

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XXII September, 1939 No. 9

The Master's Work

"I have glorified Thee on the earth. I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."-John 17:4.

PHILIP MELANCHTHON, the Reformer, said: "There has never been any voice more holy or sublime than this of John 17:4."

The words of the Master cause us to ask, What was the meaning of the life of Jesus? What was His work?

The life and the work of Jesus tell us that love is at the heart of things, that love is an everlasting principle, co-eternal with God. Jesus Himself was the highest earthly expression of this love, and thus He could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Who else but the Master could have said that in the full sense of its meaning? Who else could say that he had transmitted from his life the full measure of the effulgence of truth? Who else could say that he had absolutely completed his work?

Victor Hugo, the great author, in the fifty years of his labors, poured out great thoughts to the world, dealing with practically every phase of human life. He said: "I have expressed myself in prose, in verse, in song, in tale, in history, but have not said the one-thousandth part of what I had to say."

Mozart, the great musician, was called "music made man." He electrified audiences by the mighty strains of his compositions. He seemed to translate the very universe into the power and the glory of sound. But at the time of his death he said that he had only come to see what might be done.

Jesus died young, and yet had completed His work. John Keats died young, but had not completed his work. Tennyson said that had Keats lived, he would have been the greatest of all poets.

Keats was but reaching out after something that he could not find. It seemed a will-o-the-wisp that ever eluded his grasp. And so he craved death, with his life's work not really begun.

Raphael, one of the most brilliant of all artists, was cut down at an early age, when he could see the immense possibilities that lay in the realm of achievement where his talents had been employed.

It is character, not time, that does great things. One of the poets said,
"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs; he most lives
Who feels most, thinks noblest, acts the best."

Jesus died at the age of thirty-three, and he could look up to God and say: "I have glorified Thee on the earth. I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

From the very first there was no guess work in the life of Jesus. He did not spend half His lifetime trying to find out what God wanted Him to do. At twelve years of age we find Him in the temple discussing learned questions with the doctors of the Law; and it was on this occasion that He said to Joseph and Mary, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" At this early age evidently Jesus realized that He was on earth for a very special purpose. In the mighty determination of His mind He was not to be swerved from this purpose. After His immersion in Jordan, when He was out in the wilderness, Satan tried to divert the current of the Master's resolution, but was in every point foiled in his attempt. From that time to the end of His earthly career Jesus walked a road that was clearly defined for Him. He knew exactly the purpose for which He was on earth, and nobody else on earth knew this but Himself.

The life-work of Jesus may be divided into five parts: (1) the truth which He taught; (2) the miracles which He performed; (3) the Law which He fulfilled; (4) the death which He died; (5) the resurrection hope which He made real.

The Truth He Taught

Taking these up in order, we may say that the truth which Jesus taught marked a transitional period in the development of the Divine Plan. Jesus dealt with truth past, present, and future. In dealing with the past, He called attention to the Prophets and what they had written. He upheld the Word of God as being truth that had sanctifying power. His references were not to the poets and philosophers of Greece or of Rome, but to such personages as Abel, Moses, Abraham, David, Elijah, and John the Baptist. In His teachings He swept aside traditions and penetrated to the heart of things. No teacher had ever set forth truth in so crystallized a form. The "Sermon on the Mount" is "a mountain of truth in a signet ring." Every statement in that wonderful discourse cuts a straight path to a definite end. Verbosity was no part of the preaching of Jesus. "The Lord's Prayer" can be offered up in about thirty-two seconds; but it is doubtless the most complete prayer ever offered by any person at any time.

In His teachings Jesus recognized the value of practical illustrations. In setting forth His teachings, He uses birds, foxes, fish, flowers, trees, harvest, grapes, water, bread, sheep, leaven, seed, thorns, thistles, and various other things. By thus using many comparisons, He brought out the many sides of truth. In the vine-and-the-branches parable we find the thought of unity; in the

sheep parable is contained the great fact that God had set one true Shepherd over His sheep, and the real sheep follow Him, and "a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." Thus all the illustrations were necessary so that the truth might be presented in a rounded and completed form. The terms used by the Master were terms from things of every-day life, such as would appeal to people in the humbler strata of society. He was not preaching to princes and kings, but to those to whom He said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

In setting forth the new truth, Jesus did not disparage the Law of Israel. On the contrary, He said, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled." And to the rich young ruler He said, "This do [keep the Law] and thou shalt live."

The truth which Jesus taught upheld decorum, order, and law. He was not eccentric, nor did He oppose the government of His time, although it had won its power by the sword. In regard to the matter, of paying tribute He plainly said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." He taught His followers to be submissive to earthly authority in so far as the law of God would allow. Yet while living in the world, they were not to have the world's spirit. They were to put truth first and be living witnesses therefore. They were to be lights shining forth during a period of darkness, so that men might in due time see their good works and glorify their Father which is in heaven.

Christ's Miracles

The miracles performed by Jesus were of the greatest significance. They were performed at the call of humanity's needs. They were not of the character suggested by Satan -- that Jesus would turn stones into bread for His own requirements and jump down from a pinnacle of the temple and thus astonish the multitude. Evidently the Master had no thought that the spectacular element should have any part in His miracles. He saw people around Him who needed the boon of healing, and He healed them. When they were hungry, He fed them. In certain cases -- only three -- He raised the dead. He was a great practicalist, and did the thing required at the time, and this while He held in His mind a vision of the earth's coming glory and the future outflow of blessings to all.

Thus did Jesus avail Himself of the opportunities as they came to Him, and in so doing He left a great example for all those who have the discernment to see the value of His life. The fleeting days with the Master were things of value. He did not put off to a future date what the present called upon Him to do. He was aware of the magnitude of His work; He was fully alive to His privileges, and all His activities were directed by one purpose and by one law, and He moved majestically forward to the goal that shone before Him.

Let us consider one of the acts of the Master as illustrating the "law of necessity" which He observed in performing His miracles. Jesus crossed the lake of Galilee in a fishing boat. Here in the wilderness it was quiet, and our Lord had sought to getaway from the multitude for a brief space. But the people walked around the shore, and ere long He was once more in the midst of a crowd. The day slipped past and the evening hour came on. The disciples suggested that Jesus send the people away so that they might go into the towns and villages and buy food, but He said, "Give ye them to eat." They replied, "We have but five loaves and two fishes." And the Lord said, "That will do."

We are all familiar with the story. The miracle simply meant that the Lord took a small thing and made it go a long way. No one of that great multitude could tell how the marvelous thing was done, but, could then have looked behind the scenes, they might have seen angels working. And were not the Lord's other miracles much of the same character? On one occasion He took some clay and made it go so far that it cured a man that had been born blind. At another time He took a towel and some water and washed the disciples' feet, and that act went so far that it has come down to us through nineteen centuries, and shows that Jesus was truly humble and did not disdain to perform an act that should have been attended to by some one. He made vitality go a long way, for He imparted it to sick people and healed all their infirmities, and so we are told that when a certain woman had been cured, He perceived that virtue (vitality) had gone out of Him. He made prayer go a long way, for when He wrought the greatest of all His miracles in the raising of Lazarus, He prayed to His Father in heaven, and He was heard in the thing that He desired. No miracle performed by the Master was done merely for show, but in every case some necessity lay behind it.

The Law which He Fulfilled

One of the most interesting things in the life of Jesus is His fulfillment of the divine law. No one had ever fulfilled this law before. To the Jewish people the moral code was given on tables of stone. When Jesus was on earth, a young man thought that he himself had kept the divine law perfectly, but the Master speedily undeceived him, saying, "One thing thou lackest." And that one thing was a full measure of love. Not only did Jesus do no ill to His neighbor, but "He went about doing good." He was the embodiment of law fulfilled in a positive way. Truly He paid Israel's debt to the law, and on such a basis as that He could call disciples to follow Him, and the Apostle Paul could say, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus . . . for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." - Rom. 8:1-4.

Had Jesus not fulfilled the divine law, He could not have been accepted as a sacrifice, and then where would have been our salvation and that of the world? It has been said that Jesus had three perfections, namely: His perfection as a spiritual being before. He came into the world, His perfection as a man, and His perfection as a High Priest; and all these were necessary. Concerning the last mentioned perfection we read: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house." As a High Priest of a higher order than the Jewish priesthood, He was qualified to offer up Himself, and then the Church, which is His Body-the latter offering having consumed the entire Gospel Age.

The fact that Jesus fulfilled the law of righteousness and died on our behalf means that we have been justified from the Adamic transgression, and therefore have a standing of perfection. Whereas His perfection was absolute, ours is reckoned. So then, the merit of the sacrifice of Jesus has been applied to the Church for nearly two thousand years. Some use the expression, "passed through the Church." However, it is the same thing. The actual thought is that it has been utilized by the members of the Church through the Gospel Age, and has not yet gone to the world.

By means of the sanctifying power of the truth and life's present experiences the Church is preparing to bless the world in the Age to come. Certainly the Church is not blessing the world now;

at least, not in any special sense. The followers of Jesus have to graduate from the school of Christian experience before they will be considered qualified to confer the necessary benefits upon the world. Without the merit of Jesus, the Church could do nothing, but by means of that merit the members of the Church are permitted to suffer for the truth's sake that they may reign with their Lord and Head.

The Death He Died

Part of the work of Jesus--and indeed, the most important part--was the death which He died. Had He not died as a ransom, our salvation would not have been secured by the means that God has used. In dying, Jesus fulfilled two great types -- the bullock of the Day of Atonement, and the Passover Lamb. Whatever other types He fulfilled, these were the most important. By virtue of the first, Israel had typical justification; that is, a standing of acceptance with God during the coming year. By virtue of the second, Israel recognized and memorialized her deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the fact that her first-born ones were saved from death. The bullock -- as perfect an animal as could be secured--provided the merit which was the basis of other sacrifices. Its blood was taken into the Most Holy by the High Priest and was there sprinkled on and before the Mercy Seat. Its fat was burned on the brazen altar in the court, and its hide and hoofs were consumed with fire outside the camp.

And so the Apostle tells us that Jesus "entered not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." During the Gospel Age He has been the great Head of the Church, the great dispenser of truth, for John tells us in the Book of Revelation, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof." And how did He prevail? Simply by doing the will of God, which was that He should die. The doing of the divine will, even though it led to death, meant final victory for Jesus, just as it means victory for every member of His Body, the Church.

The Resurrection Hope

And then there is the resurrection hope which Jesus made real. The Jews had a hope of resurrection from early times, for it was set forth by their prophets. Thus, Hosea said (the Lord speaking): "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction." And the Lord said to Israel, "I will open your graves, O My people, and will bring you up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Concerning Lazarus, Martha said, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." And, while the Sadducees had fallen away from this hope of resurrection, the people at large still adhered to it.

Jesus the First-fruits of the Resurrection

But Jesus was the very first-fruit of the resurrection, and is called "the first-fruit of them that slept." When the disciples saw Him and realized that He was the same one that had been crucified, it must have seemed to them that He had opened the very gates of life. And so indeed He had, for are we not told that "He brought life and immortality to light," and that He has the keys of death and of hades (the grave)? "If Christ be not risen," said the Apostle Paul, "then our

preaching is vain, your faith is also vain ye are yet in your sins and they that sleep in Christ are perished." By this reasoning 'Paul proves that he knew the sacrifice of Christ had been a perfect one, and that therefore God could not leave Jesus in the state of death, for the intrinsic right that Jesus had to life was vested in His perfection, and while He gave up His life as a human being, He did not forfeit His right to live on the spiritual plane.

And just what does the resurrection hope mean to us? Truly it means everything; for what would life amount to without the prospect of a resurrection? Then, too, there is a sense in which we are risen with Christ even in this present time, for the Apostle says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. For ye are dead [to sin and to the world], and your life is hid with Christ in God. Sitting with Christ in the heavenly places, we can see the futility of earthly things, and we can behold the glories of the truth, and we know that the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God, which of course means that those who possess the Spirit will search the deep things of God, so that they may gain a more adequate conception of the "breadth, length, depth, and height" of divine love, and get more of that love into their own hearts.

Love that Never Faileth Makes All Things New

There is nothing deeper than love, nothing grander than love, nothing more desirable than love. "Love never faileth." Is it not the love of God that we are continually studying? The more one studies art, the more he appreciates it; and the same is true of music, science, and other things. When we are studying the Plan of God, we are chiefly studying the love of God, for that is the highest and greatest of all the divine attributes. "This is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." To know God we have to enter into the knowledge of His love, and if we do this, His wisdom, justice, and power will surely become manifest to us. It is love engendered by the truth that lifts us up into the heavenly places, so that we can realize we are risen with Christ and that "all things have become new." Is not love itself, therefore, the power of the resurrection that is passing us over from death unto life? Verily it is; for without divine love there would be no resurrection, no hope of the future, no satisfaction in the truth.

Such were the things that Jesus came to do, and which He accomplished for us. Some of these things no one but He could do. In a general sense, however, He "left us an example, that we should follow in His steps." It is a blessed privilege to be a follower of Christ, and thus to show our appreciation of gall that He did. As His followers endeavor to do this, they may feel the power of His guiding hand, and realize His blessing on their lives, as they continue in the "narrow way."

- *Contributed.*

His Leading

He led me forth from an under way
Into the breadth of the golden day,
Into the sense of a glad release,
Into a higher domain of peace,
Into the joy of changeless calm,

Into the temple of light and psalm.
He led me forth, through faith, I ween,
To flowery meads where the grass is green,
To where I behold in the love divine
A wealth that outvalues the richest mine
Love as fathomless as the sea,
Yet singing its song to the heart of me.
He leads me still, and I follow Him,
Although the shadows at times are grim.
Up above is a patch of blue,
And there the glory of God shines through.
A little way, and the toils are o'er,
And love will sing on forevermore.

Present and Future Vision

"For now we see through a glass darkly [obscurely]; but then face to face." - 1 Cor. 13:12.

THE WORD translated "glass" is from the Greek "esoptrou," a transparent substance through which, owing to its imperfect condition of clarity, one could only see the object faintly, obscurely; it was not as clear as one could wish.

Paul is dealing with the growth of character -- his analysis of character under its personification of "Love," for God is love, and those who have been begotten of His Spirit as sons of God must also develop the same character. So Paul analyzes love in its every-day habit of thought, word, and deed. He would give us to understand that it is only in proportion as we develop this essential God-like characteristic that we can appreciate the purport of our experiences. Paraphrasing this verse, then, we would suggest it would read, "For now, in proportion to our growth in grace we understand the purpose of our experiences is to the end that we might reflect the character-likeness of God." This means that when we have developed this characteristic to the degree that if we could look into a mirror we should reflect God's likeness, in the same way as when we see Him face to face, we as sons of God shall be like our Father.

You remember Jesus said, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect," and it was to this end that Jesus interpreted for us many aspects of His Father's character. Jesus further told us in Luke 6:40: "Every disciple when his course of instruction is complete shall be as his Master."

For a few moments, then, we want to apply our minds to the "course of instruction," remembering that Paul also reminds us that God has called us unto His Kingdom and glory.

"We see through a glass darkly" -- our life sometimes appears to us to be an enigma; we sometimes appear to be walking in nothing more than a maze where in the apparent monotony of the daily round and the common task we are prone to lose sight of the real purpose for such experiences, the true object of all such training in the school of Christ. We are prone to lose consciousness of the unseen presence of Him who is our daily companion and with whom life's dark maze is in reality the plan of One who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

In Luke 12:6, 7 Jesus would sweetly remind us, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings and yet not one of them is forgotten before God, . . . are ye not more precious than many sparrows?"

Do we lose sight of all these precious truths when confronted in our daily walk by a crisis, some molehill which by smallness of faith appears a mountain?

Do you think God gave Moses all the minutiae of the Tabernacle's services as a matter of course or of delighting to make as much work as possible? No! Can we not view it from the standpoint that it was to show that the commonplace duties of life were sanctified to God and should be done as unto Him with a consciousness that He took note of each and every moment lived?

Suppose Aaron had said, "Tomorrow morning I will have a rest and not offer the burnt-offering -- I will not matter much if I miss just once, as I have offered the same offering so many times." Do you think God (who Jesus assured us took heed of the sparrow's fall) would have been too busy to have failed to enjoy the sweet incense which accompanied the burnt-offering and was the means of union between Him and Israel through Aaron? Aaron's contact with God would have been interrupted, and God did not provide for that. (Psa 27:4. See Heb. 9:3-5.) Let us think of this if we are apt to consider that our life is sometimes monotonous.

One reads the Psalmist's words, "My times are in Thy hands." Do we ever see in those words the depths suggested by the translation of one of the Indian dialects, "All my hows, and whens, and whys are in His care"?

It is a continual growth in grace and love that keeps us in constant touch with God, and therefore every prophecy that is fulfilled appeals to us in proportion to our growth and love for God; every indication of our Lord's second presence stirs up the emotion of our hearts and the prayer escapes, "Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly"; every evidence of His providential care for us deepens our love for Him and strengthens our faith in His unerring wisdom; and our service for the brethren is not from us, but from Him through us. Each child of God is the special object of our Father's attention, and He has in His care all our hows and whens and whys.

We see some of life's problems obscurely. Perhaps it is because we lose sight of the ultimate issue, the end God has in view

"O joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace Thy rainbow through the rain,
And know the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be."

It may seem strange that divine love wounds to heal, but "My ways are not your ways, neither are My thoughts your thoughts." God often leads us through Gethsemane to get to Bethany. We only see the reason for some sorrowful experience in our life when we pass over to the other side and look back at the panorama and see the way He has led us and what pains He has taken to prove His love for us that we might prove our love for Him.

Thorns and Blessings

You know how sometimes in picking fruit off a prickly bush, you lift the prickly branch in order to get the fruit, and in doing so you get a thorn in your hand. It is the fruit you desired, and you are willing to pay the price of pain, sometimes, in order to obtain it. Some of the grandest and sweetest characters God has ever blessed this earth with have had their moments when they must

have caused the great Husbandman much pain, and yet He saw in them the ultimate luscious fruitage of character that would give Him such inexpressible joy and happiness. Some days it seems almost as if we are being dealt with by God in the same way as the photographer who develops his sensitive plates in a dark room under the obscure red light. The plates go through various processes in which any other light must not penetrate, and it is the photographer and his plates who alone share the secret of the dark room.

Often our developing experiences are a matter between God and ourselves -- we are being submitted to the various processes in order that the great Photographer might see in us His own likeness. He carries on His secret processes in the shadow of the red light-the glowing love of Jesus, because we are God's gift to Jesus as a further expression of God's love to Him for the great love Jesus manifested to His Father in giving His life a ransom for all. It is in this dark room God helps us to know wisdom secretly and teaches us truth in the hidden parts.

Then we think of the weaver intertwining woof and warp with various colored threads. If we were to stand on the reverse side of the cloth to which the weaver was working we should see what appears to be an unintelligible design and a bewildering mass of threads, It is only when we pass round to the other side and take our stand by the weaver and view the weaving from his vantage point that we can see the beauty of design.

How often we are apt to look at the converse side of the Weaver's woof and web as He interweaves in our experiences the variegated thread, which seem to us so purposeless, so bewildering. We need to understand the Weaver's grand design and see the loom of life where the woof and warp of life's vicissitudes are interwoven by divine love, wisdom, justice and power that He might be glorified.

Enlarging on the thought of the Weaver, we might be able to see something in the colors He uses. In Ezek. 1:28 God's glory is like unto a rainbow. Some features of the divine character were portrayed in the cherubim woven on the Tabernacle's second veil. In His design God has used the following colors to portray the life of His Son, from His prehuman existence to the end of the Millennium, and in such design we can see the Plan of the Ages:

White, silver, and green, to represent the purity, the spiritual life of the Logos in His creative works and activities as the Father's Agent in the affairs of man;

Copper and red to represent the Logos taking upon Himself the "seed of Abraham," human conditions to give Himself a ransom for all;

Blue, purple, and gold, to represent the faithfulness of our Lord in His covenant of sacrifice with His Father, His reward to be King of kings and His exaltation to the divine nature.

Taken singly these threads may mean little or nothing, especially if viewed from the converse side of the Weaver's pattern. They mean a good deal to us if we are associated and identified with Jesus. Read Psa. 45:13, 14; 139:15; Rev. 3:3; 14:1; 21:11, which show that the Church will also reflect the glory of God. Then read Rev. 22:4, which shows mankind ultimately manifesting God's character. "We see through :a glass darkly," obscurely, so long as we look on the converse side of the Weaver's pattern.

Then take the lapidarist with his precious stones which come to him for his skilled attention when they are in an uncut and unpolished condition. He has a design in which he foresees the jewels mounted in the royal diadem. He sets to work, cutting and polishing each jewel until it is fit to be

mounted in the king's crown. Each jewel requires the individual attention of the lapidarist, who is familiar with its peculiarities and knows what treatment to give.

As the Lord's jewels being prepared for the royal diadem, are we always conscious of His care for us? "He careth for you" -- even in the cutting and polishing experiences of life. He values the jewels He is preparing; they are His workmanship, precious in His sight "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I gather up My jewels" -- "a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord," to show forth His praise.

Go down and see the potter at work on the wheels with his clay, which he so deftly molds into a vessel he has previously designed and in his mind seen completed to his own satisfaction and enjoyment. The clay goes through various processes after being formed on the wheels-it is glazed and placed in an oven to harden it so that it might endure and be fit for the service for which it was designed.

Possibly our experiences are similar. We for a time seem in the hands of God enjoying the sunshine of His love, and then we are placed in circumstances calling for a proof of our faith in the Potter -- shall we be true to His design -- will the fire of testing and trial be too much? It is then we need to be mindful that He watches over His own. We should learn to say with Job, "He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me. I shall come forth like gold," a vessel unto honor for the King's palace, to give the King that pleasure and happiness He foresaw He would enjoy when before the foundation of the world He conceived the design of creating all things for His pleasure.

The Foreknowledge of God

One must acknowledge and appreciate the foreknowledge of God with the predestination of the Christ, Head and Body, if he is to make any progress in character development. (See Psa. 139:14-18.) It is often the answer to many a perplexing question, many a difficult situation in which we often find ourselves, and what is more important still, it is preeminently the means God uses to conduce rest of faith in Him and is the means of enjoying true peace of mind.

"Until the day break and the shadows flee away" is only another way of illustrating the Apostle's words in our text. "Until the day cools," matures in experience, after morning light, the heat of noonday and the approaching eventide, when all the shadows, the hazy recollections, the half appreciated experiences, flee away and we understand exactly all their true import, because, as we said in another connection, "our course of instruction is complete." Studying the Song of Solomon 2:17; 4:6-8, we see that we abide on the mountains dividing Him from us "until the day break," and we see Him face to face.

The scientist will endeavor to explain the riddle of life as he probes the wonders of the atmosphere and universe, and pretends to tell the age of the world by some archaeological discovery that will afford a field for both wild speculation and an opportunity for challenging the divine Word. One scientist will dare sum up his life's discovery and go so far as to say that "death ends all"-thereby maintaining his disbelief in the purpose of the present life, which is notwithstanding a valuable experience to prepare man for the future ages. Another scientist makes bold to declare that he has been able to create life in a cell in his laboratory, but he is forced to admit it is not an intelligent form of life-it is not a life that can hold fellowship with either God or man; so what use is it Scientists will not meet with success in explaining the riddle of life until

they learn to live a consecrated life in constant touch with the Creator, the Fountain of life and Source of light, and until they acknowledge that "the reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." When we reverence God, we can learn to love Him and His Son, who is the resurrection and the life.

It may well be that the riddle of life appeals to you never more strongly than when you first gaze into the eyes of your newly-born child and see that mutual recognition which speaks without words and holds silent fellowship. Or it may equally well be that life's riddle appeals to you in all its earnestness when you stand at the grave side to pay your farewell tribute to a life well lived; a life so unselfish, patient, loving, and gentle, noble in its purity and fragrant in its sweetness of virtue; a hidden life with its joys and sorrows, its secret fellowship in the Holy; a life perfumed with the sweet incense ascending from that altar in the Holy; a life that having faithfully sacrificed its little all, passes under the second veil -- into His presence to see Him face to face -- what a moment! Jesus has waited throughout the centuries of the Gospel Age for **this moment**. God foresaw it before the foundation of the world. Each member of the Body of Christ has waited patiently throughout his life's little day for it. What a meeting!

According to Gen. 24:63-67 Isaac meets Rebekah and sees his bride for the first time when the veil is removed from off her face. We wonder what were the first words Isaac spoke to his bride and what were her first words to him. Equally we wonder what our Bridegroom's first words will be to His Bride when He sees her for the first time within the veil and what will be her first words to her adorable Bridegroom!

And then to think that just as Isaac took Rebekah to his own home and comforted her, so will Jesus take His Bride to His Father's home and present us to His Father before His throne faultless, without blemish; and we shall see Him face to face, be with God throughout the ages of glory, not for forty days with hidden face, as Moses in the mount, but to enjoy the fulness of God's fellowship, and with Jesus complete God's happiness and pleasure in the restitution work during the Millennial Age and in whatever work our Father may be pleased for us to cooperate with Him in the ages of glory.

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is Love." "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." - 1 Col. 13:13; 2 Cor. 3:18.

- *Contributed.*

"Face to face with Christ, my Savior,
Face to face - what will it be?
When with rapture I behold Him,
Jesus Christ who died for me.

"Face to face shall I behold Him,
Far beyond the starry sky;
Face to face in all His glory,
I shall see Him by and by!

"Only faintly now, I see Him,
With the darkling veil between,

But the blessed day is coming,
When His glory shall be seen.

"What rejoicing in His presence,
When are banished grief and pain;
When the crooked ways are straightened,
And the dark things shall be plain.

"Face to face; oh, blissful moment!
Face to face - to see and know;
Face to face with my Redeemer,
Jesus Christ who loves me so."

Confession of Sin

"I have sinned." - Exod. 9:27; Num. 22:34; 1 Sam. 15:24; Josh. 7:20; Matt. 27:4; Job 7:20; Luke 15:21.

THIS CONFESSION, "I have sinned," occurs in seven different portions of God's holy Word, from Exodus to Luke. It is necessary, however, for us to consider them separately, as each confession conveys an entirely different meaning or feeling. While one confesses, "I have sinned," and receives forgiveness, another says, "I have sinned," and goes his way to blacken himself with worse crimes than he had before committed.

I.-The Hardened Sinner-"I Have Sinned"

Exod. 9:27

The first case is that of the hardened sinner Pharaoh, who under terror says, "I have sinned." In Exod. 9:27 we read: "And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked." But why this confession from the lips of the haughty tyrant? Did he desire from a contrite heart to humble himself before God? We may judge the value of his confession when we recall the circumstances under which it was made. The context beginning with the twenty-third verse reads: "And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation."

While the thunder is rolling through the sky; while the lightning flashes are setting the very ground on fire; while the hail is falling in big lumps of ice -- "Now," says Pharaoh, "I have sinned." Is this the first time that Pharaoh knew that he had sinned against God and His children? Ah no, he knew that he had been treating them unjustly for years, but he was too proud to humble himself and confess his sin, and seek the forgiveness of God and His children, and mend his ways. So, as time went on, his conscience became seared, wrong conduct and unjust practices had little or no effect upon him. He hardened his heart. Of what value was his confession? That confession, which was begotten during the terrors of the storm, died in the calm. That repentance, which was born amid the thunder and the lightning, ceased when all was hushed in quietness, and Pharaoh returned to his former evil ways.

II.-The Double-minded Man-"I Have Sinned"

Num. 22:34

The second case to consider is that of the doubleminded Balaam; who says, "I have sinned," and feels that he has, and feels it deeply too, but who is so worldly-minded that he prefers the "wages of unrighteousness" to the obeying of the Lord's commands. We recall how Balak, king of the Moabites, feared the children of Israel, who had encamped in great numbers on the plains of Moab. So Balak sent messengers to the Prophet Balaam, asking him to come and curse the Israelites that the Moabites might go out and defeat them in battle.. These messengers had with them rewards for the service of Balaam. Now Balaam was desirous of serving them, receiving from them their rewards and words of commendation, so he said unto them: "Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me." Balaam pled the cause of Balak: "And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed."

The next day Balak received this message from Balaam. He then sent back his own sons who promised, in addition to the rewards, promotion to very great honor if he would come and curse the Israelites. "And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." The next day Balaam went to see Balak, and on his way an angel interrupted his journey, and it was here that he realized that he had done wrong in not listening to the commands of God. It was to the angel he said: "I have sinned."

Upon meeting Balak Balaam was taken to an high place from whence he could view the hosts of the Israelites. He was again offered rewards and positions of honor if he would but curse the Israelites, so Balak could defeat them in battle. Balaam again went before God and pled the cause of the Moabites. Returning to Balak he said: "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?" With all sincerity of heart he went before God several times and pled the cause of Balak, and with all sincerity of heart he came each time to Balak with a refusal; and on one occasion he speaks of the "times of refreshing, . . . the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began," saying: "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh." Balaam was double-minded in the respect that he would serve righteousness and at the same time he would like to receive the wages and honor of unrighteousness.

III.-The Insincere Man-"I Have Sinned" **1 Sam. 15:24**

Our third consideration is that of the insincere Saul, who says, "I have sinned"; not like Balaam, to a certain extent sincere in two things; but the man who is just the opposite -- who has no prominent point in his character at all, but is molded everlastingly by the circumstances that are passing over his head. Such a man was Saul. Samuel reproved him, and he confessed: "I have sinned." But he was not sincere in the matter, for when we read the whole verse (1 Sam. 15:24) we find him saying: "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words; because I feared the people and obeyed their voice." This was a lying alibi. Saul never feared anybody; he was always ready enough to do his own will. He was king. Just before, he had offered another excuse, that he had saved the best of the sheep and oxen to offer to the Lord as a sacrifice; and therefore both statements could not be true.

The most prominent feature in the character of King Saul was his insincerity. One day he fetched David from his bed, as he thought, to put him to death in his house. Another time he declares: "God forbid that I should do caught against thee, my son David." One day, because David saved his life, he said: "Thou art more righteous than I; I will do so no more." The day before he had gone out to fight against -his own son-in-law in order to slay him. Sometimes Saul would seek help from, and take the advice of the prophets; and then at night he would be seeking the advice of the witches sometimes for one thing and sometimes for another -- insincere in everything.

We have been brief in our treatment of this character, for at times it seems to touch upon that of Balaam; though we see there is a real contrast between Saul and Balaam, even though there is a likeness between the two. Balaam was the great, bad man; great in all he did, whether good or bad. Saul was little, small in everything except stature; little in his good, and little in his vices. He was too much of a weakling to be desperately bad, and too wicked to be at any time good. Balaam was great in both; the man who could at one time defy God, and yet at another time could

say: "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord my God to do less or more."

IV.-Continuing in Sin-"I have Sinned"

Josh. 7:20

Our fourth confession is that of Achan and is recorded in the seventh chapter of Joshua. Here we have a case where an Israelite, a follower of God, one of His own chosen people, of the tribe of Judah, continued in sin until finally his sin found him out. Achan had stolen and stolen, until he had a great hoard of wealth (gold, silver and garments) buried beneath his tent. He did not confess his sin until God, by the process of elimination, pointed out that Achan was the man. His confession did not come from a humble and contrite heart, seeking forgiveness, but from one that was caught in theft and forced to acknowledge his guilt.

V.-The Confession of Despair-"I have Sinned"

Matt. 27:4

In our fifth consideration we come to the worst confession of all. It is the repentance of despair. And Judas said: "I have sinned." Yes, Judas the traitor, who had betrayed his Master, when he saw that his Master was condemned, repented, and in a fit of despair "brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying: I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.

And he cast down the pieces in the temple and went and hanged himself." Here is the worst kind of repentance of all: Oh, that dreadful, that terrible, that hideous and torturing confession of despair! We will tarry no longer here, but carry our thoughts to something brighter, more cheerful, for now we come into the daylight. We have been giving attention to dark and dreary confessions, but this sixth confession is brighter, for it comes from a humble and contrite heart, filled with faith and trust in God.

VI.-The Sincere Man-"I have Sinned"

Job 7:20

In the confession of job you will recall how Satan tried to shake job's faith in God by bringing ill fortune upon him. All of his herds of cattle were stolen by his enemies. All of his servants were killed when the cattle were stolen, save two or three to bear him the news. His seven sons and three daughters lost their lives in a wind storm. Nor did Satan's work end here. He took away everything that he possessed save his wife and friends, who were left to add to his torments.

Mental distress may be very grievous, but when mixed with physical ailments, so that one is unable to occupy himself, it is far worse. Job broke out with boils; not only one or two, which oft-times confine one to his bed, but we read that he was covered with boils, from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. And that was not all, for we read: "When I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions; so that my soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life." Poor job, he could not even sleep. He would roll and toss with mental worries and with physical pain; and then when he

did finally fall off to sleep he would wake up with a nightmare. Then we note his confession: "I have sinned; what shall I do unto Thee, O Thou Preserver of men? Why hast Thou set me as a mark against Thee, so that I am a burden to myself? And why dost Thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? For now shall I sleep in the dust; and Thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be."

This confession of Job's is not from the lips of a hardened sinner, brought forth in a time of terror. It is not from the Lips of a double-minded man, who is for God and His cause today, and tomorrow just as active in another's cause. This confession of Job's is not from the lips of an insincere man, who would find false excuses for his sin; nor is it from the lips of one who has planned and plotted crimes refusing confession until singled out and forced to admit the guilt. Neither is this confession from one who in despair has given up all hopes of forgiveness and goes out to blacken himself with more crimes, and dive into greater depths of sin. This confession, "I have sinned," is from the lips of sincere and penitent man. And then he speaks prophetically of the times of refreshing of which we read in Acts 3:19-21: "Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." And what does he say? "For now shall I sleep in the dust and Thou shalt seek me in the morning but I shall not be." No, when God shall seek Job in the Millennial morning through Jesus Christ the righteous, Job shall not be. He will be asleep in the dust.

VII.-The Prodigal Son-"I have Sinned" Luke 15:21

And now we come to the seventh and last confession; that of the prodigal son, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter. of Luke. Here we read: "A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."

We know that this passage is a parable and has its interpretation, but how oft have we found ourselves in similar positions? Have we spent many hours away from our Father's house? Have we engaged in riotous living, being wrapped up in the pleasures of this world? Have we left our Father's table? Have we found ourselves mixed up in the advanced theories of men? Have we found ourselves shopping around from one herd of swine to another? While the swine thrive and grow fat upon the pods of the locust or carob tree, the New Creature in Christ Jesus starves for the want of more spiritual food. He longs to return to his Father's table. When the prodigal came to himself and took inventory of his many failings, the first thing he did was to resolve: "I

will go back." I will return, not in any self-righteousness or self-excusing attitude of mind. I will return with a humble and contrite heart, with full confession of my varied errors, and with the willingness to take the very lowest place in my father's family -- as a servant.

It is only on the basis of full and humble confession that our heavenly Father is pleased to give full restoration to the privileges of sonship. His resolution to go back would have amounted to nothing had it not been followed by the doing. How many are dissatisfied with worldliness, with the husks! They will return to their Father's table, but they think of their present connections, and to lose them is too severe a test. They think of that older brother of theirs, and pride says, No! They think of their starved condition and say, "Rather than to acknowledge my error, perhaps I can find some good beans in that pile of husks over there." But in the parable the prodigal not only longed to return, but he **willed** to do so, and then **did** so. "And the father seeing him a great way off, had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." The prodigal attempts to make his confession, with a broken and contrite spirit, but is interrupted by the father's expression of love and directions for "the best robe," the robe of Christ's righteousness -- justification; "the ring," the Pentecostal blessing and a signet of everlasting mercy, forgiveness and love; "the fatted calf," the good, solid, wholesome truths; "and a general rejoicing, for the dead had come to life, the lost had been found, the wayward had returned."

So we come, travel-stained and bleeding from the rough ways of life, bowed down with the shame of conscious guilt, to our heavenly Father. And, as the father in the parable, while the prodigal was yet afar off, went out to meet his contrite son, so will our heavenly Father forgive us our sins and welcome us back to sonship, if our confessions are humble and sincere; if we are not double-minded in the matter, wanting to serve righteousness and at the same time to continue in pleasing unrighteousness. Our confessions and repentance must not be insincere, but true and genuine. Our heavenly Father will forgive us our sins, and welcome us back, but we must forsake our evil ways. We cannot, like Achan, continue in sin. "Whosoever confesseth his sins and forsaketh them shall find mercy." - *Contributed*.

Selections for the Family Circle

The Inelegance of Hurry

THERE is an idea prevalent that to be in a hurry is a sign of importance, of large business and large achievements. It is a serious mistake. An experienced person always mistrusts the man who hurries, for he fails in emergencies. Serenity of mind and leisurely action are necessary to fine work of any kind. It is in leisure that the mind assimilates best.

Scipio Africanus declared, "I am never less at leisure than when at leisure." A rare bit of wisdom of which all reflective minds know the value.. If we admit this as true, the inelegance of a hurried manner has the best of reasons. It is wasteful, inconsistent with the finest action, and is caused by a man losing control of himself, and suggests an uneasy, indecisive mind.

A distinction, however, should be recognized between activity and excited hurry, and between slowness and self-possession. Activity with self possession is the desirable condition.

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Troubles Made Beautiful

Most of the shells of the oyster are pearly in the interior; and as the true pearls are merely morbid growths, they may all produce pearls of various qualities. The formation of pearls is caused by the introduction of irritating substances, such as grains of sand, between the mantle and the shell. The irritation causes the animal to cover the obnoxious object with layers of pearl, which generally attach the foreign body to the interior of the shell. The Chinese produce pearls artificially by placing substances in the position just described, and we have seen some shells to the interior of which small metal images were attached by the pearly secretion.

When we look at a pearl, we look at an annoyance which has been ennobled. The oyster by itself is of merely nominal value. But the result of the oyster's own treatment of its irritation-the pearl-is something "of great price." Apart from its pecuniary worth, this gem has a moral significance. It suggests that troubles may be made beautiful, and reminds us that amongst mankind some martyrs are more remembered for the glory with which they invested their sorrows than for any other portion of their lives. Biography has its moral pearls, which are treasured long after the creatures of them have perished, just as material pearls are valued long years after the oysters have been discarded.

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God Chooseth

There are men who have strong and laudable desires to serve the Lord, and who fervently pray for His glory; but He does not always seem to hear their prayers. There are various reasons for this. Sometimes men are unfit for the Lord's service. They are not purged from their sins; they are not vessels unto honor, **fitted** for the Master's use; and so He sets them aside as not adapted to His work. Sometimes men wish to do great things, but find themselves straitened, hindered, limited,

and circumscribed; sometimes they are reserved for still greater work; in other cases they are rejected of the Lord for reasons well known to Him.

Moses longed to lead Israel into Canaan, but He was not permitted to enter the Promised Land. So David would gladly have built the temple at Jerusalem, but the Lord would not accept that service at his hands. Paul was forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel in Asia, and, though he essayed to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered him not. In like manner we may have desires and aspirations for usefulness which will never be gratified. The Lord may see that we could not bear the exaltation and the honor which we seek. He knows far better than we do what is for our good and so He would have us rest contented in His providence, not idle, but diligent; not careless, but watchful; not indifferent, but full of intense, earnest longing to do the will of God; yet patient under restraint, and content to be neglected and forgotten, remembering that "they also serve who only stand and wait," and that the Lord in His own well-chosen hour can lead us forth to fulfill His purposes of grace.

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Shoot Upward and Root Downward

Let me remind you all, ye faithful believers in Christ, that ye are compared to trees-trees of the Lord's right-hand planting. Seek to grow as the tree grows. Pray that this year ye may grow downward; that ye may know more of your own vileness, more of your own nothingness; and so be rooted to humility. Pray that your roots may penetrate below the mere topsoil of truth, into the great rocks which underlie the uppermost stratum; that ye may get a good hold of the doctrines of eternal love, of immutable faithfulness, of complete satisfaction, of union to Christ, of the eternal purpose of God, which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the world was. This will be a growth which will not add to your fame, which will not minister to your vanity, but it will be invaluable in the hour of storm; a growth, the value of which no heart can conceive when the hurricane is tearing up the hypocrite. As ye root downward, seek to grow **upward**. Send out the topshoot of your love towards heaven. As the trees send out their spring shoot and their midsummer shoot, and as you see upon the top of the fir that new green child of spring, the fresh shoot which lifts its hand towards the sun, so pant to have more love and greater desires after God, a nearer approach towards Him in prayer, a sweeter spirit of adoption, a more intense and intimate fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. This mounting upward will add to your beauty and to your delight. Then pray to grow **on either side**. Stretch out your branches; let the shadow of your holy influence extend as far as God has given you opportunities. But see to it also that ye grow in **fruitfulness**, for to increase the bough without adding to the fruit is to diminish the beauty of the tree. Labor this year by God's grace to bring forth more fruit unto Him than ye have ever done. We would not be as the gleanings of the vintage when there is only here and there a cluster upon the uppermost bough, we would be as the Valley of Eschol, whose presses burst with new wine.

This is to grow in grace; to root downward, to shoot upward, to extend your influences like far reaching branches, and to bring forth fruit unto the Lord's glory. - *C. H. Spurgeon*.

Example Better than Argument

SEE TO it, brethren, that you keep the channels clear, that the flow may continue full and increase. Let no mud and ooze from the world, no big blocks of sin nor subtler accumulation of small negligences, choke them again. Above all, by simple, earnest prayer keep your hearts, as it were wide open to the Sun, and His light will shine on you, and His grace fructify through you, and His Spirit will work in you mightily.

The tenor of these remarks presupposes a point on which I wish to make two observations now, viz., that the manner of the divine working which we should most earnestly desire in a time of diffused unbelief is the elevation of Christian souls to a higher spiritual life.

I do not wish to exclude other things, but I believe that the true antidote to a widespread scepticism is a quickened Church. We may indeed desire that in other ways the enemy may be met. We ought to pray that God would work by sending forth defenders of the truth, by establishing His Church in the firm faith of disputed verities, and by all the multiplied ways in which He can sway the thoughts and tendencies of men. But I honestly confess that I, for my part, attach but secondary importance to controversial defenses of the faith. No doubt they have their office: they may confirm a waverer; they may establish a believer; they may show onlookers that the Christian position is tenable; they may, in some rare cases of transcendent power, prevent a heresy from spreading and from descending to another generation. But oftenest they are barren of results; and where they do work, it is not to be forgotten there may remain as true a making void of God's law by an evil heart of unbelief as by an understanding cased in the mail of denial. You may hammer ice on an anvil, or bray it in a mortar. What then?

It is pounded ice still, except for the little portion melted by the heat of percussion, and it will soon congeal again. Melt it in the sun, and it flows down in sweet water, which mirrors that light which loosed its bonds of cold. So hammer away at unbelief with your logical sledge-hammers, and you will change its shape, perhaps; but it is none the less unbelief because you have ground it to powder. It is a mightier agent that must melt it—the fire of God's love, brought close by a will itself ablaze with the sacred glow. Therefore, while giving all due honor to other forms of Christian opposition to the prevailing unbelief, I urge the cultivation of a quickened spiritual life as by far the most potent. Does not history bear me out in that view? Depend upon it, we shall do more for Christ by catching and exhibiting more of His spirit than by many arguments—more words of prayer to God than by words of reasoning with men.

A higher tone of spiritual life would prove that the gospel was mighty to mold and ennoble character. If our souls were gleaming with the glory of God, men would believe that we had met more than the shadow of our own personality in the secret place. If the fire of faith were bright in us, it would communicate itself to others, for nothing is so contagious as earnestness. If we believed, and therefore spoke, the accent of conviction in our tones would carry them deep into some heart. If we would trust Christ's cross to stand firm without our stays, and, arguing less about it, would seldomer try to prop it, and oftener to point to it, it would draw men to it. When the power and reality of Scripture as a revelation of God are questioned, the best answer in the long-run will be a Church which can adduce itself as the witness, and can say to the gainsayers: "Why, herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened mine eyes." Brethren, do you see to it that your life be thus a witness that you have heard His *voice*

..--Selected.

Jesus' Life not Forfeited

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was dependent upon His not having forfeited His right to life. His death was sacrificial and substitutional, as He Himself said, "I lay down My life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. This commandment have I received of My Father." (John 10:17, 18.) It was in fulfilling the Father's will for Him that Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice and offering for sin (Heb. 10: 5-9); and it was because that offering was perfectly- acceptable to God, and perfectly performed, that God raised Him from the dead and highly exalted Him. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be hoyden in it. (Act 2:23, 24.) Christ's right to life was never forfeited, although life itself was yielded up on the cross, and that by the will of God; "wherefore God hath highly exalted Him," and "made that same Jesus, who was crucified, both Lord and Christ." - Phil. 2:5-11; Acts 2:36.

Thus the resurrection of Christ brings a new hope, especially to those who by faith can receive it. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Pet. 1:3, 4.) To the Church is unfolded the high calling of God, even to joint-heirship with Christ; and this hope of joint-heirship is calculated to bring about a purification of self; to sustain the doer of righteousness in his combat with the forces of evil; to lead to a despising of the shame and ignominy of espousing the cause of Christ; to cause us to look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; to count the afflictions which are but for a moment as light; "knowing that He which raised up Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus." -- 2 Cor. 3:14.

But Jesus Christ "by the grace of, God tasted death for every man"; "the man Christ Jesus gave Himself a ransom' for all"; "and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but. also for the whole world." And that all mankind are assured of a share in that which was gained for them by Jesus is part and parcel of the resurrection message, as declares, the Apostle: "God hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." - Acts 17:31.

"For me to Live is Christ"

In brief, what shall we say that the resurrection of Jesus Christ means to us? It means that a power has been manifested that can triumph over sin and death; it means the final, ultimate vindication of God's justice and wisdom and benevolence; it means that a new and living hope has been given, even the hope of "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away"; it means that from henceforth we can look on all things from. a new standpoint, even from the standpoint .of those who are alive in Christ, who have already by faith received eternal life and can view- all things in the light of eternity; it means the final extermination of sin and death, and that "all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth," for the resurrection of all inheres in Him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life." (John 5:28; Rev. 21:1-5; John 11:25.) Yes, we can now "sanctify the Lord God in our hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and reverence." (1 Pet. 3:15.) The great fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the basis for that hope.

- *Contributed.*

The Basis of Faith and Hope

"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." - 1 Cor. 15:14.

THE OLD lie of the Serpent, "Ye shall not surely die," hides the great significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The immensity of the resurrection is dulled in our minds by our being, in times past, more or less influenced in thought by the vain philosophy built upon that first lie; for if, as is the common thought of humanity, "there is no death, what appears so is only transition," then Jesus did not die in reality, and His so-called resurrection was no resurrection at all.

But death is the opposite of life; death is a falling away from life; and resurrection is a setting up again, a giving back, a restoring again of that which was, but had ceased to exist-life. Death is the cessation of being; resurrection is the restoration of being. The more this truth is impressed upon our minds, the more clearly is Christ's resurrection shown to be a display of God's mighty power, a power superior to sin and death; and it becomes an assurance that the reign of sin and death will end, and a full opportunity be given to all to also partake of a resurrection. (Act. 17:31.) "For since through man came death, by a man came also the resurrection of the, dead." - 1 Cor. 15:21.

The deeper the yearnings for God, the more the resurrection appeals to and satisfies the longings of the heart. Our sense of love and justice and equity, and our discerning of disappointments, injustices, and failures of this present life, draw us to accept the resurrection as a fact. It vindicates God.

That Christ did rise from the dead is a clearly established historical fact; as we read in 1 Cor. 15:4-8: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas; then of the twelve: after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; after that He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles; and last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." (We note that this list does not include the testimony of the women.)

We little appreciate how our faith and hope rest on the testimony of these witnesses, for if their witness is false, our faith is groundless, and our hope of a future life vanishes. The writers of the New Testament constantly appealed to the fact of Christ's resurrection as the basis of faith and hope; for as the Apostle states in 1 Cor. 15:3, it was one of the first or foremost truths, one of the foundation doctrines of our faith: "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." - 1 Cor. 15:17-20.

The Gospel of the Resurrection

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, salvation by His sacrificial death, and His resurrection, this was the substance of the apostolic preaching. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25), "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death. Therefore know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." - Acts 2:23, 24, 36.

The testimony is that if Christ is not raised, then we are still under the dominion of sin and death. Why? Because no power or force has as yet been made apparent that can deliver from death, and overcome sin. Without the resurrection, the holy life, the ministry and sacrificial death of Christ avail nothing. Indeed, without the resurrection Satan is verily the conqueror; those qualities of which Jesus was the embodiment-innocence, purity, faithfulness, truth, love-all are crushed, triumphed over by malice and hatred and wickedness; the Prince of light is blotted out by the prince of darkness! But how the words of the Apostle ring out as a joyful paean: "But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

We are living in a day when Christianity is very lightly held; when it is being scoffed at, and openly assaulted. We are witnessing a rising tide of infidelity, indeed, a paganistic philosophy that violently decries the tenets of Christ, holding them to be swinish, and characterizing Jesus as a weakling. Such do not discern that by raising Christ from the dead in the power of an endless life, God has set His approval on all that Jesus did and taught. Christ is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:15.) Men who love darkness instinctively shun the doctrine of Christ's death and resurrection, for by it we are brought face to face with the necessity of choosing or rejecting a moral renovation and a spiritual quickening, of choosing between self-will and God's will. We find ourselves brought before God, enlightened as to our nakedness and proffered Christ's righteousness as a covering, His Word and Spirit as our life. There is no sidestepping the issue. To put off making the good choice is in effect rejecting.

Recently Deceased

During recent months we have noted with interest the large number of brethren who are finishing their course. Both that our readers may share in this knowledge and that they may be informed regarding their former acquaintances who have completed their course of probation occasional lists of the deceased will be published. Your assistance in supplying us with names and addresses for this list will be appreciated.

Recently we have learned of the deaths of the following:

Mrs. Margaret McKinley, Muncie, Ind. (April).

Mrs. J. Erickson, Jamestown, N.Y. (June).

Mr. Joseph Kukowski, Milwaukee, Wis. (June).

Mr. Walter Hunnable, Braintree, Eng. (July).

Died in the United States, en route to relatives.

Mr. A.N. Dougherty, Frankfort, N.Y. (formerly of Utica). (August).

Mrs. S.D. Bennett, Millville, N. J. (August).

Wife of Brother Bennett, Institute Director.