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Behind the Scenes

IN THE springtime of the year Mother Nature calls the birds from the Southland. The snow has melted away, and the days are growing warm. The earth is waking from its long sleep. We do not see the forces that are operating, but they are there. There is a wonderful world of invisible things, natural things, behind the things that are seen. Throughout nature chemical action and reaction are going on continually, yet without a sound. Behind the flowering of innumerable plants the cells are doing their work, and down in the moist earth the roots are drawing up the water that is essential to plant life.

Always the force of gravitation is working soundlessly, and so are the actinic rays of the sun. We behold the visible manifestations of these operations, and that suffices us; but we know that some great divine power has brought all into being.

Behind the bark are saps that run
In power to life and limb.
Behind the sap the glowing sun,
Far off in spaces dim.
Behind the sun and its shining way,
The arm and the guiding rod,
Is the law of the orbs of the nebulae,
And back of the law is GOD.

Behind the gleaming fields of gold
Are sun and rain and soil,
That give reactions manifold
To man's directed toil ;
And every ripened grain that's packed
Within the harvest broad,
In embryo avers the fact

That back of it is GOD.

Behind the act is thought's rich gleam,
Behind that is the brain,
Behind the brain is the red blood stream,
From heart to the heart again.
Behind the blood as its courses go,
Whether we wake or nod,
Are the vital currents that ebb and flow,
And back of these is GOD.

Great things come out of the silences. From the silence of space come the mighty orbs that adorn the heavens through the hours of night. From the silent factories of the trees come oranges, peaches, apples, and other fruits. Somewhere out of the silence come the winds that roar upon the deep and lash the waters into foam. The silence of the mountains is big with suggestions that appeal to the winged and soaring fancies of men. An English writer has suggested building temples to Silence. But why build such temples when we can find them already built out in the mountains, or in the prairies, or in the pathless woods?

When Abraham was traveling in the wilderness, he spent much time in the silence. So did Moses when he kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law. And evidently these men acquired an increased greatness by getting in touch with great, silently operating forces. It would seem too that Jesus loved the silence, and frequently "stepped behind the scenes" that he might enter the more fully into the invisible workings of His Father's power, and might hear His Father's voice assuring him of His paternal care.

Said a writer: "Thinkers brood long in the silence, and then come forth, and their eloquence sways us. So it is with art. We look at a fine picture and our hearts are warmed by its wondrous beauty. But do we know the story of the picture? Years and years of thought and of tireless toil lie back of its enrapturing beauty. Or here is a book which charms you, which thrills and inspires you. Great thoughts lie in its pages. Do you know the hook's story? The author lived, struggled, toiled, suffered, wept that he might

write the words which now help you. Back of every good life-thought which blesses men, lies a dark quarry where the thought was born and shaped into the beauty of form which makes it a blessing to the world. All our acts are first thoughts. The artist's picture, the poet's poem, the singer's song, the architect's building are thoughts before they are wrought out into forms of beauty." So, then, they first existed in the silent chambers of the mind, and they constitute one kind of power that lies Behind the Scenes.

The Way of the Truth-Seeker

And it is Behind the Scenes that we find the elements of that truth which builds us up in God-likeness. This comes not to us in life's hurly-burly but in the silent places where we grasp mighty facts that at first almost stagger the mind. The impartation of truth comes from divine revelation, from investigation, from analysis, from synthesis, and from comparison. The world's way is to pin its faith to a man and blindly follow a leader; but that is not the truth-seeker's way. In arriving at his conclusions he employs both induction and deduction, both the a-priori and the a-posteriori methods. He leaves no stone unturned. Truth to him is the most sacred thing in the universe, and he knows that its substances and its mighty potentialities lie behind its visible manifestations.

If we could only see a thought! If we could but hear the music of a thought! If we could travel clown the stream of time with a thought as soon as it is born! If we could see the great finger of a thought's possibility pointing to the future achievement that is to come out of it! Oh the power of a thought! And at times it comes to us arrayed in vestments of silver and gold and sparkling with beauteous gems. It may be suggested by a single word. The English language contains some inexpressibly sweet words, such as God, Jesus, mother, home, love, mercy, truth; and each one of these is calculated to inspire great thoughts in the mind.

The Apostle indicates some things that lie Behind the Scenes. He says, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." That is to say, he would have us look out for the things that lie Behind the Scenes, for the very scenes of our lives are brought into being by them.

Behind natural things both visible and invisible lie spiritual things. "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen [the spiritual things] are eternal." The glory of God is one of them. "But we all, with open [unveiled] 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." The glory of God is the glory of His character-His wisdom, His justice, His love, and His power. But the quality that means the most to us is His love. His love is the greatest transforming power in the universe. What the conception of divine love will not do for a man's mind and heart, nothing will do. The life of Jesus on earth preeminently stood for God's love. The world could not understand it because the world could not enter into the sanctuary where Jesus stood. Behind the Scenes in the life of our Lord this love was operating, but the world could see it not.

"And the Greatest of These is Love"

When we see a man living and operating in the spirit of love, the spirit of Christ, we know that somewhere God is Behind the Scenes. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16.) "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." (1 John 4:7, 8.) It is, therefore, contact with God that supplies power to the life. To maintain this contact means to overcome the world. It means to have the spirit of Christ working in us. And ultimately it will mean the gaining of our great goal.

One time a man went in search of love. He entered a busy factory and said, "Love is not here, for the noise of the machinery would drown out the voice of love." He stood in the market place and said, "Love is not here, for such an atmosphere would stifle the breath of love." He gazed out over the lordly main and said, "Love is not out yonder, for the sea is too cruel for love." He looked this way and that across the land and exclaimed, "I see not love. Oh to find it! Oh to catch a glimpse of its bright pinions of gold!" But all was silent, and there was no vision. And then a storm came on, and the darkness grew about him, and he lost his way.

The wanderer was guided by a good angel to a lonely cabin, and entering therein, he found an old man, whom he told of his quest. Then the old man said to him, "Love cannot be found by seeking for it in any land. Love comes into the life when all obstructions are removed. Selfishness is its deadly foe, and dishonesty militates against it. Go home and open all the windows of your mind to God, and God will send love to abide with you and to lead you on to the heights of victory."

And ever we find that love walks in the common ways of life. It is plebian in its tastes. It walked the hills and vales of Judea and Galilee. It ministered to the sick, the lame, the palsied, and the blind. And it has been doing good ever since. "If any man . . . loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" All the philosophical and religious theories in the world are worthless if they lead not to the practical workings of love. The following is an actual occurrence. A lady said to a tramp, "You look tired, but I haven't time to bother with you just now. My son lives in the next farmhouse, and I'll telephone him to give you something to eat." However, the man did not arrive at the next farmhouse, and the next morning he was found on the roadside frozen to death.

Love is not mere sentimentality but is life's working force. It is the power Behind the Scenes. "Our love or lack of love for the brethren will prove the extent of our love for the Lord. When we appreciate what it means to love God and to love Jesus, our hearts will increase in love for the brethren. Jesus said that the proof of our love for Him and for the Father would be made known by the manner in which we keep His commandments. Among His commandments is a very important one. He said to His disciples, 'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another. . . By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.' (John 13:34, 35.) To what extent shall we love another? Jesus answers: 'This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.' (John 15:12.) The love of Jesus for us was an unselfish love, a sacrificial love, a desire to do us good, with no thought of reward from us. And He did this at a great cost to Himself. This is the kind of love He says we must have for the brethren -- a sacrificial love." - Z., Sept. 1, 1917.

Professor Henry Drummond said: "Love is not a thing of enthusiastic emotion. It is a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole round Christian character-the Christian nature in its fullest development. And the constituents of this great character are only to be built up by ceaseless practice. Do not quarrel, therefore, with your lot in life. Above all, do not resent temptation; do not be perplexed because it seems to thicken around you more and more. That is the practice which God appoints you, and it is having its work in making you patient and humble and generous and unselfish and kind and courteous. Do not grudge the hand that is molding the still-too-shapeless image within you. It is growing more beautiful though you see it not.

"Love itself cannot be defined. Light is something more than the sum of its ingredients-a glowing, dazzling, tremulous ether. And love is something more than all its elements-a palpitating, quivering, sensitive, living thing. By synthesis of all the colors men can make whiteness; they cannot make light. By synthesis of all the virtues men can make virtue; they cannot make love. We brace our wills to secure it. We try to copy those who have it. We lay down rules about it. We watch. We pray. But these things alone will not bring love into our nature. Love is an effect, and only as we fulfill the right conditions can we have the effect produced. Contemplate the love of Christ, and you will love. Stand before that mirror, reflect Christ's character, and you will be changed into the same image. There is no other way. You cannot love to order. You can only look at the lovely object and fall in love with it, and grow into likeness to it. Love begets love. It is a process of induction. Put a piece of iron in the presence of an electrified body, and that piece of iron for a time becomes electrified. It is changed into a temporary magnet in the mere presence of a permanent magnet, and as long as you leave the two side by side, they are both magnets alike. Remain side by side with Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, and you too will become a permanent magnet, a permanently attractive force. That is the inevitable effect of love."

When love is strong, faults are few. When love rides forth to conquer, all barriers must fall. Love will not be robbed of its final victory. In all its beauty, in all its effulgence, in all its strength, it is accomplishing its purpose, although unperceived by the natural eye. The poet Browning said,

"God's in His heaven; all's right with the world." What he meant was that because God exists, and God is love, all will eventually be right with the world. Love, wisdom, justice, and power do not arrive at their objectives in a day but take their time. Therefore, it is that God's Word uses the expression, "in the fulness of times." (Eph. 1:10.) Ah, yes, in the fulness of times love's sway will be assured, and love will hold the scepter both in heaven and on earth.

One met Love in the morning at the breaking of the day. He met Love near the fountain, and Love wooed his heart away. Love took his hand and led him out and down life's leafy lane, and he forgot about his lot, his sadness, and his pain. And as they walked, awhile they talked, and then they sang together, a mellow song that cheered him long like fragrance of the heather. They sang of Faith the fearless, and they sang of Hope the true, that never leaves one cheerless and whose wine is ever new. He did not shrink when at the brink they stood beside a river. Its water stole around his soul, its charm was his forever. He launched his skiff, he floated out and down its silver breast. The hills looked down in solemn peace, the waters tuned of rest. With beaching of his boat he looked and saw Love's palace home. He is now so satisfied with Love he ne'er again shall roam. He's now so overjoyed with Love his life has "caught the gleam." He found the glory place of Love far down Truth's crystal stream.

"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three but the greatest of these is love."

And love is, and always will be, the mightiest of all the forces that operate Behind the Scenes.

- *Contributed.*

The Unction From the Holy One

*"If by any means I may advance into 'the out-resurrection, that from among the dead.'" - Phil 2-11
(Rotherham)*

WHITSUNTIDE, WHICH is the seventh Sunday after Easter, and the following Monday and Tuesday, has been observed for many centuries by many Christians as the memorial of the day of Pentecost, which occurred fifty days after the resurrection of our Lord.

On that day the Holy Spirit descended upon the early disciples in "tongues of fire," as a visible sign of their setting apart to the service of God, and of the beginning of a new life within them, wherein they should "walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Not since that day has the Spirit been visibly bestowed; yet every true child of God is aware that he has received the same begetting. "You have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye all know it." - 1 John 2:20, Emph. Diag., Sinaitic and Vatican MSS.

Why Bestowed?

What is the purpose of this begetting? What is the meaning of the gift, and what is the intent of Him who bestows it? Is it that the recipient might "speak with tongues," or that he should thenceforth have an access to an excess of emotional religious fervor? Nay; it is of far greater significance and consequences.

Jesus, in His patient effort to make clear to the Jewish ruler Nicodemus some of the things of the spirit world, told him that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This statement seems basic and clear. It may be logically expanded to say: "That which is begotten of the flesh will be born [if not stillborn] a being of flesh; that which is begotten of the Spirit will be born [if it comes to birth] a spirit-being." The birth follows the begetting, and partakes of its nature.

Spirit Powers

In the same conversation Jesus explained that those "born of the Spirit" have powers of action and of invisibility to human perception totally unknown to man. "The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with every one who has been born of the Spirit."

"God is a spirit"; "heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool. The nature, laws, and conditions of the spirit world are vastly different from those of the earth. In the one particular of temperature the physicists and astronomers tell us that the universe has a range of tens of thousands of degrees Fahrenheit; our human life can endure a variation of "barely" one hundred fifty degrees. We cannot conceive of life existing at four hundred degrees below zero, or at ten thousand degrees above; yet the spirit world has joyful existence under these and other inconceivable conditions,

If we were planning to move our residence to, say, Africa or Australia, we should try to learn all we could about life there-in fact to *go there in our minds* and so prepare ourselves for our new environment. We would commence our new life there *in anticipation*; and that is exactly what the pentecostal begetting of the Spirit is-the mental seed-planting of a new spirit-life; a "lively hope," or new hope of life. To this embryonic spirit-life such various Scriptures refer as: "a new creature"; "the renewing [literally, up-newing] of your mind"; "walking in newness of life"; "set your affections on things above"; etc., etc.

The Metamorphosis, or Transformation

"There is a physical body, and there is a spirit body." The change from one to the other, tremendous as it is, is a mere detail to the power with which the begotten one has to do. The actual operation is dismissed in the Scriptures in a few sentences. "He giveth it a body as it pleaseth Him." "He will change the body of our humiliation into the likeness of His own glorious body." Moreover, this change will be accomplished instantaneously, "in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye."

But the mental, moral, and emotional transformation from the human to the spirit nature is a far more complicated and lengthy process, and requires the candidate's full, continuous, and careful cooperation. Practically the whole of the New testament is devoted to describing, facilitating, and inspiring this process. It requires rigid self-abnegation, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice, that is, of the human self. "The flesh-desires oppose the spirit, and the spirit-desires oppose the flesh, for these are contrary to each other; that not whatsoever things ye may be *wishing*, these ye should be *doing*." Every sincere candidate for spirit-birth knows this to be true.

Are We Sincere?

What does it mean to us? Are we carefully cherishing and cultivating that flame of life that we have received, or are we permitting "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches" to "quench the Spirit"? Are we "putting to death the deeds of the body" that we may live; or are we "living after the flesh," which is mortal-"death-doomed"? Are we "giving ourselves wholly to these things, that our profit may be manifest to all," as the Apostle advised his "beloved son" Timothy? Are we cultivating and bringing forth in our lives the ripening "fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering," etc.; or are the "works of the flesh" still all too manifest in our relationships-family, church, business? Is our love like God's sunshine and rain, universal and impartial-"perfect," as Jesus admonished us it should be; or is it sectional (sectional) -- only for those who agree with us?

Self-examination

These are practical questions, of supreme importance. They should be addressed, in all seriousness, to ourselves. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be, in the faith"-not a creed, but the confidence and reliance in and upon the Lord, with reason on your part for Him to have faith in *you*. "Prove ye yourselves. Or do ye not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?"

For "if we examine ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are corrected, that we may not be condemned with the world."

"Quench not the Spirit."

(Note: Scriptural quotations in the foregoing article follow the text of the three oldest Greek MSS., and the literal renderings of the Emphatic Diaglott, Rotherham, and Strong's Greek Dictionary.)

"Call to Remembrance the Former Days"

"Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." - Heb. 10:32.

INTO THE lives of most Christian people there come, at times, periods of staleness and coldness, even if not of deadness. It seems as if the run of the tide is always on the ebb-the watermark of our Christian vitality sinking lower and lower every day. The joys and delights of an earlier day come less frequently-when they come they move us less deeply -- we find ourselves carrying burdens which in other clays we would have taken to the Lord in prayer. We become more inclined to sigh than sing -- to mutter complaints than prayers -- to segregate than congregate-and thus from many causes (no one of which is wholly responsible for our condition) we pass out of the bright sunshine of the truth into the darkening shadows of doubt and uncertainty and depression.

We may not find the same joy in reading our Bibles or in reading about the truth. We may not find ourselves responding so fully or so willingly to the brethren whenever we meet them we may even reach the position that' we have no pleasure in meeting with them at all. Our faces may not light up and our hearts may not thrill at the touch of a kindred hand. There may not be the, eager sense of expectancy as the hour for study approaches; and we may not show the same degree of desire to be there on time. We find ourselves rather inclined to creep into the meeting and into a back seat, just after the meeting is started, and then we get out and away as soon as we can when it is over. And we run away just as cold as we went in. Little by little we find it becoming easier to make excuses "not to go tonight"; because the speaker's little ways irritate, or we find ourselves not agreeing with all that is being said, and so on.

And then prayer in the home becomes more difficult-the tongue seems heavy and the heart like lead -- and the words do not come easy or without effort -- until we begin to set out on the day's journey without asking for guidance and safe keeping; and walk off to bed without returning thanks for the day. And so the whole daily round becomes a dark, black, thankless task, and we shed no ray of light or happiness into the lives of others with whom we work. Our hold on spiritual things gets weaker, and we tend to forget the promises given in the Word of God; our mind fails to think of these things, and slowly they begin to fade away. Spiritual sickness has set in, and it is affecting all sections of the religious life. There is spiritual heart disease; there is spiritual short-sightedness; there is spiritual dyspepsia; there is spiritual nervousness and touchiness. We chafe and fester easily. Walking becomes difficult. In fact, we lie open to a thousand and one attacks of spiritual sickness and weakness, and to spiritual death. Those of us who escape all these things, in milder or severer form, are few in number; for from time to time we seem to ' have been purposely delivered over to these things, almost against our will or desire, to test our zeal and- the degree of our spiritual hunger.

Brethren of Long Ago

In the case of our Hebrew brethren of long ago, the underlying cause of their sickness was "fear." They suffered from drooping hands and paralyzed knees-the buckram and stiffening had gone out of their resistance-they were afraid of resisting unto blood-they shrank from discipline-the rod of correction hurt them; they whined under it-they weighed up, like Esau, the present satisfaction against' the future blessing, and were inclined to choose for the present-they were inclined to "neglect" the means of grace and salvation and the things they had been taught, so that the writer chided them for their backwardness.

The days were difficult; there was no mistake about that. They had waited for the fulfillment of promises, and it had seemed to tarry, and hope continually deferred had made their hearts sick.

They had believed the coming of Jesus to be near at hand in order to inaugurate His Kingdom and to reward them for their labors and privations, but He had seemed to tarry. And things around them were getting worse. The gathering gloom of a day of wrath was deepening all around them; the Roman taskmaster was beginning to goad their Jewish kinsmen to madness, and the retaliatory venom and spite which they could not vent on the Romans'-descended on the believer. The high authorities of Judaism were preparing for insurrection and rebellion, but they could not count on the Christians' support, and so they became more bitter and hostile. And as thousands of those who had tried to amalgamate the teachings of Moses and the teachings of Jesus began to fall away again, to Judaism, or worse, their hostility took on a severer form. And not only in Judea but in the distant places their opponents became more hostile so that, whatever church it was to which this letter was originally sent, they were feeling distressed: about things. It was hard for them to live in a condition of "faith," to live in a realm of "unseen things." For nearly fifty generations their forefathers had sought to keep the law and maintain its institutions of worship and sacrifice.

No Safety in Physical Touch

They had been able to approach a priest whom they could see, in a temple they- could admire, with sacrifices upon which they would lay their hands, and **that** was easy and appealed to their fleshly senses. The songs of praise, beautifully sung, appealed to their ears, and the elaborate ritual appealed to their eyes--here were things which gave some delight to their senses -- and then, when to all this splendor and magnificence -- so easy "to touch" -- was added the assurance that all this observance of pleasant ritual and ceremony constituted them the people of Jehovah, His choice and peculiar treasure, to whom He had made great and wonderful promises, which placed them in a unique and singular position so different; from all peoples of the earth, it made their religion a pleasant thing.

And now, for some considerable 'time they had been trying to live on a different plane. The only sacrifice for sin they had been told about, in the new order, had been offered by Jesus (instead of by a white-robed priest), and instead of doing this every year, He had done it only once. Instead of a morning and evening sacrifice of worship and praise offered by a priest, ascending up for all the people of God, they themselves had had to offer their own sacrifice of praise, a mere hymn of praise and thanksgiving. They had no beautiful temple, except as their holiest of all was in heaven; they had no high priest except the great High Priest who was in heaven: and Him they could neither see nor touch--it required a large measure of faith to believe that the prayers and petitions which they had made to Him reached His ears, or that the things they did in His name were noticed by Him. In the old days, faithfulness to God in keeping His commandments and judgments brought great blessings to their people; now, faithfulness to the new things, brought tribulations and persecutions and the spoiling of their goods. Contact with invisible things was not 'an easy thing for those worshipers whose early lives had been spent in close touch with the visible things which had come down to them from their fathers' day. They had stepped out into an intangible world-order, to follow an invisible Leader with nothing but promises to stand' on, with persecution in abundance, and the time of fulfillment was long delayed; they were getting older, and the adventurous fires of youth were burning low; the visions that thrilled them in those days were becoming dimmed and less clear, and less inspiring. Hence, unbelief (or a less clear belief) had gripped them and was girding them closely around; they were weary and the race-course was long and hard; "fear" of several kinds had settled upon heart and mind; they had lost their "rest"

and peace of mind, and found it easy to "neglect" the great salvation. They were almost ready to give it all, up and go back to the usages and customs of their fathers.

Persecution Gloried In

They had not always been lax and tired; there had been great days when their first love had burned bright and the fires of early enthusiasm had been at a glowing white heat. They had accepted persecution willingly enough then and had gloried in it. And when others were under punishment, they stood by to support and succor, yea, even to the spoiling of their own homes and possession. Faith inspired their works and activities; and love, prompted, their labors as they ministered to the saints of God, in season and out of season.

In those days the vision of their calling was clear; they knew, to the lowest depths of their hearts, that they were called to be partakers with Christ, that He had been appointed their princely Leader to lead them to heavenly glory, and that He had already entered heaven on their behalf, to offer Himself as their sin-offering. They knew also that He had tasted death for every man, even though but few had realized that this was so, and that His death was the pledge and security of that better day of which their Prophets had spoken when a new and better covenant should be made with the houses of Israel and Judah, though now the remnant of Judah was spurning Him; but for the present He had gone into the presence of their God for them, as a great High Priest of a new and better order. It was a glorious purpose which was being worked out, full redemption through Jesus' transcending sacrifice, and ' through that sacrifice, life, eternal life and inheritance, was promised. It was better in every way than the institutions of their fathers, and would yield "better" results. -- It was "better" now; it would be "better" to the end.

And thus, while the grip of the great spiritual truths was strong upon them, their hearts were aflame with a holy response. It was a gospel worth proclaiming, worth living for, worth dying for! It was worth all the broken ties of husband and wife, of children, or kinsmen; it was better than all the friendship of neighbors and countrymen; and as for suffering and scorn and odium, why, they had gloried in it all; and they had parted with their goods without a single regret.

Heavenly Fires of Devotion

The heavenly "illumination" had made, everything worth while, and it was a joy to participate in the great proclamation or confession placed before the whole nation, for it showed them the Almighty's love for them above all peoples of the earth.

Oh! if "first enthusiasms could last," if only the holy fire which the first contact with divine love produces could continue to burn undimmed and undiminished, how different things could be! Long days of waiting and unfulfilled expectations tend to damp out the flame of devotion and ready service! And the heart cools down; the head becomes less keen. The clear sharp outline of the big things of the Divine Plan fades slowly away, and we see things less clearly and definitely.

Revisions and re-definitions of thought follow as we seek to retain some grip upon the illumination which is fading into the darker, twilight dimness. With us too there have been days of waiting. Things which we expected did not happen. The crash of nations and fall of kingdoms, which we expected to be instantaneous, has proved to be protracted and long drawn out.

The "gathering home" of the saints, which we believed would be realized twenty years ago, is not yet complete, and there is not the thrill of big things-activities such as tract-distribution, lectures, etc., on the big scale to whip up our hearts into glowing enthusiasm. We sense the whole world's

need; yet, we can do nothing. We feel that our countrymen are dull of apprehension; yet we are powerless. Religious men talk of "revival," but the heavenly "fire" does not fall. Meanwhile, death, murder, suspicion, broken faith, and a thousand evils stalk the earth; and all we can do is to wait, to wait helplessly, unable to do anything, almost unable to say anything which will give one human heart a moment's respite from its gnawing anxiety.

Oh, if only we could do something effectively, to ease the tension of things in and around us, how much easier it would seem to be! It is not the persecutor which we fear, like our Hebrew brethren of long ago, but to us, as to them, the time seems long and the fulfillment seems tardy. And because this seems so, the pull and drag of inertia gets into our souls. To stand at the death-bed and be unable to relieve or soothe or assuage the death pangs, is hard to bear, but long contact with it makes us familiar with it and less sensitive. The passing days remove us further and further from the period of our life when the hot fires are easily kindled, and the glowing enthusiasms can become white hot. Then, we fall into grooves of quietness and are less demonstrative. We are harder to rouse, and our warmth does not last so long. Our resources of helpful energy are sooner spent, and we have less to give to others who have need of our labor of love. Each further year of waiting tends to rob us still more of our inheritance and lessen the circumference of our little world. And because we have found some of our brethren untrustworthy, it may have had a chilling effect on our souls. It may have tended to develop aloofness and lack of trust, and almost lack of love to our brethren. Oh! if time did not rob us of youth and enthusiasm and the illumination of the former days, how much more, easily we might spend our days of waiting!

What can we do to make the last days of our pilgrimage the best days, as they should be? What can we do to recover the blessings of years gone by, which perhaps the worms and locusts have almost eaten up? Can we do any better than heed these words of Scripture: "Call to remembrance the former days after ye were illuminated"?

- *Contributed.*

(To be continued)

HOW WE MAY GROW UP INTO CHRIST

"Speaking the Truth in love, ... grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ." - Eph 4:15.

IN PROPORTION as any who seek to know God are led to see His true character, they have confidence in Him. After such have come to the point of full consecration to the Lord, they receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and become of the Church class, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, the set apart ones - set apart by the Holy Spirit. Of these the Apostle Paul says, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear." The New Creature must repel every attack of servile fear - which belongs to the flesh, the fallen condition. The new mind must triumph over this natural tendency, must cultivate trust in the Lord.

No man could do more than take away our earthly life. No man can take away our future life. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body." So the child of God is to be very courageous knowing that no one can do him harm, knowing that God will not permit anything to come to him that will not be for his good. The enlightened child of God would have no fear, or dread, of eternal torment. He would still have proper fear such as a husband would have toward a wife, or a wife toward a husband - a fear of displeasing or disappointing, and thus losing the esteem and confidence of the companion.

In respect to all the brethren we should have such fear. We should have a filial fear toward God, but not with the thought that He would harm us or torment us or do us violence of any kind, but fear lest we should lose our fellowship with Him. So, then, whatever fear we have of a slavish kind is not from God. Such fear brings a snare. But love, inspired by a true knowledge of God and begotten of His Spirit, delivers us also from the fear of man, in proportion as this love abounds in us.

God has given us the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of power. The Christian knows that "all things work together for good to them that love God." This is to him a source of power, of strength. Circumstances and conditions which would quite overwhelm others, he may expect to have. This spirit is not only a spirit of power, but a spirit of love - a spirit of kindness and gentleness. It is a spirit that loves to do good, to do right, to be helpful. And so the Christian with this spirit of love and of a sound mind becomes more and more Godlike. This enables him to have more and more compassion for those who are out of the way. And as God sent His Son, and as the Son came and provided the blessing of life for all at such a great cost to Himself so all who have His spirit will strive to bless others.

EVIDENCES OF A SOUND MIND

The fall of Adam has worked ruin to mankind, so that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there are none sound. (Isa 1:5,6.) None are sound of mind or body. All are out of the way. "There is none righteous; no, not one." (Rom 3:10.) But in proportion as we receive the Spirit of the Lord, and in proportion as that Spirit of the Lord works in us and develops us and influences all the conduct of life, in that same proportion we receive the spirit of a sound mind.

This soundness of mind will teach us how better to use our bodies. A person of unsound mind may either eat too much or eat what does not agree with him. In proportion as we have a sound mind, it influences what we eat, what we drink, and everything we do; it helps to regulate and control everything in life for us. It gives us broad views of all the affairs of life. It gives us more generous views of mankind. We recognize that mankind are under the curse, and we have a feeling of compassion for them. We have much advantage every way, because God has opened the eyes of our understanding.

This spirit of a sound mind makes us more helpful. We know better how to deal with each other as brethren. We know better how to deal with our children, with our neighbors, with the butcher, with the ice man and with every one else. The Truth does not come to many of those who are naturally soundest of mind, and it takes time for the Truth to bring in a measure of soundness. But we notice that when one receives the Truth in the love of it, it has a healing effect on his mind. He will begin to think more correctly and to act more wisely.

Then he will desire to proclaim the Truth. The Truth is to be spoken humbly, but fearlessly. The Christian is not at liberty to speak contrary to the Truth. If he is a professed minister of the Gospel, when the Truth reaches him, he is not at liberty to continue to preach error just because the congregation appointing him might not desire the Truth. A worldling in that pulpit would have no qualms of conscience. He would say, "I am giving these people the very things they want. They are paying my salary." That would be his attitude because he had not received the spirit of the Truth.

One who had received the spirit of the Truth would say, "I now see that some of the things I have been preaching for years are injurious, dishonoring to God misrepresenting His character, and more or less turning people away from the Truth. I have been teaching error the very opposite of what I wish to do; I cannot longer dispense these errors. I am not the ambassador of this denomination; I am the ambassador of God. I am not the servant of this denomination; I am the servant of God of the Truth. If I should preach error, that which would be contrary to the Truth, I would be guilty before God. I must stop immediately."

Such a person would lose his standing - honor amongst men, favor, influence, etc. But all this is not to be considered. St. Paul says that these things are all but as loss and dross, are but vile refuse, if we can only win a place in the Kingdom. Then we shall have won the "pearl of great price." So, then, the speaking of the Truth is essential to the Christian. In his own heart, of course, he must have it enshrined. When he has received the Truth into his heart he will esteem it a blessed privilege to speak it.

Our tongue is the most powerful member of our body. Its influence is the greatest of all - the most far-reaching. It may be an influence for good or for injury. The Apostle says that with the same tongue we may praise God and injure men. To speak the Truth, to confess Christ before men, either publicly or privately, is a great privilege. But in order to be a servant pleasing to the Lord we must speak the Truth in love and without fear.

In this connection the Apostle calls attention to the fact that we are not to expect to be mature in these respects at the beginning of our Christian way. When we first enter the family of God, less might reasonably be expected of us than after we had been in the family for some time. We as dear children of God are to grow in the likeness of our dear Elder Brother, our Pattern, our Head. We are to "grow up into Him in all things." We are to recognize that He is the Head of the Church. And if we are to be members of that Body in glory, we must be developed. We are to

mature in the fruits of the Holy Spirit, that we may be qualified and prepared to share in future that glorious Kingdom which is to bless the world.

"EXPRESSION DEEPENS IMPRESSION"

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship - we are to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." And in telling this Message courageously and lovingly we should grow in grace and in knowledge. We are to proclaim the Truth, and at the same time to grow and develop in character. Why attain a growth of character? Because it will make us more like God. "God is love." He has other qualities; but this quality of love is the especially predominating the overruling quality of His character. God's Justice operates in conjunction with His Love, and His Wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that Love would not approve.

And so as we grow, the quality of love should be more and more manifest. The Truth is to be spoken in love. This is one of the things we should attain earliest. We are to curb, to bridle, our tongues. We are to see that our words are loving, kind, gentle. Speaking the Truth in love, we shall not only be accomplishing more for others but the lesson will also thus be more impressed upon our own minds. It has been well said that "expression deepens impression." Whoever appreciates and speaks forth these things of God in love will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind. In helping others he will be helping himself. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

NATURAL QUALITIES THAT NEED RESTRAINT

We see a difficulty in this respect in some of the stronger characters that come into Christ. There are characters that have less combativeness naturally, who would not be inclined to bring force to bear upon others in connection with their ambassadorship. If their Message did not seem to be favorably received, they would be likely to feel, "They do not like this, so I will not talk on this subject." But those who have more combativeness are liable to manifest the force of their disposition in the way they present the Truth. They might be too forceful they might place the matter before others as an obligation.

But we are to remember that consecration is not now a compulsory matter. It is an invitation. By and by force will be needed. The ones who are now sought are merely those who have the ear to hear; and such need only to have the word of counsel. If any use too great force in presenting the Message, the Great King would not be so well served, and hence would not be so well pleased.

Others may have great approbateness. They might have pride and wish to show off in the way of language or in their skill in handling the Sword of the Spirit. They might give out the Message with the idea of rousing in others the thought, "See how much he knows; he is a wonderful digger in the Bible." This seems to be a temptation to many. They seem to like to be in the lime-light just as others like to keep out of the lime-light. The one might have to force himself in order to go and speak the Truth in public as an ambassador; while the other would have to curb himself somewhat in this respect. The only way for the latter to do is to learn to speak the Truth in humility, in love - the love of the Truth, the love of the brethren. It is God's Plan, we have nothing whereof to boast. We are always to present His Plan in meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love.

The Apostle Paul urges that we "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." The word provoke here means to stimulate to call forth. Love is not easily called forth to anger. It is longsuffering. We might say, strictly speaking, that it is not the quality of love that would be moved to anger. Yet righteous anger is not incompatible with love. God is the highest representation we have of love - "God is Love." Yet the Scriptures assure us that God is angry with the wicked every day. His anger is righteous indignation against sin.

Looking to God as the Great Example, we see that His love was manifested toward His creatures in the beginning. It was love for humanity that provided the Garden of Eden with all its blessings and its perfect life just as for the angels His love provided for all their blessings. But when sin came in, Love stepped back; in other words, Justice was the special attribute of God then manifested. Yet it was for the good of mankind that there should be this punishment for sin. Even here God's Love persisted, though man had by sin become an opponent of God - an enemy of God; and Love was provoked to anger.

The Lord said through the Prophet, "Why have they provoked Me to anger?" (Jer 8:19.) Many Scriptures speak of God's anger. The anger of God has been against sin. It has been resting upon the world for six thousand years. But the Love of God has not been violated by this; therefore Love can be provoked to anger.

"Love is not easily provoked." It required the act of intentional disobedience on the part of Father Adam to provoke God to anger. It was not because Mother Eve was deceived that the sentence came upon the world. The anger of God came upon the world, and the sentence of death was pronounced, because of Father Adam's sin which was committed with full knowledge. During these six thousand years of sin God's Love has been in abeyance so to speak, provoked to the point of withholding its manifestation.

But all the while God's character has not changed. He did not cause the diabolical conditions which prevailed in the Dark Ages. Love would never sanction sin. "The wages of sin is death." And everything that goes with death is a part of that penalty, that sentence. But God has permitted these conditions for man's ultimate good. This love of God, held in abeyance, has bided its time to manifest itself to our race.

In due time God sent forth His Son to be man's Redeemer. He came and gave His life a willing sacrifice for human sin. In due time the call went forth to gather the Church. And this Church is being gathered - during this Gospel Age. In due time the Church will be exalted in Kingdom glory. In due time that Kingdom will lift up from sin and degradation all those of mankind who are willing to accept life on God's terms.

CULTIVATION OF LOVE ESPECIALLY NEEDFUL

How earnestly we need to watch and pray, that we may indeed be fitted for our great future work! There is a danger that love will not be sufficiently strong in us for by reason of the fall sin and selfishness have come to be preponderating influences. These principles, having the ascendancy, and operating for six thousand years have made man very lacking in love, sympathy, brotherly-kindness and long-suffering. Now there is a greater natural tendency toward anger, malice, strife, hatred, than toward love. Consequently, when God accepts us into His family He tells us that one of the first requirements is love. Love must grow in our hearts and minds; it must permeate all our thoughts, words and actions.

The Apostle in speaking of love as respects the Church assures us that if we would be pleasing to the Lord we must develop this grace richly. Those who possess this quality in goodly measure will not be easily provoked to anger. Those who possess little love will be easily angered. The love which the Lord appreciates is long-suffering. This does not mean that there would not be proper occasions for anger in God's people. There should be a feeling of righteous indignation when we see injustice. Why? Because injustice is wrong. God is angry with injustice; and so God's people should have no sympathy with injustice in any form.

If the Lord's people do not cultivate the quality of justice they will get into that attitude where they will not appreciate justice at all. While knowing what is right and what is wrong, and while appreciating justice, we are to cultivate the quality of love. None can say that his own estimate of justice is altogether right and the other man's is entirely wrong. None can say, "I do not need to cultivate this quality, but my brother needs it." But each should think, "Here is a brother - perhaps he labors under greater disadvantages than I have to strive against. He is a brother of mine according to the spirit. He seems to me to be doing wrong, but I sympathize with him because he probably does not see that it is wrong. On the other hand, it is possible that I may be wrong myself."

LET US HAVE SYMPATHY FOR ALL MEN

God has no sympathy with sin. But He has so much sympathy for the sinner that He has provided His Son to uplift the sinners, and has set apart a thousand years for the work of uplift. We note injustice. We ought to note it. But it is not for us to flay, to inflict the punishments. It is for us to leave the punishments to the Almighty. We are, therefore, to "judge nothing before the time." We see wrongs committed. We say, "I know that to be a crime; but it is not for me to settle with the criminal. God knows to what extent he is responsible; I do not. It is my duty to look at him from the standpoint of sympathy. It is my duty to pray for him and to assist him all in my power - out of his wrong views into right views. But even in this I am to be wise as a serpent, harmless as a dove. I may know that such conduct is wrong, but I cannot know as to the individual - how wrong he may be."

So love looks out and sees that the whole world is in much difficulty through the fall. And love says, "Be gentle toward all - be meek. I am ever to remember that we are in a world of sin, pain, sickness, death." From this viewpoint love will not be easily provoked, but will think kindly and sympathetically of others. So, dear brethren, let us grow up into our glorious Head in all things, until, made perfect and complete, we are "presented faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy." - Jude 24.

"The time is short! Then be thy heart a brother's
To every heart that needs thy help in aught.
How much they need the sympathy of others!
The time, the time is short!"

- *Reprints, Nov. 1, 1916, page R5977.*

I Know That My Redeemer Liveth

(Continued from last issue)

Job 19:25

IN OUR previous study of this affirmation of job the effort was made to show the desirability of reaching this assured testimony in the matter of our own relation to the Lord. To this end attention was given to the fact that our risen Savior in giving those "many infallible proofs" of His resurrection to His immediate disciples, was at the same time furnishing us with indubitable proof on which we too could say with confidence, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." In His manifestations to Mary in the quietness of the garden alone, and to Peter in some unnamed place apart, we saw how in like manner, though invisible, Jesus still comes to us speaking words by which we may certainly know He lives, and loves, and cares for us also.

We propose now to follow on in the same way in considering others of these post-resurrection appearances, taking them in the order in which they seem to have taken place. In each of these we shall find unquestionable proof that **our** Redeemer lives, and that He is fulfilling to each one of us the selfsame promise, "I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." (John 14:21.) Just because He is the "same Jesus" yesterday, and today, and forever, we too may share with those "chosen eye-witnesses" of long ago the evidences whereby every doubt may be shattered, and every responsive fiber of our inner being greatly quickened with hope, enabling us also to return to our appointed tasks "with great joy, even as it is said of those favored ones who saw their Savior, and ours, ascend from them out at Bethany. - See Luke 24:50-53.

Expounding Scriptures Concerning Himself Made Hearts Burn

Two disciples, one unnamed, are the next to be favored with an experience whereby they can affirm with assurance that their Redeemer lives again. And once more we may see that same surprising distribution of God's favors by which our own ways are reversed so strikingly. That there is a possibility neither of these two disciples were of the Twelve could be gathered from Luke. In chapter 24:33 he tells us that immediately after they discovered they had seen Jesus, they "rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together." This again was no accidental arrangement by which two disciples may have taken precedence over chosen Apostles. This was the Lord's own doings, and marvelous it is in our eyes, yea, full of lesson for us. By His granting this precedence first to Mary, then to Peter, and now to these two brethren, how clearly Jesus is bringing the lesson home to each one of us that we are Wholly incompetent to decide whom the Lord will select for special recognition. Are we not by these very significant incidents made to wonder how many of our judgments regarding fitness for His presence will be reversed when the number of His elect Church has been completed. More important still, are we not led to wonder if we will experience any disappointing reversal of a too lenient or partial judgment of ourselves? This possibility is surely written plainly for us in these actions of Jesus, and to make sure of avoiding such a disappointment when the Lord makes manifest the secrets of all hearts, how important it is that we take to ourselves all such lessons now.

The story of the evening walk to Emmaus is full of lessons of which our hearts should never tire. The name of only one of these two disciple; is given us. Why not the other? Is the omission of the other's name in any way suggestive that we may think of that one as ourself? Are the identi-

fiction marks not clear enough to most of us for thinking of ourselves as needing and receiving some similar corrections because so slow to learn all that the Scriptures should teach us. Let us note a few of these. But first let us note that these two brethren were occupied with a theme well calculated to bring Jesus to them. It was because they were absorbed in the strange nature of His death, and so perplexed with regard to its significance that such words as these could be written concerning them: "Jesus Himself drew near, and went **with them.**" No occupation of mind will ever bring the Savior so near to one's spirit as that which has to do with the meaning to oneself of His death. And no one can make the meaning of that sacrifice so clear, so heart-satisfying, and precious as He, who, "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning **Himself.**"

It has been well said, "Many of the loveliest songs of peace and trust and hope which God's children sing in this world have been taught in the hushed chambers of sorrow. . . . Afflictions, sanctified, soften the asperities of life. They tame the wildness of nature. They temper human ambitions. They reveal to men their own hearts, their own weakness, faults, blemishes, and perils. They teach patience and submission. **They deepen and** enrich our experience." And in all such "chambers of sorrow" through which we pass, no greater word of comfort can we find than the assurance the Apostle gives us that the Jesus of the Emmaus story is "this same Jesus" who can "be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," because of having been "tempted in all points like as we are."

How like Jesus it was to come to these two discouraged followers on the very day of His triumph over death. To Him it was a delight to walk with them on that Sabbath-day journey, and by revealing Himself to them cause their hearts to burn with His unfolding of Scripture, and revive their hope by the simple but significant act of **breaking bread** with them. Out of similar experiences of shattered hopes and unexpected trials how many of us have been led to know "what a Friend we have in Jesus." When through fiery trials our pathway has lain, what encouragement has come to us as we have heard Him say, "It is I; be not afraid." When made to feel the loneliness of the way, when none seem able to understand us, have we not known Jesus to draw near and go with us, and in recollecting His own lonely hours of earthly life we are given fresh courage, and led to find in Him and His words a satisfying heart's-ease. Have **we** not found it true, as a writer of note has said:

"It was in the character, not of reproof, but of a sympathizing friend that He spoke to these disciples, so let me think of Him as ready to sympathize with and comfort me, when I walk sad. It often does my sore heart no good to tell its sorrow to any earthly friend. To talk over all the incidents, all the hopes, all the disappointments, all the 'might-have-beens' connected with it, only deepens the gloom. 'I need a wiser friend than any just like myself can be, a friend who understands what perplexes me, a friend who himself sees and can show me 'the bright light that is within the cloud,' a friend who has not merely the love to sympathize with me, but the power to help. Just such a friend is this great Christ, who sometimes seems a stranger, but, coming to me and chasing my gloom away, reveals Himself as the very Lord who said, 'Ye shall weep and lament while the world rejoices, but I will see you again, and your sorrow shall be turned into joy!'"

"It is just His love to me that brings Him to my side. He comes unrecognized at first; for to me, as to these sorrowing ones, He wears 'another form' than that in which I have known Him before. My eyes, like theirs, are sealed with grief, are so 'holden' that I cannot recognize Him in this new form to be the same as ever. He walks beside me, and talks with me, and makes my heart 'burn within me,' and yet, for a time, there is no 'lifting up,' till, in a moment, somehow, the scales fall from my eyes; I know Him; and ere He goes, He leaves with me His own deep, wonderful,

satisfying, and unending peace. I am sure many of my darkest hours have been the birthplace of my highest songs. It is often just when the water in my bottle was completely spent, and, Hagar-like, I felt that I could only lay myself down to die, that my eyes were opened to see the flowing spring that had been close beside me all the time, although I knew it not. When I go mourning without the sun, a few words from the risen Lord can easily put everything right; but I often need the darkness in order to appreciate the light."

And then it is that like one whose ears have heard the joyful sound, our hearts exclaim, "I **know** that my Redeemer liveth."

He Lives to Bring His Peace into Our Hearts

The next appearance of Jesus seems to have been in the upper room where most of the eleven were gathered behind locked doors. How significant His first words to them, "Peace be unto you." He had not said these words to the women whom He met at the grave. They had not deserted Him in His hour of trial and crucifixion and therefore needed no word suggestive of forgiveness for unfaithfulness to Him. But how different it was with most of those He found gathered in that upper room. Yet there was no rebuke, nothing to call to mind their shameful desertion, not even a suggestive pause as He appeared in their midst, but "Peace be unto you," immediately spoken. He had only His loving interest in them to speak. God had "brought again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep," and the first thing He did was to comfort His flock with His word of peace.

What a wealth of meaning, of comfort and strength, is bound up in this promise of Jesus, "**These things** have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have **peace**." (John 16:33.) In bequeathing His peace to us Jesus surely meant this legacy to be one of our best witnesses of His abiding presence with us, and those who enjoy it can testify out of a personal experience, "In Thy presence, is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." (Psa. 16:11.) What peace we may enjoy when we take Him at His word. But with us, as with those disciples in the upper room, there is often a need that He should say to us-yes, even after His word of peace has been spoken in our ears-"**Why are ye troubled?** and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" Why are we so slow to take Him at His word? Because of the pleasing presentation of the lesson we need here, we quote again from the same writer as before:

"Let me be very still as I listen to the words that tell me that this Lord and Master is, to me also, the 'same yesterday, and today, and forever.'

To rid me of all my misgivings, He tells me, first, that He is no longer a dead, but a living, Christ; and He tells me, next, that though He has entered into His glory, He is the 'same Jesus' as of old -- the same in tenderness and the same in grace. I would be a brighter Christian than I am, if I thought of Him more as the living Christ. I sing with joy

'My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary';

but perhaps I think, not too much-I cannot do that-but too exclusively of the Christ that died, and not sufficiently of the Christ who lives and reigns, and is now **my living Advocate and Friend forever**. At least, Paul seems to have thought so when he spoke of the consolation of knowing the 'Christ that died, yea rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh

intercession for us.' The life of my Lord, did not end nineteen hundred years ago! Just that He might not be a local Christ, or a Christ for one age alone, He rose into that unchanging life that knows no periods, no epochs, no time, but is an Eternal Now; and He is with me today. I would seek to live upon a present Christ, and find my comfort and my sanctity in that; and all the more when I remember that the past, the present, and the future are all in the one great Lord who is 'the same yesterday, and today, and forever,' so that my faith can cling to the -Christ who died, my **love** rest satisfied in the Christ who is risen, and my hope expect with joy the Christ who comes again; for, to the heart that knows Him, He is really 'all,' not merely the alpha and the omega, but all the letters between. My faith in the Christ of history is confirmed and intensified when I see that He is the Christ of **experience** also.

"How often has He said to trembling and dispirited ones just what He said in the upper room, 'Why **are ye** troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?' All down the age His voice has been heard **speaking** peace, and His presence bestowing it. Have I not myself had experiences of His grace I cannot dispute, experiences I would not part with for a thousand worlds? I recognize His words of old in the very tone in which He has spoken to my own heart many a time. To me the Christ of history and the Christ of experience are one-'that same Jesus'; and I see that instead of its being difficult for me to trust this Christ whom I have never seen, because His earthly life now lies so far back in the past, it is becoming every day easier to do it. He stands before me now in a glory He never had before, a Savior **whose grace has been tested and experienced.**" Therefore, "I **know** that **my** Redeemer liveth."

"My Lord, and My God"

Again we come to the same upper room. Thomas, not being present when Jesus appeared here before, and having declared the only condition on which he could believe that Jesus was alive again, is now to have the proof he had demanded. There is no need for believing that Thomas critically tested the evidence he had asked for, but rather that he spontaneously exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God." All his doubts had vanished now, and he is satisfied that the "same Jesus" is alive for evermore. In thinking of Thomas demanding this evidence before he could believe, we have become accustomed to speak of him as the "doubting Thomas," and to think of him only in that manner. But from another viewpoint his insisting on seeing the **evidence** by which he could know that the **crucified Jesus** was risen again, has much in it that we may well consider. What he beheld drew from him a statement which embodied both assurance and complete dedication. "My Lord, and my God." And "this same Jesus" who "once to loving doubt showed hands, and feet, and riven side," and thereby gave permanence to a disciple's faith, continues to do the same today. And in what way can He more effectively produce in our hearts an abiding faith in His being our personal, living Redeemer, than by opening our vision to see Him **crucified** for us? What vision will cause us to cry, "O Lamb of God, my Sacrifice," like a clear, unclouded view of the wounds He bore for us? We turn to the Gospels and read the story of the buffeting and the mocking, of His long-lingering agonies on the cross; or perchance we turn to something like Dean Farrar's "Life of Christ," and with tears in our eyes reread a vivid account of the horrors of His death by crucifixion, and from our deepest powers of response we say, "He bore, He bore it all for me!" "My- Lord, and **my** God!" The tie by which we are bound to Him never seems stronger than when we meditate on the fact that "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." That sacrifice is the answer to all our doubts concerning His acceptance of us, and we cling- to Him in the- assurance that

"If I ask Him to receive me,
Will He say me nay?
Not till earth and not till heaven
Pass away!"

Let us, then, be not faithless but believing. "If while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," now that we have been accepted in the Beloved One, and He stands in God's presence for us, is it not ours to rejoice in a love that will not let us go? Only let ours be the complete assurance and dedication so well expressed in the words of Thomas, and our testimony will then be one of blessed conviction, "I **know** that **my** Redeemer liveth."

He Careth for All His Own

Our next appearance is a seashore morning meal prepared by the hand of Jesus. His disciples had been toiling all night without results. How very, often in after days, indeed, how often through all the days of the Church's toiling, it has seemed as though they had "caught nothing." Times innumerable it has seemed an utterly fruitless toiling, or one of very meager results. But perhaps when many a weary toiler has reached "the shining

shore," a watching Savior will astonish him with a far greater measure of success than was ever dreamed of. Meanwhile, this appearance on the seashore has its encouraging lesson for us. In it we may find other proofs that ours is indeed a living Savior, One whose constant care is always assured us. Had He not taught these men that the God who cared for the sparrow, would likewise care for them? In how many ways He had illustrated His intimate care for all their needs, and given them His word of promise that they would never be forsaken. And now He comes to them in a time of their need, filling their net to gladden their spirits, and inviting them to a prepared feast with His gracious, "Come and dine."

Having promised that He would come to us and **manifest Himself** to us, can we not say of a truth, "And so we walk together, my Lord and I"? Surely one of the lessons He wanted to teach in this seashore appearance is that He cares for us in all that concerns us. "His loving thoughtfulness shows Him to be my brotherly Christ, who is deeply interested in the common business of my life, and who sits down beside me as I eat what His own bounty has provided, and what His presence sanctifies and cheers. That fire on the coals and that abundant haul must have seemed to these disciples to say-and **they say it to me** 'With Me to care for you, you will never want: be sure henceforth, that when you go forth to serve Me, I will look after the supplies.' His interposition often comes just when human effort has completely failed. Indeed, He lets the failure become absolutely disheartening, on very purpose to prepare the way for manifesting His power. His ways of grace have the same inscription as His ways in Providence, 'past finding out.'

"It is no wonder, surely, in view of this, that God's command to me is 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.' But if He promises to guide me not only in the broad highways of my life, but in its smallest and obscurest paths, because even in the smallest I need to be led, it is the least He can expect that I should ask Him to do it. Let me so honor my Master all along; and then, when the long night is past, and in the early Morning of the Eternal Day He provides for me a feast upon that Shore, I shall not doubt whose voice it is I hear, whose love it is I taste. I shall **know in a moment** that 'It is the Lord'-for none but He could do so gracious a thing as that-my Lord and Master thus fulfilling **to me** His promise, 'I will sup with

him, and he with Me,' and saying on the shore of heaven, just what He said on the shore of the Syrian lake, 'Come and dine.'

Have we thus learned to know Jesus? Can we not by looking back over the years of His faithfulness bear testimony to this peculiar personal care and guidance? Then once again it is our blessed privilege to affirm, "I **know** that my Redeemer liveth."

The last manifestation of the risen Jesus to be witnessed by His disciples is more fully reported by Luke than by the other Gospel writers. Both in his Gospel narrative and in the first chapter of Acts, Luke has given us some details we may well prize very highly. And Luke is the one who preserved these heart-cheering words for us, "**This same Jesus**, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11.) Jesus left His beloved followers looking "steadfastly toward heaven" as He departed from them, and He it is who has told us that He wishes to find us with the upward look in the day of His return. Speaking of the things we see about us today, He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift **up** your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28.) This was no intimation that His waiting ones would be looking up into the sky overhead, but rather that theirs would be the spirit of abounding joy as the evidences of their near deliverance increased. And everywhere in Scripture this attitude of heart is urged as being the only consistent reaction in keeping with a prospect so glorious. If early disciples returned from the mount of ascension "with great joy" to take up their appointed tasks, that of carrying the message of salvation into all, the world, what an overflow of joy should characterize us today, when all the evidence provided us in prophetic fulfillments seems to clearly show that soon, yes, very soon. "Reapers and sowers will together come" in the glad Harvest Home above.

We remember that Jesus told those early disciples that if they properly understood the reason why He should leave them, they would rejoice. They would be glad over the coming of the Spirit and the work it would do in preparing them for the place He said He went back to God to prepare for them. Are we then failing to rejoice consistently? Is there anything in our vision obscuring in some measure the joy-producing reactions we should be experiencing today? With what earnestness and devotion we should in all of our deportment be "looking for and hastening **unto** the coming of the Lord," even as the Apostle admonishes us, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." "How can I keep the longing back" should be our habitual attitude and spirit in times like these. Holding such a hope, consistently held and encouraged by the very signs Jesus urged us to note, should be doing a marked work- of purification in each expectant heart. Thus will God's Spirit witness with our spirit a blessed assurance that when the silver cord of present life shall break, we shall then see face to face our blessed Lord, "in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of 'glory.'" Blessed possibility, since it is ours to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, . . . whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."- *Contributed by J. J. Blackburn.*