

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## The Mind of the Master

A MEDITATION FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

*"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." - Phil 2:5.*

AT THIS season of the year it is our custom to meditate on the story of the Advent, to let our thoughts linger either on our Lord's birth itself, or on some of the remarkable incidents which attended it. While we may, and do, question the accuracy of the date, December 25, believing rather that His birth occurred in the autumn, at the beginning of the Jewish year, yet as has been truly observed, since our Lord did not anywhere indicate His wish that we should celebrate His birthday at all, and since the general celebration takes place at this season, we may appropriately enough join with all whose hearts are in -the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and His dear Son, our Redeemer.

In our meditations, however, while we invariably derive much spiritual profit as in spirit we accompany (the shepherds to Bethlehem (Luke 2:15) it is not because we dwell only or mainly on our Lord's birth, or on any of the circumstances attending it, but rather because we endeavor, under the guidance of the Spirit, to penetrate to its inner significance-to the *mind* of Christ Jesus, rather than to His *birth*, to the motives which prompted Him to lay aside the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5), to- the purpose for which He emptied Himself of that glory and took on Him the form of a servant. For the mind of Christ must certainly be much more to us than any event in His history, however great. *That* may be the glory of an age; but *this* is for all time, for all eternity. And we know of no passage of Scripture which throws a clearer, stronger, light on the mind of Christ, on the inward significance, on the motive and purpose, whether of the Advent or of the Atonement, than the pregnant verses from which our text is taken. The whole passage (Phil. 2:5-8) reads, in the American Revised Version:

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking

the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

There is much in this passage, indeed, both of doctrine and of duty, which we must pass by with no more than a word, or even without a word; for it is a very full cup which St. Paul here lifts to our lips, and we cannot hope to drain it. The virtue, the grace, of humility, for instance, was never more splendidly illustrated, or more weightily enforced on those who were tempted to think more -of themselves, and more highly, than they ought to think. Then, too, the doctrine of the pre-human existence of Christ is nowhere more distinctly and impressively affirmed, and not affirmed only, but assumed and implied in the whole structure of the sentence, and in many of the leading words it contains. Nor, again, is there anywhere a clearer implication of the heart-moving truth that in humbling Himself to manhood, to death, to shame, Christ was serving a higher will than His own; that it was not only His own good pleasure but also the good pleasure of the Father that no man should perish, but that all should turn and live.

But precious and weighty as these truths are, we should not sound the depths of the Apostle's words, or reach their choicest treasure, were we to rest in these. There are truths in them which are as much more precious as they are more seasonable; truths more powerful than the Star which hung over the cradle of the Holy Babe, more sweet than the angelic Song which announced His birth; truths which cast their full light on the very mind of Christ, and teach us in the simplest way both *why* and *for what* He came down to earth and was found in fashion as a man. It is, then, to the motive of His Advent, and to the purpose for which He came, that in the following paragraphs our attention will be particularly drawn.

### HE WHO WAS RICH

First of all we are carried back, and carried up, to those pre-natal times in which He was a mighty Spirit-being, the Logos of Jehovah. (John 1:1.) While existing thus in the form of God, exercising the power of the Father, and sharing His glory, our Savior was of humble mind. He did not, as did Satan, meditate a usurpation of Divine authority, in order to exalt Himself and to seek a name higher than that which was rightly His. He had no thought of robbing the Father of *His* honor and glory by putting Himself on an equality with the Father. On the contrary, He had the same spirit then, which He later manifested on earth, when He said "My Father is greater than I." - John 14:28.

Not only did He not seek to rob the Father of *His* glory -- He did not even clutch at the glory of His own highly exalted state. So far was He from grasping at the splendors of His highly exalted office as at a prize which He could not forego, that He relinquished them, voluntarily; divested Himself of His royal robes; emptied Himself of His glory.

This is the first picture St. Paul presents to our wondering eyes. And if we ask for the motive of this abdication, if we ask: "Why does the Son of God lay aside His princely state?" the Apostle replies: "He is about to become a man, to be made in the likeness of men." If we still ask: "Why?" he tells us plainly elsewhere, what here he only assumes, that the Son of God divested Himself of His glory for our sakes; that He stooped so low in order to raise us high; that He who was so rich became, for our sakes, poor, that we, through His poverty, might become rich. - 2 Cor. 8:9.

In effect, then, we are taught in this passage to think of the first humiliation of the Son of God, His humiliation to manhood, as prompted by pure love and pity for men--a love and pity so pure, so powerful, as to constrain Him to stoop to their condition and to share their lot. He is in the form, shares the power and the glory, of God; but all this He resigns in order that He may accept

the Father's proposal that He become the Savior of men, coming into the world, first to redeem it, and later during the Times of Restitution promised (Acts 3:19), to become its King and Deliverer; to regenerate men and enable them to regain the Divine image they have lost.

This was the "mind of Christ" before He became man and dwelt among us. And it continued to be His mind after He took our flesh and likeness.\* As He had emptied Himself of the glory He had on the spirit plane, so also, by a continuing voluntary humiliation, He emptied Himself of the glory of manhood. Wealth, rank, power, learning, genius, fame, are the qualities and conditions which command for men the admiration of their fellows; in these lie the glory, the splendor of human life.

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\*In both the Authorized and the Revised Versions the translators refer to the mind which "was" also in Christ Jesus. However, scholars tell us that the Greek gives no verb to correspond with the English "was" in these translations. Furthermore this limitation (of the reference to our Lord's mind) to His pre-human past, is not expressed in the Greek. Because of this it would be proper to translate: "Which was and is in Christ Jesus."

As man, He might have set Himself to be a great man, to exercise authority, to win reverence, to command service. And yet He who even on the human side had an ancestry so ancient and honorable; He who, if only by His willingness to be the servant of all, and His power to touch the hearts of all, had a claim to rule superior to that of any of the princes of this world; He who possessed divine wisdom, and who spake as never man spake; He who alone was without sin and never at any time transgressed any commandment; He who was so good that the world has received from Him a new ideal of goodness; He, therefore, who; of all men, might justly have claimed the most splendid and impressive human conditions and to be revered as their Hero, Sage, Ruler, Saint, declined these human glories (as just before He had divested Himself of the glories of heaven) and took on Himself the form of a servant (or, as the word really means, the form of a *slave*); refused every advantage which He could not share with the lowliest of the children of men, and humbled Himself to endure whatever is sordid, painful, sad, or terrible in their lot. Do we, any of us, know the sting and temptation of penury and homelessness: He had neither shekel to pay a tax with, nor a place in which to lay His head. Have we, any of us, blushed under the shame of dependence? He owed bed, food, raiment, to a few poor friends who ministered unto Him out of their scanty resources. Are we oppressed with infirmities and troubled by sorrows for which there seems no remedy? He Himself bare our sorrows and carried our infirmities. Do we dread death? He humbled Him, self and became obedient to the Father even unto death. Do we dread shame even more than death? His obedience to the Father's will took Him to the shame of the Cross. Have we felt how sharper than the serpent's tooth or the sting of death itself is ingratitude -- the indifference or the hostility, of those whom we have loved and served? He came to His owls and His own received Him not. He was rejected and despised by those for whom He had laid aside the glories both of, heaven and earth.

### **THE PATTERN FOR US**

This was, and is, the mind of Christ. It was the mind that brought Him down to earth, the mind that animated Him while He was on earth; the mind which animated Him when He ascended to heaven; the mind that even now animates Him as He begins to take His great power and to reign. His is a mind that delights to *share*; a mind which, so far from clutching at anything it possesses, counts nothing its own until all who are capable of receiving of His fulness have had the opportunity to do so; a mind that could not be satisfied to enjoy anything thoroughly, until a way could be found (no matter at what cost to Himself) whereby *we* might be reconciled to Himself and His Father, a way whereby we might be

**"PURIFIED MADE WHITE AND TRIED"**

and thus fitted to share His joy, so that He might "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied"; a mind which moved Him to divest Himself of every splendor by which we were not also irradiated; to refuse every *cup* of blessing of which we could not drink; nay, more a mind which constrained Him to experience every poor and mean and painful condition by which, however justly, we were tried, and to drink of every cup of shame and sorrow, which by our transgressions we had poured for ourselves.

This mind, which was, and is, in Christ Jesus, is also to be in us, is to dominate all the thoughts, affections, and habits of our life. In the Church at Philippi, to whom the Apostle penned these lines, there were some who were in danger of developing a self-asserting, vainglorious habit. To such, the mind of Christ is held up as a pattern, to bring them back to the better way, that way of love, which looks every man on the things of others-seeks not his own but another's welfare. As they became possessed of the mind of Christ they would do nothing through strife or vainglory but in lowliness of mind each would esteem other better than himself - Phil. 2:3, 4; 1 Cor. 10:24.

At this hallowed Christmas season, when men's hearts everywhere are more than usually stirred with emotions of friendship and love, when, even in a world at war, feelings of benevolence and compassion prompt all right-minded people of every faith to deeds of mercy and kindness, may we, who call ourselves by His Name, be granted His spirit -- His mind -- in rich measure. Let us be ready to empty ourselves of every earthly honor, and clutch at nothing we cannot share with our brethren. Like St. Paul, let us be ready to spend and be spent in the service of the Lord, the Truth, and the Brethren (2 Cor. 12:15), that all may know we have been with Jesus and learned of Him -- that we have, indeed, the mind of Christ. - 1 Cor. 2:16.

"Ring the bells at Christmastide, Tell once more the story; Spread the tidings far and wide, How the Lord of glory Human nature stoops to wear, Human sorrow deigns to share, Man's transgression comes to bear.

"Come and worship at yon stall,  
Bend the knee before Him;  
Lo! this Babe is Lord of all;  
Shall we not adore Him?"

Joyous hearts enthrone Him King,  
Willing lips His praises sing,  
Grateful hearts your tribute bring!"

- P. L. Read.

## Christmas Carol

"From the starry heav'ns descending  
Herald angels in their flight,  
Nearer winging, Clearer singing,  
Thrilled with harmony the night:  
'Glory, glory in the highest!'  
Sounded yet and yet again,  
Sweeter, clearer, Fuller, nearer  
'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

"Swept the angel singers onward,  
Died the song upon the air;  
But the glory Of that story  
Grows and triumphs everywhere;  
And when glow the Yuletide heavens,  
Seems that glorious song again  
Floating nearer, Sweeter, clearer  
'Peace on earth, good will to men! "

"Shepherds in the field abiding,  
Roused from sleep, that gladsome morn,  
Saw the glory  
Heard the story  
That the Prince of Peace was born:  
'Glory, glory in the highest!'  
Sang the angel choir again,  
Nearer winging,  
Clearer singing:  
'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

## Peace on Earth

**Luke 2:14**

"PEACE ON THE EARTH where warfare never ceases,  
With men and nations evermore at strife?  
How has the world ignored the heavenly voices  
In the road turmoil of this earthly life!

"But to that chant, above His cradle ringing,  
Was the Life-story of the Christ-child set;  
No discords marred its harmony unbroken,  
And in our lives its echoes linger- yet.

"'My peace I leave thee'; Ah! here lies the secret;  
'Not as the world gives, give I unto thee.'  
And, though that world be filled with strife and tumult,  
Safe hidden in His peace our lives may be."

## The Claims of Love and Justice

THERE IS nothing more necessary to the peace and prosperity of the Church of God than that its members should have a clear understanding and appreciation of moral principles, with a full determination to be controlled by them. Even among Christians there are often differences of opinion, with reference to principles of action, which greatly interfere with spiritual growth and prosperity. Such difficulties most frequently arise through a failure to rightly distinguish between the relative claims of love and justice. Therefore we deem it profitable briefly to consider these principles and their operation among the children of God.

Justice is sometimes represented by a pair of evenly poised balances, and sometimes by the square and compass, both of which are fitting emblems of its character. Justice knows no compromise and no deviation from its fixed rule of action. It is mathematically precise. It gives nothing over for "good weight" or "good measure." there -is no grace in it, no heart, no love, no sympathy, no favor of any kind. It is the cold, calculating, exact measure of truth and righteousness. When justice is done, there is no thanks clue to the one who metes it out: such a one has only done a *duty*, the neglect of which would have been culpable, and the doing of which merits no favor or praise. And yet cold, firm and relentless as this principle is, it is declared to be the very foundation of God's throne. It is the principle which underlies all His dealings with all His creatures; it is His *unchangeable business principle*. And how firmly He adheres to it is manifest to every one acquainted with the plan of salvation, the first step\of which was to satisfy the 'claims of justice against our race. Though it cost the life of His only begotten and well beloved Son to do this, so important was this principle that He freely gave Him up for us all to satisfy its legal claims against us.

The principle of love, unlike that of justice, overflows with tenderness and longs to bless. It is full of grace, and delights in the bestowment of favor. It is manifest, however, that no action can be regarded as a favor or a manifestation of love, which has not underneath it -the -substantial foundation of justice. Thus, for instance, if one comes to you with a gift, and at the same time disregards a just debt to you, the gift falls far short of appreciation as an expression of love; and you say, We should be just before we attempt to be generous.

And this is right: if justice is the foundation principle in all of God's dealings, it should be 'in ours also; and none the less so among brethren in Christ than among those of the world, As brethren in Christ, we have no right to presume upon the favor of one another. All that we have a right to *claim* from one another is simple justice-justice in the payment of our honest debts to each other, justice in our judgment one of another (which must make due allowance for frailties, etc., because we realize in ourselves some measure of similar imperfection), and justice in fair and friendly treatment one of another. This is all we have any right to *claim* and we must also bear in mind that while we have a right to claim this for ourselves from others, we are just as fully obligated to render the same to them.

But while we *may claim* justice -- though there is no obligation to demand it for ourselves, and we may if we choose even suffer injustice uncomplainingly -- we *must*, if we are Christ's, *render* it. In other words, we are not responsible for the actions of, others in these respects, but we are responsible for our own. And, therefore, we must see to it that all our actions are squared by the exact rule of justice, before we ever present a single act as an expression of love.

The principle of love is not an exact principle to be measured and weighed like, that of justice. It is three-fold in its character, being pitiful, sympathetic or reverential, according to the object upon

which it is centered. The love of pity is the lowest form of love: it takes cognizance of even the vile and degraded, and is active in measures of relief. The love of sympathy rises higher, and proffers fellowship. But the love of reverence rises above all these, and delights in the contemplation of the good, the pure and the beautiful. In this latter sense, we may indeed love God supremely, as the personification of all that is truly worthy of admiration and reverence, and our fellow men in proportion as they bear His likeness.

Although we owe to every man the duty of love in some one of these senses, we may not demand it one of another, as we may the principle of justice; for love is the overflow of justice. Justice fills the measure full, but love shakes it, presses it down, heaps it up and overflows justice. It is therefore something not to be demanded, nor its lack to be complained of, but to be gratefully appreciated as a favor and to be generously reciprocated. Every one who craves it at all should crave it in its highest sense the sense of admiration and reverence. But this sort of love is the most costly, and the only way to secure it is to manifest that nobility of character which calls it forth from others, who are truly noble.

The love of sympathy and fellowship is also very precious; but, if it come merely in response to a demand, it comes robbed of its choicest aroma; therefore never demand it, but rather by manifestation of it toward other's court its reciprocation.

The love of pity is not called out by the nobility of the subject, but rather by the nobility of the bestower, who is so full of the principle of love that it overflows in its generous impulses toward even the unworthy. All of the objects of pity are not, however, unworthy of love in the higher senses; and some such often draw upon our love in all the senses.

To demand love's overflow of blessing-which is beyond the claims of justice-is only an exhibition of covetousness. We may act on this principle of love ourselves, but we may not claim it from others. The reverse of this exhibits a manifest lack of love and a considerable measure of selfishness.

Thus, for instance, two of the Lord's children were once rooming together and, through a failure to rightly consider the relative claims of love and justice, one presumed upon the brotherly love of the other to the extent of expecting him to pay the entire rent; and when the other urged the claims of justice, he pushed the claim of brotherly love, and the former reluctantly yielded to it, not knowing how to refute the claim, yet feeling that somehow some Christians had less principle than many worldly people. How strange that any of God's children should take so narrow and one-sided a view! Cannot all see that love and justice should work both ways and that it is the business of each not to oversee others in these respects, but to look well to his own course, and, if he would teach others, let it be rather by example than by precept?

Let us beware of a disposition to covetousness, and let each remember that he is steward over his own goods, and not over his neighbor's, and that each is accountable to the Lord, and not to his brother, for the right use of that which the Master has entrusted to him. There is nothing much more unlovely and unbecoming to the children of God than a disposition to petty criticism of the individual affairs of one another. It is a business too small for the saints, and manifests a sad lack of that brotherly love which should be specially manifest in broad and generous consideration which would rather cover a multitude of sins than magnify one.

May love and justice find their proper and relative places in the hearts of 'all of God's people, that so the enemy may have no occasion to glory! The Psalmist says, "Oh, how love I Thy law [the law of love whose foundation is justice]! it is my meditation all the day." (Psa. 119:97.) Surely, if it were the constant meditation of all, there would be fewer and less glaring mistakes than we often see. Let us watch and be sober, that the enemy may not gain an advantage over us.-*W. T. Reprints, p. R3070, Sept. 1, 1902.*

## **Rest Comes to Another Fellow-Laborer**

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." In the days of-vigorous service, and in the hour when death terminates life's activities -- at all times -- God exercises a special, continuous care over His servants. Daily strength is given for the appointed task from the time of the first buoyant step into the field of service until the toils of the way have ended in the rich reward of divine approval. Through all of life the angel of the Lord encamps about those who love Him in sincerity, and in the hour of death they fear no evil. Thus, such know the grace that saves, the power that keeps, and the blessedness of finishing the Christian course with joy.

To another of our well beloved and highly esteemed fellow-laborers we believe this happy consummation has come. On October 11th our dear Brother L. F. Zink passed away at the home of a niece in Brantford, Ontario, in his eighty-seventh year. He was born in Wellandport, Ontario, March 6, 1857, and had five brothers and three sisters, all of whom preceded him in death. Those of us familiar with the last months of his life have been very appreciative of the loving care he received from his devoted niece, with whom he had made his home since the death of his sister, a year ago. It has been a cause for thankfulness that in this way God had provided for his comfort; and our sincere sympathy and gratitude goes out to this one who ministered to him so faithfully to the end. He who remembers even a cup of cold water givers in His name will remember this kindness to one whose life and death were precious in His sight.

For the past year or more our brother had grown steadily weaker, and he was forced to give up active service. An occasional visit with brethren at nearby points was the limit of his ability, until finally even this had to be given up. His story had been told for the last time, the story by which his ministry had been characterized in a special way. Its pattern is known to all who heard him -- the call of the Bride and the "feast of fat things" in store for all the nations in Christ's reign of peace and righteousness.

Brother Zink's passing removes from us one more of the few remaining brethren whose years of interest in God's age-embracing purposes and the promulgation of that message began with the very dawning of our Movement. At an early age he was brought in touch with the first writings of Brother Russell. Embracing the truth therein made clear, he dedicated himself to its service and the promulgation of that glorious message. His previous active association in business with other members of his family was terminated, and in subsequent years his field of service was unique in its diversity and scope. Many years were spent in the colporteur field, in territory embracing Canada, United States, England, Australia, and New Zealand. This form of ministry continued until about 1908, and thereafter he took up a kind of personal Pilgrim service using his own financial means to move about far and near as a "comforter of the brethren." In 1911 he took his place among those listed in the regular Pilgrim service. In this capacity he served in the old organization until faithfulness to the principles of truth and righteousness made it imperative that he take his place among those standing free in Christ.

Each faithful servant of God fills an appointed place in the ministry of the Church. To each member of the Body is given some endowment of the Spirit qualifying him for a service of enduring character. Thus our brother was blessed, and he leaves behind an influence and memories of imperishable sweetness. He has been and will continue to be thankfully remembered by his individual method of presenting the message. His labor has not been in vain in the Lord, and God alone can know the measure of enduring fruitage of the long period of Brother Zink's faithful service by which there has been laid up treasure in heaven. His cross has been borne in a steadfast and joyful spirit, and for him we may believe the Master's "Well done" has been won. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."



## **Now and Afterward**

"Now, the sowing and the weeping,  
Working hard and waiting long;  
Afterward, the golden reaping,  
Harvest home and grateful song.

"Now, the pruning, sharp, unsparing;  
Scattered blossom, bleeding shoot!  
Afterward, the plenteous bearing  
Of the Master's pleasant fruit.

"Now, the long and toilsome duty  
Stone by stone to carve and bring;  
Afterward, the perfect beauty  
Of the palace of the King.

"Now, the tuning and the tension,  
Wailing minors, discord strong;  
Afterward, the grand ascension  
Of the Alleluia song.

"Now, the spirit conflict-riven,  
Wounded heart, unequal strife;  
Afterward, the triumph given,  
And the victor's crown of life.

"Now, the training, strange and lowly,  
Unexplained and tedious now;  
Afterward, the service holy,  
And the Master's 'Enter thou!'"

## Lessons from the Life of Joseph

*Scripture Reading: Psalm 105:17-23; Genesis chapters 37, 39-50.*

THERE WERE seven years of plenty in Egypt, and then the seven years of famine came. The famine extended to Canaan, where Jacob lived. He and his household began to be in want. Then Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, so he sent his sons to obtain provisions for his household. The brothers seem to have been slow to start on this journey, and their father had to urge them. "Why do ye look one upon another?" he asked them. "Get you down thither, and buy for us from thence that we may live, and not die." We are not surprised that they did not set out eagerly for Egypt. It was into Egypt they had sold their brother. That was more than twenty years before, but doubtless the memory was fresh in their minds. There are some things we can not forget. No wonder they had to be urged to start.

Only ten went: the father would not trust Benjamin away from himself. Arriving in Egypt, they were ushered into the presence of the governor, and bowed down themselves before him, with their faces to the earth. So Joseph's dreams were fulfilled at last. He knew his brothers. At first he treated them harshly, made himself strange to them, spoke roughly to them. Why did he do this? Was it resentment? Was he repaying the evil they had done to him so long before? No; he was proving them. He wanted to know if they had grown better through the years; so he tested them in different ways. If one has wronged us, treated us unjustly, forgiveness is not all the duty we owe him. We should seek the cure in him of the evil disposition which caused him to sin against us. We should try to make it impossible for him to repeat the wrong to another.

Joseph sought to know before he revealed himself to them whether his brothers had been cured of the evil heart which twenty years before had led them to treat him so cruelly. Were they still hardened, or were they penitent? He found very soon that they were suffering the bitter pain of remorse. He put them for three (lays into prison, alleging that they were spies. Again they stood before him. Not supposing that he understood their Hebrew language, they talked among themselves.

They said one to another, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

Joseph heard their words, and saw that they remembered their sin against him and were experiencing remorse. The first testing was encouraging; they seemed to be truly penitent. Joseph was deeply affected. The record says, "He turned himself about from them and wept." This shows that even at the first interview his heart was tender and loving toward them. Instead, however, of making himself known to them at once, he restrained his heart's deep feeling and turned back to them sternly, saying that one of them must stay in prison while the others returned home with food for their households. Then he took Simeon and bound him before their eyes. Why this seeming severity when his heart was so full of love for them? He was not yet sure enough of the genuineness of their repentance. Perhaps it was the prison that had wrought this penitence in them; perhaps they were not really changed in heart and character. Mere sorrow for wrong-doing is not enough. One may have bitter remorse for a bad past, and yet not be cured of the spirit which did the evil. Would these men do now the same thing, over which they were grieving? Joseph was not yet sure, and he would not make the mistake of revealing himself to them and making known to them his readiness to forgive them until he was satisfied on this point. So he sent them away.

## THE WISDOM OF JOSEPH

Nine brothers went back to Hebron. On their way home they were startled at finding their money in the sacks with the food. Guilt makes such cowards of men that every new incident fills them with new terror. Finding the money made the brothers afraid. They interpreted this bit of generosity as evidence of enmity, a trick to get some cause -of harming them. Thus does- sense of guilt cause- unhappiness in the midst of blessings.

The brothers went home. At length they are back again in Egypt, and Benjamin is with them. They had a kindly reception. The governor asked after the welfare of their father -- "the old man of whom ye spoke." He saw Benjamin, and his heart yearned upon his brother, and he sought where to weep. He could not keep back the tears, and he entered his own room and there gave vent to his feelings. Gaining control over his emotions, he washed his face, to remove the traces of his tears, and came again to his brothers. He had them dine with him. Still he did not make himself known to them. He let them start homeward again. They are happy now. Benjamin is safe in their midst -- that fear is past, the fear that he would be retained. Simeon is free too, and returning with them.

But they have not gone far before they are suddenly overtaken by an Egyptian officer who charges them with the theft of Joseph's silver cup. Sack after sack is taken down and searched, in the order of the men's ages. At last the missing treasure is found in Benjamin's sack. Instantly dismay seizes all the brothers. They did not know that Benjamin was innocent, that: Joseph had ordered the cup to be put into his sack for a purpose. All the circumstances were against him. It looked as if he were a thief-this youngest brother of theirs, of whom their father was so proud. Here he was, bringing disgrace upon all of them. Now mark where the test of character comes in. If these older brothers had been the same men they were twenty-two years before, they would have made short, sharp work with Benjamin. But what did they do? They rent their clothes in their sorrow, and went back, all of them, to the city. They hastened to Joseph's house and fell down before him on the ground. Joseph spoke sharply to them:

"What deed is this ye have done?" There was another burst of penitence: "What shall we say unto my lord? How shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we,, and he also with whom the cup is found." They do not denounce Benjamin and propose to give him up: they will stand together.

Joseph said he could not punish the innocent with the guilty. "The man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father."

Here was the test. Would these ten men go away and leave Benjamin alone, in the grasp of Egyptian justice, to suffer for his supposed offense? Twenty two years ago they would have done it. Instead of this, however, we have one of the finest scenes in history. These brothers will not desert Benjamin. The speech of Judah, as he pleads for Benjamin, is one of the noblest pieces of eloquence in any literature, sacred or profane:

"Then Judah came near unto him, and said, O, any lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy

servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more. And it came to pass, when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down; for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: and if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Now, therefore, when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father forever. Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father."

### **MELLOWING INFLUENCE OF PENITENCE**

No one can read these pathetic words of Judah, as he pleads for his brother Benjamin, and not see that these men have been wonderfully changed since that clay when they sold another brother into bondage, and were deaf to all his piteous cries and entreaties. Judah evidently speaks for all his brothers. We notice particularly in these men a tender regard for their father which they had not shown before. They had seen his uncomforted sorrow all the years since they had robbed him of Joseph; now they cannot endure to cause him another pang. We notice also a tender love for their youngest brother which contrasts wonderfully with their hard-hearted cruelty toward Joseph that day at Dothan. As they were then, they would not have cared what might happen to Benjamin; now Judah begs to take the boy's place and bear his punishment, staying in Egypt as the governor's slave, that Benjamin may return home.

Joseph was now satisfied. At their first visit he had seen their deep consciousness of guilt, as they, remembered their sin against him. In this final testing he saw more—he saw that they were changed men. The grace of God had been at work in them. The sin of twenty-two years ago they could not now commit. Penitence had wrought deeply in them, softening their hearts. They were prepared now to stand together as brothers, and together to lay the foundation of national life.

The time had come therefore for disclosure. All doubts are gone from Joseph's mind. As soon as Judah had finished his eloquent plea, Joseph caused all strangers and attendants to go out of the room. No eye must witness the sacred scene which was about to be enacted. When they were alone, those twelve men, Joseph, with streaming eyes and loud weeping, made himself known to his brothers. "I am Joseph," he said to them.

Who can imagine their feelings as these words fell upon their ears? First there must have been terror mingled with their amazement. Again all their sin against their brother rose before them. Here was Joseph whom they had so cruelly wronged. He was lord of Egypt, and they were in his power; what would he do with them? Twenty-two years ago they had put him in the pit to die, and then hastily lifted him out only to sell him as a slave. They had supposed that they were now done with that "dreamer." But here they are before him in utterly reversed position. Is it any wonder they stood dumb in the presence of Joseph, or that they could not answer him, or that they were troubled?

But Joseph's heart was too full to prolong the scene. "Come near to me," he said. "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." But he hastened to comfort them. "And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God: did send me before you to preserve life ... to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance." Then he added, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." Then he bade them hasten to his father with the news and -to return, all of them, with their father and their families, to dwell in Egypt, to be near to him. The wonderful scene closes with Joseph's falling upon Benjamin's neck in loving embrace, then kissing all his brothers and weeping with them in the joy of reconciliation. The barriers were now all broken down. The old sin was forgiven. The long-sundered family was brought together again. Estrangement had been healed by love and peace. O what a burden that must have lifted from their hearts, like the burden that rolled away when God forgave us.

### **PRACTICAL LESSONS FOR THE FAITHFUL**

Here we may pause in the narrative to gather some of the practical lessons. Joseph's dealing with his brothers is an illustration of Christ's dealing with us as sinners. There is forgiveness in His heart the moment we stand before Him. We have not to excite and kindle love in Him. He loves us in our sins. He is always ready to forgive. But oft-times He leads the penitent through experience after experience before He reveals Himself- in full, rich love, until we demonstrate that our penitence is sincere. These brothers were sorry for their sin when they first stood before Joseph. "We are verily guilty," they said among themselves. That was confession. But had their sorrow for their sin cured them of their wickedness of heart? Mere consciousness of guilt is not enough when we stand before Christ. It is not enough to say, "I have sinned." There is a sorrow because the sin is found out, because it brings shame and reproach upon us, because it hurts us among men, or because it must be punished. Such penitence as this does not satisfy Christ. The sorrow for sin which God wants and waits for is godly sorrow, which works amendment of life, which is not only sorrow for past sins, but which can no more repeat those sins. When our repentance is sincere, true and deep, God makes Himself known to us, grants us forgiveness, and gives us His peace. As Joseph invited his brothers to come and be near him where he could nourish them, so Christ invites His forgiven ones into fellowship with Him, into the family of God, to share all His blessedness and glory.

This story teaches us the duty of forgiving those who have wronged us. It would be hard to conceive of any sorer wrong that could be done to another than that which was done to Joseph by his brothers. There was no sufficient cause, no just Provocation, for it, either. It began in a feeling of envy because their father loved him more than he loved them and weakly showed his preference. It was aggravated by the boy's dreams which he in a childlike way told them. Envy grew to hate, and hate ripened into the intention of murder, which by God's providence was softened into selling as a slave. But we have seen how freely and how beautifully it was forgiven. There does not appear ever to have been any revengeful feeling in Joseph's heart toward his brothers. He seems to have kept his heart free from any trace of bitterness, and full of sweet, gentle love, all through the years. Surely it is a beautiful picture, Joseph loving and blessing those who had sought to kill him, who had caused him years of sorrow. It takes more than mere human sweetness and gentleness to do this. Joseph must have lived very close to God all those years to thus become the interpreter of divine forgiveness.

We are living more than as many years after Christ came to earth as Joseph lived before He came: Have we learned this lesson of forgiveness as well as Joseph learned it? Are we keeping our own hearts sweet and loving under ill-usage? Let us study the picture of this badly-treated brother forgiving those who had so sorely wronged him, until its spirit sinks into the very depths of our

spirit, until -we can from the heart pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us."

"As we forgive, forgive us -- so we pray.

Christ might have bidden us beseech of heaven:

'May we forgive, Lord, as we are forgiven.'

But no! He set His bounds of pardon thus

That love, through need, might be more generous."

We are taught here, too, that God uses even men's evil to help advance His Kingdom. Joseph said to his brethren: "Be not grieved, . . . for God did send me before you to preserve life." We can readily see how blessing and good came out of all -the evil done by the brothers of Joseph. It shows how God's hand is -in everything. No evil deed of the worst of men is allowed to run riot among the divine plans and purposes, or to defeat His love and grace. This does not make sin less sinful; but it assures us that even the wrath of man shall be made to praise God. It is a comfort to know that while we cannot undo our wrong deeds, God can keep them from undoing us, and can even use them -to advance His Kingdom.

*-Contributed.*

***(To be Continued)***

## The Letter to the Colossians

*"If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory." - Col. 3:1-4, R. V.*

THE PARAGRAPH to be considered in this discussion is the beginning of a new section in the letter. The controversy with the errorists of Colosse is ended, and Paul has entered upon his exhortations to those desiring to be "rooted and built up in Christ." (Col. 2:7.) The bridge that connects the two sections is, "If then but, in the words that follow, there is a reminder of the controversy which he considers as fully settled by the arguments already presented-lovingly, but with no lack of positiveness. This phrase, "If then ye were raised together with Christ," corresponds to the one that opens the previous paragraph (Col. 2:20), "If ye died with Christ"-an argument against submission to the thinking of the errorists. The new phrase serves the still loftier purpose of exhortation to the life of holiness, to which the rest of the epistle is principally devoted.

The first exhortation, "Seek those things that are above," nestles, as a jewel' in its golden setting, between two supreme inducements-one that the present should fully appropriate, and the other that adds unspeakable lustre to a glorious future: no better present inducement to "seek the things that are above" can be suggested than that the old life has been left behind, if "ye were raised together with Christ"; but to claim to have been raised together with Him becomes a mere farce if we do not "seek the things which are above, [the place] where Christ is," and where we hope to dwell with Him for eternity.

The exhortation that immediately follows is similar: "Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." In this instance, the reason follows, and is a double one: "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." By this arrangement the Apostle has placed the two jewels, the two precepts, in a setting of divine logic, motives beyond the pale of human selfishness. They embody the thought of union with Christ in His death and in His resurrection, and a consequent participation in His life, both the present hidden life and the future glorious one which is to be manifested to all creation. This full blossoming flower can be a possibility only if there has been the patient period of growth and development as a bud under the great Husbandman's direction.

"His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower."

Earlier in the Epistle Paul has told us of the great change which, must be evident in every Christian, viewing it from the two aspects of death to the world, and death to self. (Col. 1:6, 10, 11; 2:10, 11) just as there is a definite time for this growth and experience, so there is also a definite means-union with Christ through faith. The faith that comprehends His death and appropriates it, can be trained to appropriate and experience His resurrection life. Thus -his death and resurrection become both the basis of salvation and the pattern of life. There is, too, in the latter a prophecy of the future life.

## **UNION BY FAITH WITH CHRIST**

Only by a living faith can there be genuine communion with Christ, and only by a living faith can there be the communication of this hidden, but none the less real, life in Him. "In Him was life" (John 1:4; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6; Rom. 5:21; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 John 5:12), and therefore, in the words of this Epistle (Col. 1:17), "in Him were all things created, and in Him all things consist." Jesus, in His discussion of the resurrection in John 5:24-26, uses a similar expression, but evidently with a different meaning, for there it is, "As the Father hath life in Himself" that He "hath given to the Son to have life in Himself." The Logos gave life to Adam and Eve and to all living creatures, drawing from the Heavenly Father's reservoir of grace. Just as from the day of His creation as the first-born of all creation (Col. 1:15-17) union with the Father maintained Him in life, so in God, the Self-existing One, all creation, including the Logos, lived and moved and had their being. (Acts 17:28; Exod. 19:4; Dent. 6:24; 33:27; Psa. 18:35; 37:17; 41:12; Isa. 41:10; 46:4; 63:9, etc.) "How precious is Thy lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou wilt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light." "In Him was life: and the life was the light of men." (Psa. 36:7-9, R. V.; John 1:4.) Finally there came a day that the Logos was given life in Himself in a new sense. From that day He has been "the express image of the Father's person" and therefore has life in Himself as the Father has life in Himself, and union with Him can give life in a new sense. - Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15.

It is impossible that a God of wisdom would trust Him with the supreme powers which this implies until He had been tested in the last point where weakness might show up some, moment in the eternity ahead. (Heb. 4:15.) And until the testing is finished and successfully passed, Jesus could not permit Himself to be called "good." (Matt. 19:17.) ' It is therefore not only a sympathetic Life-giver we have during the time of our being tested in all points, but One whose life has been tested for absolute perfection and who consequently can give life that is without spot or blemish or any such thing. (Eph. 5:27.) When the last of our tests has been successfully passed, we also can as safely be made "partakers of the divine nature."

Life as it is manifested in vegetation and the animal kingdom is dependent on union with the Fountain of life, though even the intelligent animal, man, is generally unaware of that union. The higher life of the new creation can be neither begun nor continued except by a conscious union with Him. In truth they must "acknowledge Him" in *all* their ways if He is to direct their paths and thus continue them in life. (Prov. 3:6.) In this way only is His fulness received into our emptiness, His righteousness into our sin-condemned being, His life into our deadness.

## **THE HIGHEST HUMAN ATTAINMENTS NOT SPIRITUAL**

To "live after the flesh" is to starve the new creature, and to study the beauties of the Bible *merely* from an intellectual standpoint, would be following the flesh and might result in the deadening of every spiritual sensibility. The exercise will be good for the brain, but a vain thing in this battle against the world's allurements and the weaknesses of the flesh, especially as the powers of evil are arrayed on the world's side, with intellects far surpassing the best of ours. Such activity instead of being an evidence of life is only the galvanic twitching of the muscles in a corpse. If Christ lives in us, the symptoms of life should be continuous, and quickly so, if we live in Him, by Him, with Him, for Him. To this end all our powers, not excluding the best our brain can give, must be devoted.



The passage under consideration, along with many others, proves that the resurrection of Jesus was an uncontested article of faith in the early Christian religion. That resurrection is to us a seal of the Messiahship of Him who was "declared to be the Son of

God with power, by His resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4); and it is a prophecy and an assurance of ours, for "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the *first-fruit* of them that slept"; and, too, it is a pattern of our newness of life, as indicated in the exhortation to "*likewise* reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin." Union through Christ, if faithfully maintained, inevitably results in a moral and spiritual change, of which His resurrection is the symbol. Death with Christ brings to an end, reckonedly, the old life with all its selfish desires and sympathies with the sin that every where surrounds it; but resurrection with Him institutes a new life -- new hopes, new aims, new thoughts, new activities, new capacities. The weaknesses of the flesh having been condemned, and covered by the precious blood, in this reckoning of ourselves dead, a new life is begun, in which by faith the Christian can say with the Apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.) The heathen converts to whom Paul was writing were probably, many of them, outstanding examples of the contrast between the life that Jesus calls death (Matt. 8:22) and the "newness of life" in which all who are His must surely learn to walk. Those heathen, as well as their ancestors for many generations, had walked in the ways of sin, but they were now planted in a path, the end of which revealed, in vivid contrast to the blackness of sin, under the flood-light of divine love, their eternal hope, the heavenly home, "where Christ is."

Nothing less than true heart-appreciation has ever appropriated that hope. Many a mature Christian must look back regretfully on early years of merely intellectual acceptance of truths, years in which he was thinking of himself as being "dead with Christ," though actually still very much alive according to the flesh. He reached his maturity only when his *heart* had grasped Christ. Only then could there be any real death with Him or any living of the new resurrection life. "To this end Christ died, and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living" (Rom. 14:9), not however that He might be in the culmination Lord over dead Christians, but over those who are "alive in Him."

The resurrection life demands this, not only the highest type of morality, but much more than this. We are enjoined to "let not sin reign in our mortal bodies" (Rom. 6:12), and if Christ live in us, ours will be the Christ-life. , The water in the stream and the water in the fountain are the same. The light that filters into earth's foulest dungeon does not lose its heavenly purity. The Christ that liveth in us is the same Christ that lives in heaven.

There are many arguments for the life beyond the grave, but the one proof of it is the resurrection of Jesus. Many excellent discourses have been preached on the subject of the resurrected life manifest in us, but by far the best one is the life itself, the "living" epistle--that discourse preached by the Christian in his daily living in newness of life, the life begotten in him "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 4:25; 10:9.) As Jesus manifested God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16; John 1:18; 17:6, 26), so also we should be effectively "epistles of Christ," showing forth **His** praises by living the new life that speaks not in praise of self, but of Him who bought us. - 2 Cor. 3:2, 3; 1 Pet. 2:9.

## THE HIDDEN LIFE

However well we may in our present state show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, the great importance of that light will still remain hidden except for a few stray beams. Not only is it impossible for us to give out more than a very much obscured light, but as only man knoweth the things of man (1 Pet. 2:9; 1 Cor. 2:11), so only those who are living after the spirit can comprehend the things of the spirit. Our light must therefore in the main fall on blinded eyes. There is a more important sense, however, in which ours is a hidden life. Its source is a hidden one, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." As another has said:

"The life of those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High may be called a Hidden Life, because the animating principle, the vital or operative element, is not so much in itself as in another. It is a life grafted into another life. It is the life of the soul incorporated into the life of Christ; and in such a way, that while it has a distinct vitality, it has so very much in the sense in which the branch of a tree may be said to have a distinct vitality from the root. It buds, blossoms, and bears fruit, in the strong basis of an eternal stock. 'I am the vine,' says the Savior, 'ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.' This is a great mystery, but it is also a great truth. The Christian, whose 'life is hid with Christ in God,' can never doubt that his spiritual existence and growth originate in, and are sustained in, that divine source alone.

"In the second place, the life which we are considering may properly be called a Hidden Life, because its moving principles, its interior and powerful springs of action, are not known to the world. This is what might naturally be expected from what has already been said in respect to the relation existing between a truly devoted Christian and his Savior; inasmuch as he is taken from himself, and is grafted into another, and has now become a 'new man in Christ Jesus.' The natural man can appreciate the natural man. The man of the world can appreciate the man of the world. And it must be admitted that he can appreciate, to a considerable extent, numbers of persons who profess to be Christians, and who are probably to be regarded as such in the ordinary sense of the term, because the natural life still remains in them in part. There is such a mixture of worldly and religious motives in the ordinary forms of the religious state, such an impregnation of what is gracious with what is natural, that the men of the world can undoubtedly form an approximated if not a positive estimate of the principles which regulate the conduct of its possessors. But of the springs of movement in the purified or Hidden Life, except by dark and uncertain conjecture, they, know comparatively nothing. Little can the men who, under the teachings of nature, have been trained up to the reception and love of the doctrine which inculcates 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' appreciate the evangelical precept which requires us, when we are assaulted, to 'turn the other cheek.' Still feebler and more imperfect is the idea which they form of that ennobling Christian philosophy which inculcates the love of holiness for holiness' sake. They are entirely at a loss, and, on any principles with which they are at present acquainted, they ever must be at a loss, in their estimate of that intimacy and sacredness of friendship which exists between God and the sanctified mind. Rightly is it said in the Scriptures, 'But the natural, man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.'

"Again, the Hidden Life has a claim to the descriptive epithet which we have proposed to apply to it, because, in its results upon individual minds, it is directly the reverse of the life of the world. The natural life seeks notoriety. Desirous of human applause, it aims to clothe itself in purple and fine linen. It covets a position in the market-place and at the corners of the streets. But the life of God in the soul, occupied with a divine companionship, is not so. It pursues a lowly and retired course. It obeys the precept of the Savior: 'When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and pray to

thy father which is in secret.' It neither desires to see nor to be seen openly, except when and where duty calls it. It is willing to be little, to be unhonored, and to be cast out from among men. It has no eye for worldly pomp, no ear for worldly applause. It is formed on the model of the Savior, who was a man unknown. He came into the world, the highest personage on the highest errand; and yet so humble in origin, so simple in appearance, so gentle in heart and manners, that the world could not comprehend Him; and He was ever a sealed book, except to those who had the key of the inner life to open it with."

### **THEN SHALL YE ALSO BE MANIFESTED**

As surely as Jesus' humiliation and obedience "led to the cross, and the cross to the empty grave, and the empty grave to the throne, so surely does the throne lead to the coming again in glory. And as with Christ, so with His servants, the manifestation in glory is the certain end of all the preceding, as surely as the flower is of the tiny green leaves that peep above the frost-bound earth in bleak March days. Nothing in that future, however glorious and wonderful, but has its germ and vital beginning in our union with Christ here by humble faith. The great hopes which we may cherish are gathered up here into these words, -- 'shall be manifested with Him.' That is far more than was conveyed by the old translation -- 'shall appear.' The roots of our being shall be disclosed, for He shall come, 'and every eye shall see Him.'" In the same sense that every eye shall see Him, the Church also shall "with Him be manifested in glory." A full manifestation of the Church in the present time would not be a pleasant spectacle. How' thankful we are that there is so much hidden; and how thankful we can be that in the revealing, the glory will go to the One in whom our lives are now hid. All the world will realize that those then associated with Him are those who formerly were such as they, who met just such temptations as assailed them, and who were just as weak as themselves, but victors through Him who loved us and bought us, because "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience, and endurance with joy." (Roan. 8:37; 1 Cor. 15:57; 1 John 5:4; 2 Cor. 2:14; Col. 1:11; see R. V. and Diaglott.) The inner man of the heart will no longer carry about a body with traits that need to be concealed, for his will be the completed character-likeness to his heavenly Father-"His name shall be in their foreheads." (Rev. 14:1; 7:3; 22:4.) "Then shall the righteous blaze forth like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." - Matt. 13:43.

Note that it is not merely a manifestation to the Church but a manifestation "with Him" who is to be revealed to the entire creation. Then, without spot or wrinkle or blemish or any such thing (Eph. 5:27), "prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21), they shall be joined with Him in a blessed union instituted by our heavenly Father Himself, and which none can sever. They are ready to enter upon the blessed association that will be theirs as Bride of the Lamb. Eternally they shall serve, like Martha, in a service that shall never for a moment interfere with their sitting as Mary in rapt attention at His blessed feet. So "shall they ever be with the Lord." - 1 Thess. 4:17; John 12:26; 14:23; 17:24; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23.

"Manifest with Him in glory"! Who can speak of the self-revealing splendor of the great I AM? "He is light." Any effort to describe or even to imagine His glory would only dim His luster; nor can our imperfect understanding comprehend the glories of the resurrected Lord standing in the heart of that blaze. We, like the Apostles on the Mount of Transfiguration, would fear to enter into that cloud. (Luke 9:34.) Who can even faintly suggest the glory of those who shall "awake in His likeness"! (Psa. 17:15.) And this is not a shining forth as a comet, nor as one of the short-lived stars which frequently mystify the astronomers. "They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament for ever and ever." - Dan. 12:3; Matt. 13:43; 1 Cor. 15:41, 42.

## THE CHRISTIAN'S PRACTICAL AID

The injunctions that head this chapter are not for those who are clinging to the things of the earth in the mistaken conviction that they can serve two masters, but for those who seek the Kingdom of God in faith's assurance that all such things as are necessary of this earth will be added to them by our heavenly Father's grace. (Matt. 6:33.) "Godliness is profitable unto *all things*." (1 Tim. 4:8.) To the mind set on heavenly things, the earth has nothing to offer. "But then, indeed, I even esteem all things to be a loss [Gr: "bones thrown to the dogs in the streets"] on account of the excellency of the knowledge of the Anointed Jesus my Lord; on whose account I suffered the loss of all things, and consider them to be vile refuse, so that I may gain Christ." (Phil. 3:8, Diaglott.) And what joy it will be to turn the bones, well laden with the meat of divine grace, over to the Gentile "dogs" in His due time. The present is but the vestibule of an infinite future, not only for the Church, but also for the world.

The world has made considerable progress in many respects, but it is yet far from fully appreciating the importance of forming correct habits of thought. Most of us as children are permitted to form thinking habits that can be eradicated only by years of endeavor, if ever, before the principle is even suggested to us that "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." - Prov. 23:7.

If there is any subject with which, one finds he is able to discourse with freedom, it must be that he has thought much along that line. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. 12: 34.) If therefore that one cannot talk freely of spiritual things, the Apostle's suggestion seems to be the one necessary remedy: "Set your mind on things that are above." Daily the pressure of earthly things increases on every side, and with that increasing pressure, the necessity for greater vigilance in the matter of "redeeming the time." (Eph. 5:15, 16; Col. 4:5.) In the rush of our day there is danger for all, that quiet meditation on heavenly things will be a lost art. "A book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that *thought upon His name*." (Mal. 3:16.) The mind of the flesh knows well that it must sort its affairs out into things important, moderately important, useless and injurious. The Christian who has not done this will find little time for "thinking on" that wonderful list the Apostle gives us of those things that will continue through the great time of destruction ahead. (Phil. 4:8.) Ours will be but a painful and fruitless creeping along the lower levels of the- earth unless we "see the King in His beauty and the land that is very far off." (Isa. 33:17.) Only in the secret place of the Most High, with our doors shut about us, can we escape the destructive fury being visited on a commercial and war-mad world. (Isa. 26:20.) Fortunately those doors are ready to welcome us at all times, whatever our business and however driving our necessities.

There is a delicacy of thought and a carefulness on the part of our translators suggested by the comma which the Revised Versions have placed after "where Christ is" that assures us that, however imperfect their work may be, their hearts seem to have been earnestly desiring to give us a true representation of the divine thought in the original. His presence there makes very definite our hope, for He that went to prepare a place for us (John 14:2, 3), having died that we might live, now that He ever lives to make intercession for us will not permit any outside influence to interfere with our attaining the heavenly inheritance which is ours in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 1: 11.) May the "God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory" give unto us "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of our hearts enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His own right hand in the heavenly places." (Eph. 1:17-20, R. V.) "And now,

my little children, abide in. Him; that, if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." - 1 John 2:28, R. V.

- P. E. Thomson.

## **The Vista of the Year**

"Gone with our yesterdays; folded apart,  
Laid by with the treasures we hide in the heart,  
The year that hath left us, so silently shod,  
Has carried its records of earth unto God.  
How strange was its mingling of bitter and sweet,  
Its trials how heavy, its pleasures how fleet;  
How often its mercies surprised us, unsought;  
How frequent the gifts to our hands which it brought.  
Alas! that we shadowed its glory with sin,  
Nor battled its beautiful trophies to win;  
And thanks unto Him who gave pardon and rest,  
And wrought for His children whatever was best.

"Far down thy fair vista, blithe New Year, we see  
The sun gleam of the beautiful Sabbath to be;  
From afar o'er the billows of trouble we hear  
The anthems of praise and the notes of good cheer.  
God speed the full time when all idols shall fall,  
And the banner of Jesus wave high over all;  
When the nations shall walk in the light of the Lord,  
And Eden's lost verdure to earth be restored.

"Dear Christ, by Thy passion, Thy grace, and Thy power,  
Assist us, uplift us, in each clouded hour,  
And still, by denial, bestowal, delay,  
Whatever is needful, O! give us, we pray!  
The year that is far above rubies shall be  
The year of our lives that is closest to Thee.  
And precious and sacred our changes shall grow,  
If heaven-light o'er them in tenderness glow.  
Let the burdens of woe, and the conflicts of care,  
Alike be relieved by the breathings of prayer;  
And happy, and always resigned, let us raise  
Each morning and evening the songs of our praise."