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Thanksgiving

"Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for He is good; for His loving-kindness endureth for ever." - Psa. 136:1.

TO THE Christian, every day is a day of thanksgiving. The Psalmist expresses this attitude: "O Lord... we Thy people and sheep of Thy pasture will give Thee thanks for ever." "Giving thanks always," says the Apostle, "for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ unto God, even the Father." - Psalm 79:13; Eph. 5:20.

The appointment by the head of the nation of a special Day of Thanksgiving is profitable to the Christian, however, for it prompts him to an enumeration of his many and infinite blessings. When we attempt this we are impelled to exclaim with Paul: "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable bounty" -- which is just another way of saying "The half has never been told." "Unspeakable" here means not something which cannot be spoken of, but that which has not been fully spoken or declared.

For the gift of Jesus, our Savior; for the "peace with God which comes as a result of His sacrifice; for the further "grace wherein we stand" -- the great High Calling to the Priesthood -- as a result of which "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God": for the daily experiences, testings, trials, and for the daily supply of grace which enables us to benefit eternally by these temporal afflictions -- all these are but a part of His "unspeakable bounty." Eternity, and the cumulative capacity of "all saints" will be required to realize and to tell the complete story of our Father's munificence. - 2 Cor. 9:15; Eph. 2:18.

Not the least of our present and particular blessings is that of living under a civil government that assures to every citizen complete liberty of religious assemblage, worship, and expression -- in speech and in print. For such a government we may well heed the Apostle's words: "I exhort, therefore, first of all, that thanksgiving be made for . . . kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." - 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.

Today the true Christian stands, as alien as was Paul in Athens, in the midst of another and greater Mars' Hill -- a world preponderantly committed to reliance for safety and well being upon force of arms, and the god of war. Few indeed hear the Voice speaking behind them, saying: "Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion. Ask of Me and I will give thee the nations for Chine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron!" - Psalm 2.

This prospect fired the minds and hearts of the Hebrew bards and seers of old. Like the angel Israfel, of whom legends say, "his heartstrings are a lute," the heartstrings of the "sweet singers of Israel" were swept by the glorious vision, and they broke forth in rhapsodies of praise and thanksgiving.

"Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song:
Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth.
Sing unto Jehovah, bless His name;
Show forth His salvation from day to day.
Declare His glory among ""the nations,
His marvelous works amcng all the people.

""Say among the nations, JEHOVAH *reigneth*:
The [new] world is established that it cannot be moved.
He will judge the people with equity.
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
Let the field exult, and all that is therein;
Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy
Before Jehovah; for He cometh,
For He coneth to judge the earth:
He will judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with His truth.

"Mercy and truth are met, together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
Truth springeth out of the earth!
And righteousness hath looked down from heaven.
Yea, Jehovah will *give* that which is good;
And our land shall yield its increase.
Righteousness shall go before Him
And shall make His footsteps a way to wall, in.

"Praise ye JEHOVAH!" - Psalms 96 and 85.

- H. E. Hollister

Victorious Living

"And we should bear each other in mind, for an incitement of love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the custom with some; but exhorting to it, and so much the more as you see the day drawing near." - Hebrews 10:24, 25, Diaglott.

ON EVERY hand we have seen the warring nations striving for victory, but the victory they have been bending every effort to achieve will not be an everlasting one. While the world is in turmoil and men's hearts are failing them for fear, the great God of heaven, our Father, is grandly working out His great designs. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." (Rev. 20:6.) When God's will has been accomplished in the selection of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, which we hope by His grace to attain unto, it will be a lasting victory, bringing peace to all the world. "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah." - Num. 14:21.

All about us are the evidences of war between right and wrong. The Christian is on the side of God and right; he carries in his right hand the sword of the spirit, and on his left arm the shield of faith. Day in and day out, battles must be fought, temptations must be overcome, troubles and trials must be borne. The hosts of evil never sleep, but constantly press the conflict, seeking to demoralize and defeat the Christian in the development of the Christlike spirit, necessary to the attainment of our hope.

What the Lord desires to see in His people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to Him and to the brethren, but a development of the Christian graces in our hearts, thereby manifesting that the transforming power and influence of the Holy Spirit of God and Christ is operating in our lives; old things have passed away, and a new life has begun -- new desires, a new hope, and new ideas of propriety of conduct.

It is encouraging to know that this warfare is not merely our own against our weakness and sin, but that God is for us, has called us, is helping us by His word of promise, and will continue to do so if we continue to heed His counsel. God, our Counselor, is wise, infallible, unerring. He knows the end from the beginning. He knows, therefore, how to direct the affairs of His people. How wonderful is the thought that the Almighty has promised to guide His people through the difficulties of the present life! As David expressed it: "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." -- Psalm 73:24.

Being a Christian, a footstep follower of the Master, means going all the way with Him, shaping our lives after His, and showing to the world that we "have been with Jesus and learned of Him." We see in Him a perfect example of all to be desired, and One who was deeply moved at the sight of human degradation. What deep solicitude of a noble heart, which grieved for a nation that refused to be helped and comforted by the One sent of God!

The conquering power in the life of our Master was His love and loyalty to His heavenly Father, and the same must be true in the life of the Christian. Love and loyalty to our God and Christ will assure us the victory that God has promised to all who love and obey Him. This conquering power of Christ in our life is first evident in the mind, where anxiety and worry once dwelt, where now trust and peace abide. Jesus said: "Let not your heart be troubled," and "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. Do not doubt, be of good cheer, be free from anxiety. "I have

overcome the world;" victory over death has been accomplished. Yes, the conquering power of love for the Father's Name -- and the faithful obedience to His will and plan have prevailed. Thus, with abounding compassion and tenderness, our Lord on the last night of His earthly life bestowed upon His people a parting blessing, His legacy of peace, a legacy of priceless value.

The divine character, "Love," is constructive. It not only tends to build up characters after the divine pattern, but it makes us laborers together with God. Our sufficiency is not of ourselves, but of God. He it is who for the asking will so fill us with His spirit that we can go forth from victory unto victory. In Hebrews 6:10 we have the assurance that "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." It is very important that we keep in mind that we are ambassadors of the Lord, and as His representatives we have a ministry of comfort to perform. This honor "showed toward" God's name, is revealed in the ministering to the saints. Whatever is done for, our brethren is done for God. Our ministry of comfort, then, is toward all in Zion, the consecrated Church. They must have our love, our cooperation, our sympathy, our aid, that they may be strengthened, established in their endurance as good soldiers of Christ. "Wherefore, comfort yourselves together and edify one another," counsels the Apostle. (1 Thess. 5:11.) Except we have this spirit of helpfulness we can never hope to become copies of God's dear Son. Therefore, in proportion as we are filled with the spirit of the truth, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love, in that proportion we will be able to "comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." - 2 Cor. 1:3, 4.

Addressing the Israel of God, the Apostle admonishes: "Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4:32.) In exercising sympathy and compassion we will be copying the divine character and the influence upon our hearts and lives will be ennobling. The Word of God reveals that our heavenly Father delights in all those who seek to cultivate the sweet spirit of Christ, who allow it to control their conduct, extending mercy, generosity and sympathy to others. David says: "The Lord taketh pleasure in His people; He will beautify the meek with salvation." - Psalm 149:4.

Again the Psalmist says: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalm 133:1.) We see in these words of David that all who have the spirit of the Head must and will be in sympathy with all the fellow-servants of the Body. The victory of Christ will then be evident in the Body.

It would indeed be very easy to love the brethren and to lay down our lives for them, if they were all like our Master, but they are not. The inspired Apostle tells us that God has chosen the mean things of the world, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble; and so it pleased the Father to pass by some of the noblest of our race and accept some of the meanest to discipleship. What thanks have we if we love only them that love us? If we love as Christ loved us, we shall be glad to give our lives to the brethren, according to the needs of each. What a blessing and how profitable and helpful to us in our preparation for the kingdom!

The battle that begins at the time of our consecration continues unto the end. It must be a real battle, a real conflict, bringing us to gladly lay down our lives for the brethren, assisting them in bearing their burdens, helping them to "overcome" -- and if at any time we are tempted to deal harshly or speak rudely, yes, even to think unkindly, let us remember and consider our own weaknesses and unwilling imperfections. Remembering that God forgave us and that we are subjects of His interest and care, we ought to exercise the same interest and care for our brethren. This is termed by the Apostle in 1 Thessalonians 1:3, a "labor of love." The spirit of the Lord's people should be the desire not only to tell others of God's mercy and the good news of the

Kingdom, but to comfort all those that mourn in Zion. The Apostle says: "Do good unto all men as ye have opportunity, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." - Gal. 6:10.

Did you give him a lift? He's a brother of man,
And bearing about all the burden he can.
Did you give him a smile? He was downcast and blue,
And the smile would have helped him to battle it through.
Did you give him your hand? He was slipping down hill,
And the world manifestly was using him ill.
Did you give him a word? Did you show him the road?
Or did you just let him go on with his load?

Did you help him along? He's a sinner like you,
But the grasp, of your hand might have carried him through.
Did you bid him good cheer? Just a word and a smile
Were what he most needed that last weary mile.
Do you know what he bore in that burden of cares
That is every man's load and that sympathy shares?
Did you try to find out what he needed from you,
Or did you just leave him to battle it through?

Do you know what it means to be losing the fight,
When a lift just in time might set everything right?
Do you know what it means -- just a clasp of a hand,
When it seems a man's borne about all he can stand?
Did you ask what it was -- why the quivering lip,
And the glistening tears down the pale cheek that slip?
Were you brother of his when the time came to be?
Did you offer to help him, or didn't you see?

Don't you know it's the part of a brother of man
To find what the grief is, and help when you can?
Did you stop when he asked you to give him a lift,
Or were you so busy you left him to drift?
Oh, I know what you say may be true, may be true
But the test of your manhood is: *What did you do?*
Did you reach out a hand? Did you find him the road?
Or did you just let him go by with his load?

- J. W. Foley.

Satan's devices are employed against those who are trying to live godly. In the Word of God Satan is pictured as a great fowler setting snares for the feet of the unwary. One of his devices is to make unimportant things seem important, thus leading some of God's dear children into thinking they are contending for the faith and for righteousness, when really they become contentious, causing strife and divisions among the brethren, and refusing to fellowship those who do not quite see and agree with them.

The Scriptures reveal that there is "one fold and one Shepherd," and that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Gal. 3:27.) The Christians are separate from the world, separate from sinners, because they have accepted salvation through the redeeming blood of Christ, and have their names "written in the Lamb's book of life," and so have become probationary members of the one true Church. Let us more and more come to see that the Church of Christ is not a sect, but is one and indivisible, united to Him, joined by a living faith in the ransom, His redemptive work.

The victory of Christ will be complete when by the grace of God the members of the Church have been transformed into the likeness of their Head, and given new bodies, divine bodies, in the first resurrection. "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15:57.) When He has attained the victory in the Church, His Body, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:43.) This victorious Christ will, rise and shine with healing in His beams, curing a sin sick world. What a glorious work lies ahead of God's people!

- *T. G. Smith.*

Patient Endurance the, Final Test

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. - James 1:4.

THE SCRIPTURES everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. In every phase of human experience we can see its need. To be just under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be unjust to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellowmen. Therefore the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humanity. God Himself possesses this quality of patience, and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next Age the Church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop the character necessary for a place on the throne with our Lord.

Patience is closely allied to love and mercy. If God were unloving, unmerciful, He would be without patience. In man's present blemished, fallen condition, patience is sadly lacking, although it is often exercised outwardly for policy's sake. This Godlike quality, like all the other qualities of character inherent in God and in all perfect beings created in His likeness, has been largely obliterated in humanity by the fall of the first pair.

In the New Testament there are two Greek words translated *patience*. One of these words signifies forbearance, longsuffering. The other carries the thought of cheerful or hopeful endurance. The latter is the word used in our text, and has a much deeper significance than attaches ordinarily to our word patience. This constancy -- the endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing manner--represents an element of character, and not merely a temporary restraint of feeling- or of action. It signifies a development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the requirement of divine wisdom and love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised in duetime to overthrow them.

It will surely be profitable for us to cultivate carefully this element of Christian character of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, and without which, His Word assures us, our character cannot be perfected. The Christian requires patient endurance to put on the whole armor of God, and having put it on, to keep it securely buckled. We need it in dealing not only with others, but also with our selves, with our own blemishes. We should always take into account the various circumstances -and conditions surrounding ourselves and others. As we look around, we see that, the world is in a condition of blight, of sin. This knowledge should give us great sympathy with humanity, without which we would have but little patience. All of our brethren in Christ, like ourselves, are by nature members of this fallen human race. Therefore we should have a great deal of patient endurance with the Lord's people, as we would have them exercise this grace toward us.

THE PATIENCE OF GOD

As the quality of justice will always persist, so will the quality of patience, though not in the sense of patient endurance of evil. God patiently works out His own glorious designs, in perfect equipoise of mind. At present this requires the exercise of patient endurance with evil, sinful conditions; and in the ages of glory to come God will, we believe, still work out His purposes in perfect patience, probably in worlds yet uninhabited.

But in the exercise of patience under present evil conditions, Wisdom must have a voice. God has declared that in His wisdom the time will come when He will cease to exercise patience toward the world. That is to say, He will no longer bear with the world in their present sinful, imperfect condition. That time has almost arrived. The great cataclysm of trouble, now about due, will sweep away the entire present order preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Then God will give men the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with Himself and righteousness before He will deal with them summarily.

The time is coming when there will be no more sin. God will have a clean universe by and by. But He will first give everybody an opportunity to rise out of sin. If they will not avail themselves of the opportunity, then God's patience, longsuffering, will cease to be operative toward such. This will not mean that God's patience has ceased, but that its activity has ceased in that direction.

God's patience has arranged the thousand years of Messiah's reign for man's blessing, and His wisdom has decided that those thousand years will be sufficient for the elimination of evil; Whoever will not learn to live righteously under those favorable conditions would never learn, and it would not be the part of divine wisdom longer to exercise patience with such. Likewise also, in our dealings with ourselves and others, there is a limit to the proper exercise of patience -- longsuffering. We should not be patient with ourselves beyond a certain point. There are circumstances in which we would- properly feel that we should have *known* better and should have *done* better than we did.

LET US JUDGE OURSELVES

If a child of God realizes that he has been derelict with himself, he should say, I will not be patient with myself any further. I will take myself in hand and conquer this weakness which I have permitted in a measure to assert itself to the weakening of my own character and probably 'to the discomfort and pain of others. I cannot do this in my own unaided strength, but by the grace of the Lord I am determined to overcome in this matter.

Parents require much patience, forbearance, in dealing with their children. The limit of patience might differ in regard to different children. There fore the wise parent will judge how nearly each child has been doing the right thing, and how well each has received and profited by instruction. If he finds that any child of his is wilfully doing wrong, he should not continue to be patient, but should administer the rod. This would not mean that the parent had ceased to be patient. He might have patience the next day with the same child, and subsequently the application of the rod might come again. We are rather to be too patient, too sympathetic, than to have too, little patience, too little sympathy. Remembering our own weaknesses, we are to exercise patience toward others who are seeking to overcome their imperfections, even as we are seeking to overcome our own. We all need that patience, forbearance, be exercised toward us.

OUR LORD'S LESSONS ON PATIENT ENDURANCE

Recurring to the word patience as used in our text, let us glance backward to our Lord's Parable of the Sower, as recorded in Luke 8. In verse 15 we read, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," patient endurance, constancy. The thought here is that to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept in His Kingdom we must do more than to receive the Word of His Testimony, 'even though we receive it with joy. It means more; for the stony ground class at first thus received it. For a brief time these seemed to give evidence of fruitfulness and vigor; but when the hot sun of persecution arose, they withered away, because of lack of depth of soil.

In this parable the Lord shows that patient endurance, constancy, is the final test of character. It follows after the receiving and the sprouting of the seed; it follows after love, hope, joy and faith have caused the seed to spring forth and begin to bear fruit. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the fruit may be developed and thoroughly ripened, that the grain may be made ready for the garner. Ah, how important this grace is seen to be, in the light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be *cheerful*. We cannot suppose that He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even when He saw them bearing much for His sake, if they endured it in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind.

Those who thus endure surely would not be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment found expression in the words, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O My God!" All of the royal priesthood are sacrificers, as was our great Chief Priest; and God who accepts our sacrifices through the merit of our dear Redeemer, informs us that He loves a *cheerful* giver -- one who performs his sacrifices gladly, with a willing heart. This does not mean that our bodies will never grow weary; but that our spirit will rejoice in the privilege of suffering weariness of the flesh in so noble and wonderful a service. But if our Father should see best to lay us aside from active work for a time, when our hearts are longing to serve, this too will be an opportunity to endure cheerfully His will for us. It may also be a test of our full submission of our wills to His, and thus be an important stepping stone upward toward the Kingdom glories and privileges.

The other instance in which the Lord used this word patience, or patient endurance, is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling His followers that they must expect tribulations as the result of being His disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, when Satan is the prince of this world. They must expect opposition from various quarters; but He assured them that nevertheless they would be fully under divine care and protection, even though persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful constancy] possess ye your souls." - Luke 21:19.

Our faith and our trust in the Lord and His gracious promises should be so strong and unwavering that they will far more than counterbalance the oppositions of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants. So implicit should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all 'these' persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of His providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as living stones for the glorious Temple which He is constructing, and which is now so soon, we believe, to be set up.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and can possess our souls, our lives, as New Creatures, . even amidst tribulations, with cheerful endurance. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to whom God has given the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, or by anything that man can, do unto us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting every experience that He permits to come to us as ministrations of His providence for our, ultimate good and His glory.

THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENT ENDURANCE

Let us here examine carefully into the reason why it is necessary for us to develop this grace; of patient endurance. It appears that the development of this quality is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom, and one of the same conditions required of Him. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial Kingdom, *in*

joint-heirship with the Only Begotten Son of God, *our* great Redeemer. That will be a mighty work and it is eminently proper that Jehovah should require that those whom He shall account worthy of that exalted position shall not only appreciate His goodness and His glorious character, and prefer His service to sin and iniquity, but demonstrate their thorough loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to His will to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer *on* behalf of these principles. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the individual to have an established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful, endurance even unto death would be necessary to demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we were able to make diamonds out of some plastic material with the brilliancy of the real diamond; and suppose that they became hard, but not so hard as the genuine diamond. Would these imitation diamonds have the value of the true diamond? By no means. If they were subjected to severe pressure, they would be crushed. And so with the Christian. If we supposed him possessed of every grace of character that could belong to the sons of God, save this one of firmness, endurance, he would not be fit to be amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence we see the necessity of the Lord's demand that patient, cheerful endurance shall be a characteristic *of* each one, who shall be accepted to a place in His Royal Diadem.

The importance of this quality in the Christian character is again emphasized by the Apostle Paul. In *His* Epistle to Titus (Titus 2:2), when enumerating the character qualities of an advanced Christian, he declares that they must be "vigilant, grave, temperate, sound *in* faith, in love, in patience." The final test of patient endurance must be passed before we can be accepted as of the Very Elect.

The same Apostle in writing to Timothy, thus reminds him, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patient endurance." We need this important grace more and more as *we* speed along on our race course and near the end of the *way*. Feet grow weary; trials and testings abound; therefore *we* need to "gird up the loins of our mind" and, looking to our great Exemplar for the needed inspiration and strength, to set our faces like a flint for the home stretch.

TRIALS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL

Our,, ability and strength to patiently endure should increase *as* we progress in the narrow way. *We* should grow "strong in the Lord and *in* the power of His might. But we cannot possibly develop this essential trait of character without trials-experiences intended to call for the exercise of cheerful endurance So let us not think it strange if we are called upon to pass through protracted trials which make necessary the nerving of ourselves to *bear*. But let us repeat that the virtue is not merely in the bearing; for the *world* has much to bear, but it is particularly in the *manner* in which we endure. At heart we must be sweet and submissive -- in fullest harmony with the Lord's processes of development. This may be hard at times; but His grace will be sufficient, if we constantly apply for it. "Having done all," let us "stand!"

Ah, yes! We can see *a* new reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial *as* our Master had His -- under an evil environment -- that *we* might not only have all the necessary *qualities* of Christian character, but have them rooted, grounded, fixed, established.

The Apostle James likewise draws our attention to the importance of this quality. Hee says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience" that is to say, if our faith stands the trial, it will work out in our character this patient endurance. On the other hand, if we do not attain this development, it

will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, and that we are not fit for the Kingdom. Thus we see clearly what a great mistake has been made among Christian people in general in supposing that religion is a thing to be gotten suddenly as an answer to prayer, or by going to the mourner's bench, or by standing up for prayers, or in response to some divine or human appeal—just as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, the step of repentance from sin and justification is only the beginning, and not the end, of the Christian way. The next step is consecration of ourselves and our all to God. But this also is far from the end. Not only must we go on and on, to the attainment of faith, fortitude, self-control, meekness and love, but having attained all these, we must *patiently endure*. We must "run with patience [cheerful endurance] the race set before us." Or, to use another figure of speech, it is merely starting in the School of Christ; merely having our names enrolled as pupils, to be taught of the Lord.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

The Church of the Philadelphia period were promised of the Lord that because of their faithfulness, because they had "kept the Word of My patience," they should be kept from "the hour of temptation" which was to come upon all the world a little later. The Church of Laodicea -- the Church of our day -- is not kept from entering into the "hour of temptation"; but we may be sure that we will be kept while *in* it, if we are faithful and true. Our dear Lord's special message to the Laodicean phase of the Church has been, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne." - Revelation 3:20, 21.

Though we are not spared from this hour of temptation, we have a counterbalancing blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's parousia.* We may have His instruction, His dispensing to us of spiritual food, "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree never before enjoyed by His saints. And, as we might expect, this greatest favor is offset by the subtle and severe trials and testings of this special "hour of temptation." If there was ever a time when patient endurance was needed by the Lord's faithful, it is *now*. If ever they needed the counsel, "In your *patience* possess ye your souls," they need it *now*. Those who are able to *patiently endure will stand* in this evil day. All others will fall. As the Apostle forewarned us, the fiery ordeals of this day "will try every man's work, of what sort it is."

* Any one interested in the Scriptural evidences that our Lord has now returned in the manner foretold, as "a thief in the night," will be sent the "Parousia" booklet, upon receipt of 10 cents.

We find this quality of patient endurance lacking everywhere throughout Christendom today, even among the majority of the professed followers of Christ. It is becoming more and more scarce. Few wish to endure anything—for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake, or for any one else's sake; and if endurance of anything unpleasant is absolutely necessary, the trial *is* borne with much of impatience, *complaint* and chafing. Moreover, a spirit of defiance and rebellion against everything like self-denial or resignation, a spirit of intense bitterness, is daily growing in the hearts of mankind.

This general tendency of the civilized world today toward non-endurance, impatience and rebellion against restraint necessarily has its influence upon those who are seeking to walk in the narrow way. Only by divine grace can this tendency be successfully resisted, and progress be made toward the development of the likeness of Christ. This special grace, needed today by the Lord's children, will be withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord, following in

the footsteps of Jesus. It *is*, because the professed followers of Christ are living so far from Him that we see today the tendencies are developing which we have noted amongst those who profess His name.

This spirit so prevalent is at the bottom of mob violence which is kept down largely by military force, in the outbreaks against law and order which we hear of so frequently. We may expect this spirit to continue to grow. There is *a* feeling amongst the masses that in the past they have been too patient, not sufficiently aggressive -- the feeling that if they had taken things into their own hands long ago -- present conditions might have been averted. But those who have kept the Lord's Word of patient endurance, who have sought from Him the wisdom from on High, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and of good fruits," have learned that He has a due time in which His purposes shall be accomplished, and they are willing to abide His time patiently, knowing that it is best. They have learned that

"God's plans, like lilies white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the hidden heart of gold."

The Apostle counsels us respecting this "hour of temptation" which is now upon us. Its besetments and trials will be many, and some of them *will* be so subtle and deceptive that all who are not thoroughly, rooted and grounded in the Truth will be carried away by the false arguments of those whom Satan is now permitted to use as his agents in trying all those who dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

ST. PAUL'S PICTURE OF PRESENT CONDITIONS

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all, for all of Christendom are not upon the same plane -- mentally, morally or physically. The trial as it is coming upon Christendom in general, however, *is* pictured by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. He here enumerates certain characteristics of this "hour of temptation." He says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves-covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers [enticers to strife], incontinent [not under restraint, impetuous], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors [those who cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations], heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having *a form* of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

This is a graphic picture of present day conditions *in* the Christian world, so-called. Because they received not the Truth in the love of it, therefore God has sent them "strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, and should be condemned thereby. This hour of temptation has not yet reached its greatest intensity, but we believe this stage will be reached in a very short time.. Blessed are all they who have made the Lord, "even the most High, their Habitation." These shall not be moved; yet many of them will pass through most severe trials and temptations. Through the mails we learn of the struggles and prayers of many of God's children -- some because of their own imperfections and frailties, and some because of the imperfections of others; and still others are tried because of earthly cares and burdens which they seem unable to fully overcome or to cast upon the Lord.

LET US HAVE THE PROPER FEAR

We sympathize with these dear *ones*, and counsel them as best we can, remembering the Master's words, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." (Luke 6:21.) Our heart is especially solicitous *for* those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not -- who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches" -- whose love for the Truth seems to be growing., *cooler instead* of hotter, and who seem to *feel* less and *see less* than they did years ago. These seem to be sleeping when they should -be watching and praying; and this hour of trial, we fear, is finding them unprepared; while some who are weeping, praying and striving are more like our dear Master *in* Gethsemane; and like Him, they will be strengthened. for the final trial.

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each, other, and counting the prize held out to us as far dearer and more precious than all else beside, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left to us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's dear children that their welfare will be our chief concern; and this will mean our own spiritual health. Yet we must not allow our love even for the brethren to hinder our fullest confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in the choice of His Bride, even though siftings should take from us some whose fellowship we have cherished.

Let *us* patiently hold on our way -- this blessed *way!* Let us do with our might what our hands find to do. Soon will come the Harvest Home! Soon, if faithful, we shall gather, as a glorious company, to go out no more forever. We shall come with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us! But let us remember that "we have need of *patience, that* after. we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise"! - Heb. 10:36.

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning Day!

"Then peace, my heart! and hush; my tongue!
Be calm, my troubled breast;
Each passing hour prepares thee more
For everlasting rest!"

- R5650, *March* 15, 1915.

"Adoration"

"Adoration is devout meditation on what Jehovah is the praise of the divine perfection. Thanksgiving is delighted meditation on what the Lord has done for us, or others. Praise for His mercies. There is a gracefulness and majesty in habitual gratitude. It is pleasant. It is the full heart, the praising disposition that makes the life blessed.

"Thanksgiving must flow from a full spring. The best way to secure it is to fill the mind with worthy themes. They who have accustomed themselves to walk on lofty levels within sight of the majesty of God and beside the cataract of "Redemptive Love" their haunts are alpine heights, not valley paths, nor the streets of a city. Their sanctuary is spacious. Their feet are often found on Calvary's hill. The light of the "cross" shines about them, and the sight of the dying Savior awes them into tremulous love.

"I will thank Him for the pleasures given me through my senses, for the glory of the thunder, for the magnificence of music, the singing of birds, and laughter of children. I will thank Him for the pleasures of seeing, for the delights through color, for the awe of the sunset, the beauty of flowers, the smile of friendship, and the look of love, for the changing beauty of the clouds, for the wild roses in the hedges, for the form and beauty of birds, for leaves on the trees, and the scent of flowers. But what shall we say when we think of our redemption and of the hope of life to come? What does it mean? That I am a member of Christ, and a child of God, that Christ loved me and gave Himself for me that there is pardon for all my sins, that I have means of 'grace, and the hope of glory. What can I say to all this, but 'Praise the Lord O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all my sin and healeth all my diseases. Who saveth thy life from destruction and crowneth thee with loving - kindness."

- *Selected.*

The Perfecting of the Saints

"The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." - 1 Thess. 3:12, 13.

THESE WORDS are addressed to saints; and saintship, despite the beliefs of many, is not conditioned upon being perfect in thought, word, and deed, but upon covenant relationship with God. Covenant relationship during this Age is one of sacrifice, made possible by our Redeemer, through whose merit, our offering is reckoned perfect-"A living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God." (Rom. 12:1.) This special -covenant class, foreseen in the purpose of God, is brought to our attention in Psalm 50:5; where in prophetic command God says, "Gather My saints together unto Me: those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

God does not covenant with sinners (John 9:31); and so, before He could enter into an agreement with one who is by inheritance a-sinner, some provision must be made whereby that one may be considered righteous in His sight. Such a provision was made; and for this reason, Paul can say: "There is therefore now *no* condemnation to them that are in Christ - Jesus." (Rom. 8:1.) This does not mean that the one justified has become sinless, or that he may even hope to become sinless so long as he must needs operate through these imperfect human bodies.

Paul, painfully aware of this fact, tells us that even though 'his whole desire was to righteousness, evil was present with him: he could not- do the things that he would; and he cries, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" Then he gives the answer-the solution that has comforted the heart of -every true believer who, like Paul, has dedicated his life to the good fight of faith: "I thank God [for deliverance] through Jesus Christ our Lord. So: then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Paul's words are a clear intimation that it is from the standpoint of his will, his heart's desire, that God judges him, and not according to the weaknesses of his flesh.

The Apostle John recognized this same fact; and in his first epistle (written about 90 A. D., when he was nearing the close of his long saintly warfare) , declared that, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful {having promised] *and* just [the satisfaction for our sins having been provided through Christ] to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all *unrighteousness*." - 1 John 1:8, 9.

In the light of these facts (actual imperfection *on* the one hand and imputed righteousness on the other) , *what are we to understand from the words of . our text? Is* imputed righteousness all that is required to make us increase and abound in love? No, there is nothing gained by imputed righteousness as an end in itself. The justified standing God grants us is for the purpose of enabling us to present our "bodies an acceptable sacrifice" which, when accepted by the Father, as indicated in our begetting by the Holy Spirit, opens up, to us the hope of attaining to the divine nature, if and when we prove responsive to the operation of His Spirit, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight. Imputed righteousness, therefore, has been granted solely for the purpose of making it possible to select and perfect a class who become saints through a covenant of sacrifice that obligates them to walk in the footsteps of their Lord. And if faithful in the performance of this covenant, they are promised a share in His glory and dominion. "If any man will come after *Me* [said Jesus], let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." "If we suffer [with Him], we *shall* also reign with Him." - Matt.16: 24; 2 Tim. 2:12.

MADE PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING

We read concerning our Lord, who is declared to have been holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and undefiled, as a man, that He "was made perfect through the things that He suffered." (Heb. 5:8, 9.) It is evident therefore, since He was already perfect as a man, that this perfecting must relate to Him as a New Creature; and if such a work was necessary in the case of Jesus, we can begin to realize what a great transformation must also take place in us, if we are to "be like Him and see Him as He is." This transformation is not, a perfecting of these physical bodies, but has to do with the development of the New Creature which, when the work is completed, *will* be clothed with the nature of God. "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the *first-born* among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29.) While this Scripture may include the contemplated change in nature that will be ours, its primary application into the work of the Holy Spirit in transforming our characters until we become like our Lord, and this cannot be done without suffering.

Our text says, "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love." We are apt to forget that the pattern of our development is God's work, and we take upon ourselves a responsibility which we are wholly unable to carry. The Jew under the Law was obligated to the keeping of a covenant that would grant life *only* through perfect works of the flesh. But they found that this *could* not be done, for the Law made *no* allowance for human frailty -- it was "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"; consequently, they were burdened, heavy laden; the agreement they made through Moses was a yoke too heavy to bear.

When Jesus began His ministry, He offered them release: "Come unto Me, ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me: . . . for My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30.) Those who were Israelites indeed, and were conscientious in their endeavors to keep the Law, could appreciate to some extent the gracious opportunity that was being offered them, but the rest indifferent or insincere, were blinded.

We as Christians, must take heed that we do not burden ourselves as these Jews were burdened; we are not able to commend ourselves to God by perfect work. Satan would like nothing better than to have us think that we must work out our own salvation, with fear and trembling, apart from God's aid; but such is not the case, "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do His good pleasure." But Satan might argue, Do not the Scriptures inculcate the requirement of perfect works when they say: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48)? and is it not the Christian's work that is referred to when we read: "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure"? - 1 John 3:3.

We would not for one moment convey the thought that these admonitions of the Lord's Word do riot mean what they say, for they do: the purity of God is the ideal set before, us, and we dare not lower that standard.. But how is it possible for us to attain to such a degree of perfection?

It will be recalled that the Galatian brethren were having trouble along this line through the perversion of the Gospel by Judaizing teachers, and Paul said to them, (Gal. 3:3), "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

You will note that the Apostle John, in the same Epistle in which he says: "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not," also says, "If we say we do not sin, we deceive ourselves." Then again in this same Epistle he says: "Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he *cannot* sin because he is begotten of God."

Of one thing we may be sure: John does not here contradict himself, but states facts which, when rightly understood, are in perfect harmony. All of God's work being perfect, it follows that that which is begotten of Him must also be perfect; and as long, as that seed remains in us, it remains perfect. But it is possible to lose this seed; we have this treasure in earthen vessels that are very imperfect; and so this seed, begotten in us, must needs continually struggle in its endeavor to bring the old mind and body into subjection. But even when subjected, our works will still be imperfect, for faulty tools cannot produce perfect results.

The struggle that the 'new mind has in subduing the flesh is necessary to its development and establishing, that it may eventually come to the birth. If this were not true, then our Lord need never have gone through three and a half years of trial and suffering.

But that period was necessary to His development as a New Creature, and the same is true of the Body members. God is not perfecting these 'human bodies, but is bringing forth unto perfection a New Creation.

In this work of development, we do well to keep in mind the fact that God does not do for us the things we are able to do for ourselves. If we were able to perfect ourselves, then Paul would never have said, "The Lord make you to increase and abound"; consequently, if we gain a place in the Kingdom, the glory of that achievement will not belong unto us, but unto the Lord. Paul would have us understand that "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." - Eph. 2:10.

It is only when we are fully aware of this fact that we are in a proper condition of mind and heart to permit the Father to work in us that which is well pleasing in His sight. We must realize that we are dependent upon Him to shape our course -- to direct our path in life, in order that His Spirit may transform us into the image of His Son. It is not possible for us to know what we need in the way of experience or chastisement; nor what things constitute means of grace unto us; we do not know even how far we may have progressed in the transforming of our characters; but we do know that if we will continue, to cooperate with Him in this work of His Spirit, we can fully trust Him to finish the work He has begun in us, for this is His promise. This, then, is the thought expressed in our text: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love."

LOVE THE END SOUGHT

But why does the Apostle mention only "love", why not faith, hope, doctrine, etc.? It is because love is the only thing that constitutes an end in itself, God is love, and we must 'become Godlike. Paul's argument in 1 Cor. 13 shows that all other things are valuable only in so far as they help perfect love in us. His argument is not intended to deprecate knowledge or faith or hope or pure doctrine, for to do so would be to show a lack of appreciation for the helps that God has given us. A child of God should have no sympathy with the attitude that views doctrine as only a "bone for contention." It is not doctrine that causes unseemly controversy, it is the lack of the Lord's spirit in its discussion. To use doctrine as a club against our brethren, is not to contend earnestly for the faith, but with the faith, as with a weapon to hurt those in God's family whom we should seek to help. The dark ages are a monument to the results of false doctrine,, but pure doctrine, rightly used, !is of great, assistance to growth in love.

While God is not concerned with perfecting these old bodies in which we tabernacle, yet, through His overruling providence, they prove very valuable to us by way of exercise in our development as New Creatures; for our cooperation with God is involved, to a large extent, with our struggle to

keep these bodies in subjection to His will. This struggle is as necessary to our development, as is the struggle of the larvae, in order that it may emerge from the cocoon a fully developed butterfly. Without this struggle, it would never fly; and, likewise, if we did not have the world and the flesh to struggle with, we would never develop hardness as good soldiers.

EXAMPLE A BETTER TEACHER THAN PRECEPT

It is important that we note the stress that our text puts upon example as an aid in the cultivation of the graces of character -- "Abound in love, one toward another and toward all men, *even as we do toward* you." In a comparison of precept and example, it is generally conceded that example is the better teacher. The thing with which Jesus most found fault with the Pharisees was, that they told others what to do, but did not practice what they preached. Jesus, on the other hand, left "us an example, that we should follow His steps." This example was the most lasting and effective lesson He could give us, in that it demonstrates how to perform the precepts He has given us; and Paul, following in His footsteps could say: "Even as we do toward you."

MEANS OF GRACE

There are various means of grace through which God operates in making our love to increase and abound; and inasmuch as He requires our cooperation in this work, it behooves us to know what these are. First in importance, is the Word of God. The development and requirements of the New Creature are very much like those of the natural man. We require food on which to grow; water with which to cleanse and renew the vital fluids; air with which to oxygenize and purify the blood (life); exercise to keep the various functions of the body healthy and active; and rest to recuperate the physical powers.

The analogy is clear. The Word of God is both food and drink to the new mind, and if study and meditation upon that Word are neglected, development will cease, and if neglected too long, we sicken and die. Then the New Creature's breath of life, the Holy Spirit, is supplied us through the Word. Jesus said: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:36.) Then too, faith, the basis or soil, so to speak, in which we grow, "Cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) Hope, likewise, "The anchor of our souls within the veil," is based upon the promises of God's Word. Joy and peace also exist because of belief in that Word, for we read in Rom. 15:4, 13 that, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.... Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is evident also that the Word is the basis for our love, for "We are begotten by the Word of Truth," and God's spirit is received through that begetting. Furthermore, feeding upon the Word of Truth makes us to grow in spirit stature; and the more of the Spirit that we have, the more fruitage our lives will show, for Paul tells *us* that "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," etc. Since then, through the Word we receive the Spirit, the Word must of necessity, be the basis for love and all spiritual grace. "But as touching brotherly *love*, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught *of God* to love one another"; taught through the precepts and examples of the Word. "Now abideth faith, hope and love." Elsewhere Paul shows that this is the order in which these appear in our lives; for "The hearing of the Word brings faith" (Rom. 10:17) , and "Faith is the basis of things hoped for" (Heb. 11:1), and "Hope maketh not ashamed *because* the love of God [by this means] is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." - Rom. 5:5.

Other means of grace that minister to our development are *God's Providences*, by which our course in life is directed; His *chastenings*, which mellow and ripen us; and *fellowship* with those of life precious faith, which is often the means by which opportunity is provided for the exercise of the graces of character. In this connection we would also note the Scriptural badge of a Christian, a badge that he should always wear: It is not some form of dress, a rosary hung about the neck, nor even a cross and crown pin. No, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Aside from this, all other badges are of very little significance.

In addition to the many admonitions to love, which the Bible sets forth, there is recorded for us God's own example; and we are told that if we will continually hold this up before our minds, and meditate upon the glory and beauty of character revealed therein, we will be changed into the same image. "We all with open face [the veil that darkens the faces of unbelievers having been taken away], beholding as in a glass [the mirror of God's Word] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the *same image*, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.) This shows that it is God's Spirit, operating upon our minds and hearts, as we study and meditate upon His Word, that brings about the transformation in our lives. It is God, therefore, that makes us to increase and abound in love.

The greatest example we have of *love* in action, is the gift of God's only begotten Son. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." But His grace did not end here; for not only did He sacrifice the dearest treasure of His heart, but He also provided that those *who* would learn to appreciate and manifest a like spirit, might be given the opportunity of becoming joint heirs with His son. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." - 1 John 3:1, 2.

What effect is the sublime hope having upon our lives? In the next verse, John says: "Every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure." True faith and hope will cause us to put forth every effort to become Godlike; and although we are rewarded according to our faith, yet God judges the quality of that faith by the effort that we put forth to bring both mind and body into subjection to the perfect law of love. The Scriptures agree with the saying that "Actions speak louder than words," for we read: "Hereby perceive we the love of Christ, *because* He laid down His life for us. And," continues the Apostle, "we [followers in His footsteps] ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Real love will find ways to express itself.

Divine Providence, we believe, ranks second in the work of establishing our hearts in love. When Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, he is telling us that God, through His providences, is, supervising and overruling all the circumstances and experiences of our lives. If, then, we accept our experiences as coming from the Father, and are rightly exercised thereby, they will unfailingly work out to our good. Satan may seek to harm, and foes may hate and friends may scorn, but if God be for us, who can be against us?

The means of grace we experience in the chastenings of the Lord, may at times result from, our own wrong doing, but usually they are administered as a spiritual tonic. "Ye have forgotten," says Paul, "the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children: My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." - Heb. 12:6.

Peter says: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning- the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." - 1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

But as Paul observes: "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11.) And so it is that the Lord works in us to make us to increase and abound in love.

Love is the goal for which we strive -- the "end of the commandment." But, like a beautifully finished photograph, it must be fixed, made permanent. And so our text says, "To the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God." It is not enough, therefore, that the image of love be developed in our hearts; we must be unalterably fixed in love and righteousness. And the trials and difficulties that attend our course, are no doubt intended to accomplish this in us. Realizing this fact, we should patiently endure, and faith and hope should enable us to rejoice therein, for it is wonderful to confidently expect that the Lord will stablish our hearts in holiness, and present us before the throne of His glory without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

PHOTOGRAPHY AS AN ILLUSTRATION

The processes in the art of photography furnish us a very good illustration of the steps that are necessary in our development. The *uncoated film* would represent us in our fallen state-unfit for the Master's purpose. The coating of *silver nitrate*, which makes the film a suitable medium for the photographer's use, might well represent the imputed righteousness of Christ, which makes us suitable material for the Father's use.

The placing of the film in the camera, and its exposure to the light rays, which convey the image desired on the film, would illustrate, first: the step of consecration which brings us into Christ; and second, the begetting of the Holy Spirit which impregnates us as the children of light. The image is now on the film, though unperceived, and if carelessly exposed to the light of day, it will be ruined; it cannot endure unlimited light. Neither could we endure to be ushered immediately into the divine presence following our begetting, for there is much work to be done with us, just as there is with a film following its exposure to the image-bearing rays of light, and it would be premature at this point to expect any permanent results.

Following exposure, the film is passed through a developing process which brings out the picture so that every detail stands out clearly. This fitly illustrates the development that takes place in us, perfecting the New Creature to the point where every detail of the image of Christ stands out clearly in the sight of the Father. The film cannot develop of itself, but must, be subjected to the knowledge and skill of the photographer, who has to exercise considerable patience with films that curl and twist. Likewise, the glory in the development of the New Creation will not belong unto it, but unto the Lord, who alone has the necessary knowledge and skill to perform the task, and the patience to continue with it when we fail to restrain the perversity of these old minds and bodies.

When the photographer sees that he has a perfect image on the film, he then proceeds to stablish or fix that image so that no amount of exposure will cause it to fade. This he does by subjecting it to an acid bath. God does the same thing with us; He subjects us to experiences that fix in our hearts the image of His Son so that no amount of exposure or temptation could ever cause us to change. Those experiences sometimes seem very acid, very trying.

In completing the film, the photographer has a purpose in view: namely, the reproducing of the image upon sensitized paper. This reproduction or printing, as the process is called, is accomplished by the infiltration of light through the film, and by this process an unlimited number of photographs can be made. Likewise, when God has finished with the development and establishing of the New Creation, the light of the glory of His character will flow through it to perfect His image in the willing and obedient of mankind, so that all may know and reflect His glory.

The experiences of the Church, and the events in the world, indicate that our Lord is present; and that for some time now, He has been trying the hearts, sifting us as wheat, that He might demonstrate who are the ones that are established in love, and who still come short of that image. If under these tests and trials we find that we are not fully established, we must not lose courage or give up the fight, but must remember that "He who has begun a good work in us, will also finish it" if we will continue to trust Him and in meekness strive to do His will.

"Now may the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, *make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him* be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

- *John T. Read.*

Encouraging Messages

[We regret there has been a delay in finding space for the following letter.]

Dear Brethren in Christ:

In reading the letter by Brother C. J. C. of Athens, Greece, in the March issue of the "Herald," I could not help but lift up my heart in gratitude to a gracious Father who in His love has seen fit to spare us thus far the destruction and want of war in this, our country. And at the same time I have been reflecting upon the statement in Romans 15:25, 26, concerning Paul's bringing the contribution of the Church to the poor saints at Jerusalem. It was an offering of the love and devotion of the Gentile believers to their Jewish brethren in Christ residing at Jerusalem. What a blessed portion is ours who are able to minister to some of the Lord's poor, if we will avail ourselves of this opportunity, even as the early Church did in the days of Paul.

"And God who continually supplies seed for the sower and bread for eating, will supply you with seed and multiply it, and will cause your almsgiving to yield a plentiful harvest." (2 Cor. 9:10, Weymouth.) In Psalms 127:1, we read: "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

But we are assured that God will increase the benefits of our almsgiving, not only to the receiver but also to the giver. For we read further, "May you be abundantly enriched so as to show all liberality, such as through our instrumentality brings thanksgiving to God. For the service rendered in this sacred gift not only helps to relieve the wants of God's people; but it is also rich in its results and awakens a chorus of thanksgiving to God." - 2 Cor. 9:11, 12, Weymouth.

My reflections have been thus: God has favored us above many others. We are aware of the need of our brethren in war-torn Europe. We have the promise of God's blessing to those that will minister to the poor. The following points are made by Paul in his beautiful treatise on giving to the poor saints in 2 Corinthians 9:

First: We are supplying their needs.

Second: We are assured that God will increase the benefit of it.

Third: We will be enriched in every way ourselves. Fourth: It will evoke thanksgiving to God in the hearts of other saints.

Fifth: It will redound to the glory of God.

Sixth, and last: It will cause other saints to bear us up in prayer to God.

What a wealth of blessing is ours! Shall we not avail ourselves of this blessed portion to minister to the necessity of the saints? - Rom. 12:13.

"For by the practical proof of it which you exhibit in this service, you cause God to be extolled for your fidelity to your professed adherence to the Good News of the Christ, and for the liberality of your contributions for them and for all who are in need, while they themselves also in supplication on your behalf pour out their longing love towards you because of God's surpassing grace which is resting upon you. Thanks be to God for His unspeakably precious Gift." - 2 Cor. 9:13-15, Weymouth.

With these precious promises in mind, we are constrained to send a love offering for the poor saints in war devastated Europe. . . . I could wish that all the friends would make a careful reading of the ninth chapter of Second Corinthians and then make it a matter of prayer to see what part the Lord would have them to share in this ministry of giving to the necessity of the poor saints, so that they too will feel the deep joy of ministering to some of the Lord's own.

Yours by His Grace,

Brother and Sister F. F. -- N. J.

Dear Brethren:

For some time I have been wanting to write the Editors of the "Herald" and get their opinion as to the best translations of both the Old and the New Testaments. May I have the consensus of opinion of the editorial staff as to the best translations. So far, as to my own opinion, I hold Rotherham as the "king" of versions, both for the Old as well as the New Testament; as second choice I consider the Interlinear word for word of the Diaglott, together with Young's Concise Critical Comments; and as third choice I have selected a good free translation to balance the literalness of the other three mentioned above. And this free translation I have selected is Weymouth's third edition, without Notes. As an *extremely free* translation, along with Weymouth's (that is of the letters of St. Paul only) I use Arthur S. Way's, "The Letters of St. Paul and Hebrews."

I consider on the four Gospels, the translation of C. C. Torrey as very fine. His renderings are so much in keeping with the context as a good translation should be, and it is one of the latest. But as one of the very latest and perhaps the best translations of the New Testament it appears that the New Revision of the Revised American Standard Version . . . may prove to be the ideal translation. But since it is to be a free translation I would have to examine it before recommending it.

With much Christian love, I am,
Your brother by His grace,
L. C. -- Wash.

Dear Brethren:

There was a time when I wrote quite often, expressing my devotion to the "Herald." For several years I have been ill most of the time, and not capable of writing much. The "Herald" is one of my first loves and still remains the same. I read the back issues and find such articles so interesting that it is like reading the Bible anew. I know too that some of your help have "gone on before." We will go on in the blessed hope of meeting our brethren soon, as the night is far spent and the Day is dawning when our trials and pains are over, our journey ended. "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus." Bring peace to the groaning creation.

Your sister and friend,
Mrs. H. R. -- Ill.

Recently Deceased

Mr. J. Salisbury, Melbourne, Aus.
Mr. Edwin F. Sowdon, Melbourne, Aus.
Laura H. Pringle, Chicago, Ill. - -(July).
Mr. L. H. Bender, Napa, Calif. - (September).
Mrs. Elsie Butler, Taneyville, Mo. - (September).
Mr. W. A. Buhl, Coshocton, Ohio-(October).
Mr. S. D. Dills, Sharon, Pa. - (October).
Mr. C. E. Pye, Halifax, N. S. - (October).