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Pentecost

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come then were all with one accord in one place"-Acts 2:1

THE ORIGINAL national festivals established by the Mosaic law were three in number "Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty; every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee." (Deut. 16:16, 17.) The same three festivals are elsewhere prescribed. (See Exod. 23:14-17; 34:18, 22, 23; Lev. 23.) And although other festivals were added in later times, it is to the deep religious character of these three that we attribute the salutary influence which fostered the spirit of unity amongst the Hebrew people.

The second of these great national festivals was that known to us by the name of the feast of Pentecost. In the law of Moses it is called "the feast of the harvest, the first-fruits of thy labors"; also "the **feast of weeks**"; that is, the feast celebrated the day after the completion of seven weeks from the second day of the Passover, when the sheaf of the first-fruits of the harvest was presented before the Lord (Lev. 23:15): in other words, the feast occurring fifty days after the second day of the Passover. Hence its later Hebrew name, day of **fifty**, which becomes in Greek, day of the **Pentecost** (Greek, "**pentekoste**," fifty). - See Exod. 23:16; Lev. 23:15-21; Num. 28:26-31; Deut. 16:9-12.

The day of Pentecost was properly the celebration of the close of the harvest of wheat and barley. As a sheaf of the ripening harvest had been presented at the sanctuary on the second day of the Passover, as an acknowledgment that it was God's gift, and as such belonged to Him, so now two wave-loaves of fine flour, made from the gathered harvest and baked with leaven, were presented before Jehovah. This was the distinguishing rite of the feast. The loaves were made with leaven because they were not intended for the altar, but were a thanksgiving offering for God's bounty in furnishing food for His people. At the same time the priests were commanded to offer seven lambs of the first year, one bullock, and two rams, as a burnt-offering, with the customary meat and drink offerings also one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, and two lambs of the first year as a

peace-offering. On the same day was a holy convocation, and all servile labor was forbidden. It was a joyous festival to the Lord, every one being enjoined to bring with him a free-will offering, according as God had blessed him, and to eat it at the sanctuary with his children, his servants, the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.

The Jews also called it "the feast of the joy of the law," as occurring, according to their tradition, on the very day when the law was given from Mount Sinai, the fiftieth of the Exodus, from the night of the first Passover. It must be acknowledged, however, that this cannot be clearly made out from the sacred record, nor is there any reference to such coincidence in the Old Testament. God, however, honored the day in a preeminent manner by choosing it as the time for the gift of the holy spirit, and thus for the inauguration of the Christian dispensation. The Jewish tradition, nevertheless, does beautifully cause the feast of Pentecost to associate the old dispensation of the law with the new dispensation of the Gospel; the organization of the Old Testament church under Moses with a partial ministry of the spirit, with its reorganization under the apostles with the fulness of the holy spirit.

Waiting for the Promise

It was on this day that we find the disciples, in the words of our text, gathered "with one accord in one place," and thus included probably not only the apostles but also the one hundred and twenty mentioned in Acts 1:15. Ten days before, the apostles had witnessed the ascension of Him whom they loved. During the forty days since His resurrection, through His various manifestations, they had gradually realized His change from human to the divine nature. He was raised from the dead a life-giving spirit-being (1 Cor. 15:45) and was no longer a man, of the earth, earthy. He was no longer human in any sense or degree, but the full implications of His change were as yet unperceived by the disciples, as we note from their question recorded in Acts 1:6. True, He had already breathed on them, saying, "Receive ye the holy spirit." (John 20:22.) We may not speak with certainty as to the meaning of this, but the relationship was incomplete according to the plan and purpose of God, for He soon "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me." (Acts 1:4; Luke 24:49.) The "promise of the Father" was of the spirit, but evidently concerning that yet unexperienced ministry of the spirit coming "upon" them for power. With this parting instruction, the Son of God was received from their sight, nevermore to be seen until that happy day, "face-to-face in all His glory."

And now for ten days they had "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," - awaiting that they knew not. Of the place where they had assembled, nothing is known. "Commentators have been much divided in their conjectures about it. Some have supposed it was in the upper room mentioned (Acts 1 :13); others, that it was a room in the temple; others, that it was in a synagogue; others, that it was in the promiscuous multitude that assembled for devotion in the courts of the temple." As to the day, "it has by many been supposed that this took place on the first day of the week, that is, on the Christian Sabbath. But there is a difficulty in establishing this. There was probably a difference among the Jews themselves on this subject. The law said that they should reckon seven Sabbaths, that is, seven weeks **from the morrow** after the **Sabbath**. (Lev. 23:15.) By this Sabbath the Pharisees understood the **second day** of the Passover, on whatever day of the week it occurred, which was kept as a holy assembly, and might be called a Sabbath. But those Jews who insisted on a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, maintained that by the Sabbath here was meant the usual Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. Consequently, with them the clay of Pentecost always occurred on the first day of the week; and if the apostles fell in with their views, the day was fully come on what is now the Christian Sabbath. But if the views of the Pharisees were followed, and the Lord Jesus had with them kept the Passover on

Thursday, as many have supposed, then the day of Pentecost would have occurred on the Jewish Sabbath, that is on Saturday. It is impossible to determine the truth on this subject. Nor is it of much importance." - Barnes' "Notes on Acts."

The Spirit's Descent

And now while the disciples were thus gathered, having given themselves entirely to the business of devotion, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance."

It burst upon them at once. Though they were waiting for the descent of the spirit, yet it is not probable that they expected it in this manner. As this was an important event, and one on which the welfare of the Church depended, it was proper that the gift of the holy spirit should take place in some **striking** manner, one which even their physical senses, such as sight or hearing, could attest so as to convince their own minds that the promise was fulfilled, and so as deeply to impress others with the greatness and importance of the event. The sound appeared to rush down from the sky. It was fitted, therefore, to attract their attention no less from the direction from which it came than on account of its suddenness and violence. Wind in the sacred Scriptures is often put as an emblem of a divine influence. It is invisible, yet mighty. In this place the sound as -of a gale was emblematic of the mighty power of the spirit, and of the great effects which its coming would accomplish among men. It does not appear that there was any actual wind; all might have been still; but the sudden sound was **like** such a sweeping tempest. It was the **sound**, and not the **wind**, that filled the house. And it is this which makes the miracle really far more striking than the common supposition makes it to have been. A tempest might have been terrific. A mighty wind might have alarmed them. But there would have been nothing unusual or remarkable in it. Such things often occurred; and the thoughts would have been directed, of course, to the storm as an ordinary, though perhaps alarming occurrence. But when all was still, when there was no storm, no wind, no rain, no thunder, such a rushing sound must have arrested their attention, and directed all minds to so unusual and unaccountable an occurrence.

The "cloven tongues like as of fire" were first seen by them in the room before they rested on the heads of the disciples. Perhaps the fire appeared at first as scintillations of flame, of slender and pointed appearance, moving irregularly around the room until it became fixed on their heads. The word "tongue" occurs often in the Scriptures to denote the member which is the instrument of taste and speech, and also to denote language or speech itself. The common opinion is that these tongues, or flames, were, each -one of them, split, or forked, or cloven. But this is not the sense of the expression. It means that they were separated or divided one from another; not one great flame, but broken up, or cloven into many parts; and probably moving without order in the room. lithe Syriac it is: "And there appeared unto them tongues which divided themselves, like fire, and sat upon each of them." The old Ethiopic version reads it: "And fire, as it were, appeared to them, and sat on them." The fire, in the form of a gentle flame, rested upon the head of each one. This evinced that the prodigy was directed to **them**, and was a very significant emblem of the promised descent of the holy spirit. After the rushing sound, and the appearance of the flames, they could not doubt that here was some remarkable interposition of God. The appearance of fire, or flame, has always been regarded as a most striking emblem of the Divinity, and was thus used on several occasions, as recorded in the Old Testament. And now to the disciples, the tongues would be emblematic of: first, God's presence and power; and second, of the diversity of languages which they were about to be able to utter.

"They Were Filled with the Holy Spirit"

To be filled with any thing is a phrase denoting that all the faculties are pervaded by it, engaged in it, or under its influence. Acts 3:10, "were filled with wonder and amazement"; Acts 5:17, "filled with indignation"; Acts 13:45, "filled with envy"; verse 52, "filled with joy and the holy spirit." The disciples were entirely under the sacred influence of the power of God, which revealed itself in the miraculous ability to speak languages which they had not before learned. No such outpouring of the divine spirit had ever occurred before as respects the children of Ad-am. Indeed, no such new 'begetting on God's part was possible until first the sin-offering had been made and accepted. The phenomenon itself witnessed the acceptance of the merit of the great antitypical High Priest, who ten days before had ascended into the antitypical Most Holy. (See Heb. 9:24.) It is probable that this great work is referred to in Revelation 8:1-5. - See "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," R. E. Streeter, Volume I, page 367.

The only thing corresponding to this descent of the holy spirit was that upon our Lord at the time of His consecration at baptism in Jordan. He there received the holy spirit in the same sense but "without measure," He being perfect; those who received this holy spirit at Pentecost received it by measure, that is, in limited degree. (John 3:34.) Although they were all "filled" with the spirit, yet, because of weakness and imperfections of their organisms, they could only receive limited measures-these differing one from the other according to natural temperaments, etc. Fifty days previously, the resurrection of Jesus, which revealed His acceptableness to God, occurred on the same day as the offering of the barley sheaf of firstfruits, which typified Christ our Lord, as "the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:20.) And now God manifests His acceptance of the Church, the body of Christ, by this remarkable manifestation of divine approval, by the outpouring of His holy spirit upon the waiting disciples who represented the Church collectively. And this on the very day that the two wave-loaves were offered in the temple, picturing the presenting of the Church before God, "a kind of first-fruits of His creatures" (James 1:18), and its acceptance through the merit of the great High Priest.

Various Manifestations of the Spirit

God's holy spirit had indeed been manifested in various ways previously, but all of them differed from this manifestation. For instance, it was the holy power of God which moved upon the waters in connection with the world's creation. (Gen. 1:2.) Again, as the Apostle Peter declares, "holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit"; mechanically. (2 Pet. 1:21.) He further explains that what they spoke and wrote they did not comprehend, because their utterances and writings were not for themselves but for us of the Gospel Age. We are, therefore, to recognize the fact that the spirit-dispensation had its beginning in Jesus, when He was thirty years of age; but so far as others were concerned, its beginning was in the sanctified ones at Pentecost, as recorded in this lesson. Neither are we to think that this Pentecostal outpouring requires a repetition, for the holy spirit thus once poured upon the Church was to abide, to continue, with the Church, not to be withdrawn and poured out afresh repeatedly. A collective anointing was here indicated, and its authority extends to the last called one of this Gospel Age even "like precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments." - Psa. 133:2.

It was appropriate, that the giving of the holy spirit should be with a certain outward demonstration and manifestation; not merely to impress and convince the apostles and the early Church, but also for the benefit of those who should subsequently come into relationship with the Church. Faith must have a ground to rest upon, an assurance that there was at the beginning such a direct recognition of the Savior's sacrifice and of the divine acceptance of the consecrated ones

who trusted in Him. The reality and certainty of this miracle of tongues is strongly attested by the early triumphs of the Gospel. That the Gospel was early spread over all the world, and that, too, by the apostles of Jesus Christ, by men of Galilee, is the clear testimony of history. They preached it in Arabia, Greece, Syria, Asia, Persia, Africa, and Rome. Yet how could this have been affected without a miraculous power of speaking the languages used in all those places? It requires the toil of many years to speak in foreign languages; and the recorded success of the Gospel is one of the most striking attestations to the fact of the miracle that could be conceived.

Under the influence of this remarkable power from God, we find Peter, who in fear had denied his Master, now powerfully moved, in the very city of Christ's crucifixion and in the presence of his enemies, to boldly proclaim the Word of truth. Here it was that he used one of the two "keys" entrusted to him (the second at Cornelius' conversion, three and one-half years later, the first of Gentile believers) and moved thousands to acknowledge Christ. And ever since, from its "birthday" at Pentecost, the true Church has continued to manifest God's power and glory. Some have concluded that there were times when the holy spirit was not in the world at all, but this was because they were looking for it in a wrong direction or under wrong conditions. At times the nominal church of outward professors has been so overgrown with the "tare" element that the true "wheat" could not readily be "discerned, yet we are confident that the Lord never left Himself without a witness, and that even in the darkest hour of the Dark Ages there were some of God's true people in the world; some representatives of the body of Christ; some, therefore, possessing the holy spirit; some who therefore constituted the salt of the earth and the lights of the world, even though the darkness was great around them and its influence so powerful that no record of the true Church is to be found, but only the records of the apostasy.

Fruits Superior to Gifts

The fact that the holy spirit upon the disciples was accompanied by miraculous manifestations or gifts, tongues, etc., does not imply any greater favor of God toward the primitive Church, which had those gifts, than toward the Lord's people of a later day, after those gifts had ceased; for, as the apostle points out, it was possible for some to have those gifts without having much of the real spirit of the Lord. He says, "Though I speak with the tongues 'of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am **nothing**." (1 Cor. 13:1, 2.) We are, therefore, to esteem love for the Lord and for the brethren and for the neighbor-active love, which does, as well as wishes and says-to be the best evidence of an acceptable condition with the Lord, the best evidence of a filling with **His holy spirit**, a far better evidence than the possession, of the "gifts" described. Far greater, far more precious gifts of the spirit. then, are the gifts which the spirit develops in us -- the fruits of the spirit -- joy, peace, faith, love, etc.

. Jesus has ascended to His Father, but this other "paraklete" (comforter) has come to dwell in His people forever. The holy spirit's work is threefold. First, with reference to Christ's immediate disciples, it was the **revealer-Jesus** had instructed and opened truth to their minds, but their minds were weak, their memories treacherous. The holy spirit comes to bring to mind Jesus' works, to strengthen memory, to fill them with the truth thus spoken in all its vividness and power, and open the true meaning of what was obscure and dark. Nor is this all. There were many things Jesus had for them, which they could not bear, were not able to receive, before His departure. These the spirit should make known to them; these things to come it should unfold to them. This promise is the foundation on which; the, whole New Testament rests as the inspired truth of God. They spoke, they wrote the things pertaining to Christ and His Kingdom, as they were moved by the holy spirit.

The second office is that of the **convictor and** regenerator. It is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment; and as it convinces and convicts, it is to renew and lead them to Jesus. On the day of Pentecost this power was demonstrated; thousands were pricked in their hearts: thousands believed in Jesus. Ever since, its presence has been revealed in conviction and conversion. Religion advances; Jesus is received; the Gospel is victorious only as the holy spirit brings the truth home to the hearts of men. And this tremendous power will be recognized in the glorious time near at hand when God shall pour out His spirit upon all flesh, in the times of restitution long promised.

The third office is that of **quickener, guide, and comforter**. To the soul penitent and believing, this blessed spirit comes and quickens it to see and feel the fulness, and richness, and power of the truth as it is in Jesus; stimulates it to sacrifice and labor; excites to prayer; strengthens against temptation; supports and comforts amid trial, sorrow, and death. Jesus sends this divine spirit, in fulfillment of His promise to work in His Church and thus completes the cycle of redemption.

"Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed
His tender last farewell,
A Guide, a Comforter bequeathed
With us to dwell.

"And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness
Are His alone."

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Mrs. Alice Pangborn, Los Angeles, Calif. - (January).
Mrs. Anna Patton, Brooklyn, N. Y. - (February).
Mrs. Jennie Cuthbert, Pleasantville, N. J. - (March).
Mrs. Marguerite Grenzebach, Brazil, S. A.: (March).
Mr. J. C. Laird, Ardmore, Pa. - (March).
Mr. Robert Perry Payne, Richmond, Va. - (March).
Mr. Leonard B. Wagstaff, St. Louis, Mo. - (March).
Mr. Joseph Malinguaggio, Hartford, Conn. - (April).
Mr. A. Van Woerkom, Grand Rapids, Mich. - (April).

The Sum of All Graces is Love

1 Cor. 15:1-13.

"And now abideth Faith, Hope, Love, these three; but the greatest of these is Love." - 1 Cor. 13:13.

NEXT TO the Great Teacher's sermon on the mount, stands this discourse upon Love by the great Apostle Paul. Both discourses teach the same lesson; but they approach it from different standpoints. As pupils in the, school of Christ, all the instructions of the divine; Word and providences are intended to develop our hearts and influence our conduct in harmony with the lines of Love. This was the testimony of the Master when he said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Similarly he declared that the entire law of God to men is fulfilled in Love-toward God and toward men: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy be- ing, and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Since, then, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and "the bond of perfectness," without which no other grace of character would be truly beautiful, we do not wonder to find the statement in Scripture ,that "God is Love;" and again, that "He that loveth not, knoweth not God."

Our Lord declares, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God" -- the God who is Love. To know God in the sense here indicated . means more than merely to know that there is a God; it means more than merely to know something, of God's loving plan and character; it means to know God in the sense of, personal acquaintance, and an appreciation of his character; and no one can have this knowledge except as he receives, partakes of, the spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of Love. And this spirit of holiness and Love cannot be acquired instantly; it is a growth, and its development is the chief business and should be the chief concern of all who hope to know God in the complete sense which will be rewarded with life eternal.

Hence, after Love's great provision of the Lamb of God, and the ransom of all mankind accomplished by him, all of its various steps for our deliverance from sin and death have been along the line of developing in us this character of Love, the character of -God, which, according to the divine standard, alone will make us acceptable before the Father and bring to us his grace of everlasting life. Oh how important then, that we should be "taught of God and develop this, his character. "Learn of me," said our dear Redeemer; and well we may, for he is the express image of the Father's glorious character of Love. And "if any man have not the spirit of Christ [the Father's holy spirit, Love] he is none of his."

To begin with, we are very poor.material out of which to form likenesses of God's dear Son. (Rom. 8:29.) We were "children of wrath even as others" -- the original likeness of God possessed by father Adam before lie transgressed has been sadly lost 'in the six thousand years intervening: hence, instead of finding ourselves in the divine likeness of Love, we find that we were "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity" to such a degree that,' instead of Love being the natural ruling principle in our characters, it is in many instances almost entirely obliterated; and what remains is largely contaminated with evil, self-love and sin-love and carnal-love-perversions which are in direct antagonism with the wholly unselfish Love which is the essence of the divine character.

The work of grace for the world, during the Millennial Age, will be to make known to all mankind the gracious character of God, and his provision for the salvation of all; and to transform all who are willing from the depravity of sin to the perfection of character-Love: making mankind once more images of God. It will not only transform their wills, but it. will also be accompanied,

by a physical transformation which will remove from them all the blemishes of sin, and all hereditary inclinations thereto, and leave them in the likeness of God, with a recollection of the undesirableness of sin and its evil consequences.

The work of grace for the Church during this Gospel, Age is to transform our perverted characters and re-establish them in the divine character, Love. Whoever fails of attaining this, fails of attaining the will of God concerning him; and must necessarily fail of winning the prize set before us in the Gospel.

But since our transformation of mind or will is not accompanied by a physical transformation or restitution, it follows that so long as we are in the flesh, we shall be obliged to contend against its inherited weaknesses and dispositions to selfishness and sin. But this sharp and continual conflict not only selects a special overcoming class, but, serves to develop the desired character more quickly than will the more easy processes of the Millennial Age. In consequence, while it will require nearly a thousand years for the world's perfecting, the perfecting of the saints in character may be accomplished in a few years, under the special, sharp discipline and the special course of instruction designed for the "little flock." But whether in few years or many years, and whether with little or much friction of , adversity, the transformation and polishing of character must be accomplished. This love-likeness of our wills to the will of God is the end to be sought, if we would finish our course with joy, and with good hopes for the eternal glory.

GIFTS IN THE EARLY CHURCH,

In the early Church God indicated in a miraculous manner his acceptance of those who consecrated themselves as followers of Christ, by the bestowal of what were termed "gifts of the spirit." A particular account of these is given in the chapter preceding our lesson. (1 Cor. 12.) The Apostle indicates that some enjoyed several of these gifts, remarking concerning himself that he had more than any of them. Not unnaturally the recipients of these gifts, while feeling thankful for such a recognition from heaven, realized that some gifts were more valuable than others: and the Apostle confirms this view and urges that they seek to use the highest and noblest gifts where several were possessed. And perceiving that the Church was likely to consider that the possession of these gifts indicated such a measure of -divine favor as would imply that they were overcomers and would ultimately gain the prize of their high calling, the Apostle took this opportunity, while discussing the gifts, to point out that their possession implied far less of divine favor than the recipients had supposed. To this end he points out in our lesson that these outward gifts of tongues, miracles, healings, etc., were necessarily and properly divided between the various -members of the Church for their mutual welfare, and to draw them and hold them together, making them mutually dependent upon one another. This being the case, all could not have the same gifts; but as he points out, God has divided these and set or established the various members and gifts in the Body as it hath pleased him. Yet, it is proper that all should recognize the difference in the gifts, and each covet or desire earnestly to have and to use in the divine service the best gifts that God has been pleased to entrust to his stewardship. And then, the Apostle adds, "Yet show I unto you a more, excellent way."

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT MORE DESIRABLE

This more excellent way is that, instead of seeking and striving for the "gifts," which were solely at God's disposal, they should seek for another kind of "gifts," otherwise called, "fruits" of the same spirit; namely, Faith, Hope and Love. These gifts are termed "*fruits* of the spirit," because, unlike the others, they grow gradually, and are not given miraculously. However humble a miraculous gift any member of the Church might have, there would be nothing to hinder him

from growing the largest "fruits of the spirit" by careful attention to the cultivation of his heart. If the chief "gifts" were not open to all, 'the greater and more precious "fruits" were open to all; and to desire and cultivate these is much more excellent than to strive after miraculous gifts or talents which God has not been pleased of his own volition to bestow.

Proceeding along this line, the Apostle calls attention to the fact that any one, or even all, of the miraculous "gifts" might be possessed, and yet the recipient be far from the condition of heart which would be fit for the Kingdom. The quality which is *necessary*, as a basis of character, which would make any service acceptable to God or cause it to be appreciated or esteemed by him, is Love. If Love be not the motive power, the greatest zeal and richest rhetoric and eloquence on behalf of God or on behalf of righteousness, would pass for nothing in God's estimation, and bring us no reward from him. If Love be lacking, great ability as an expounder of mysteries, and much study and knowledge would pass for nothing in God's esteem. Even a faith that could cure all manner of diseases, or, to use our Lord's illustration of the largest degree of faith of this kind, a mountain-moving faith (Matt. 21:21) would count for nothing, if, deep in our hearts as the basis therefor, God could not see Love-for himself and for our fellow-creatures. Even the giving of all of one's possessions to feed the poor, as charity, would count for naught except the moving cause were Love. And even to be a martyr, and to be burned at the stake in the name of Christ, would pass for naught except in the recesses of the heart God could see that the moving consideration to the suffering was Love. Because, all of these things, the acquisition of knowledge, the dispensing of it with eloquence, the "exercise of mountain-moving faith, and the giving of all of one's goods to the poor, and his own martyrdom, might be done from selfish motives-to be seen of men, to be highly esteemed by men, for ostentation, for pride, or because of a combative disposition. For this cause the, Apostle exhorted the Church to seek for this inestimable fruitage of the spirit-Love; so that whatever gifts they might possess, either natural or miraculous, might be exercised in a manner that would be a blessing to their fellows and acceptable to God, and bring the users the great reward eternal life.

What then is Love, this wonderful quality without which nothing is acceptable in the sight of God? The Apostle does not attempt to define Love, but contents himself in giving us a description of some of its manifestations. The fact is that Love, like life and light, is *difficult* to define; and our best endeavors to comprehend it are along the lines of its effects. Where Love is lacking results are more or less evil; where Love is present the results differ according to the degree of Love, and are proportionately good. A college professor, commenting upon the word Love, said:

"As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism, as you have seen it come out on the other side of the prism broken up into its component colors-red, and blue, and yellow, and violet, and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow -- so Paul passes this thing, Love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And in these few words we have what one might call the spectrum of Love, the analysis of Love. Will you observe what its elements are? Will you notice that they have common names; that they are features which we hear about every day, that they are things which can be practiced by every man in every place in life; and how by a multitude of small things and ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the *summum bonum*, is made up?

"The spectrum of Love has nine ingredients: --
Patience -- 'Love suffereth long.'
Kindness -- 'and is kind.'
Generosity -- 'Love envieth not.'
Humility -- 'Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.'
Courtesy -- 'does not behave itself unseemly.'
Unselfishness -- 'seeketh not her own.'
Good temper -- 'is not easily provoked.'
Guilelessness -- 'thinketh no evil.'
Sincerity -- 'Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.'"

We cannot agree with the professor that these graces can be practiced by every man, in every place, every day. We must contend that these graces as a whole cannot belong to "the natural man." He may indeed put on some of the gentleness, some of the humility, some of the courtesy, some of the patience, some of the kindness; as men may attach grapes to thorn-bushes and figs to thistles; but with the natural man these graces are wholly put on, and not the outgrowth of the inward grace, the holy spirit, Love -not an evidence of relationship to God. Where the imitator has not been begotten again, by the word and spirit of truth, his imitation of certain, outward features of Love will not constitute him a son of God nor bring to him the rewards and blessings of sonship to which there is but one door-Christ Jesus.

In the Christian, an outward manifestation of patience, meekness, etc., is not sufficient either in God's sight or in his own sight. These graces of the spirit must be produced by the spirit of Love, filling and expanding within his own heart. But in civilized countries many of the graces of the spirit are recognized by the unregenerate, and are imitated as marks of good breeding: and in many cases they are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments quite antagonistic to the holy spirit of Love.

The putting on of the outward forms of Love does however mitigate the evils and distress and friction incident to the fall, even in "the natural man," even when these graces are merely simulated with more or less of hypocrisy and deception as to the real selfishness of the uncircumcised heart. But trying times occasionally show how thin is the polished veneer of politeness and gentleness which covers selfish and stony hearts: for instance, the last reports from the recent holocaust at the Charity Bazaar, in Paris, shows that the most polished and aristocratic young "*gentle-men*" of the most polite city and nation of earth displayed the ferocity of brute beasts

when face to face with death, and that in their mad rush to escape the flames they knocked down and injured each other and even the first ladies of rank in France, to whom erstwhile they were overly polite. We cannot expect more of a love-veneered selfish heart-even the strong glue of chivalry will not hold the veneer under some such cases. And the time is not far distant when a still greater, more general and more terrible crisis will make manifest to the whole world that much of the politeness and gentleness of our day is only skin deep, and is not from the heart, the fruitage of the holy spirit of Love. In that great crisis, as the Scriptures show, every man's hand will be against his neighbor. In that Day of Vengeance the masks of formal politeness will be discarded, and the world for a short time will get such a glimpse of its own hideous selfishness as will help prepare it for Millennial lessons in Love and its graces, to be given them by the great Immanuel.

The Scriptures inform us that in our fallen state Love is foreign to our natures, and must be introduced into them by the power of God; saying-"Not that we first loved God but that he loved us

and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins." And, learning of this, God's Love, and truly believing and appreciating it, "the Love of Christ constraineth us [to Love]." We are "begotten by the Word of, Truth" -the message of God's Love toward us in the forgiveness of our sins, and his call to us to return to his favor and likeness, and his provision of the helps by the way that we might become copies of his dear *Son*. - *Reprints*, pages R2202, R2203.

(To be continued)

If Ye Do These Things

"If ye do these things ye shall never fall." - 2 Peter 1:10

THE WORDS quoted above are peculiarly appropriate at the present time. Are we not reminded by them of the very solemn warning with which Jesus brought to a close his discourse, which is generally referred to as "the Sermon on the Mount." (Matt. 7:24-29,) On every side there appears to be a fatal tendency on the part of the Lord's professed followers to ignore the plain, meaning of the Master's solemn words. The words in verses 21-23 should be carefully . studied until we know that we understand their meaning. "Not every one who says to me, Master, Master, will enter into the Kingdom of the heavens; but he who performs the will of that Father of mine in the heavens. Many will say to me in that day, Master, Master, have we not taught in thy Name? And in thy Name expelled demons? And in thy Name performed many wonders? And then I will plainly declare to them, I never approved of you. Depart from me you who practice iniquity." - Diaglott.

Perhaps all the brethren in Present Truth are more or less familiar with these words, but their designed effect cannot be accomplished, because we have learned to apply them to the nominal systems. We think the warning is not for us, but for others. We say, in effect, if not in words, that having been brought into Present Truth, we have only to hold fast certain beliefs which separate us from others and all will be well. On the other hand, if the words. were intended to warn all true believers that holiness alone would meet with the Master's approval, how all-important it is that we should have a clear understanding of them and not to rest in a delusive sense of security. which accompanies the belief that what we know is of greater importance than what we are. It is true that knowledge is important, but -wisdom is of far greater importance. We do not read that Christ is made unto us knowledge, etc.; but that. Christ is made unto us *wisdom*, and righteousness, and sanctification, and deliverance.

The close of the last century was marked by tremendous advances in knowledge, both secular and religious. In a very true sense these advances were the climax of years of patient study and research by students of science and religion. It would be most unfair and unwise to forget the labors of these students, and to think that we could have stepped into the clear light we enjoy apart from the valuable help contrinuted by each generation, of truth, seekers since the Lord raised up the Reformers in the Sixteenth Century.

Let us however assume that we are living in the Apostolic Age, when Peter wrote his letter to those who had obtained an equally precious faith-with him. (2 Peter 1:1.) Let us ask the question Were these Christians deficient in the knowledge of the broad outlines of the Divine Plan of the Ages? Would their knowledge of the Divine Plan compare favorably with the knowledge possessed by the brethren in Present Truth? If we allow ourselves to be guided by the words of the Apostles, we must conclude that the Church of God at that time was not deficient in the knowledge of the broad outlines of the Divine Plan of the Ages, and further that the knowledge

that believers possessed would compare favorably with our own at the present time. If this be admitted, then it is clear that the knowledge we have obtained, and now enjoy, has only 'put us on equal terms with the brethren who lived during the Apostolic Age of the Church. We know from Church history that when the Apostles fell asleep, error more or less rapidly displaced the Truth, until just before the Reformation almost complete darkness had settled down upon the professed Church of God. During the interval between the Reformation and our own day, Truth has been gradually restored to God's people, and today we enjoy the Truth as it was taught by the Apostles, with the added advantage that the pilgrimage of the Church is nearly ended, and the establishment of the Kingdom is very near.

It seems clear then that the Truths which separated believers in the Apostolic Age from 'all others; are the same Truths we now appreciate. However, as the believers in the Apostolic Age were exhorted to make their calling and election sure, so are we. The knowledge they enjoyed would not entitle them to a share in the Kingdom, and the knowledge we enjoy will only add to our confusion, if we fail to: give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. "If ye know these things, happy [blessed] are ye if ye do them." It should be clear to us all that the greatest danger to those in Present Truth is modern gnosticism. It is far easier to claim to be superior to your brother on a point of knowledge, than to prove your superiority by the excellence of your character.

Our great Adversary divided the early Church, along these lines, and he is still successfully pursuing the same policy. Should we not consider one another to provoke unto love and good works? If we have difference of opinion on one or more points of doctrine, we may not conclude that, because we believe we are right, the Lord has ceased to love our brother. This being so, should we not love our brother still more, for is not his need of love and forbearance greater? How could we hope to win our brother by any other means? From the limitless fountain of our Lord's love and compassion we all draw freely, and we may not overlook his words, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."

It may be profitable for us all to note the experiences and the example of the Apostle Paul as recorded in the letter known to us as 2 Corinthians. Paul's activities in Corinth are described in Acts 18. Guided by a vision from the Lord he labored much in the city, and many of the citizens became Christians. At the time of writing his second letter to the Church at Corinth, much opposition to Paul had arisen, and his reaction to this is of the greatest value to all the brethren in Present Truth. Paul did not freeze up. Read his words in 2 Cor. 6:11, 12 (Diaglott) : "Our mouth is opened toward you, O Corinthians! Our heart has been enlarged. You are not straitened in us, but you are contracted in your own tender affections. In similar circumstances many good Christians would feel justified- in showing marked coolness and reserve. Why did Paul act differently? The answer is, Paul was here knowing that he spoke truly when he said, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Paul never forgot that Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it. It was therefore the Spirit of Christ in Paul that overlooked every cause for complaint, and continued to exercise the love that covers all things; believes all things; hopes for all things; endures all things.

"Savior like a shepherd lead us.
Much we need Thy tender care."

The present is a very solemn time for all in Present Truth who are looking forward to meeting our great Pilot face to face. It cannot be doubted that when this thought dominates our hearts, the differences which separate brethren in Christ seem far less important, for do we not believe that we shall then share on equal terms all the excellencies of wisdom and knowledge, with nothing

of our present human imperfections to mar our equal appreciation of all the delightful things provided by an Omniscient Creator, and ministered by the glorious Bridegroom. to his faithful and adoring; Bride.

Surely it is only through the wily one, Satan, that any of us at the present time would dare to think that our present differences are due to insincerity on the part of any. We may not condemn one another. The oneness for which our Master prayed will soon be ours, and to the eyes of our hearts an eternity of glory and blessing is ever drawing nearer.

- D. W. Black.

"Many Infallible Proofs"

No. 2

A short series of meditations, both devotional and doctrinal, on "Jesus and the Resurrection."

"The Lord is risen indeed." - Luke 24:34.

WE turn now to the fifteenth chapter of St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, a chapter which might well be called "the resurrection chapter of the Bible," so exhaustively does it expound that basic doctrine of our faith.

Like many of the writings of St. Paul the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians was written to meet erroneous teachings which had arisen in the Church. Some were denying the doctrine of the resurrection altogether, while others held distorted and confused notions in respect to it. In various places in his epistles we find traces of the prevalence of error on this subject. For instance, in 2 Tim. 2:18 we find the Apostle speaking of some "who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already."

Such taught that there was indeed a resurrection or regeneration, but that it consisted in the regeneration of society, and that so far as the members of the Church were concerned it had already taken place when they had turned from idols to serve the one true God. Others, holding wrong views respecting the nature of man, maintained that when the body died, the spirit would live on in a happier, freer, condition, without a body. In opposition to this erroneous teaching the Apostle, in his second letter to this same Church, taught them: "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, 'being burdened'; and then he goes on to say: "not for that we would be unclothed [as they taught], but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." - 2 Cor. 5:4.

What is the Soul?

Their erroneous views arose in part from a mistaken idea as to what constitutes the soul. Throughout the Bible the word "soul" is used to signify "being" or "person"; and a human being or person is made up of two parts, namely, a body and its vitality, otherwise called the spirit of life or breath of life. The body is not intelligent of itself, neither is vitality intelligent, but when the two are brought together, intelligence, being, or soul commences. So it was with father Adam: the Lord formed his body, but it was not a soul -- it was merely so much organized matter in good form. Next God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives," -- the vitality common to all living creatures. It was when these two things, organism and vitality, were properly united, that man

came into existence, a living, thinking, being; -- man **became** -- a living soul. (Gen. 2:7.) The record is not that man has a soul, but that man is a soul or being.

Let us take an illustration from nature, namely, the water we drink. It is composed of oxygen and hydrogen, neither of which is water. However, when the two combine, as they do in proper proportions, the resulting thing is water. Just so it is with the soul. God speaks to us from this standpoint, of our each being a soul. He does not address our bodies, nor our 'breath of life, but He addresses us, as intelligent beings or souls. In pronouncing the penalty for violating His law He did not address Adam's body specifically, nor did He address his vitality, but He addressed the man, the soul, the intelligent being -- "thou." "In the day that **thou** eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." "The **soul** that sinneth, it shall die." - Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 18:20.

When we perceive, then, that it is the soul that dies, we perceive also that it is the soul that will need the resurrection from death.

"I Delivered unto You First of All"

After opening the chapter by reminding the Corinthians of the effect the Gospel he had preached had in their midst, the Apostle presents, in verses 3 and 4, a 'brief summary of the essence of that Gospel. We quote: "For I delivered unto you first of all, [first, not in point of time, but first in importance -- I delivered unto you as amongst the most important or chief things] that which I also received; -- how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures [that is to say, according to the Old Testament Scriptures]; and that He was buried, and that He rose, [or, as the Revised Version more accurately translates, -- "and that He hath 'been raised'"] on the third day, according to the Scriptures."

This brief summary of his Gospel consists of three historical facts and two doctrinal propositions. The three facts are: the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The two doctrines are: that the death of Christ was a death for sins; and that His death, burial, and resurrection were parts of an ordered plan, -- they were according to Scripture.

In regard to the three facts the Apostle insists, first, that Christ really died-His death was a genuine, historical event, the date, manner, and place of which were all perfectly well known; second, that Christ was buried a real human body being laid in an actual grave, a grave familiar to those who dwelt in Jerusalem third, that Christ has been raised. (It is not said that Christ rose, but that He was raised. His resurrection was the work of the Father, and was the Father's seal of approval upon the work of the Son.)

Christ's Death a Sacrificial One

From these three facts the Apostle draws two doctrinal sequences: Christ died; -- but to believe that will do no more for us than to believe that Lazarus died, unless we believe also that **Christ died for our sins**. The death of Christ was not the common event which happens to all men. For in Him was no sin, and death is the natural consequence and proper wage of sin. His death, therefore, unlike the death of other men, was a voluntary action, a willing sacrifice, a death for others, not for Himself. In this doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, of voluntary expiation of sin, lies the special and infinite worth of the death of Christ. And St. Paul affirms this doctrine plainly and strongly. With him, it is of the very stuff and essence, -- the marrow, of the Christian faith; it is the first, the most important thing to be taught and believed.

"According to the Scriptures"

The second doctrine in this summary of the Gospel is that the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus are, parts of an ordered plan. "Christ died," he says, "according to the Scriptures." "He has been raised again," says he, "according to the Scriptures. Now that the Hebrew Scriptures did foretell that Christ should be cut off out of the land of the living, and that He should make His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death, may be seen by reference to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah; and that His soul (or life) should not be left in "hades" (oblivion), nor His body see corruption, was stated beforehand in the 16th Psalm. These facts are familiar to all who know their Bibles, and need no proof. What, then, was the purpose of the Apostle in making the point? We answer: His point is that whatever was foretold in the Holy Scriptures was to that extent a revealing of the mind and purpose of God. If the death and resurrection of Christ were according to Scripture, that fact implies that the sacrifice of our sins has found acceptance in God's sight. The Scriptures reveal the very plan of redemption wrought by the Man Christ Jesus as in the heart of God from before the foundation of the world, as the end and consummation for which He has been preparing mankind through the ages, by the ministry of His spirit operating through the labors of His servants, the Prophets. The plan of the work of Christ was designed by God. All the lines of His life were drawn by the hand of God before Christ took our flesh to atone for our sin. Round His death and resurrection the lights of prophecy kindled with wondrous splendor; more than half the Old Testament predictions concerning the Messiah point to these supreme facts. And therefore to accept the redemption of Christ is to accept the redemption of God. Through the sacrifice of Christ we learn God's will is our salvation -- or rather, we see that salvation triumphantly accomplished which from the Scriptures of the Prophets we had already learned to be God's will. All doubt, all fear, all hesitation, is thus removed from our hearts. We believe in Christ; we believe also in God.

The Historical Proof of Christ's Resurrection

Having reaffirmed the glorious Gospel, the Apostle proceeds to prove it to be true. He does so by developing two main themes: first, the historical testimony to the resurrection of Christ; and, second, the moral absurdities which must be maintained by those who deny the resurrection. These two themes he runs together and interweaves in the paragraph which extends from verse 5 to verse 19. For the sake of greater clearness let us consider these two themes separately, disentangling the interwoven threads of argument.

First, then, we note the historical proof of the fact of Christ's resurrection, which the Apostle here lays before us. Mark what that proof is. Historical facts depend on testimony. If we are to be convinced that a certain event transpired in the past, our very first demand is that men of character and credibility should assure us, from their personal knowledge, that it did take place. If their character is high, if their credibility has been put to the test and stood it, if they were competent judges of the fact, if we see that they had no motive for 'bearing false witness, and were incapable of bearing it, however strong the inducement, we really have no alternative -- we can only listen to and receive their testimony. Have we this kind of proof for the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Within thirty years of Christ's death St. Paul affirms that there were hundreds of witnesses to the fact that God raised Christ from the dead, most of whom were still alive. Some, who do not believe in our Lord's resurrection, have advanced the view that the Apostles were mistaken; they were deceived, misled by their hopes-they were filled with "wishful thinking." But St. Paul will not admit this. On the contrary he denies the possibility of mistake on the part of the witnesses. He will not hear of it. He will not for a moment concede that either he or his brethren were de-

ceived, by their hopes or by their strong imaginations. The only alternative he admits, we read in verse 15, either "we are found false witnesses" (false, not mistaken), or else the fact we attest is true. Either the fact is true or we are the most profane and blasphemous of false witnesses, witnesses who lie about God, and before and against God.

There was no mistake. On a fact so sacred and so momentous there could 'be no mistake. The resurrection of Christ was, or it was not, a matter of plain fact. Either He did, or He did not, appear after His death, to Cephas, to James, to the Twelve, to the Five Hundred, to St. Paul himself. So many men, some of them amongst the most cautious, slow, skeptical of men, could not possibly have been deceived, If the fact that they affirmed did not take place, they had no motive for affirming, but every motive for denying it. If the Man Christ Jesus were only a dead Jew, what could they possibly gain by setting themselves against all the currents of opinion and against their own private interests? **He** could not help them. The priests and magistrates could very obviously injure and degrade them. Was it likely, is it credible, that for the sake of a lie-a lie so unprofitable as that a poor dead Jew had come to life -- they would forfeit the respect of their neighbors, incur the ban of priests, and provoke the wrath of magistrates?

The Testimony of St. Paul

Look then, at St. Paul. Here was a man the whole bent of whose nature, education, and training, predisposed him to reject Christian facts. A devout and learned Jew, "bound by conviction and by every motive of interest and ambition, to be zealous for the Hebrew faith -- in his zeal for it he had persecuted the Christian Church. Is it so much as conceivable that he should belie his convictions, sacrifice his interests, surrender his ambitions, in order to lie about the God whom he held in such great reverence? Yet he says he was a liar, if Christ did not rise from the dead.

Most of us are familiar with the **sound** of truth. If a man speaks to us from the platform and does not believe, or does not feel, what he says, there is an instinct in us, which at once detects his insincerity. If we go into a court, and hear a lawyer trying to make the worse the better case, to snatch a verdict rather than to demand justice, we can generally detect his want of faith in his client's case, although he simulate all the fervency of sincere conviction. There is a certain **ring** to truth by which we distinguish it from all counterfeits. Well, read, we do not say all St. Paul wrote, or even much of it, but read -- only this one chapter of the resurrection. It is impossible for any one to read it and then to say that its author was consciously bearing false witness against God. One cannot but admit that Paul believed the fact he affirms -- believed it with all his heart. And St. Paul says the fact was one on which there could be no mistake, no doubt; that either he had seen the risen Lord, or that he was uttering a willful lie, affirming that God had raised Jesus from the dead, when he knew very well that the dead rise not.

James the Just-Peter the Brave

Other witnesses are St. Peter and St. James. James was noted as a just man -- "James the just" he was called -- one of those rigid, uncompromising Hebrews, not very gentle, perhaps, but nevertheless true and upright. And Peter was a brave man, and brave men are usually of honest, fearless speech. They make reliable witnesses. True, in a moment of passionate excitement and bewilderment Peter told a lie, denying the Master he loved.

But it is true also, *as* we might have expected from what we have learned of his character, that, after telling that lie, he went out and wept bitterly. This sin was at least foreign to his nature, a sin from which he might well have supposed himself safe. And it was after his bitter repentance, when his whole demeanor changed, that he went forth and proclaimed before brutal priests and a

brutal mob, that the Man whom he had denied, and whom they had crucified, God had raised from the dead. Both James and Peter devoted their lives to the affirmation of this fact. They died for affirming it. Are we to believe that a conspicuously just man and a conspicuously brave man, devoted their whole energy to the commission of a sin utterly alien to their several characters? that the just man lied, and the brave man lied, and yet remained brave and just? that two of the most religious of men spent their whole lives in lying about God, and yet grew in piety to the end? Unless we are prepared to so believe, we must accept their testimony that God raised up Jesus from the dead.

The Twelve and the Five Hundred

Not only Peter and James and Paul, but the Twelve are found false witnesses, if God raised not their Master from the dead. That is to say, the very men who gave up all to follow the truth -men so hard to persuade as Thomas, men of John's pure and heavenly spirit, were liars, all of them, and knew that they were liars, and died in the endeavor, which God permitted to succeed, to palm their lie upon the world! If we could believe that, what else could we believe?

Lest it should be said that the Twelve were apostles and leaders and had a faith to establish, even though that faith were founded upon a lie, we have the testimony of the Five Hundred brethren, most of whom remained alive to St. Paul's day. Among the Five Hundred, as among the Twelve, there were men of a skeptical turn of mind, men not easily convinced of the truth of any fact which transcended the limits of previous experience, for St. Matthew tells us that when Jesus appeared to them they worshiped Him "but some doubted." (Matt. 28:17.) It was not until they had received every proof which skepticism could demand, that they confessed the Lord to be *verily* risen from the dead, and went forth into all nations to preach "Jesus and the Resurrection."

What Shall We Say?

What, then, shall we say to this testimony to the resurrection of Christ? What **can** we say? Is it credible that five hundred of the best and bravest of men lied about God? If we are not to believe the historical fact to which with one consent they bear witness, what can we believe? To what other historical fact even one hundred, *not* to say two thousand years old, can we produce so many witnesses of a character so high and noble? To suppose that men of their character banded together as false witnesses of God to palm an imposture on the world and that they succeeded in their attempt is to believe an unbelievable miracle. With such witnesses as the Apostle has produced in testimony we can only join in his triumphant conclusion: "*Now* hath Christ been raised from the dead -- the first fruits *of* them that are asleep." - 1 Cor. 15:20.

- P. L. Read

The Question Box

Question:

'What is the sequence of events to be expected in connection with the Second Advent of our Lord?

Give Scriptural support for your answer.

Answer

As these events unfold *we* shall be able to speak with greater certainty than would become us today. However, we think we can find the answer in the last five chapters of the Book of Revelation.

Beginning with chapter 18, and continuing to the end of the Book (chapter 22.) we find a series of 12 distinct visions narrated in orderly sequence. They commence with the times in which we now live, and cover the entire period up to the full establishment of the Kingdom of God. The events thus symbolized are:

1. The fall of Babylon - Chap 18
2. The first resurrection, that is to say, the resurrection of the Church, symbolized as the marriage of the Lamb. - Rev. 19-6-9.
3. The glorious epiphany of Christ with his Church. - Rev. 19:11.
4. The final Armageddon conflict and victory. - Rev. 19:17-21.
5. The binding of Satan. - Rev. 20:1-3.
6. The Millennial reign of Christ and his Church. - Rev. 20:4-6.
7. The loosing of Satan for a little season. - Rev. 20:7, 8.
8. The post-Millennial apostasy, and the judgment on it. - Rev. 20:9.
9. The final destruction of Satan. - Rev. 20:10.
10. The judgment of the dead, small and great. - Rev. 20:12, 13.
- 11 The destruction of the last, enemy, death. - Rev. 20:14.
- 12 The eternal Kingdom of God. - Rev. 21; Rev. 22:5.

- P. L. Read

Jesus the Joy of the Desolate

In memory of my beloved son, WALTER M. BLACK, and to all that love righteousness and long for Christ's Kingdom he did, following lines are dedicated.

Alone in the night-time,
Alone through the day,
Alone when I go, and
Alone if I stay;
For the silence that holds me,
None other can break;
And I'm lonely no matter
What pathway I take.

Yes, lonely, as here
In life's twilight I wait
For the sound of your step,
When the day has grown late;
For your greeting to fall
On my listening ear,
I'm lonely, *so lonely*,
Without you, my dear!.

But shall I go mourning
Because you now sleep,
Where no storms ever come,
And the eyes never weep?
Where your heart no more yearns
For those now lying still
In the vale, and away
On the slope of a hill.

And would I recall you
To live as before,
Where the shadow of death
Casts its gloom evermore?
Where there's sorrow and sighing,
And pain and decay;
And the battle for life
Grows more weary each day?

Ah no! let *me* suffer.
In silence, the dart
That strikes when is stilled
A beloved one's heart;
And patiently wait,
For the dawn of the days
When the curse will be lifted,
And clouds rolled away,

For the Morning will break,
And the dead shall arise,
And songs of redemption
Reach up to the skies
For then *will* be banished
Earth's sorrow and gloom,
When Christ from her bosom
Removes every tomb.

Oh, the comfort in knowing
That you are at rest,
With your head safely pillowed
Upon Jesus' breast;
That His watch He will keep
Till the dark night is gone,
And will call you forth early,
To greet the new dawn.

Then with joy all unmingled,
We'll again clasp your hand;
And through ages eternal,
In life with you stand;
For Jesus His promise
To "make all things new,"
Has sealed with His life blood --
The "Faithful and True."

Oh, the glory that waits
For the children of men,
When He comes and restores
Them to life once again!
For His Kingdom shall last
Till the victory is won;
And *God's* will on the earth,
As in heaven, is done.

- *Margaret H. Black.*

Messages of Encouragement

Dear Brethren:

It is sometimes claimed that Bible Students cannot meet and discuss, or study subjects on which there are different viewpoints, without having undue controversy. There is therefore a tendency to avoid those subjects which are considered "controversial" and study only those on which there is unanimity of opinion. For some months a group of Bible Students from Wisconsin and Illinois has met monthly and studied topics on which there is much difference of opinion, without indulging in argumentation, controversy, or animosity of spirit. The experience of this group proves that brethren with positive, opposing convictions can meet, study and discuss those so called "controversial" subjects and profit thereby. These brethren have studied such topics as: Sin Offering; Presence of Christ; Woman's Place in the Church; Cause of Divisions among the Brethren; Justification; Covenants; and are still, meeting regularly and harmoniously.

Two things at least are essential for the successful studying of such subjects. One is that the brethren must manifest the Lord's spirit in large measure. The one with desire to force acceptance of his ideas must restrain that desire. 'The one who would monopolize the time of a meeting with his thoughts must consider that others have a right to be heard. One must go not only with the thought of presenting his thoughts on the subjects considered, but with also the purpose of listening to the others.

There must also be an orderly method of conducting the meeting. The chairman must be impartial, and the business of two brothers arguing back and forth across' the table with each other must be prohibited. There must, be adherence to the topic, and opportunity to all to participate.

Here is the modus operandi followed by the group mentioned above. A topic for consideration is chosen by the group at one of their meetings. Within the week following, the members send questions on the topic to one, acting as secretary of the group. The secretary combines the questions; eliminates the duplicates, and those not pertaining to the topic; and mails the completed list promptly to the members, who then study the matters prior to the meeting.

At the meeting the chairman reads the first question, and then calls upon each member of the group for comment thereon. Then it is thrown open for general discussion. Members may ask further questions of others for enlightenment on points brought forth, but promiscuous argument back and forth is taboo.. 'The idea is that each is, *given* full opportunity to present his views, but there is to be no forcing acceptance of views through means of endless argument back and forth. 'This **same** procedure is followed with each question under, discuss sign. The group referred to meets only once a month, and therefore their sessions run about three hours in length. Generally they are so alive and, interesting that the three hours slip by rapidly. Unanimity of decision is not often reached, but each accepts that which he believes to be Scriptural, and no one is hurt if the thoughts he presents are rejected by others.

These meetings have demonstrated their value in many ways. They encourage real Bible study, Some who, knew nothing of a concordance, have learned how to handle it and profit thereby. They develop tolerance for the views of others. They give splendid opportunity to manifest the spirit of Christ towards the brothers whose ideas we may consider wrong, but who we can see are just as honest, earnest, and sincere as we are. They help eliminate some of the excessive self-

confidence some of us are afflicted with, and present us with much needed lessons in teachableness and meekness.

If brethren who are honest of heart and tolerant of spirit among our many divisions of Bible Students would get together from time to time and study' those so-called "controversial" topics, they could not help but The benefited by it. It would aid greatly in breaking down the divisional barriers. It would help eliminate intolerance and bigotry, and bring a stronger realization of the fact that the Lord's people are under one Head and are, all brethren. Why not advocate procedure of this sort as a step towards eliminating the spirit of division and establishing the spirit of unity among brethren now separated,

Yours in His service,
O. R. M. -- Wis.

Dear Brethren:

Christian greetings: These few lines are to say thank you, for the "Herald" which has been sent to me free and also an extra copy. I am sincerely grateful, for it has been a great help and spiritual uplift, not only to me, but when I have finished reading it, I pass it on to six others who enjoy its message; then it goes to a hospital and we do not know how much good it may do there.

The extra copy goes to an old lady, a Bible student, who at one time attended the classes, but now she is alone and unable to meet with others and has only these booklets to encourage and strengthen her. So once again I ask that they be sent free to me as I have but an old age pension.

We are living in strange times, and yet we see how prophecy is being fulfilled in these days and can lift up our hearts and rejoice for our redemption draweth nigh. I pray for you all in your work and writing, that all may be blessed with his blessing,, and that God will prosper you in the year to come. - 2 Thess. 1:2, 3; Josh. 1:9.

Your sister by His grace,
Mrs. J. A. -- Eng.

Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute

All lovers of our Lord Jesus and friends of the truth are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting of the Institute to be held at 2 p.m. in the office of the Institute at 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn 17, N. Y., Saturday, June 7, 1947 as announced in our April issue. In addition to the primary business of the election of directors, .opportunity willll be given for consideration off such other matters as may properly come before the meeting.

Members of the Institute who are. not receiving the "Herald in their own names, or the name of a member of the immediate family, but who are readers of the "Herald, '- " should so inform the office at once so the proxy forms May be sent them.

In addition to the present directors the following has been placed as a nominee:

H. E. Hollister, Chicago, Ill.