

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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Trouble in Anglican Church Circles

THE ATTACK of spiritual indigestion from which many of the Church of England hierarchy have been suffering, has recently been brought to the attention of the ecclesiastical world by means of the doctrinal controversy now raging between the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the English Church, and his subordinate prelate, Dr. Barnes, the radical-minded Bishop of Birmingham. The matter which is causing so much stir in the ranks of the orthodox is the subject matter of a book written and published by the latter clergyman under the title, "The Rise of Christianity." In his book Dr. Barnes expresses views of so heretical a nature that the Primate has requested his immediate resignation from his office of Bishop, a demand to which Dr. Barnes has replied with an unqualified refusal. The volume to which the Archbishop objects so strongly consists, in essence, of an open attack upon not only the cherished dogmas of the Episcopacy, but actually upon the foundation principles of the Christian faith itself.

Many of the communicants of the Established Church have used the columns of the public press to voice their feelings in the matter in no uncertain terms, in consequence of which, the issue has become one of the gravest importance throughout Protestant Christendom. In this connection it is a significant fact to note that apparently almost fifty per cent of the writers take their stand in support of the Bishop of Birmingham, who, it must be admitted, is merely giving expression to views long held in private by the Modernistic clergy of Christendom, but rarely proclaimed in such outspoken language.

To those in the light of present truth the situation should occasion no great surprise. The attacks, either open or veiled, made by the proponents of the "rationalistic" school upon the basic doctrines of Christianity have been in almost daily progress since the acceptance by many of the clergy of the "findings" of the exponents of the Higher Criticism and those of its companions in error, the evolutionists. The battle being waged by the so-called rationalists against the supernatural phenomena of the New Testament has been duly noted by all "Bible Students."

Dr. Barnes selects as special targets for his abuse, those doctrines of the faith which teach of the virgin birth of our Lord and his nativity in the royal city of Bethlehem, etc. The story of the virgin birth he carefully "explains" is based upon a mistranslation of a Hebrew word meaning "young

woman," so that in reality there was no miraculous element about it at all. We quote his words regarding "the supernatural aspects of Christ's life," which he informs us arose "from credulous rumor, symbolic writing, and literary embroidery [in other words, pure fiction] incorporated into the New Testament many years after his death." Developing his theme the Bishop suggests that "such details as the birth at Bethlehem, the flight to Egypt, and the return to Nazareth, were written into the Gospel story to *make it look as if ancient prophecies had been fulfilled.*" He maintains that the date of Christ's birth has been wrongly placed and that "Christ possibly lived until fifty. But it is against the testimony of the witnesses to our Lord's resurrection that the learned Bishop levels his particular shafts. According to the reverend gentleman, the disciples and Mary, who went to the sepulcher and found that the Lord had risen, were apparently victims of an optical delusion and suffered from some form of auto-intoxication. In other words their desire to have the miracle of the resurrection take place was so strong that they were able to convince themselves that the event had actually occurred, something which the Bishop manifestly disbelieves entirely.

In his attack upon the credibility of such witnesses as Peter, John, and Mary, Dr. Barnes evinces the characteristic distrust shown by many scholars of the value of the testimony of those whom he terms "ill-educated proletariat," meaning by that, the common people of our Lord's day. How true it is that the natural mind receiveth not the things of the spirit. The skepticism of the Bishop closely parallels that of the rulers of Israel who "when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men marveled." (Acts 4:13.) Unlike the rulers, however, who attributed the power of the Apostles to the fact that "they had been with Jesus," the Bishop evidently considers the witnesses to the resurrection to have been merely credulous fools, suffering from an over-excited state of mind. We submit that this is, to say the least, a strange position to be taken by one who professes to be a Christian believer and who commands a handsome salary as a Bishop with a responsibility for feeding the flock of God.

One of the writers referred to who criticizes Dr. Barnes, also rebukes the Archbishop for the stand he takes in the controversy. He comments on the fact that the Primate has passed over in silence "the most salient point in the book," namely, the clear implication by the writer that he considers Christ to have been no more than a prophet and an ethical philosopher, who claimed for himself no more affinity with God than any other good man might acquire. Then he goes on to assert that "on this issue the majority of Christians would support the church in urging Dr. Barnes to resign." But the Archbishop has stopped short- at the point of merely disagreeing with Barnes' conclusions that the resurrection of Christ belongs to the -sphere of religious symbolism *and is not a historical fact.* "In fact," says the writer, "many orthodox Christians share this view" (that the resurrection of our Lord is not a fact) "and that this position is approved in the report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine."

"Can it be," he continues, "that the Archbishop feared to raise this most crucial issue"? The meaning of the writer here becomes somewhat obscure, but he is apparently trying to say that although the claim of the Apostles that our Lord rose from the dead is one generally repudiated by the Modernistic clergy, the Archbishop feared to say so in as many words. It is, indeed, a crucial issue, for it is a doctrine which has constituted the foundation for the hopes of every Christian. The great Apostle Paul reasons in his epistle most logically, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." (1 Cor. 15:17.) And then in verse 20 (1 Cor. 15:20) he concludes exultantly, "But *now* is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept," and all who have been permitted to understand the blessed philosophy of the Atonement will take their stand with the great teacher of Christian doctrine.

Another writer on the subject makes this truly remarkable statement: "I find no stumbling-block to my faith in Dr. Barnes' views." It would seem pertinent to inquire of this gentleman, "Of what faith are you speaking?" If the views expressed by such an expositor were to be regarded as correct, then it would follow that all Christians had been believing in cunningly devised fables for 1900 years, and that our Lord and his Apostles have been guilty of the most flagrant falsehoods; for Jesus predicted and the Apostles bore testimony to the fact of his resurrection, and upon their testimony has rested the faith of every Christian throughout the Age. If the skepticism of Dr. Barnes is an accurate reflection of the views of even a small proportion of his communicants, how thankful we are that we do not share them. Truly the words of Jesus are being fulfilled: "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" - Luke 18:8.

- J. R. Hughes.

His Word is Sure

Mathematicians have worked out, a formula for proving the accuracy of any prediction. They call it the law of Compound Probabilities. It runs something like this: One prediction has one chance in two of fulfilment. An added detail weakens the chance to one- in four. Two added details weakens the chance to one in eight. Three added details weakens the chance to one in thirty-two. Ten added details increases the hazard to one in 1024. Twenty-five added details makes the fulfilment practically impossible, for the hazard is increased too one in 33,554,432.

The Old Testament Scriptures predicted that Jesus Christ would visit this world in the form of human flesh, and from first to last they added, 109 details to this prediction. Twenty-five of these details were connected with the betrayal, trial, death, and burial of our Lord. Such predictions seemed absurd and unbelievable, and were made by the Prophets over a period of 500 years, many centuries before the advent occurred.

On turning to the records as found in the four Gospels, we find that every one of these predictions was literally fulfilled in the space of twenty-four hours.

Should any one be sufficiently interested to apply this test further, and would take the time to figure the hazard taken in making 109 predictions concerning the advent of Christ, he would likely have a line of figures many yards in length, yet, the records show that every prediction was accurately fulfilled in the space of thirty three years.

- *Prophecy Monthly*.

The Unity of the Spirit

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." - Eph. 4:3.

THE UNITY of all who are true believers in the shed blood of Christ as an atonement for sin, is surely one of those very desirable objectives properly hoped and prayed for by all who love our Lord in sincerity. Ever since Jesus himself prayed to the Father nineteen hundred years ago, fervently requesting that his followers share in a blessed oneness with God and himself, there have been longing hearts who have taken up the prayer in a sincere desire to see such oneness present in the Church. And how could it be otherwise in the life of any believer who really loved the Lord Jesus? No one who loved him could long remain a stranger to those strong impulses of deep affection that constrained him to pray for the most perfect unity and loving, harmony among

his people. And he would surely expect to find them equally concerned about the possible effect such love and concord would have upon the world outside. Remembering that his Church would be in the world to carry forward a testimony of his coming into the realms of men to save them from sin and death, he specially desired that the loving unity and deep attachment to each other on the part of his people would serve to convince the world that he had surely been sent by the Father. (John 17:21.) As we catch a vision, then, of his yearning for this unity, and as we grow in the knowledge and appreciation of its desirability and of *all* that it embraces, it must certainly lead us to a prayerful study of just what it was that Jesus asked the Father for, and the part that we may play in making such a prayer blessedly fulfilled in our experience. Such a study is needed on our part if we would understand how even in the matter of this prayer, Jesus could say that the Father always heard him (John 11:42), and yet confess, as we must, that the history of the visible Church has been marred by a most lamentable absence of the unity of the Spirit.

THE WHEAT IN THE MIDST OF TARES

If Jesus cannot be satisfied in the depths of his love for us with anything short of the oneness set forth in his prayer -- the oneness of the divine family -- it follows then that the actual experience of such unity among his followers must represent a wonderful possibility of blessing, a state where the fellowship of such kindred minds would indeed be like to that above. But as we look back over the history of the Church which has stood before the world, and recall the discords, and the failures to measure up in any outstanding manner to the standards of love and unity our Lord has asked for, it is not surprising to find oneself feeling that nothing but disappointment has been the portion of the Head of the Church in this matter. However, with the better understanding of the purposes of God which we now enjoy, we can see that, deplorable as the records are, they are not entirely a story of defeat and vain hopes.

In the wisdom of God there has been a ministry of evil permitted throughout this present Age, and the Enemy has not been kept out of the field, but permitted to scatter his tares freely in every quarter where the good seed has been sown. God's Word will enable the true Christian to discern the difference between the Church of which Jesus is the Head, and amongst whom alone the unity of the spirit can possibly be found, and the church which fills the earth with its Christian name and its worldly standards and compromises. With this fact clearly understood, we can know that notwithstanding all that history reveals of strife, and even of bloodshed among those professing the name of Jesus, yet, after all, Jesus has not experienced disappointment. The unity of the Spirit has never left the earth since Pentecost, and praise be to God, it will never be permitted to depart from the earth "Till we *all* come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

MANY EFFORTS MADE TO UNIFY BELIEVERS

In a general way may it not be truthfully said that the real purpose behind many of the efforts made toward unity in the past, and behind some present undertakings in the religious world, has been in a considerable degree honest, and therefore to that extent commendable. If the past has witnessed frequent attempts by ambitious men to inaugurate a unity of force, whose lording it over God's heritage has left the deep stain of persecution on church history, surely it must be admitted that other men have come forward' actuated by nobler motives and unselfish ideals, genuinely striving to bring about a more harmonious fellowship in Christ. Mistaken views regarding the unity Jesus desired, have been many. Abortive schemes to end divisions, which the Apostle said must come that the approved might be manifested, have long been in evidence. Creeds, written and unwritten, have flourished and have in one form or another contained substantial and thoroughly Scriptural features, and it cannot be denied that the prime movers in

some of these very schemes were true Christians, misinformed, but nevertheless sincere. If we today feel disposed to question any or all of these efforts,, we should surely do so with humility, and with a proper regard for the pure intentions of all who have given evidence of love for God and his people. Had we ourselves proved that we had passed beyond the possibility of endeavoring to carry out proper and well meant purposes by questionable expedients, then we might be in a position to consider ourselves competent to sit in judgment on others of the past and present. May it not be that the passing of even a little more time will reveal that our vision has also been in a very real sense "through a glass darkly." Some are learning even now, with considerable humiliation, that greater knowledge of God's Plan of salvation, and an opportunity to profit by the mistakes of our brethren in darker days, has not removed the possibility of being bound, hindered, disfellowshipped; and all because of a failure on the part of many who speak freely enough of liberty in Christ, to really understand that law of love and liberty, and who possess so little of that wonderful carnality -- destroying vision and power -- "the unity of the Spirit."

THE UNITY RESULTING FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT

One great difficulty in uniting believers, and the underlying cause of so many failures in the various efforts made, has been a failure to understand the most important element essential to a true unity of the Spirit. All along there has been, and even yet there is an oversight of the fact that the Word of God is very exacting when treating such matters. What men might verily believe to be the unity of the Scriptures, might be, and indeed often is, nothing more than the unifying of ideas and objectives congenial to any number of people, and often largely of human origin. The Christian world is full of that kind of union, and we freely admit its existence. We *must* distinguish between the union that is possible where a few people, or a hundred, meet or fellowship together, sharing beliefs in common, and that union of-the same number of people who meet and enjoy a unity that is distinctly the result of the Holy Spirit's work in the inner life of each believer thus united. It is the failure to recognize this fact that has caused so much of harm, and caused a multitude of sects and factions to deceive themselves with the idea that they are, regardless of the error in their doctrine, the people among whom the unity of the Spirit is found. Our danger is equally real, in employing such tests as seeing "eye to eye" and others similar, and these can be a snare and a delusion, and will be such unless there be a real vital relationship to the Lord himself.

The true unity has persisted throughout the Age. God *has* heard the prayer of Jesus for the unity of his devoted followers. A kinship of spirit uniting every spiritual mind, an affinity of love inherent in every true child of God, a oneness of whole-hearted devotion to the person of Jesus Christ, flows out from heart to heart in a blessed sense of unity when the "unity of the Spirit" is possessed in reality. When this unity is bound up in our affections, it will sweep away all the barriers of dogma, span the centuries of the Age, and into the depths of the heart there will come the most blessed realization that Jesus has not prayed in vain for the oneness of his people.

UNLESS THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE

Men can, as we have seen, produce union, yes, and produce a unity that is wonderfully adhesive and permanent. But men cannot by any means or methods create or perpetuate the unity of the Spirit. Only the Spirit of God can produce the unifying results, set forth in our opening text. The "unity of the Spirit" is therefore not a matter of bringing men into harmony with each other on matters of teaching and practice, but it is positively a matter of bringing individuals into a personal relationship with the Lord. The Word-does not say, "If any man believes that Jesus died for our sins, and associates himself with others of similar faith, the same is a new creature," but

"If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature. (2 Cor. 5:17.) Certainly not otherwise can he be such, and the "unity of the Spirit" is peculiarly limited to new creatures in Christ. Again we read, "There is one Body, and one Spirit, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and *in you all*." (Eph. 4:4, 6.) Accordingly, just in so far as a company of people may be made up of individuals living in this vital relationship to Christ, *and indwelt by the Father*, just to that degree can there be a unity of the Spirit. Sine it must be confessed that the proportion of those thus indwelt is small, it follows that considerable variation must be expected in groups who meet together, or who may be met with from day to day. It is seen then that Paul is not merely expressing a desire for uniformity of any superficial kind, but he is laying down principles which concern those only who are walking worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, and who are earnest in their desire to attain "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT

That there is a work to be performed in us by the Holy Spirit, there can be no doubt. That it was expedient that Jesus go away in order that the Spirit might come and do in us what he himself could not have done had he remained with us, is also clearly stated in the Scriptures. And that the work of the Spirit is such as to need no mechanical innovations of ours to give effect to its operations, or to meet peculiar situations in the Church, or to attract the eyes of the world, has long been recognized by godly men. That the Lord's assurance that "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit" has been the recognized basis of all successful evangelism throughout the Age, may be known by all who will take the time to familiarize themselves with church history. How strange it is then, in view of the facts just stated, facts universally approved by most Christians, that- we hear so little emphasis being placed on the *work of the spirit*. Theoretically all the above mentioned facts are professedly embraced in the teachings of the majority of believers, and yet when the real verities of the Scriptural teachings regarding the work of the spirit in a fully surrendered life are emphasized, there seems to be a decided barrier raised against such emphasis. This is all the more difficult to understand when it is, observed that the same Christians seem utterly immune to any thought *that their own works* could be other than successful if all hindrances were removed from their path. Under these circumstances how could we expect to find any very large number enjoying the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"? Many men of many minds must inevitably find themselves separated by personal preferences, ideas, and policies, while at the same time "the Church which is his Body," moving along amongst the mixed multitude, continues to sing, "My goal is Christ and Christ alone," and perpetuates within their deepest affections the unity of the Spirit.

THE PRIMARY FOUNDATION FOR UNITY

What then is the work of the Holy Spirit by and through which true Christian unity may be definitely experienced? In answer to such a question it would seem necessary to give emphasis to the words of Jesus regarding a very important feature of the Spirit's work. Among other things Jesus said that the Spirit would guide us into all truth, and that through the Spirit whatsoever things he had said would be brought to our remembrance. And we cannot forget that our Lord also said on the basis of Peter's declaration, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," that "*On this rock will I build my Church*, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Oh! that this statement of Jesus had been indelibly stamped on the innermost chambers of every Christian's heart; and oh! that all believers past and present had remembered or would now remember Paul's equally emphatic statement, ".Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:11.) Had these great truths been always remembered, oh how much less of discord there would have been. Then the oneness for which Jesus prayed would have been a blessed reality in the Church, and it would today destroy numberless hindrances to

the well-being of that Body, which by God's unchangeable law, is built up by that which every single part supplies.

And this is exactly what the Holy Spirit will do in us if it is permitted to take the words of Jesus and reveal them unto us. The promise that we would be guided into all truth cannot mean that we will be so completely informed that every vestige of truth will have been compassed by us, for this would be contradicted by Paul's statement "now we know in part." What the promise of Jesus assures us is that we will be enlightened up to the fullest possible measure of our capacity to receive of the spirit. This promise must not be claimed in any exclusive way by those of us who are now favored with clearer light on times and seasons of the Divine Plan. The early Church could claim this precious promise as fully and as gladly as we can, and that some of them realized its deepest meaning is clearly revealed in the records. They caught the depth of the Master's words, "*I am the Truth*," and they experienced so complete a transformation of mind that all prejudices, religious and national, were swept away, and "all one in Christ became a fixed principle of life.

JESUS' PRAYER HEARD BY THE FATHER

The work of the Holy Spirit is to bring together in a "unity of the faith" all who love the Lord in sincerity -- yes, and to cause us to love all who have thus loved him. Its work will be to break down all the barriers that our inherent tendency to forbid all who walk not with us have raised, until it is realized that in Christ Jesus "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither *bond* nor *free*, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28.) Therefore, whoever forgets this fact and proceeds to make such distinctions in the Body of Christ, does so in violation of the Word of God. And, as we have just seen, this unity of the faith of which our text treats cannot mean the complete understanding of all details of truth, neither does it demand a uniformity of belief on anything but the clearly stated fundamentals of the faith. It must therefore follow that all believers in the redemptive sacrifice of Christ whose characters give evidence of a living union with him must be embraced by us in the unity of the Spirit. To insist on a more exclusive application of these Scriptures, and to conclude that whatever of dispensational time features some of us may now understand would be a test of membership in the Church or a determining proof of one's being in the Little Flock, would seem to be carrying matters much too far, and it would be an ignoring of some plain facts of Scripture which are abundantly confirmed in the lives of godly men and women. Again, we say, the prayer of Jesus for the oneness of his Church *has* been heard by the Father, and that Church "which is his Body" has enjoyed and will continue to enjoy the "unity of the Spirit," as a blessed sense of relationship to all true saints past and present.

"This is the work of God," said Jesus, "that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." The written Word is all built up around the Living Word, around the person and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and therefore, whoever he be, and whatever his work in the edification of the saints may be, if this fact stands out pre-eminently in his life and service, such an one is on the foundation, other than which none can be laid. Blessed indeed, therefore is the heart prepared to receive into full fellowship all such, as sharers together with us of the grace of God. Someone has suggested that "All roads over which human limitations hold sway, lead to Rome, but all roads: where the Spirit is permitted leadership will lead to the person of Jesus Christ." No argument is necessary to prove that this is so. There will be no more of anything like "I am of Paul," "I am of Cephas," etc., when the work of the Spirit has taught us God's unifying fundamentals of the truth as it is in Christ our common Lord.

- J. J. Blackburn.

(To be continued)

Cooperation in the Ministry (Installment No. 4)

In the January, February, and April 1947 issues of this journal, we published, under the above caption, a number of letters which had passed between the Dawn Bible Students Association and our Institute. Since then there has been a further exchange of correspondence, as follows:

May 20, 1947
Directors, of
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

Dear Brethren:
Christian love and greetings in our Redeemer's name!

Your letter of February 12 received, and we thank you for it. In reply we wish first to confirm the arrangements for a meeting of our Trustees with your Board of Directors on the evening of June 9. 11, it is agreeable we will be glad to come to 177 Prospect Place for the meeting, and will endeavor to be there by 7:30 o'clock.

In your letter you have set forth a fairly comprehensive outline of *your* viewpoint, and the reasons for it; and in order that we may have both sides before us in our cording conference, we wish now, in reply to your letter, to set forth our understanding of the Lord's will as it applies to the work of the Dawn Bible Students Association. In this way we will have something definite to consider when we meet.

The gist of your letter indicates that the real difference between our viewpoints is in the matter of what constitutes qualifications for teachers to serve the Church. We agree that this is the fundamental difference between us. If we understand your viewpoint correctly, you seem to make no distinction between doctrinal standards for general fellowship among the brethren and qualifications for teachers. We hold, on the other hand, that the Scriptures reveal that the doctrinal standard for general fellowship is not necessarily the same as for teachers in the Church.

An impressive Scriptural example of this is found in the Book of Hebrews. In chapter 3, verse 1, the Apostle addresses those to whom he is writing as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." There is no question, therefore, about their standing in the Church as brethren, but in chapter 5, verse 12, the Apostle makes it plain that these "holy brethren" were not qualified to be teachers, although they had been in the truth long enough to have attained such qualifications. We think you will agree with us that the Apostle was not intolerant, nor restricting Christian liberty, in pointing this fact out to the Hebrew Christians.

Instead of these "holy brethren" being qualified to teach, they required that solve one teach them again what constituted the first principles of the oracles of God. These first principles as outlined by the Apostle himself in chapter 6, verses 1-6, include all the points of doctrine you brethren have set forth as qualifications for teachers, and more. The Hebrew Christians had not qualified as teachers, because they had never progressed beyond these first principles -- they had not gone on to perfection. Regardless of -what we may understand the Apostle to mean by "going on to perfection" the point is clearly established that those whom we may properly recognize as "holy brethren" may not necessarily be doctrinally qualified to teach in the Church.

Again, the very fact that Paul takes the trouble to set forth qualifications for elders proves, we believe, that it is Scriptural to make a distinction between fellowship and eldership, and that it is not a curtailment of Christian liberty to do so.

In the qualifications, set forth by this inspired writer the, statement "apt to teach" is, we think, very significant. We hold that this implies more, much more, than merely the ability to impart knowledge to others. A person might be highly gifted with the ability to impart information, but first he must possess the information himself. A professor of mathematics is apt to teach mathematics only because he understands mathematics.

So it is in the Church. Aptness to teach in the Church involves the necessity of clearness in the truth which is essential for the people of God to know, for how can one be apt to teach the truth if he is not himself clear in the truth? This, it seems to us, is so obvious that it needs no further clarification. Nevertheless the Apostle does clarify the point further by saying that a bishop (elder) should not be a novice-margin, "one newly come to the faith." One new in the truth is not likely to have all the points of the truth clear, nor has he had the necessary background of experience to make him a safe teacher in the Church.

Is there not even a greater danger of making one a teacher who, once knowing the truth, has departed from some important phases of it? The novice is not qualified because he has not yet proved his stability, but a brother who has departed from some phases of the truth has demonstrated that he is indeed one who can be blown about by every wind of doctrine. The novice may some day become stable, but the erring brother has become unstable, hence disqualified as a teacher.

And Paul continues his lesson of what it means to be a faithful teacher in the Church. In the opening of the 4th chapter of 1 Timothy he says that in the latter times "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." He then enumerates some of the errors, and in the 6th verse adds, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained."

Could the Apostle have stated more clearly that to be a good minister of Jesus Christ one should be well nourished and built up in the faith and in the doctrines, and be able and willing to "put the brethren in remembrance" of the fact that some are departing from the faith, and to warn the Lord's people against seducing spirits? We think not. The climax of this lesson comes in the statement, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and then that hear thee."

That Paul's use of the term "doctrine" applies to more than godly living is clear in his second epistle to Timothy, where he writes further to this young servant of the Church, saying, "Study to skew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15.) It is well for all of the Lord's people to take heed to this counsel, for we are all "workmen" for the Lord: but its first application was to Timothy, an elder in the Church, showing him that if he was to be a servant or workman approved by God it was essential for him to rightly divide the Word of Truth. The importance of rightly dividing the Word of truth appears three verses later in this chapter, where Paul writes that some had erred, "saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." The Scriptures clearly teach the doctrine of the resurrection, but failing to rightly divide the Word of truth, some were putting the resurrection in the wrong place, chronologically. And these errors, Paul says, were eating like a cancer, which is the effect of all error.

Paul then admonishes Timothy to be faithful in combating error, but in doing so, to be gentle, avoiding foolish and unlearned questions which engender strife, and then adds, "apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." (2 Timothy 2:24, 25.) Here, then, is an inspired viewpoint of what a teacher in the Church should be and do. And how different it is than the idea that because some one has a different understanding of certain doctrines, those doctrines become controversial, hence should be ignored in order to have peace in the Church. And to us it seems still worse to set up as teachers those who are unsound in the truth, thus encouraging them to introduce their errors which will eat as a canker among the Lord's people, causing a breakdown of faith in the verities of the truth and confusion in the ecclesias.

In Titus 1:9, Paul sets forth as one of the qualifications of teachers the ability "by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Here again "aptness to teach" the truth is seen to include soundness in the truth. And to be pleasing to the Lord such a one must be willing to uphold the doctrines, not remain silent about them.

The foregoing are a few Scriptural reasons why we believe that teachers in the Church should be sound in the truth, and zealous for its promotion. We are happy to recognize many as brethren in the Lord whom we feel do not measure up to this doctrinal standard for teachers. If one should come into our meetings and state simply that he believed in the blood of Jesus and was devoted to the service of God, we would not say to such; "You are not a Christian." He might believe in eternal torture and the trinity, but still we would not disfellowship him. We would welcome him at our meetings, hoping thus to have an opportunity to help him see the truth more clearly.

We believe, however, you will agree with us that there is a vast difference between taking this liberal viewpoint of all professing Christians and the possible sponsoring of them as teachers. This distinction being so obvious, it then remains only to determine where to make the difference. But wherever we draw the line, we think it should be apparent that to do so is not in itself unscriptural, nor the suppression of Christian liberty. We think it is important to recognize, however, that wherever we do draw the line, we can do so only for ourselves, and not, for others. The Dawn Bible Students Association has no Scriptural authority to tell an ecclesia what its standard for teachers should be. However, we do have the right and the responsibility to have such a standard as a service organization, and it is with the hope that we can agree on what a proper standard should be that we are glad to continue these discussions.

Coming now to some of the details of your correspondence, we will take the liberty of making a few observations. In kindness we say that we feel you have made too much of the expression "confession of faith," as though, we have, or are attempting to establish, a written creed for the brethren, especially the Pilgrim brethren. We do not feel that this is necessary. We become sufficiently well acquainted with brethren to know their views, to know their rejoicing in the truth and their zeal for all of its doctrines, before we ask them to serve. We believe this is the proper method. To send an unknown brother out in the Pilgrim service simply because he might be willing to sign a "confession of faith," as you put it, would be exceedingly unwise, as we see it.

But let us not be misunderstood. We see nothing wrong, when circumstances require it, for any brother to sign a statement of where he stands on matters of truth. We have in mind at the moment the custom of some ecclesias to send such a statement to brethren appointed to serve them as Pilgrims. We think this is eminently proper. In many instances ecclesias have no other way of determining the doctrinal qualifications of a brother, and as a servant of the Lord and the truth, any brother under such circumstances should be happy to let an ecclesia he desires to serve

know clearly, definitely, and fully, where he stands on all the doctrines of present truth as they are understood generally by the brethren. To us it would seem a wrong spirit on the part of a brother to resent furnishing such information. We should always remember that we are merely servants of the Lord's people, not their overlords; and it is always becoming for servants to furnish those they serve with their credentials for service, if such be required.

In your letter you state definitely that you would not knowingly send a brother into the pilgrim service who was not doctrinally in harmony with the outline of truth, "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach." You must know that this is going considerably beyond your own outline of a doctrinal standard for teachers which calls merely for belief in God, in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and a profession of consecration. We are glad that you are willing to go this one step farther.

You mention the V. D. M. Questions. We are glad you did, for it reminds us that Brother Russell did not hesitate, when he deemed it necessary, to establish a definite doctrinal standard -- and a written one, too -- for teachers in the Church. To us this means that Brother Russell did not consider that simple statement of truth, "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach, as a suitable doctrinal standard for teachers in the Church. Certainly Brother Russell believed that the Scriptures clearly taught many fundamental truths which are not mentioned in that outline, as the V. D. M. Questions indicate.

You say that in the list of V. D. M. Questions prepared by Brother Russell, no questions are asked concerning the Second Presence of Christ, the Covenants, and the Sin-offering. We remind you, however, that Question 20 reads, "Have you read thoroughly and carefully the six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*?" and that Question 21 reads: "Have you derived much enlightenment and benefit therefrom?" Do you honestly think that a brother who, in reply to these questions, would explain that he did not accept the teachings of -the Volumes on the matter of Christ's Second Presence, nor agree with their presentation of the Covenants and the Sin offering, would have been approved by Brother Russell as a Pilgrim or an elder? We are fully convinced that he would not. The reason for this conclusion is Brother Russell's advice in the very article in which he published the V. D. M. Questions. We quote the following from that article:

"Repeatedly Bible Students write us that their elders try to hinder them from the use of the Watch Tower Society's publications as textbooks in Bible we study. Some of these elders go so far as to tell the s classes that they are out of harmony with many of the things in these textbooks. Sometimes, as rulers, t they forbid the use of these in the classes. We are asked what should be done under such circumstances. We reply, Let those who wish to follow such leaders do so -- that is their right. We shall wish them well. But let us not follow with them nor submit for a moment to such arrangements. . . . We recommend that such classes vote to dismiss such an elder from his position of *service*." - *Reprints*, page R5982, column 1.

In view of this clear-cut statement appearing in the articles which serves as a preamble to the V. D. M. Questions, we believe the, fact is well established that Brother Russell considered many important doctrinal points well taken care of in the two questions, pertaining to the study and appreciation of *Studies in the Scriptures*.

The matter of clearness in the truth and in the understanding of the *Divine Plan of the Ages* is mentioned many times by Brother Russell as an essential qualification for eldership. On the Chart of the Ages depicting the Divine Plan, the Second Presence of Christ is clearly illustrated, together with the harvest at the end of the Age. Obviously, then, the "Divine Plan," to Brother Russell, included the fact of Christ's Second Presence.

While the above observations are what we believe Brother Russell's viewpoint to have been on the questions at issue, it is not with the thought of definitely deciding the matter on this basis, that we have made them. That is why the main body of this letter deals with the Scriptural presentation of proper qualifications for teachers, and the fact, above all, that the Scriptures do make a difference between fellowship and eldership. This, more than any other single difference of viewpoint, is what keeps us, apart. Not only is it Scriptural to have a more rigid, doctrinal standard for teachers in the Church than is required merely to acknowledge one as a brother, but it is logical, and in keeping with the spirit of a sound mind.

We are glad to know that your present Directors all believe in the Second Presence of Christ. Believing it, you must certainly recognize the important place this inspiring truth holds in the Divine Plan. Why should we think it necessary to relegate this great truth to a minor place in our meetings simply in order to give those who have lost faith in it an opportunity to teach? You may say that your Pilgrims-who - do not believe in the Second Presence of Christ do not preach their unbelief from the platform. Perhaps not, but certainly they are in no position to strengthen the brethren on this subject who may need strengthening.

You say it is a controversial doctrine, hence should not be made a test of eldership. This is not a sound argument, for there isn't a truth taught in the Bible that is not controversial in the opinion of some. The resurrection of Jesus was a controversial doctrine in the early Church, and Paul reveals that there were those in the Corinthian Church who did not believe in it. That the wages of sin is death is controversial in the minds of some. There are millions of sincere men and women who do not agree with us on this point. Shall we say, then, that just because some of our brethren have chosen to change their minds on certain doctrines of "present truth," these doctrines are not important, and should not be made tests of eldership? To follow such a policy to its logical end would mean the death of the truth in the earth in a very short time.

To us this viewpoint is turning things upside down, reasoning in reverse from the Apostle when he exhorted the elders at Ephesus to take heed to the flock in Order to protect them against teachers of false doctrine who would rise up from among themselves. Paul did not advise that when these unsound brethren did manifest themselves they should be made teachers in the Church on the ground that to do otherwise would be intolerant.

Trusting that these few thoughts may help you understand our viewpoint better, and looking forward to our meeting together, on June 9, we remain

Yours in the blessed hope,
DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION.
W. N. Wooddworth, *Secretary*

PS. - Answering your inquiry concerning how one becomes a member of the Dawn Bible Students Association, we quote the By-law regarding this point, which reads:

"Members. The membership may be increased by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire membership for any one nominated by two (2) members. Said vote may be made either in person or by mail."

The conference planned for June 9, 1947 was not held, owing to the inability of the Institute brethren to accomplish full Board representation. However, an informal discussion took place in St. Louis, July 12, 1947, between Brothers W. N. Woodworth of the Dawn and P. L. Read of the Institute.

August 29, 1947
DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION,

Dear Brethren:

We understand that recently in St. Louis Brother W. N. Woodworth and Brother P. L. Read found opportunity to discuss the question of a date for the next Dawn-Institute conference.

Our Directors agree with your Trustees as to the desirability of as full a representation on both sides as possible, but have thus far been unable to arrange a date when all seven of our Directors could be present. Brother Woodworth's suggestion conveyed to Brother Read that possibly a majority of our Board could arrange to meet with is majority of your Trustees, appeals to us as a practical solution of the problem. Accordingly we will plan to have four of our Directors (Brothers J. C. Jordan; J. T. Read, P. L. Read, and P. E. Thomson) meet with your representatives. We understand the date, Monday, October 27, 1947, will be satisfactory to you, and suggest the hour and place as 2 P.M. at the Dawn *office*, Rutherford, N. J. (or such other hour and place as you may prefer).

We would appreciate your early confirmation of these arrangements, that our brethren may plan accordingly.

Will you please accept this as a formal acknowledgment of your letter of May 20, 1947, already acknowledged by telephone. Some of the points you make will doubtless be further discussed at the conference.

Sincerely in His joyous service,
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.
P. E. Thomson, *Secretary*

September 3, 1947.
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE,
Dear Brethren:

Your letter of August 29 received, and in reply we wish to say that the date and time you have suggested (October 27, 2 P.M.) for a conference will be satisfactory to us. At least, it will be so, as far as we can foresee at the present time. Should any unexpected contingency arise to make it impractical, we will advise you in ample time.

Yours in the blessed hope,
DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION.
W. N. Woodworth, *Secretary*

The conference planned for Oct. 27, 1947 was not held, owing to the inability of the Institute brethren to arrange for four of its brethren to attend.

October 28, 1947
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE,

Dear Brethren:

Christian love and greetings!

Confirming a recent telephone conversation with Brother Thomson, and on behalf of our Board of Trustees, with whom I have since met, I am now writing to express our regret that it was not possible for a majority representation of your Board of Directors to meet with us on Monday afternoon, October 27, as had been arranged. We all felt that a meeting with a minority of your Directors, who would not be able to reach a definite decision on behalf of the Board, would not serve materially to attain the end which we are all seeking, namely, a harmonious cooperation in the ministry of present truth. Our Board -of Trustees has authorized me to say that we are prepared to meet with your Board of Directors, as a Board, at any time and place which you may find possible to arrange. When you find that such a meeting is possible, let us know a few weeks in advance, and we will be happy to accommodate ourselves to your convenience.

Very sincerely yours in the blessed hope,
DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION.
W. N. Woodworth, *Secretary*

October 30, 1947.
Mr. Norman Woodworth,
DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Dear Brother Norman:

Your letter of the 28th came to hand yesterday. In this same mail I am inquiring of our Directors as to whether they can be present for a second meeting as you proposed in connection with the Chicago Convention which will be held November 15 and 16. It is not probable there would be any time for meeting during the time of the Convention unless it should be that there are no Sunday night meetings. In that case they could possibly meet on Sunday night if your Board also found that date a possible one for their attendance. They will be letting me know by return mail as to whether they could attend a meeting the 14th, 16-th, or 17th. I am sure this is too short notice for you, but realize there is a bare possibility of our being able to make such arrangements.

Those who will be present, according to present plans on that occasion are: Brothers B. F. Hollister, H. E. Hollister, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, and P. E. Thomson.

With warmest Christian love,
Your brother by His abounding grace,
Paul.

October 31, 1947.
Mr. Paul Thomson,
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

Dear Brother Paul:

Yours of October 30 received today. I am replying at once, because tomorrow I am leaving for a trip to the West Coast. You are right in suspecting that the notice is a little too short to be able to meet with you brethren in Chicago as you suggested. I regret that this is so, as I feel that there would be a possibility that one or more of our trustees from the West Coast could possibly come as far as Chicago for a meeting.

Possibly, however, you brethren while you are all together, might consider it worth while to study our letter to you of May 20, and let us know your reactions.

If the next time you find that a majority of your Board can be together you can give us four to six weeks notice, I am quite sure we will be able to arrange to meet with you.

Yours in the blessed hope,
Norman.

December 27, 1947
DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Dear Brethren:

You will be interested to learn that our full Board of seven brethren found opportunity to meet in Chicago November 16, 1947, at which time we considered the correspondence recently passing between your organization and ours, particularly your last four letters dated, respectively, May 20, 1947, September 3, 1947, October 28, 1947, and October 31, 1947. We noted, especially, the request in yours of October 31, 1947, that we let you know our reactions to your letter of May 20, 1947. These are submitted in the following paragraphs:

From your letter of May 20, 1947, taken in connection with our earlier exchange of correspondence, one point clearly emerges: There is at present one (and only one) real difference between our viewpoints. It relates to the qualifications we should expect brethren to possess whom we invite to share in the ministry of our respective associations.

We hope before these discussions are concluded that this one difference will be largely, if not entirely, resolved. (As a contribution to this end we will later in this letter offer some comments bearing on certain paragraphs in your May 20, 1947 letter.) But realizing that this desirable outcome may not be attained immediately, the question remains: What degree of cooperation, if any, may we achieve now, notwithstanding our one difference?

In seeking an answer to this question, we note, with satisfaction, your own words:

"We think it is important to recognize, however, that wherever we do draw the line, we can do so only for ourselves, and not for others. The Dawn Bible Students Association has no Scriptural authority to tell any ecclesia what its standard for teachers should be. However, we do have the right and the responsibility to have such a standard as a service organization."

Holding this right for yourselves, and recognizing a similar right belonging to each ecclesia inviting your cooperation in the ministry, you will, presumably, concede it also to the Pastoral Bible Institute.

If, then, you find yourselves able to cooperate with ecclesias who may or may not share your views as to what the doctrinal standard of its teachers should be, it should be possible for you to cooperate also with us, notwithstanding the difference in viewpoint on this subject which presently exists between us.

Assuming your concurrence in the foregoing, it would appear that the next thing in order would be for us to entertain each other's recommendations as to the practical steps we might take, to bring about the harmonious cooperation in the ministry of "present truth," which you were gracious enough to say (in your October 28th letter), is "the end which we are all seeking."

In regard to the time and place for our next conference, we gather from your recent letters that Chicago would be as satisfactory to your Board as Brooklyn or Rutherford. In our case, while a majority of our Board could probably find it convenient to meet with you in Brooklyn or Rutherford about the time of the Institute's annual meeting (in June), we could arrange for a majority to attend a conference in Chicago almost any day in the year, on reasonably short notice. Four of our brethren live in Chicago, or vicinity, while a fifth resides in St. Louis and could also be counted on to attend. In these circumstances, therefore, we shall be pleased to leave the time and place for you to name.

We come now to the consideration of the details of your May 20, 1947 letter. On these we offer the following comments:

(1) You submit Hebrews 5:12 as "an impressive Scriptural example" in support of your position that doctrinal standards (such as belief in Brother Russell's latest views on the Covenants, Sin-offering and Lord's Second Presence), which you admit are not requisite for fellowship "as holy brethren" (Heb. 3:1), must be required of "teachers."

It is difficult for us to see in what way this passage supports your views. In the first place, the three specific doctrines are not mentioned, nor can we find any implied reference to them.

In the second place we do not find in the context any suggestion that doctrines believed by elders are to be different from, or in advance of, or deeper than, those held by brethren not serving as elders.

As we understand this passage, it is an exhortation to all the brethren (including the sisters) to grow, to cease to continue as babes, but to progress to maturity. The entire company of the consecrated ones should be able to "teach" in the sense in which the Apostle uses that word here. Eldership, or public expounding, or teaching, is not in the Apostle's mind at all, as we understand the passage. Commenting on this very passage, Brother Russell, in Vol. VI, pages 257, 258 wrote:

"This implies that in a general sense, at least, the entire Church, the entire priesthood, the members of the New Creation, should become skilful in their Father's Word to the extent that they will be 'ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh, a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and reverence.' (1 Pet. 3:15.) Thus we see again that teaching, Scripturally considered, is not limited to a clerical class; that every member of the New Creation is a member of the Royal Priesthood 'anointed to preach,' and thus fully authorized to declare the

good tidings to those who have ears to hear -- each according to his ability to present it faithfully and lucidly.

(2) Your remarks on the phrase "apt to teach" and regarding a "novice" are fully concurred in by us. We have elsewhere discussed these passages in harmony with your views. (See, for example, the "Herald" for August 1946, pages 121, 122, and July 1947, page 108.)

(3) We note your objection to our employment of the Phrase "confession of faith," and that by our use of it you feel that we have implied, erroneously, that you "have, or are attempting, to establish, a written creed for the brethren, especially the Pilgrim brethren."

We certainly did get that impression, and are most happy to learn that it was an erroneous one. It was occasioned by a paragraph in your May 11, 1946 letter (published in the "Herald" for January 1947, page 12) which reads as follows:

"The doctrinal qualifications of those we sponsor as teachers shall be the enlarged and detailed treatment of this brief epitome, as set forth in '*Studies in the Scriptures*' and '*Tabernacle Shadows*,' and also such so-called controversial subjects as the Lord's Second Presence, the Covenant, and the Church's share in the Sin-offering, as taught in these Volumes."

In order that we may be fully assured on this point, and that there may remain no room for future misunderstanding, we would appreciate it if, when you next write, you instruct us to disregard that paragraph. It would be helpful, additionally, both to our Board and to the Members of our Institute, if you further informed us, in writing, that you do not contemplate any creed, written or unwritten. Some of our members have had experience with both written and unwritten creeds, the memories of which experiences, today, are not pleasant.

(4) Your further words, namely, that you "become sufficiently well acquainted with brethren to know their views . . . before you ask them to serve," appeals to us as the only proper procedure. It is one that we, ourselves, have long followed. You may recall that in the May 1936 "Herald," after calling attention to the general principles so ably expressed by Brother Russell in Vol. VI, page 240, we likened the responsibility of our Directors, in connection with the Pilgrim ministry, to that of a Convention Program Committee, and said:

"As it is the duty of the latter to invite such speakers only as they have reason to believe will prove generally acceptable to the conventioners, so our Directors are under a similar duty in inviting brethren to, share in the Pilgrim ministry. However, no one would think of holding the Convention Program Committee responsible for *every* point of doctrine or interpretation to which a speaker might give expression. Provided the brother was sound in those fundamental doctrines so well presented by Brother Russell in the Watch Tower article of August 1, 1913, captioned, 'Doctrines More or Less Important' [which we reprint elsewhere in this issue, and heartily endorse] full liberty of thought and utterance would be accorded him. Experience has shown that a Pilgrim, ministry can operate satisfactorily only when a similar measure of liberty obtains."

(5) In the course of your letter you make reference to 1 Timothy 4:1, 2, where the Apostle warns Timothy:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats."

and to 2 Tim. 2:16-18 which reads:

"Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred saying that the resurrection is past, already, and overthrow the faith of some."

These Scriptures to which you have seen fit to draw our attention are very searching. However, we are happy in the belief that they have applied to none of the brethren who have served in the Pilgrim ministry of the Institute throughout its twenty-nine years history. We have heard of instances, though, when they have been erroneously applied to brethren who were above reproach, true to their own wives, temperate, self-controlled, unruffled, hospitable, apt to teach, not given to wine, had good reputations for high moral standards both within and without the Church, and who firmly believed the Scripture which said, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." These instances which we recall, were misapplied to brethren with whom we were personally acquainted, on the sole ground that they were not certain that "the

fellowship of His sufferings," which they most certainly shared, was typified, in Leviticus 16, in the goat of the sin-offering. Nay, more than this, we have even known of instances (some of your Board may possibly have heard of them) where brethren who have always held with, Brother Russell's treatment on these subjects were (and still are) boycotted, because they refused, and continue to refuse, to join in such mistaken attitude towards their co-laborers in the vineyard.

(6) In our letter of Feb. 14, 1947 (See "Herald," April 1947, page 58) we referred to Brother Russell's V. D. M. Questions and said:

"Evidently when he listed these twenty-two questions, if the three much-discussed doctrines had ever held the place of importance in his mind which some seem to think, they no longer did so, for in these V. D. M. Questions (originally prepared for Pilgrim brethren) they are conspicuous by their absence."

In reply you refer us to Questions 20 and 21 and to what you believe would have been Brother Russell's probable course in the event one had differed with some of the teachings, contained in the six Volumes of *Scripture Studies*. You cite also his recommendation to dispense with the services of elders under the circumstances mentioned in *Reprints*, page 5982, col. 1. (W. T. Nov. 1, 1916, page 329.)

The elders to whom Brother Russell there referred were evidently opposing- his ministry in general, and in his judgment unlikely to prove profitable to -the brethren. If asked Question 21: "Have you derived much enlightenment and benefit [from the six volumes of *Scripture Studies*]?" they would doubtless have replied disparagingly, in the negative. But in the case of a brother answering enthusiastically in the affirmative, we believe Brother. . Russell would have recommended his retention in the ministry, even though the brother stated his inability to accept the teachings of the Volumes in every particular.

As a matter of fact, in the 1916 Forewords, as you will doubtless recall, he pointed out that the light on every subject treated in the six Volumes had grown clearer than when those Volumes were written. In the Foreword to Vol. VI he specifically so states in reference to the Covenants, to which he also alludes in the Foreword to Vol. V. Again, in *Reprints*, page R5950 (W. T. Sept. 1, 1916, page 264) he writes of "Our mistake respecting the harvest," which mistake would certainly

have an important bearing on the subject of our Lord's Second Presence. To this mistake he specifically refers in the Forewords to both Volumes II and III.

Moreover it is evident that his mind must have been exorcised along such lines for some years before those Forewords were written. For example, in December 1913 he wrote:

"Suppose that A.D. 1915 should pass with the world's affairs all serene and with evidence that the 'very elect' had not all been 'changed' and without {the restoration of natural Israel to favor under the New Covenant. (Rom. 11:12, 15.) What then? Would not that prove our chronology wrong? Yes, surely! And would not that prove a keen disappointment? Indeed it would! It would work irreparable wreck to the parallel dispensations and Israel's double, and to the jubilee calculations, and to the prophecy of the 2300 days of Daniel, and to the epoch called 'Gentile Times' and to the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days, the latter of which marking the beginning of the harvest so well fulfilled its prediction, 'Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh unto the 1335 days!' None of these would be available longer. What a blow that would be! One of the strings of our 'harp' would be quite *broken!*" - *Reprints*, page R5368. (W. T. Dec. 15, 1913, page 375.)

In view of the fact that this clarification and expansion of views along all lines was taking place in his mind, it is our conviction that, far from wishing the brethren to draw from the V. D. M. Questions 20 and 21 the conclusion that he had especially in view the three doctrines upon which you brethren lay such stress, the very reverse was true. Important as those three doctrines doubtless were to him (as indeed they are to us) they were evidently not important enough, in his judgment, to be included in the list of V. D. M. Questions. They are, as we said before, and must again insist, conspicuous by their absence.

As one ponders the writings of our late beloved Pastor it becomes apparent that he was not one who would seek to restrain the proper liberty of any. Quite to the contrary. To quote from Vol. III, page 184: "There are various degrees of bondage. . . . Some who would indignantly resent the utter and absolute slavery of individual conscience and judgment required by Romanism, are quite willing to be bound-themselves, and anxious to get others bound. . . . True, their chains are lighter and longer than those of Rome and the dark ages. . . . But why wear human shackles at all? Why bind and limit our consciences at all? Why not stand fast in the full liberty wherewith Christ has made us free? Why not reject all the efforts of fallible fellow men to fetter conscience and hinder investigation?"

In Vol. VI, page 242, he writes: "The real need of the Church of Christ is *still more liberty -- until* each individual member shall stand free and independent of all human bonds, creeds, confessions, etc.

Then, too, in making recommendations in connection with the election of elders, how careful he always was to place the emphasis where it rightly belongs -- where the Apostles placed it on -- character qualifications. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11; 1 Pet. 5:1-3.) "Remember," says he to the elders, in *Reprints* page R4346 (W. T. March 1, 1909, page 73), "that the principal thing is love, in all; and, while not neglecting doctrines, give special heed to the development of the Lord's spirit amongst the various members of his Body."

Again, in *Reprints*, page R2446 (W. T. April 1, 1899, page 74): "The *leading* characteristic to be looked for in every one accepted as a servant of the Church, to minister in holy things, should be first of all the spirit of love. We do not mean (to say that knowledge and ability should be entirely ignored, but we do mean to say that these should be considered of secondary and not of primary importance, as is always the tendency."

With this "sound doctrine," (these "healthful words"), we bring this letter to a close. Accept for each and every one of you, the sincere good wishes of our entire Board. May the New Year find you most happy, because it finds you rejoicing in the Lord.

Your brethren by His grace,
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE.
P. E. Thomson, *Secretary*

Considerable interest in these exchanges between the Dawn and our Institute appears in correspondence reaching our office. No doubt the friends are all remembering the matter in their prayers.

Doctrines More or Less Important

HERE are certain features of the doctrine of Christ which are fundamental and indispensable, and without which none would be recognized of the Lord as one of his followers. There are other features which would seem to be useful, helpful, blessed, but not fundamental-not essential to membership in the Body of Christ. The fundamentals have been enjoyed by good, saintly ones from the day of Pentecost until now.

We, the same class now, have the same fundamentals, and are permitted to have other privileges, truths, "meat in due season," for our strengthening. These latter are not necessarily essential to our membership in the, Body of Christ; otherwise our forefathers who did not have them would not have been members of Christ, and there would have been no Christ Body for centuries.

The fundamental theory of the Atonement is as follows:

- (1) All men -- all of Adam's children-are sinners. (2) None can be reconciled to God without a Redeemer's sacrifice.
- (3) Jesus came into the world to be that sacrifice -and later to apply that ransom-price for the sins of the world.
- (4) On the basis of faith in the Redeemer's work, the believer may consecrate himself to the divine service, in acceptance of the divine invitation, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice."
- (5) So doing, the believer may -- up to the time of the completion of the elect number -- exercise full assurance of faith that his sacrifice will be accepted of the Father; and that he will receive a share of the anointing of the Holy Spirit -- the begetting.
- (6) Such as meet these conditions are to be accepted as brethren in the highest sense of the term. This much would seem to have been always necessary, and more than this we believe is not necessary today. But if by reason of our favorable, *day* we have more knowledge, we may, also have, corresponding trials, which our greater knowledge, will offset.

Our advice to the Lord's dear people everywhere *is* that they put no yoke upon each other, beyond the fundamentals specified above-that otherwise they stand free, and leave each other free, and fellowship and agree as much as, they can with each other.

If there be a disposition to crowd each other on more than this basic faith, and if it be considered necessary to separate, in order to the progress of either of the parties, then doubtless rather than a continual contention a separation would be the wise course.

We are not criticizing the views of any one. Each has a perfect right to hold whatever he believes the Bible to teach, and our views are doubtless well known 'to all of our readers. Briefly stated, they are, as follows:

- (1) That the one that sinned was Adam, and that he and all his posterity were involved.
- (2) That a Redeemer was necessary, that Jesus became that Redeemer, and "gave himself a ransom for all."
- (3) That God has invited some of the redeemed sinners -- not to be the ransom-price, nor to redeem anybody else, but -- to be associates of the Redeemer, members of his Body, his Bride.
- (4). The terms and conditions upon which these may have fellowship are that Jesus as the great Advocate shall accept them as his members -- their flesh as his flesh -- and that he shall impute to them the share of his merit which would be coming to them as members of the Adamic race. Then they are legally justified from all the shortcomings, weaknesses and imperfections inherited by them; and their own wills and all their remaining powers and talents being consecrated, their sacrifice may be acceptable to God-as part of the Sin-offering by the great High Priest.
- (5) Sharing thus in the Redeemer's death, these are privileged to share in his *life*, by the First Resurrection. The Redeemer does *not* now make application of his merit to the world, aside from the *newly* accepted and added members. He will carry out the divine program, and sacrifice all his members before presenting, at the end of the Age, the merit of his sacrifice on behalf of the sins of the whole world, and will thereby seal the New Covenant for them.

In our judgment many err in attaching too much value to the Church's sacrifice; whereas other dear brethren err, we think, in that they do not see any value in the Church's sacrifice, nor that she is permitted a share in the Master's sacrificings at all. To us it seems like the swing of the pendulum from one extreme to the other; whereas *our* view lies in the center, as we have stated the matter.

If after fully considering these matters, a class finds that it cannot agree, and would make better progress as two classes, we would concur in that conclusion as a wise one, as much as we would deplore the necessity of a division. Such a separation would: not necessarily alienate either class from the Lord's people, nor from the Society, because both acknowledge Jesus as their Redeemer, and both acknowledge that his blood is primarily -efficacious. - Reprints, p. R5284. (W. T. August 1, 1913.)

"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive.
Ah! who, dear Lord, can pray that prayer?
The rest, with ready zeal is said,
But self-accused, we falter here.

"If in my heart has been
An unforgiving thought, or word, or look,
Though deep the malice which I scarce could brook,
Wash me from the dark stain."