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Another New Year... How Shall We Use It?

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." - Col. 3:16.

WHO OF those now privileged to enter another new year of probation under the blood of him who stands in the presence of God for us, can fail to experience a real joy of heart in realizing that though we must lay in the hands of God all the soiled pages of the past year, yet notwithstanding the mistakes we have made, and the unlikeness of our walk to that of his beloved Son, God is ready to accept our sincere confession and graciously opens up another year to us, saying, "Do better now my child." Could anything do more than this act of his grace to start us off over the incoming year's hidden pathway with a song in our hearts, and a renewed determination to be more faithfully responsive to him in the days before us? Surely "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" will fill our mouths hereafter. Reviewing the past, we rejoice in the goodness and mercy which have so continuously followed us, and the future being as it is, so full of glorious possibilities, will we not be found saying with David, "Now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." (Psa. 27:6.) What reasons there are for filling his courts with praise in this way! As the old year closes and a new one begins, does it not bring inexpressible happiness just to know that we are one year nearer home, and therefore so much nearer that glad day when this mortal shall put on immortality, and there will be a deliverance from all the frailties of this fleshly house in "which we groan, being burdened." Then shall "we know even as we are known."

Before considering the admonitions contained in our text, it will be well to devote a little time to the preceding one in which the Apostle says, "Let the peace of God rule [preside, *Diaglott*] in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Certain it is that this peace of God must reign in the heart before the word of Christ can dwell richly within, or acceptable praise to God be offered in his courts. Peace stands at the very entrance of our approach to God. His first word to us is that of peace through the blood of the cross; "peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then beyond this entrance, and through all the advancing stages of Christian life, peace with God, and the peace of God, are intended to be the foundation of all our growth in grace and knowledge. What a rich possession! It means our enjoyment of the legacy Jesus intended all his faithful followers to have while still in the world in which much of suffering would be our portion, a peace which he himself enjoyed amid all the contradiction of sinners against himself. And how in keeping with the promise of Jesus to give us such a peace are the reiterated promises of God's Word. David describes it as "great peace," saying, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Isaiah's expression is, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee"; and Paul says that "the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." - Psa. 119:165; Isa. 26:3; Phil. 4:7.

What will it mean to have the peace of God ruling or presiding in our hearts? It will mean our constantly seeing that God through Christ is ever reaching out his arm of fatherly love to us, enfolding us in a love divine, all love excelling. It will mean a blessed realization of the fact that we are assured of a divine affection, deep, infinite, inexhaustible. It will mean that our whole life in all its round of experiences is under the control of God's almighty power. With such things to meditate upon, what peace the Savior gives to trusting hearts!

This "peace is defined to be a state of quiet or tranquility, freedom from disturbance or agitation, calmness, repose. Such a state of mind is here affirmed of 'God. His is a mind tranquil, calm, undisturbed and never agitated nor even wearied nor perplexed by any of the cares of his vast dominion. Yet this perfect peace of God, the Scriptures show, is not due either to the fact that there are no disorders in his vast dominion, nor yet to any stoical indifference to pain or pleasure, but rather to that perfect poise of his glorious attributes which makes him master of his situation as sovereign of the whole universe.... He is never confused, bewildered, perplexed, anxious or careworn, nor in the least fearful that his plans will miscarry or his purposes fail; because all power and wisdom inhere in him. The scope of his mighty intellect reaches to the utmost bounds of possibility, comprehends all causes and discerns with precision all effects; consequently he knows the end from the beginning, and that, not only upon philosophical principles, but also by intuition.... Thus we see that 'the peace of God' is compatible with great commotion and with sorrow and pain of any kind; for it is not dependent upon outward circumstances."

If, then, such a peace possesses our hearts throughout the year before us, can there be any doubt about the fulfillment in our lives of each of the inspired admonitions of our chosen text? In the enjoyment of such rest and peace abiding permanently within, we can say truthfully, "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

THE WORD OF CHRIST RICHLY INDWELLING

The first admonition of our text has to do with a rich indwelling of the word of Christ. In our study of the Bible how frequently we are met with the thought that it is only when the truth is received into a good and honest heart that its effects will be manifested in the life.

In so many ways we are shown that it is only when our yearning for a deeper knowledge of the Word of God is to the end that we may be sanctified thereby, that any real and lasting blessing can come from our study of it. In the nature of things it follows that this rich indwelling of the word of Christ must be preceded by a hungering and a thirsting after such knowledge; for blessings of this kind are reserved for those only who earnestly desire them. This calls to mind the promise which Jesus gave in the matter of the work of the holy spirit taking his words of life and making them rich in revelation and blessing to us. He assures us of the Father's joy in giving the

spirit to us, and he likewise assures us that if we are hungering for the word of truth, the holy spirit will guide us into all truth, and show us things to come. "When, therefore, we pray for the holy spirit, and' to be filled with the Lord's spirit, we are to look about us and find the provision which he has made for the answer to these prayers, which he has thus inspired and directed.

"We find this provision in the Word of truth; but it is not enough to find where it is: if we desire to be filled, we must eat; assuredly we must partake of the feast or we will not experience the satisfaction which the eating was designed to give. He who will not eat of a full table will be empty and starved, as truly as though there were no food. As the asking of a blessing upon the food will not fill us, but thereafter we must partake of it, so the possession of the Word of God, and the offering of our petition to be filled with the spirit, will not suffice us; we must eat the Word of God,' if we would derive his spirit from it.

"Our Master declared, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life' (John 6:63); and of all who are filled with the spirit it is true, as spoken by the Prophet, 'Thy words were found and I did eat them.' (Jer. 15:16; Rev. 10:9.) It is absolutely useless for us to pray, Lord, Lord, give us the spirit, if we neglect the Word of truth which that spirit has supplied for our fulfilling. If we merely pray for the spirit and do not use the proper means to obtain the spirit of truth, we will continue to be at most only 'babes in Christ,' seeking outward signs, in proof of relationship to the Lord, instead of the inward witness, through the Word of truth, which he has provided."

TEACHING AND ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER

The next portion of our text has to do with a duty we are frequently reminded of in the Scriptures. It has pleased the Lord to give his people an important part in the work of building one another up in our holy faith; and this is truly a very real responsibility which all must recognize and faithfully discharge. The Apostle Paul is himself one of the most outstanding examples of this recognized and faithfully performed stewardship. With what patient and unceasing labor he reiterates again and again the great essential facts of the plan of salvation, and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Surely these are days in which something of Paul's burden of heart should be felt by all of us as we too recognize our responsibility in this matter of assisting one another. Among other Scriptural admonitions bearing on this point we may well call to mind these words: "But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." And again, "But exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the Day approaching. For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." - Heb. 3:13; 10:25, 26.

With so many inspired warnings given in the Word of God pointing with particular emphasis to this hour of temptation in which we are now living, it surely behooves every one of us to be giving all diligence to heed these warnings ourselves, and to faithfully point them out to others. The deceitfulness of sin with all of its hardening and soul-blinding effect is today a danger besetting all who are not walking with a careful circumspection in every avenue of daily life. Never more than today has this warning been needed, lest sin disguised as an angel of light ensnare our unwary feet in its entanglements. Today, to each individual the word is spoken in tones of solemn warning, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

In the above Scripture the Apostle has reminded us that this exhorting of one another should all the more occupy our thoughts as we "see the Day approaching," and surely that Day is seen to be right at hand. What then shall be our word of exhortation, as we seek through the coming days of the new year to teach and admonish one another? Surely it will be to encourage steadfastness in

keeping our lamps trimmed and burning, allowing no beclouding influences to dim the light of divine truth in our own hearts, or to hinder the shining forth of the power of the truth from our lives. Since the Day is so rapidly approaching, and only the pure in heart shall see God, should we not be emphasizing this fact with increasing earnestness in these days? How much teaching and admonition is still necessary to meet the subtle attacks of the Adversary to distract our minds from the truth that sanctifies the heart. The cross of Christ in all that it represents of divine love, complete provision for the cancellation of all our guilt, and the center of all our doctrinal faith, and all our happy privileges in the fellowship of the Gospel of Christ -- what a field for timely admonition is here! And as those who are "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2:13), how fervently and continuously we should be reminding one another of this soul stirring hope. Has not the beloved John told us that "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure"? This being true, how much we may admonish one another to watch and pray to the end that we may be found of him in peace, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

IN PSALMS AND HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS

Living as we are today, manifestly in the very midst of events so eloquently assuring us that the end of the Church's warfare is near, what songs should fill our hearts. Prophets and Apostles have spoken their soul-inspiring messages, foretelling the events which are now taking place before our eyes. Jesus himself has spoken of these same things and has given us his heart-cheering assurance, "Surely I come quickly." If in the days of long ago, when the Apostles were yet in the flesh, they ministered to the saints the word of comfort: "Be patient, brethren, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," what joy should be ours today as we stand on the very threshold of the glorious consummation of all our hopes. Beloved, let our songs abound, and every tear be dry. The love of Christ makes fresh our hearts, a fountain ever springing, so that as children of the light we may have the praises of the Lord flowing forth from our hearts and lips in our daily life, as we with our "blessed hope" journey on to fairer worlds on high. What songs we can sing of mercies past! The numberless blessings of the past when counted one by one should fill our lips with psalms and hymns, and the blessings of the present hour, not least of which is the fact that we are still standing in the favor of God, call for notes of loudest praise, while greatly multiplied blessings yet to be ours might well make us long for angelic tongue to sing the praises of our God.

We are not forgetting the oft repeated warnings of the Word that with these special joys which in several important ways are peculiar to this our wonderful day, there are sure to be some crucial trials awaiting the faithful saints in days to come ere we have finished our course. That the new year will have its shadows and its deep waters there can be no doubt, for it is still true as stated by the Apostle, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. 1:29.) Yet surely we can also say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy." (Acts 20:24.) Songs in the night he giveth. The glad songs of salvation are not affected by fluctuating circumstances, provided our faith is anchored firmly within the veil. It is in the midst of deep trials that our Master exhorts us to sing, saying, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." Then whatever coming months may bring in the way of trial and sorrow, let us be found encouraging ourselves and others with "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord," for to him everlasting praise belongs.

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES YET ABOUND

"Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." In this last line of our text, some translations give "gratitude" rather than "grace." "O to grace how great a debtor" is the spontaneous language of a grateful heart, and that gratitude ever longs for an opportunity to reveal itself in devotion to God. Such golden privileges still surround us ,today. Strange indeed that any should feel that the days in which we live afford no special opportunity to spend and be spent in the ministry of the Gospel of comfort. The admonition still applies: "Do good unto all men as ye have opportunity," and hearts which are saying out of pure gratitude, "Come hear what the Lord hath done for me," may still find opened doors. Hearts like the Master's will never fail to be touched with feelings of compassion for those in need of sympathy and help, and never be at a loss to find such needed service. A larger sympathy for all we touch in life's pathway during this new year will contribute much to giving testimony to the genuine gratitude we ourselves feel for the blessings God has so graciously brought into our lives. Let our heart's love expand to wider reaches in an effort to comfort others with the comfort wherewith we have ourselves been comforted, and there is no question that the volume of praise in our own hearts will be greatly enlarged, and songs of gratitude will be going up to God from other hearts because we were ready, in season and out, "to preach good tidings unto the meek; to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, . . . to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Only let us come in deep and true gratitude to God as we enter this new and wonderful year, fully dedicating our lips and voice to him, entreating our Lord that he will take and keep "My voice and let it bring honor always to my King." Who can estimate the good we all may do while the days of the new year are going by.

If we thus cultivate the habit of "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," we shall be as was Barnabas, true comforters of the brethren. Let us do with our might what our hands find to do, and so reflect the "light of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ," that others may see that our own life has been transformed, our own mouth, filled with song, and our knowledge of impending events mightily at work lifting us up into the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, far above the tumult and the strife, rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory because we know our deliverance draweth nigh.

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Half Hour Meditations on Romans

No. 11

Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel. -- 2 Tim. 2:8

PAUL, A servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures), concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: by whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ; to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. -- Rom. 1:1 7

"Often people reading the Bible are not conscious of the extreme listlessness with which they pass along the familiar and oft repeated words of scripture without the impression of their meaning being at all present with the thoughts and how, during the mechanical currency of the verses through their lips, the thinking power is often asleep for whole past ages. . . ."

We may at least for the present therefore be allowed to read over a paragraph first and seek to fasten the import of certain of its particular phrases upon our attention, even though these phrases may have heretofore been regarded as so intelligible that we did not think of bestowing an effort or dwelling one moment upon their signification. Then again be allowed to read the paragraph over again in such extended or paraphrased language as may give us another opportunity of its sense being riveted in our understanding. While securing such clear understanding of the Apostles words will be our immediate purpose and may at times seem to be our only one, yet this can never be more than a means to an end. To see only the point of the Apostles masterly arguments would indeed well repay us for the "half hours" we may spend together in these pages. But unless they also have the effect of bringing Jesus himself into ever clearer vision as the altogether lovely One, alone worthy of our hearts devotion [the Father always excepted], we shall fail of our ultimate aim.

"Beyond the sacred page we seek Thee,
Lord, Our spirits pant for Thee, Thou living Word."

The Address or Greeting

As we read these seven verses of address or greeting our author uses to commence his letter, we are forcibly reminded of the remarks of R. G. Moulton in discussing the Epistles of St. Paul from the literary standpoint. We quote: "Some writers are obscure through poverty of thought; Paul on the contrary through exuberance. In his writings great ideas, brilliantly worded, come pouring out with a rapidity that leaves appreciative effort lagging behind. Yet this but half describes his exuberance. Paul has a highly relational mind; not content with vivid presentation of a thought, he must guard it in all its aspects and indicate its connection with all other thoughts." In this passage the interval between the first and seventh verses will therefore read very well in succession:

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God, In verse one at the mere mention of the "Gospel" the mind of Paul seems to catch fire. He cannot hurry on to Rom. 1:7 without pausing in Rom. 1:2 to mention the fact that the Gospel was

promised long ago and to state in verse three the subject of it. Then in Rom. 1:3 at the mere mention of our Saviors name, Paul's mind seems to burn and blaze with signal intensity. He cannot go on without asserting in this and the next verse that Jesus, the Son of God whom he announces, is not only the Jewish Messiah who died but also the Christians Lord who ever liveth. He states in the Rom. 1:5 that from Jesus he had received his commission to preach unto all nations and in the Rom. 1:6 to instance the people he was addressing as among those nations. "And it is not till after he had completed this circle of deviations but at the same time enriched the whole of its course with the effusions of a mind stored in the truths of revelation that he resumes in the seventh that rectilinear track by which the writer who announced himself in the first verse sends in the seventh his Christian salutations to the correspondents he is addressing."

The Gospel Is of God

"The Gospel": word almost too familiar now till the thing is too little understood. What is it? In its native and eternally proper meaning, it is the divine Good Tidings. It is the announcement of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior of men, in whom God and man meet with joy." True it is that that announcement stands in living relation to a bright chain of precepts and solemn warnings. We shall see this amply illustrated in this Epistle. But neither precepts nor warnings are properly *the Gospel*. "The Gospel saves from sin and enables for holy conduct. In itself it is the pure, mere message of redeeming love."

The Gospel is of God; that is to say, it originated with the Father. He is the Author of it. "God so loved the world. . . ." "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him" (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9).

The Gospel Promised Beforehand

Far from evincing a desire to advance something new, the Apostle is at pains to show that "his" Gospel is in entire accord with the Old Testament writings. It was a constant position with him "that he advanced nothing but what was maintained by the best and holiest men of the nation." "Saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts 26:22, 23). Though his doctrines might appear to be new, yet he regarded them "as entirely consistent with all that had been declared in the Jewish dispensation; and not only consistent but as actually promised there." The passages of the Old Testament on which he particularly relied will come before us as we proceed. It is worthy of special notice here, however, that the Apostle had a great respect for the Old Testament. Manifestly he studied it. Nor is he alone in this. Hear the Apostle Peter: "To him [Jesus] give all the Prophets witness" (Acts 10:43). Jesus himself said, "Ye search the scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). And again, he says "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (John 5:46).

"The sunrise of Christ was no abrupt, insulated phenomenon, unintelligible because out of relation. Since the world began (Luke 1:70), from the dawn of human history, predictive word and manifold preparing work had gone before. . . . The whole east heaved with expectations of a Judea world rule about the time when, as a fact, Jesus came. He came, alike to disappoint every merely popular hope and to satisfy at once the concrete details and the spiritual significance of the long forecast. And he sent his messengers out into the world carrying as their text. . . that old and multifold literature which is yet one Book; those holy writings (our own Old Testament from end to end) that were to them nothing less than the voice of God. They always put the Lord, in their preaching, in contact with that prediction." Who else in all history was thus heralded beforehand?

Concerning His Son Jesus Christ Our Lord

Above everything else let us ever remember that the Gospel according to Paul, as the Epistle to the Romans has appropriately been called, has to do with a Person. The sum and substance of "his" Gospel is Jesus. Elsewhere he writes: "I know whom I have believed." It is one thing to know certain things about Jesus (even though those things be all true) and another thing altogether to know him. The Queen of Sheba had heard a great many things about Solomon, but when she became personally acquainted with him she realized that the half had not been told her.

Recently it has been suggested to us to stress still more in these pages the importance of church unity.

We doubt if there is a better way to do this than by emphasizing the Personality of Jesus.

The Personality of Jesus

Brethren, let us thank God that our faith is not in a creed, not in a statement of belief, however exact or explicit; not in a document but in a living Being, our blessed Lord Jesus himself, whose personality embraces every grace. In loyalty to Jesus we can all find fellowship and unity. Yea, and if it did but know it, a distracted world could find its life. How true is the saying: " *What we believe divides us; whom we believe unites us.*" "I," said Jesus, "if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Brethren, let us lift him up *now*, in these difficult days; let him fill our lives.

We know that this saying of Jesus will have a grand fulfillment in the next Age, when all shall have their eyes opened to behold our Lord; when he shall indeed be the desire of all nations. But we cannot wait that time. Our souls are panting to see him lifted up now, and if this cannot yet be in the world, it must be in the church.

"We would see Jesus! for the shadows lengthen
Across this little landscape of our life- -
We would see Jesus! our weak faith to strengthen
For the last weariness, the final strife!

"We would see Jesus -- the great Rock Foundation
Whereon our feet were set by sovereign grace;
Not life nor death, with all their agitation
Can thence remove us, if we see His face."

The Seed of David

The Apostle next tells us that Jesus *was made* or as the Greek may literally be rendered *became or was born* of the seed of David. "So the New Testament begins (The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David [Matt. 1:1]); so it almost closes (I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the off spring of David [Rev. 22:16])." St. Paul in later years recalls the Lord's physical descent again: "Remember that Jesus Christ, *of the seed of David*, was raised from the dead according to my Gospel." "The old Apostle in that last passage has entered the shadow of death; he feels with one hand for the rock of history, with the other for the pulse of eternal love. Here was the rock; the Lord of life was the Child of history, Son and Heir of a historical king, and the, as such, the Child of prophecy too. And this against all surface appearances beforehand. The Davidic ground (He shall grow up

before him . . . as a root out of a dry ground [Isa. 53:2]) had seemed to be dry as dust for generations when the Root of endless life sprang up in it."

According to the Flesh . . . According to the Spirit

What does the Apostle intend us to understand by the expressions "according to the flesh" and "according to the Spirit." Since their proper understanding is essential to a clear grasp of much of what follows in this Epistle, we may well pause a moment in their consideration. Two preliminary questions present themselves: (1) What is man? and (2) What do the scriptures teach concerning the nature of our Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT IS MAN?

"The Scriptures recognize man as composed of two elements: body and spirit. These two produce soul, sentient being, intelligence, the man himself, the being or soul. The term body applies merely to the physical organism. It neither relates to the life that animates nor to the sentient being that is the result of animation. A body is not a man, although there could be no man without a body. The spirit of life is not the man; although there could be no man hood without the spirit of life. The word spirit is from the Hebrew word *ruach* in the Old Testament scriptures.

Its signification primarily is breath, and hence we have the expression breath of life, or spirit of life, because the spark of life once started is supported by breathing.

"The words spirit of life signify more than breath. They relate to the spark of life itself, without which breath would be an impossibility. This spark of life we receive from our fathers, it being nourished and developed through our mothers. It is quite untrue that the spark of human life is communicated in a miraculous way, any more than is the spark of brute life. The lower animals -- the horse, dog, cattle, etc.- -are begotten of the males and born of the females of their respective genera in precisely the same manner as the human species is produced, nor does anything in the Bible suggest the contrary. It is purely human invention designed to uphold a false theory that claims Divine interposition in the birth of human offspring."

THE NATURE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

The scriptural teaching concerning our Redeemer is That

(1) he existed as a spirit being before he became flesh;

(2) he underwent a change of nature: the life principle or spirit of life that formerly animated his spirit body was transferred to Mary's womb and "though retaining all the purity and perfection of the pre existent (spirit) state, the transferred germ of being partook . . . of the nature of the mother (human nature) and was made flesh by being born of a woman."

(3) He was put to death flesh and thereby ceased to exist in any manner or degree on any plane of existence until

(4) he was raised from the dead. He was raised spirit and now enjoys the highest of all natures: Divine.

[NOTE: For an exhaustive discussion of these and related subjects we refer all to the masterly

work of Charles T. Russell entitled, "The Atonement between God and Man."]

In the light of the foregoing remarks it will not be difficult to see that the word flesh in our text refers to the physical organism or human body of our Lord.

It does not include any reference to the life principle which animated that body. On the other hand, the word "spirit" makes no reference to the spirit nature that was his before he became flesh nor to the Divine nature he now enjoys. It refers altogether to the life principle that animated his human body during the days of his life on earth.

Declared the Son of God

Those who had the inestimable privilege of personal acquaintance with our Lord during the days of his flesh were able to reach the conclusion before his death and resurrection that he was the Son of God.

The holiness of that life principle that animated all his conduct clearly marked him out as the holy, harmless, undefiled One separate from sinners. Some men might say that he was John the Baptist, some Elias, others Jeremias or one of the prophets, but when Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom say ye that I am, Simon Peter answered: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:15,16).

The Power of His Resurrection

All questions as to the holiness of his spirit or his relationship as Son of God were forever settled by his resurrection from the dead. God grant us more and more to know experimentally "what is the exceeding greatness of *his power* to usward who believe according to the working of his mighty power *which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead*" (Eph 1:19, 20). Jesus had claimed to be Gods Son. The Father honored that claim in the most decisive manner possible by raising him from the dead. Thereby Jesus was declared, determined, marked out, designated, proved to be Gods Son.

Moreover his resurrection not only proved him to be Gods Son but proved him also to be holy. "Thou wilt not suffer thine *Holy One* to see corruption" (Acts 2:27). It would surprise us to learn that one who had been unholy had been raised from the dead by the power of the Father. In the case of Jesus, resurrection was the natural corollary of such a life as he had lived. It was morally impossible for him to have remained dead. "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains [Fenton: grip] of death; because *it was not possible* that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:24).

Among All Nations

"Among all the nations," all the Gentiles. The words read easy to us and half unnoticed perhaps as a phrase of routine. Not so to the ex Pharisee who dictated them here. A few years before he would have held it highly unlawful to keep company with, or come unto, one of another nation (Acts 10:2, 8).

Now, in Christ, it is as if he had almost forgotten that it had been so. His whole heart in Christ is blent in personal love with hearts belonging to many nations; in spiritual affection he is ready for contact with all hearts."

For His Names Sake

"He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles. . . . I will show him how great things he must suffer for my names sake" (Acts 9:15, 16). "Paul had indeed come to know that name and to pass it on was now his very life. He existed only to win for it more insight, more adoration, more love. The name deserved that great souls entire devotion. Does it not deserve our equally entire devotion now? Our lives shall be transfigured in their measure by taking for their motto also, For his Names sake. "

"It means so much to me, that, when he came,
They called him JESUS!; Tis a gripping name
That takes a saving hold on one like me,
Who lifts new visioned eyes that now would see
All false lights fade in presence of the true --
What does it mean to you?"

Review

Let us briefly review the ground we have covered.

"Notice the beauty and symmetry of Paul's opening sentence. It is a crystal arch spanning the fault between the Jew of Tarsus and the Christians at Rome. Paul begins by giving his name: he rises to the dignity of his office and then to the Gospel he pro claims. From the Gospel to ascends to its great subject, to him who is Son of David and Son of God.

From this summit of his arch he passes on to the apostleship again and to the nations for whose good he received it. Among these nations he finds the Christians at Rome. He began to build by laying down his own claims; he finishes by acknowledging theirs.

The gulf is spanned. Across the waters of national separation Paul has flung an arch whose firmly knit segments are living truths and whose key stone is the . . . Son of God. Over this arch he has tens with words of greeting from his Father and their Father, from his Master and their Master.

"Every word increases the writers claim upon the attention of his readers. He writes to them as one doing the work of the promised Messiah, who lived at Nazareth and died at Jerusalem. Among the servants of Christ he occupies no mean place; he has been called to the first rank. He has been set apart by God for the proclamation of those joy tidings whose echoes from afar were heard by the ancient prophets and still resound in the words of the sacred books. The Divine mission of the prophets and the sacred ness of their writings claim attention for one who announces as present what they foretold as future. This claim is strengthened by mention of him who is the great matter of the good news. Paul proclaims the advent of a scion of the house to which eternal royalty was promised. The advent of One who by Divine power, by victory over the grave, has been separated from all others as the Son of God. This Son of David and of God is Paul's master and theirs. By his personal call Paul has received the rank of an apostle. The office receives luster from the grandeur of him by whom it was conferred. The purpose of Paul's mission is that men in all nations may obey faith. A further purpose is that the name of Christ, written in these verses in characters so splendid, may be revered and loved by all. Among these nations are Paul's readers. But he does not write to lead them to faith. Christ has already made them his own by a Divine call. They are objects of Gods love and men whom God has claimed for himself. Paul desires for them the smile of God and the rest of spirit that only the smile can give. May it come to them from its only source, the common Father and the common Master.

"In these words there is no mere rambling among sacred topics; no running away after some great thought; no mere desire to put Christ's name into every sentence. Everywhere there is order and purpose. In Rom. 1:5 we find Paul standing as an apostle on the level upon which he stood in Rom. 1:1. But how great an advance he had made. The long foretold Gospel has been importance to the man set apart to proclaim it. The Apostle has been into the glory of that presence now irradiates the office received from One so great. He comes forth as an ambassador claiming for his Master the allegiance of all nations."

We conclude with the following paraphrase: "Paul, a devoted servant of Jesus Christ, an Apostle called by Divine summons as much as any member of the original Twelve, solemnly set apart for the work of delivering Gods message of salvation. Paul, so authorized and commissioned, gives greeting to the whole body of Roman Christians (whether Jewish or Gentile) who as Christians are special objects of the Divine love, called out of the mass of mankind into the inner society of the church, consecrated by God like Israel of old as his own peculiar people. May the free unmerited favor of God and the peace which comes from reconciliation with him be yours! May God himself, the heavenly Father, and the Lord Jesus Messiah grant them to you!

"The message which I am commissioned to pro claim is no startling novelty launched upon the world with- out preparation. Rather it is the direct fulfillment of promises that God had inspired the prophets of Israel to set down in Holy Writ. It relates to none other than his Son, whom it presents in a twofold aspect: on the one hand by physical descent tracing his lineage to David, as the Messiah was to do; on the other hand, in virtue of the holiness inherent in his spirit, visibly designated or declared to be Son of God by the miracle of the resurrection. He, I say, is the sum and substance of my message: Jesus, the Jews Messiah and the Christians Lord. And it was through him that I, like the rest of the Apostles, received both the general tokens of Gods favor: called to be a Christian and given the special gifts of an Apostle. My duty as an Apostle is among all Gen tile peoples and therefore among you too at Rome to win men over to the willing service of loyalty to him. The end to which all my labors are directed is the honor of his holy name."

- P. L. Read

My Prayer

"Being perplexed, I say,
Lord, make it right!
Night is as day to Thee,
Darkness is light.
I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much.
My trembling hand may shake,
Mine unskilled hand may break;
Thine can make no mistake."

Christ the Head of the Corner

"Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the top stone with shoutings of Grace, grace, unto it." - Zechariah 4:7.

IN ATTEMPTING an exposition of this excerpt from the prophecy of Zechariah, we may well pause to note two views on prophecy in general. The one, held by those of the school of "Modernism," supposes that the Prophets, being merely men of high mental and moral attainment and more keenly aware than their contemporaries of the things of their times, exhorted the people in parabolic sayings which they considered would be most helpful and instructive.

The other view, while ascribing to the Prophets high moral and intellectual standards, holds that God spoke through them, and that in this way he communicated to man the particulars of his eternal purpose in Christ.

This latter view is that which was held and freely expressed by Jesus and the Apostles. Such a view of prophecy gives glory to God as the Author of a great and wise plan for man, and makes the prophecies of the Bible, messages from God, authoritative and reliable.

The Apostle Peter asserts this view and contradicts the other when, in speaking of the salvation in Christ, he adds, "Of which salvation the Prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." - 1 Pet. 1:10-12; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21.

The foregoing clearly implies that the Prophets spoke and wrote by inspiration of things they did not themselves understand, and some of these prophecies which seem, on the surface, to have a more or less local application, are so worded as to be applicable also, on a world wide scale, to events and conditions of a far distant age. Nor is it wise or justifiable, even though we may be convinced that a fulfillment of a prophecy has taken place, to conclude that the prophecy is therefore closed and of no further significance.

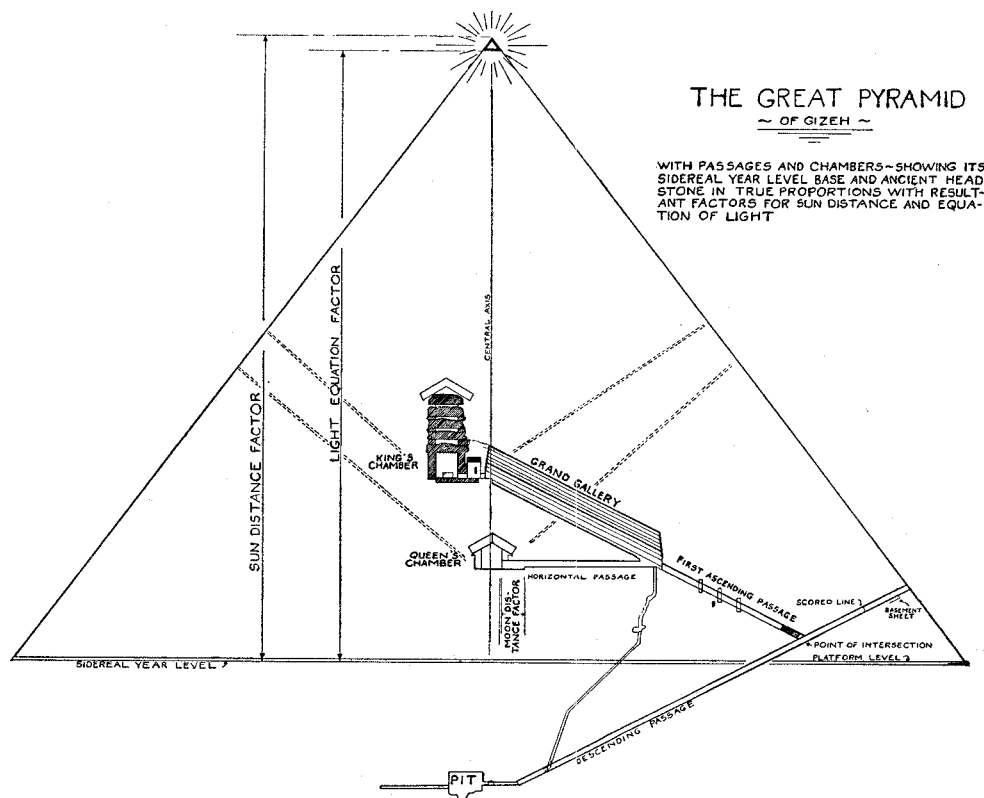
Zechariah lived in the time of the rebuilding of the Temple, following the return from Babylon. Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, was confronted with many difficulties in connection with this undertaking, and no doubt, the Prophet's words served to encourage him and the people to continue their labors.

The words of the text, however, were not really Zechariah's, but the Lord's. Possibly the Temple had some sort of top-piece or headstone, although there is no mention of such a stone in the description of the preceding and greater Temple of Solomon. Also there was indeed a "great mountain" of difficulties to be overcome and removed by Zerubbabel, because of the persecutions and oppositions of the Samaritans; but there was no *literal* mountain to be removed to make way for the Temple.

Accordingly, it has been noted by some expositors that the words of the text lend themselves more precisely to the figure of a pyramid,* and the prophecy has been most aptly applied to the construction of another and greater building than the Temple of the Restoration; namely, the Great Pyramid in Egypt -- a building which *was* crowned by a headstone or "chief corner stone" and whose site *was* at first occupied by a mountain of rock which had to be leveled so as to become a plain, in order that the Pyramid might be erected thereon.

* Zechariah's rock-hewn tomb in the Valley of Jehoshaphat near Jerusalem, is topped by a large and complete pyramid.

Further, let it be observed that the Pyramid is a symbol of the class of individuals who are to become the heavenly phase of the Kingdom of which Christ is the head or top stone. Our Lord Jesus himself, as the antitypical Zerubbabel, and in preparation for the actual work of setting up the Kingdom on earth, has already begun the figurative leveling work.



THE GREAT PYRAMID OF GIZEH

WITH PASSAGES AND CHAMBERS—SHOWING ITS SIDEREAL YEAR LEVEL BASE
AND ANCIENT HEADSTONE IN TRUE PROPORTIONS WITH RESULTANT FACTORS
FOR SUN DISTANCE AND EQUATION OF LIGHT

This corresponds in meaning with the prophecy of Daniel, in whose vision the great image (symbol of Satan's dominion) was smitten by a stone that was cut out without hands, so that it vanished like chaff from the summer threshing-floor. More of this must of course be expected before the appearance of the Messianic Kingdom in its visible form which, as the antitype of the "stone" of Daniel's vision, must increase until it fills the whole earth. - Dan. 2:34, 35.

It is understood, then, that the words of the prophecy under consideration were so ordered by Jehovah, their Author, that they might admit of special application to his altar and witness in the land of Egypt, and that the "great mountain" of the prophecy is, *typically*, the, original huge mass of natural rock bordering the Nile, which mass of rock had first to be leveled off in order that the Pyramid might be erected on that particular spot. But *antitypically* the reference is undoubtedly to the great mountain (kingdom) of Satan's dominion on earth, whose arrangements, founded upon error and deception, must be swept away, to be superseded by the better things of the Kingdom of Messiah.

The Apostle Peter also spoke of the building of the antitypical temple, and his words, too-as most students of the Bible agree-were so ordered by divine inspiration as to fit the Pyramid-particularly when he spoke of Christ as the stone that was rejected of the builders, but is become the head of the corner; and when, in another verse he says that we (the Church) as living stones, are built up into him, who is the head. - 1 Pet. 2:4-7.

Since the pyramid is the type of building which best fits the foregoing references, it seems evident that the headstone of the Great Pyramid is given to us as a figure of Christ, and that the whole Pyramid is to be taken as standing for a completed Messianic or anointed company, whose peculiar privilege shall be to restore forever the broken relationship between man and his Creator. - See also Acts 4:11; Psa. 118:22-24; Matt. 21:42.

It is scarcely necessary, we believe, to take seriously the theory of those who say that the Great Pyramid was never topped by a headstone. Besides being contrary to Scriptural teaching, this theory is opposed to the teachings and symbolisms of the Pyramid itself, and is without an iota of historical support.

The Great Pyramid is the oldest and the original Pyramid, while the others are, admittedly, imitations of it; and there is no question that others of the pyramids of Egypt had headstones, some of which have been found and can be seen in the museums. It is quite possible that the headstone of the Great Pyramid (or some considerable fragments of it) will yet be found buried in the debris which still surrounds the ancient monument.

A few references to the Great Pyramid are found in the writings of the ancient historians. Herodotus describes in some detail the manner in which the interior core masonry of the Pyramid was built up, tier upon tier. He then says, "the upper portion of the Pyramid was finished first, then the middle, and finally the part which is lowest and nearest the ground."

This means, of course, that, of the outer polished casing stones of the building, the headstone or top piece was the first to be placed in position, then the side casing stones were fitted to the lines of the headstone on down to the base. Thus Herodotus, the historian, agrees with the Bible; for in all things Christ the Head is to have the pre-eminence; he must be exalted first; then the Body members of this anointed company are to be built up unto him, and are constituted with him, an everlasting priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

A description of the Great Pyramid by another ancient historian, Diodorus Siculus of Sicily, is of particular interest to us in our present study, for it provides us with a clue to the approximate *size* of the Pyramid's headstone.

Diodorus states that in his time, which was the first century before Christ, the whole building was entire and without decay. This implies, of course, that the headstone was there at that time, for a pyramid could not be said to be "entire" if its principal stone were missing. Diodorus then gives in round numbers the dimensions of the whole Pyramid and of its headstone; the latter about six cubits square, which is approximately correct according to sound Bible-Pyramid theory and philosophy. *

* The Greek word chosen by this historian to refer to the head piece of the Great Pyramid is Koruphe, which, as defined by Liddell and Scott, means, the head, top, or summit. It may also refer to the top peak of a mountain. This word is not defined in the Bible concordances, for it does not occur in the New Testament, where the Greek word kephale is invariably employed for the meaning, head. While these two Greek words have different derivations, they both signify primarily, the head.

Professor Charles Piazzi Smyth, foremost nineteenth century authority on the Great Pyramid, after a special study of the upper courses of masonry composing the Pyramid in its present dilapidated condition, estimated the approximate size of the headstone; and his estimate also agrees, within a few inches, with the requirements of theory.

In the diagram, which shows a vertical cross section of the Great Pyramid in its original state, is also shown the headstone in what is believed to be its true proportions and ratio to the size of the whole structure. The beauty, dignity, and grace of its lines, the fittingness of the headstone's size and relation to the whole, as well as certain purely scientific relationships to the base of the Pyramid, will be noted by the careful student.

- *Julian T. Gray.*

Pastoral Records

R.C.A. advises that there will be a delay of approximately six weeks in the production of additional duplicates from the Master Records.

Your orders will be shipped just as soon as we receive deliveries from R.C.A.

"Then to side with truth is noble,
When we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit,
And 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses,
While the coward stands aside
Till the multitude make virtue
Of the faith they had denied."

The Weekly Prayer, Praise, and Testimony Meeting

"We went ... where prayer was wont to be made." - Acts 16:13.

New subscribers are invited to write us for a free copy of the July 1955 "Herald." Therein, on page 109, a brief introduction is given, bearing directly on these REPRINT excerpts, and on the value of the weekly Testimony Meeting: "the one meeting most helpful in spiritual growth." - Ed. Com.

MANNA TEXT DECEMBER 29 -- ECCLESIASTES 11:6

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

If the sowing has been a general one with a view to the gathering of the Lord's little flock from every nation, people, kindred, and tongue, we must expect the harvest work to be similarly broad, widely extended

Meantime let us not forget that our own land is the gathering-place for people from every nation under heaven, and is therefore a fruitful field in a larger sense than any other. The Lord seemingly held back the discovery of this continent until the due time, when it would become the gathering-place for the oppressed of all nations; for the oppressed are specially amenable to the truth, as our Master's words indicate, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

WORK WHILE IT IS CALLED DAY

We earnestly commend the course followed by some, of refusing better situations that would pay larger salaries, because the labor involved would be more taxing and leave less opportunity for the service of the truth. We recommend that situations that pay well and absorb every moment of time except that requisite for providing the things that perish, be sacrificed in favor of situations paying less wages but affording greater opportunity for volunteer work, colporteur work, etc. We are glad to say this spirit prevails more and more amongst those who have received the truth in the love of it.

We are not to hold back from the service of the truth because we are well known by our neighbors or because the majority of those who distribute tracts and handbills are illiterate or forced to the service by poverty. Rather we are to remember that we have given our all to the Lord, not only our lives but our physical strength, our mental strength, our reputation and influence, and our money. If we made a full consecration to him, we gave our all, and we must judge of our Lord's estimation of our attitude by his words, "He that is ashamed of me and my Word . . . of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed" (Mark 8:3,8); and again, we remember the declaration, "Them that honor me I will honor." It is not surprising then that we find that those who are most active in serving the truth and who thus indicate their special love for it and its authority, the Lord, should have special evidence of his love to them in their spiritual health and progress and keeping by his power.

"I'm not ashamed to own my *Lord*,
Or to defend his cause;
Maintain the honor of his Word,
The *glory* of his cross."

... Let us be faithful, us to whom the Lord has been so gracious in the bestowment of such clear knowledge of his own character and of the harmony of his blessed Word in the "Plan of the Ages." - *Reprints*, pp. R4000, R4001.

MANNA TEXT JANUARY 5 - ROMANS 15:3

"The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me."

Although the Scripture narrative of our Lord's crucifixion is told in a most simple and artless manner, and without apparent attempt at embellishment to give it tragic effect, nevertheless, in its simplicity it is one of the most touching narratives of history. As no novel could present a more eventful life, so likewise none ends more tragically than did this great, real drama set upon the stage by the Almighty, as an exhibition both to angels and to men of his justice and Love combined. How strikingly depravity of fallen human nature was illustrated in those who witnessed our Lord's many wonderful works, and then his unresisting sacrifice for our sins, coldly-without appreciation. Nothing could illustrate this better than the account of the division of our Lord's garments and the lot cast to see who would get the seamless robe, which so beautifully represented his own personal perfection, and which had probably been a gift from one of the noble women mentioned as being amongst his friends. (Luke 8:3.) The climax was reached when, after finally dividing the spoils, his executioners unpitifully viewed his sufferings and death" - "Sitting down they watched him there."

Flow strangely the average mind, in its fallen estate, unguided by the sound principles of judgment and the Lord's Word, can be swayed from one extreme to the other. This is illustrated by the fact that many of those who wagged their heads and reviled the Lord upon the cross, and taunted him with his declaration that he was the Son of God, and with his statement respecting the temple of his body, had evidently been amongst those who heard him during the three and a half years of his ministry. Some of them probably had seen his "many wonderful works," and were among those of whom it is written: they "marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth"; and who said, "When Messiah cometh can he do greater works than this man doeth?" Yet when they saw the tide turned against him, and especially when the influential of their religious teachers opposed him, they seem to have been easily swayed. We feel ashamed for the weakness of our fallen race as here shown. Yet the same thing is exemplified today: however pure and however luminous may be the presentations of the divine truth, if the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees of Christendom denounce it, they sway the multitude: however pure and true and honorable the lives of the Lord's servants, Satan can still suborn false witnesses, and secure honorable (?) servants to slander and reproach them. But this is what we are to expect. . . . Thus is fulfilled in us the declaration of the prophets also, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

And, remarkable as it may seem, this is the very same invitation that is extended to the Church of this Gospel Age, that they may have fellowship with their Master's sufferings, and eventually have fellowship also with him in glory. In view of all this we may well exhort one another to lay aside every weight, and to run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until he shall become the finisher of it. - *Reprints*, pp. R2315-R2317.

MANNA TEXT JANUARY 12 - GALATIANS 6:1

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness: considering thyself lest thou also be tempted."

As sons of the (Highest, who are seeking to be like our Father and our Elder Brother, we are to love the brethren "with a pure heart, fervently" - with sincerity. All of the children of God are brethren, as new creatures; all these brethren have hopes, ambitions, interests and promises linked together in the Lord Jesus and in the heavenly Kingdom in which they hope to share. All these brethren are joint heirs, fellow-heirs, one with the other and with the Lord. They are partners; their interests are mutual and co-ordinating.

Additionally, they have a special mutual sympathy of compassion; for while, as new creatures, they are rich in divine favor and promises, they all have serious weaknesses, according to the flesh-drawbacks; which cause them to "groan," and to sympathize with the other in their groanings. As the Apostle says, "We which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our body" - the complete Church. Oh, yes! the exhortation to love as brethren, fervently, is one which appeals to us specially.

But now we come to another point. Our love for the brethren cannot be exactly of the same measure and exactly of the same intensity or fervency toward all. There is something which gauges or regulates it. What is it? It is that we love God and the glorious principles of righteousness, which are represented in his character; and we love our Lord Jesus from the same standpoint, as being the very exemplification of all that is good, noble, true, just, generous, loving; and our love for the brethren must, of necessity, be in proportion as we find the brethren to be copies of our Lord. We do not mean copies in the flesh, but viewed from the Lord's standpoint; copies in spirit, copies in heart, copies in motive, copies in intention, copies in loving zeal for righteousness, truth, etc. This is not partiality; this is not doing to others different from what we should wish them to do to us. This is following the Lord Jesus' example; for we find that amongst his Apostles even, all of whom were chosen, there were three specially beloved; and of those three one is specially noted as "that disciple whom Jesus loved." He was specially loved, because he was specially lovable; and so with us and 'the brethren. We should love them all warmly, fervently, but of necessity with varying degrees of fervor, and the fervor should increase with each in proportion as we note his growth in heart-likeness to our Lord.

The Apostle Paul calls our attention to our duty respecting the brethren and how we should conduct ourselves toward them under varying circumstances, saying that faithful brethren should be esteemed *very* highly in love for their works' sake; that other brethren who are unruly should be warned; that those who are feeble in their mental comprehension of the truth should be strengthened; that those who are weak should be helped, supported; and that we should exercise patience toward all. - 1 Thess. 5:12-14.

The Apostle John shows us that this matter of distinguishing as between brethren that are to be esteemed and brethren that are to be warned, appertains not merely to conduct but also to doctrinal matters. Yet we may be sure that he does not mean that we are to disfellowship a brother merely because of: some differences of view on nonessential questions. We may be sure that he does mean his words to apply strictly and only to the fundamentals of the doctrine of Christ: for instance, faith in God; faith in Jesus as our Redeemer; faith in the promises of the Divine Word. These will be marks of a "brother," if supported by Christian conduct, walking after the spirit of the truth; even though the brother might have other views which would differ from

ours in respect to certain features of the Plan of God not so clearly and specifically set forth in the Scriptures.

Our warnings or reproofs or withdrawals of fellowship, are to be merely in the nature of correctives, with a view, as the Apostle says, to the restoring of such an one. "Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" - if not in the same manner, possibly in some other manner, in which you are *weaker*. - *Reprints*, pp. R3033-R3035.

MANNA TEXT JANUARY 19 - PSALM 119:97

"O how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

Nothing is more necessary to the peace and prosperity of the Church of 'God than that its members should have a clear understanding and appreciation of moral principles, with a full determination to be controlled by them. Even among Christians there are often differences of opinion with regard to principles of action, which greatly interfere with spiritual growth and prosperity. Such difficulties most frequently arise through failure to distinguish between the relative claims of love and justice.

Justice knows no compromise and no deviation from its fixed rule of action. There is no grace in it, no heart, no sympathy, no favor of any kind. When justice is done, there are no thanks due to the one who metes it out. Such an one has merely done a duty, the neglect of which would have been culpable, and the doing of which merits no favor or praise. And yet, firm and relentless as 'this principle is, it is declared to be the very foundation of God's throne.

JUSTICE BEFORE GENEROSITY

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

There is no obligation to demand justice for ourselves, and we may, if we choose, even suffer injustice uncomplainingly. We must, however, if we are Christ's, render justice so far as we are enabled to recognize it. Therefore we are to endeavor earnestly that all our actions, our words and our thoughts may be squared by the exact rule of justice, before we offer even one single act as an expression of love.

LOVE AND JUSTICE BOTH CONTROL..

If justice must mark our conduct toward others, so love must be used by us in measuring the conduct of others toward us. We may not apply to others the strict rules of justice which we acknowledge as our responsibility to them. Love, generosity, demands that we accept from others less than justice, because we realize they are fallen, imperfect, not only in their flesh, but also in their judgments.

Love is not, like justice, an exact principle to be measured and weighed. It is threefold in character: It is pitiful; it is sympathetic, in the sense of kinship of soul-affectionate; it is reverential. These different forms of love are exercised according to the object upon which love is centered. Pity-love is the lowest form of love. Sympathetic love rises higher, and proffers fellowship, comradeship. But the reverential love rises above all these, and delights in the contemplation of the good, the pure, and the beautiful. In this latter form we may indeed love God supremely and our fellow-men in proportion as they bear his likeness.

May love and justice find their proper, relative places in the hearts of all of God's people, so that the enemy may have no occasion to glory! The Psalmist said, "Oh, how I love thy law [the law of love whose foundation is justice]. It is my meditation all the day." Surely, if God's law were the constant meditation of all, there would be fewer and less glaring mistakes than we often see! Let us watch and be sober, that the adversary and our fallen flesh may not gain an advantage over us as new creatures. Let self be more and more eliminated and love reign supreme. - Reprints, pp. R5883-R5885.

MANNA TEXT JANUARY 26 - MATTHEW 6:16

"When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance."

In our text our Lord is not expressing any disapprobation of fasting; quite to the contrary, he is endorsing it as a propriety, but it was the wrong spirit that he condemned. For when the Pharisees fasted, many of them did it to be seen of men, in order to seem holy and given over to spiritual things. Hence our Lord's suggestion that when his disciples fast, they should not be as the hypocrites, whose fasting and long faces were to show men their piety. In the same connection our Lord proceeds to say that when his disciples fast, they should do the very reverse; that they should anoint their heads and be as cheerful as possible.

We can see the philosophy of this course. If their fasting had brought them nearer 'to the heavenly Father, it should have made them more gracious and luminous. It should have had a happifying effect, which would have shown itself in the countenance. The thing reprimanded, then, was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who assumed a sadness of countenance to be seen of men.

The followers of the Lord are to practice such fasting as will be seen of the Lord and not of men. The Father, who knows the heart, will appreciate our efforts to draw near to him and will grant our desire. But these things should be hidden to the outside world and known only to God; and the joy of the Lord should be manifest in the countenance.

ABSTEMIOUSNESS SPECIALLY HELPFUL DURING LENT

We have in mind the fact that the Lenten season represents the forty day period of our Lord's experiences just preceding the crucifixion. We might enter sympathetically into this matter and think of the trying experiences that were upon the Master when he knew he was drawing near to the time of his death. As we try to think of him, it will enable us better to realize what a privilege it is to endure hardship as good soldiers for the sake of his message. - Reprints, p. R4858.

Faith's Foundation

"For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." - 1 Cor. 3:11.

The Christian faith does not center in a Dogma, or in a Book, but in a Person, and this is the cause and pledge of its essential unity. Its one answer to all who, with the Philippian jailer, asks, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" is the answer of Paul and Silas, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." That truth was clearly seen by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when he began his magnificent sketch of Christian theology with the pregnant words, "God, who fragmentarily and multifariously of old spake to our fathers by the prophets, at the end of these days spake unto us by his Son."

But unity does not exclude diversity -- nay, more, without diversity there can be no true and perfect unity. Where there is no unity, there is distraction, but where there is no diversity there is death. Where the spirits of the prophets are not subject to the prophets -- where every man is conscious only of his own invisible consecration -- where, as in the Church of Corinth, every one in his fanatical egotism is anxious to shout down the truths revealed to others, that he may absorb the attention of all by his own "tongue," however barbarous, however dissonant, however unintelligible--where it is ignored that amid the diversities of gifts and ministrations there is yet the translucent energy of one and the same spirit -- *there is* confusion, and railing, and irreligious strife. And where, on the other hand, all lips mechanically repeat the same shibboleth for centuries after its significance has been worn away--where the dullness of a self-styled "orthodoxy" has obliterated the many hues of the wisdom of God--where inquiry is crushed under the heel of authority -- where, in fact, there can be *no* independent inquiry because all conclusions are dictated beforehand by the tyranny of an usurped *infallibility*--*there is* uniformity indeed, but therewith corruption and decay. When it is persecution to alter the perspective of a doctrine, and death to leave the cart-rut of a system--when they who question the misinterpretations of Scripture which have been pressed into the service of popular errors, must face the anger of startled ignorance -- when there is no life left save the spark which glows in the ashes of the Martyr, or the lamp which flickers in 'the Reformer's cell -- then the caste which has seized the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven may boast of unity, but it is the unity produced by selfishness in the few, and serfdom in the many. The unity so secured is but the stagnancy of the unrippled water, the monotony of the barren sands. It is the unity of the dead plain, "where every molehill is a mountain, and every thistle a forest tree." In this latter condition there is a deadlier peril than in the former. Even discords can be inwrought into the vast sequences of some mighty harmony, but what great music can be achieved with but a single note? Unbroken unanimity may be the boast of a deadening Buddhism, a withered Confucianism, a mechanical Islam; it cannot exist in a free and living Christianity. If it exists at all, it can only be as a uniformity of indifference and ignorance--a uniformity of winter and of night. The uniformity of the noonday is only for the Infinite. For finite beings, if there be any light at all, there must be the colors of the sunset, and the sevenfold luster of the rainbow, which is only seen when there is rain as well as sun.

- "The Early Days of Christianity," by *F. W. Farrar*.

Victory

(Author Unknown)

When I really am contented
That my wish be set aside,
When I cease from selfish longing,
When I triumph over pride,
When I'm willing, really willing
To be nothing (as they sing)
But a broken, empty vessel
In the service of the King:
That is victory!

When I calmly take unkindness,
And as meekly bear a sneer,
When I'm willing to relinquish
All that earth is holding dear,
When the falseness of some dear one
Fails to waken in my heart
Any bitter, hard resentment
Or to wing an angry dart:
That is victory!

When I cease to long for earth's love,
Am content to be unknown;
When I smile when friends neglect me,
Happy in His love alone;
When I lose myself in Jesus,
And surroundings cease to be,
With their little jars and discords
Able to discourage me:
That is victory!

Lord, I cannot hope to triumph
Over every form of sin,
And to live but for Thy glory
While my own will reigns within.
So I bring my will to Thee, Lord,
Rule Thou me in all my ways,
And the glory shall be Thine, Lord,
And the honor, and the praise:
That is victory!

Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me

Jesus, Savior, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves around me roll,
Hiding rocks and treach'rous shoal;
Chart and compass came from Thee,
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild,
Boist'rous waves obey Thy will
When Thou say'st to them
"Be still!" Wondrous Sov'reign of the sea;
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful billows roar
Twixt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
"Fear not, I will pilot thee."

Recently Deceased

Sr. Winifred Clough, Pasadena, Cal. (Nov.).
Bro. Carl Everberg, Woburn, Mass. (Aug.).
Sr. Marie Giloth, Jersey City, N. J. (Nov.).
Bro. C. Hillary, Bishop Auckland, Eng. (Oct.).
Bro. H. E. Hollister, Albuquerque, N.M. (Dec.).
Sr. John Hoskins, Glendale, Cal. (Nov.).
Sr. Rachel Jennings, Ilford, Eng. (Nov.).
Bro. G. C. Lange, Milwaukee, Wis. (Nov.).
Sr. Meyers, Massillon, Ohio (Nov.).
Sr. Matilda Officer, New Haven, Conn. (Dec.).
Bro. H. L. Weaver, Sonora, Cal. (Nov.).
Sr. J. Weinz, Wauwatosa, Wis. (Nov.).
Sr. K. Winski, Grand Rapids, Mich. (Nov.).