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"This Do in Remembrance of Me"

"For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do show, the Lord's death till He come." - 1 Cor. 11:26

CHRIST OUR Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor. 5:7, 8.) Here, in one sentence, brief, but pregnant with meaning, the beloved Apostle Paul, writing as always under the guidance and in the power of the Holy Spirit, draws our attention to the great Antitype, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, of whom the Jewish Passover lamb was but a type.

How well the type prefigured our Lord! To begin with, the lamb selected was to be *without blemish*, reminding us of the fact that our Lord Jesus had no blemish of sin in himself, and that he did not contract any stain or spot of sin by his contacts with the world. As the Apostle Peter reminds us: "We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." - 1 Pet. 1:19.

The blood of the typical lamb was sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels of the Israelite's *house*, but the blood of Jesus, the unforfeited life which was made available to us by the shedding of *his* blood, has been graciously applied to *our hearts*, removing from us the burden of unforgiven sin, setting us free from all consciousness of evil.

Again, in instituting the typical passover, we read in the 12th chapter of Exodus that the Lord said unto Moses: "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." How truly this feature is fulfilled in the experience of a consecrated believer of this Gospel Age! Everything in his life dates from the time when he came "under the blood." Before that, all is darkness; before that, all is death. He does not care to even think of the darkness of his unconverted days, and when he does occasionally mention them, it is only that his Savior may be the more magnified in the hearts and minds of those to whom he speaks; and that the contrast of that past with his present happy state may awaken in him a still greater sense of gratitude and devotion.

JESUS OUR PASSOVER LAMB

As the Jews fed on the literal lamb, so we are to feed on Christ; that is to say, we are to appropriate to ourselves, by faith, his merit, the value of his sacrifice. Not only so, but if we would be strong spiritually, and prepared for the deliverance in the morning of the new dispensation, we must eat of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. What is it to "eat" of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth? Ah! this means much more than might at first be supposed. It involves not merely a belief in the truth concerning Christ and his atonement -- it goes beyond even a confession of that belief. It includes a loving surrender to this and related truths, so that they are grasped by the moral, no less than by the intellectual side of our complex nature. Thus partaken of, the truth will accomplish our sanctification; day by day, the renewing of our minds with his precious Word will gradually transform us into his likeness.

In the typical arrangements bitter herbs were included, which aided and whetted the Israelites' appetite for the lamb and unleavened bread. Commenting on this feature, Brother Russell has observed that instead of these, "we have bitter experiences and trials which the Lord prepares for us, and which help to wean our affections from earthly things and to give us increased appetite to feed upon the Lamb and the unleavened Bread of Truth. We, too, are to remember that we have here no continuing city; but as pilgrims, strangers, staff in hand, we are to gird ourselves for our journey to the Heavenly Canaan, to all the glorious things which God has in reservation for the Church of the First-borns, in association with our Redeemer, as kings and priests unto God."

On the night of his betrayal, just before his crucifixion, our Lord Jesus clearly identified himself as the antitypical Passover Lamb. Peter and John had been sent ahead, and in the "upper room" to which they had been led, they had "made ready the Passover." At the appointed time, "when the hour was come," he gathered his Apostles round him and said: "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." "It was necessary that as Jews they should celebrate the Passover Supper on that night -- the night of the anniversary of the slaying of the Passover lamb in Egypt, of the saving of the typical first-borns from the typical 'prince of this world' -- Pharaoh - - the same date on which the real Passover Lamb was to be slain. But as soon as the requirements of the type had been fulfilled, our Lord Jesus instituted a new Memorial upon the old foundation, saying, 'Do this in remembrance of me.'" *

* As noted on the back page of this issue, the appropriate time, this year, to commemorate the death of the antitypical Lamb, will be after sundown, Thursday, April 15.

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

We recall the circumstances of the first Memorial -- the blessing of the Bread and the Cup, the fruit of the vine, and of our Lord's words in connection therewith. Year by year, as we "keep the feast," and the time of our departure draws nigh, the appropriateness of the symbol's, and the humility and love of our Lord are more deeply impressed on our hearts, and the longing desire within us grows more earnest that we, too, though imperfect, may faithfully follow in his steps.

Quoting again from our dear Brother Russell: "In presenting to the disciples the unleavened bread as a memorial, Jesus said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' The evident meaning of his words is, This symbolizes, or represents, my body. The bread was not actually his body; for in no sense 'had his body yet been broken. In no sense would it then have been possible for them to have partaken of him actually or antitypically, the sacrifice not being as yet finished. But the picture is complete

when we recognize that the unleavened (pure, unfermented) bread represented our Lord's sinless flesh, leaven being a symbol of sin under the Law, and especially commanded to be put away at the Passover season. On another occasion Jesus gave a lesson which interprets to us this symbol. He said, 'The Bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.' 'I am the Bread of Life.' 'I am the living Bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the Bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' - John 6:33, 35, 51.

"In order to appreciate how we are to eat, or appropriate, this living Bread, it is necessary for us to understand just what the bread signifies. According to our Lord's explanation of the matter, it was his flesh which he sacrificed for us. It was not his prehuman existence as a spirit being that was sacrificed, although that was laid down and its *glory* laid aside, in order that he might take our human nature. It was the fact that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners -- without any contamination from Father Adam, and hence free from sin -- that enabled him to become the Redeemer of Adam and his race, that permitted him to give his life 'a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time.'-1 Tim. 2:3-6.

"When we see that it was the pure, spotless nature of our Lord Jesus that was laid down on behalf of sinners, we see what it is that we are privileged to appropriate. The very thing that he laid down for us we are to 'eat,' appropriate to ourselves; that is to say, his perfect *human* life was given to redeem all the race of man from condemnation to death, to enable them to return to human perfection and everlasting life, if they would; and we are to realize this and accept him as our Savior from death."

The unforfeited life of Jesus, laid down in sacrifice for us in obedience to the Father's will, is thus seen to be that which alone has value in the Father's sight. As the Apostle declares: "the Man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:6.) It is important to observe, however, that the work of recovering Adam and his race from the power of sin and death, while based on that ransom price, goes beyond the mere provision of the ransom. While the provision was made now nearly two thousand years ago, it is manifest that the work of recovering Adam and his race from the power of sin and death has not yet been accomplished; indeed it has scarcely begun. The only disposition thus far of that ransom has been to make it available for the Church, and this only by faith. Only by faith has even the Church passed "from death unto life"; not even this *little flock* has been fully recovered from the power of sin and death; still less has the rest of the race. Manifestly, then, it will require a considerable time (the Scriptures indicate the entire thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom), to restore, to deliver, to set free, from the power of sin and death, Adam and his children. Evident it is, that the work of restoration, for which the foundation was laid nearly two thousand years ago, is still to be accomplished. To quote once again from Brother Russell:

"In order that any of the race of Adam might profit by the sacrifice of Jesus, it was necessary that he should *rise from the tomb* on the divine plane of life, that he should ascend to the Father and deposit the sacrificial merit of his death in the hands of justice, and receive from the Father 'all power in heaven and in earth.' As relates to the world, it was necessary also that in the Father's due time he should come again to earth a glorious divine Being, then to be to the whole world a Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King, to assist back to perfection and to harmony with God all who will avail themselves of the wonderful privileges then to be offered."

This blessing, restoration to *human* perfection (not perfection on the spirit plane, but on the human plane) which will be the happy portion of the entire race (all the willing and obedient), the Church of this Gospel Age receive *now*, by faith; that is to say, *human* perfection is *reckoned to*

them by God. And the partaking of the unleavened bread at the Memorial season means to us, primarily, the appropriation, by faith, of this right to perfect *human* life, with all its privileges, the blessing which, at the cost of his own life, our Lord procured for us. Likewise the fruit of the vine symbolizes our Savior's life given for us, his *human* life, his being, poured out unto death on our behalf; and the appropriation of this by us also signifies, primarily, our acceptance of *restitution* rights and privileges secured by our Lord's sacrifice of these.

TWO ADDITIONAL SIGNIFICATIONS

In our showing forth the Lord's death in this, the way appointed (1 Cor. 11:26), we may not improperly associate in our minds two additional thoughts of great beauty and solemnity: (1) Our consecration to be "dead with him" (Col. 2:20), even as we remember the Apostle's words, "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him (2 Tim. 2:11), and (2) the oneness of spirit which obtains between fellow-members of the Christ company.

The fruit of the vine fitly represents the life given by Jesus, the sacrifice-the death-"this is my blood [symbol of life given up in death] of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins"; "Drink ye all of it." (Matt. 26:27, 28.) It is by the giving up of his life as a ransom for the life of the Adamic race, which sin had forfeited, that a right to life comes to man. (Ram. 5:18, 19.) Jesus' shed blood is the "ransom for all"; and the dominant idea of our "feast" is this fact and the benefits which as consecrated believers we derive therefrom; but in addition we may remember also and rejoice in the fact that we may (indeed we have covenanted, have we not? to) drink of his cup, even as (though beyond their then understanding) he spake to his close disciples: "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup." (Matt. 20:23.) Verily this is a "high calling" (Phil. 3:14), and well might we question our ability to drink (unaided) of his cup. But our sufficiency is of God, and so with the Apostle we too count all things loss, that we may know the power of his resurrection, the *fellowship of his sufferings* (Phil. 3:10), not repining, but all the more rejoicing at any evidence which may come to us that the sufferings of Christ may be abounding in us. - 2 Cor. 1:5.

With regard to our second additional thought that of the oneness of spirit possessed by fellow members of "his body," the Church (Eph. 1:23), how close to the heart of our Lord does this thought bring us when we recall that it was just about the time when he instituted this "remembrancer" that he offered that matchless intercessory prayer on our behalf, that is recorded in the 17th chapter of John: "That they all may be one." (Not his close disciples only, but us also, who have since believed.) "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John 17:20, 21.) What thoughts are these, which just before his passion our Lord entertained with regard to his consecrated followers! What grand and noble hopes respecting the mutual love, the sympathy, affection, and interest which should prevail amongst the members of this "one Body" of our Lord!

WHO MAY PARTICIPATE?

Just one word more. Who may participate in this memorial? To this question we would reply: No one should join in this celebration who does not trust in Christ as his or her personal Savior from sin and death, and who does not purpose to walk worthy of the Name of Jesus, in his footsteps wherever they may lead, to the best of his or her ability. No one should come to the Lord's table lightly, carelessly, but, as the Apostle exhorts: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." (1 Cor. 11:27-29.) But on the other hand none should absent himself or refrain from this communion from a sense of unworthiness. Thank God for a sense of sin, for a keen conscience about it, but let not that keep any away. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." - (1 John 2:1; 1:9.) Thus cleansed, let us draw near, gladly confessing our love for our Lord, rejoicing in the pleasure and privilege of remembering him in this, the way appointed. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." - 1 Cor. 11:26.

- P. L. Read

"UNTIL HE COME"

'Till He come!' -- Oh, let the words
Linger on the trembling chords;
Let the little while between,
In their golden light be seen;
Let us think how heaven and home
Lie beyond that 'Till He come.'

"When the weary ones we love
Enter on their rest above,
Seems the earth so poor and vast,
All our life -- joy overcast?
Hush! be every murmur dumb;
It is only 'Till He come.'

"Clouds and conflicts 'round us press;
Would we have one sorrow less?
All the sharpness of the cross,
All that tells the world is loss,
Death and darkness and the tomb
Only whisper, 'Till He come.'

"See, the feast of love is spread.
Drink the wine and break the bread;
Sweet memorials! -- till the Lord
Call us 'round His heavenly board;
Some from earth, from heaven some,
Severed only -- till He come!"

RESURRECTION

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." - Acts 24:15.

RESURRECTION! What a word! What a power of suggestion it contains! It has the aroma of spring. It tells us that the winter is gone; the cold snows have melted away, the time for the singing of birds has come, and the flowers appear in the land. Resurrection! The trees seem to whisper it, the streams to be purring it, the sun to be smiling it, and the world to be welcoming it. Everything appears to be rejoicing in the power of returning life.

God need not have made the spring-time, but in his loving kindness he has given it once a year. We know it is coming. How eagerly we look for the first robin. Ah, there he is, just as joy-giving as ever. He is reconnoitering -- just taking a look over the land. He will be settling down to the business of house keeping ere long. And there is the purple violet nodding its head. Everywhere nature is waking up from its long sleep. The world is enjoying its awakening to life. And it is all due to the fact that the sun is higher in the sky. Its rays are coming more directly, less obliquely, and they gain power as it mounts still higher. Trees, grass, flowers, and the brown earth itself, are all bathed in the ardent, bountiful, life-giving solar light and warmth. Germination is going on. There is a mighty process of transformation taking place on every hand. This all preaches the yearly sermon of the world's great need, for above all else men need the great Sun of Righteousness to arise with healing in his beams. Nor shall they seek him in vain, for in due time he will disperse the long night of sin, sorrow, and death, and death shall be no more.

THE EVER-REPEATED QUESTION

"If a man die, shall he live again?" is a question asked by Job a long time ago, and has been asked many times since. Science has no answer for this question. The Platonic philosophy claims that man does not actually die, but is immortal, and that death is but a semblance of dissolution, or a something that affects merely the body, while an ethereal part called the spirit lives on. In the words of the poet it says, "There is no death; what seems so is transition. This life of mortal breath is but a portal of the life Elysian, whose portal we call death." Much of the world's theology runs in this same channel. But God's Word states: "They are all of the dust, and all return to dust again." It is very important to see death to be what it is, and then we are prepared to consider the great change that is to come to a dying world.

When Jesus was on earth, Israelites of Pharisaic persuasion believed in a resurrection. Referring to her brother Lazarus, Martha said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said unto her, "I am the resurrection and the life [it is through me that the resurrection will come]. He that believeth in me, though he were dead [in the past] yet shall he live [in the future], and whosoever liveth [at that time] and believeth in me shall never die." Thus the Master directed attention to the one means of gaining life.

In order to secure for the world a resurrection, Jesus had to die and rise again. His own resurrection was the first great requirement. While his death seemed to be the greatest possible overthrow of a cause, his resurrection revealed the greatest triumph. He had promised to rise again, but in the main this had gone over the heads of the disciples. So he convinced them by appearing to them. It was an amazing revelation. He was alive. Death had no more dominion over him, and now he possessed the power to open the tomb and to release from death; he had the keys. So the Apostle wrote "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them

that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits afterward they that are Christ's at his coming [presence]. Then cometh the end, . . . when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power; for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. 15:20-26.) In the glorious hope of a resurrection, millions have lived and died.

"Why seek ye the living among the dead?" said the angel at the tomb. Why, indeed? And as the Master of life is not numbered among the dead, neither is the doctrine of the resurrection, in its full scope and power, to be found in the tomb of musty and stale theological treatises, or in creed graves. Yet it lives in all its strength and beauty in the Word of God. But the smoke of false creeds has obscured it from the eyes of the great majority, for they have failed to see that the mighty promises of Holy Writ apply to all mankind. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." - Hosea 13:14.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they [the heavens] shall hear [have communication with] the earth [the earthly representatives of the heavenly Kingdom]; and the earth shall bear the corn, and the wine, and the oil [the people symbolized by corn, wine and oil]; and they shall bear Jezreel [the lowest part of the world's inhabitants, who so greatly need the uplifting influences of the Kingdom]." - Hosea 2:21, 22.

IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST

During the present Age some have been regarded as already risen with the Master. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." (Col. 3:1.) To be risen with Christ means to have an entirely new viewpoint of life and its affairs. The great struggle for existence on earth encourages the growth of human ambition. It is a saying that "there is always room at the top." Young people are encouraged to acquire knowledge that they may thus rise to the summit; of human achievement, and perchance have their names on the world's roll of fame. But Christ calls to something very different, something higher. It is to have our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And so we are to seek the things above. Then on the other side of the veil we shall have fellowship with God's people throughout eternity. All the things for which our hearts yearn are stored up for us in that celestial realm, and some day we shall, if faithful, share in the first resurrection. - See Phil. 3:10, 11.

ALL IN THEIR GRAVES SHALL ARISE

When all in their graves shall arise, then comes the process of the general resurrection for the members of the human race; and what this will mean for the hundreds of millions who have died, no words can express. It will be the regaining of life under entirely new conditions. We recall a great writer's description of the death of a young girl, little Nell, who was taken from her friends and borne to the cold tomb. Now, because of the redemption in Christ, we can visualize little Nell alive once more. It is the great morning of the resurrection. The world's long night is gone. The effulgent Sun of Peace is risen and his glory is diffused upon human hearts and minds.

And where are those who formerly traveled over life's wintry way? And where is Nell? She is alive. No mere semblance of life is that, but life itself. It shows in her sprightly step and in her sparkling eye. The rose has come back to her cheeks and buoyancy to her form. The grave which held her for a season, has no more claim upon her. She carries not the slightest suggestion of death's power. She is the same sweet Nell as of old, but with added grace and freshness due to

recently imparted vigor of life and joy. Her former companions are there too, and she finds her friends of former days. Trees, flowers, and grass clothe the earth that was parched, and the warbling birds sang never so blithely as now.

The great congested cities are gone. The hovels of poverty are no more. People have congenial employment. No one is in want. The earth is bringing forth its increase, and injurious insects and weeds have been destroyed. Forces of nature no longer run riot, and the air is balmy and invigorating. Men and women -- thousands of them -- have already come back from the tomb and millions more will return in due time as the redeemed earth is made ready to receive them. Social inequalities have melted away, for the only aristocracy is that of character. There are no extremes of riches and poverty; money is a thing of the past. There is no racial friction or strife, no war in all the world. The people are characterized by a wonderful simplicity of manner and of dress; their faces bear the stamp of honesty of purpose. Everything speaks of life and testifies to the operation of a power hitherto unknown.

It is the evening hour. The declining sun tints the cloud-flecked sky with a glory past description, and a few birds are giving out their farewell notes to the departing day. Here we sit in a kind of natural amphitheatre, formed by gigantic trees. It is a goodly place, affording a grand, panoramic view of earth and sky. All is quiet, and the gentle murmuring of some meandering stream is a delight to the ear. It is a spot that invites us to tarry, while the magic of approaching darkness weaves deeper shadows under the umbrageous branches of the monarchs of the wood. And while the silken fingers of the softly vagrant breeze fondles our cheek, we listen to the "stilly sounds that come with eve" that whisper of a world at peace.

"Groves were God's first temples," and men and women are coming to join in the evening hour of worship. Joy is on every countenance. And over there where a strata of protruding rock forms a natural rostrum, one of venerable aspect speaks to the assembled participants. He discourses on the goodness of God, and tells us that he lived on earth a long time ago, and we learn that his name is Daniel, the beloved Prophet to whom the promise was made that in the end of the days, he would come forth to stand among his people; and we remember him as one who was faithful to the Lord in a wicked and idolatrous world.

We listen as Daniel reminds his hearers that their presence there evidences the fact that the promises of God are sure. It has all come to pass because God so loved the world that he sent his Son from heavenly glory to a sin-cursed earth to die on man's behalf. By the resurrection of Jesus he gave assurance that some day the power of death would be broken, and now that glorious time has come at last. He further reminds them that their present blessings are but a foretaste of the blessings held out in the prospect of everlasting life, promised to those who learn to know their God. And having concluded his discourse, he mingles with the throng.

While the shades of night gather round, and the great stars come out one by one in the firmament above, let us also listen to our old friend, little Nell, as she sings:

"There is gladness in earth's morning,
For the weary night is over;
Joy and gladness in the morning,
With earth now decked in Eden's prime.
All the birds at last are singing,
And love's music grandly ringing,
Oh the glory of the morning time.

"A great highway now is here,
For the power of death is broken,
A way for men to walk in freely,
Bright with fragrant blossoms gay.
All the rhapsodies of glory
Now attend salvation's story,
Oh the blessings of this happy day.

"Hearts and minds unite in kindness,
And there are no mists of blindness,
And there flows truth's mighty river
From God's throne all white and pure;
And the happiness forth winging
Its glad way around with singing,
Earth shall smile and evermore endure."

A closing hymn is announced, and the mighty throng sing as one person a great "Jubilate Deo," to the Everlasting Father in Heaven, from whom all blessings flow.

The wonderful resurrection work goes on. The Son of love gives the fulness of his splendor to mankind. And the divine music of peace, joy, kindness and good-will, coming down to earth from above, will flow on and on in a mighty tide of benediction to the hearts and minds of uncounted millions of the human race. So let it be, O, Lord: Thy Kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Amen.

- *Walter Sargeant.*

Praise Is Comely

"Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name: bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not any of his dealings: who pardoneth all thine iniquities, and who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth from the pit thy life, who crowneth thee with kindness and compassions, who satisfieth with good thy desire, thy youth reneweth itself like an eagle." - Psalm 103:1-5, Rotherham.

DANGER HAS threatened the life, or sorrows have engulfed the one who could write or sing with the understanding such a Psalm as this one hundred and third. Perhaps it was inspired by the experience from which the Psalmist had prayed in the previous Psalm to be delivered. All who have their senses exercised by reason of righteous use to discern the contrast between the evil that is in themselves and the good that is in our Great Provider, in everything, at all times, will give thanks to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Such outpouring of gratitude may be made on bended knee or standing in the public market place, seated at the table furnished by his wisdom with natural or spiritual food, lying on the bed to rest from a day of weary toil or for hours of restlessness, or going about in the performance of the daily task.

We need not concern ourselves with the critics' contention that David did not write this Psalm. Whoever wrote it, the divine spirit was dictating phrases to fit the need of every suffering and repentant son of Adam, whether living in David's troubled age or in the age of grace. In this Age one of the manifestations of that grace is the permitting of Satan and his cohorts to turn the wheels that polish God's chosen ones, preparing them for the time of the greater grace, the time when true praise will be rendered to his holy name. That inestimable privilege is reserved for those who value the polishing enough to sing Psalms of praise while they daily submit to the grinding experiences without which the perfections of that reflected glory could never be manifested.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his *dealings*." To bless him for all that is apparent to the flesh as benefits, as the King James version renders it, is fairly easy; but blessing him for all his dealings, as Brother Rotherham has rendered it, takes us far down into the Christian life, takes us to the point where the Christian not merely quotes, "All things work together for good," but really believes it, and believing to that point where he can "in *everything* give thanks." To give thanks in everything without having faith to believe that God's hand is guiding in everything is a vapid substitute for the sparkling faith that "renews itself like the eagle." - Psalm 103:5.

To bless Jehovah implies affection as well as praise, all that is within one recognizing the holiness of his name, and giving the reverence that can never be satisfied with lip service, or even the giving of hours of one's time to the passing on to others that which delights us so. All that is within me is not enough to Praise his holiness as it deserves. To refrain from giving that much is robbery of the basest sort. Rotherham comments: "*Forget not any of his dealings: his benefits, if thou wilt-but have not all his 'dealings' been 'benefits,' though sometimes in disguise? Forget not any of his dealings, for whereas it would be difficult to forget them 'all,' be it thy care, as far as may be, that thou forget none, since the forgotten mercy or chastisement may be that which thou dost now most need to recall.*"

Though we multiply a hundred times the list of reasons for gratitude which the Psalmist gives in verses three to five, and who could not, our feeble appreciation would probably have left out more than it has added. Not until life's end has been reached will any of us be conscious of all the reasons for gratitude. Not until the grass has faded, the flower of the field has withered, the wind has passed over it and it is gone, its place knoweth it no more (Psa. 103:15-16), and the new place

Jesus went to prepare for those thus represented is entered upon-not until then will that praise appropriately sound forth.

The Psalmist's praise flows on in unbroken phrase. No minor strain is dwelt upon. The fading flower is introduced only to make more vivid the "loving kindness of Jehovah from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." The stream broadens as it flows on, the benefits of the individual widening into gifts which are to fill the universe, "all places of his dominion."

The fallen human flesh, or even the new creature that dwells in this imperfect flesh, cannot be depended upon to be properly grateful for its experiences, but must be urged to "Bless the Lord." The Hebrew method of repetition indicates the urgency of the necessity of that plea for thanksgiving, and therefore the depravity, the natural ingratitude of the creature. Some limited gratitude there might be where there is any nobility of soul, but if all that is within us is to be marshaled for our Psalm of praise, it must be urged to it. Memory must be trained to retain the innumerable evidences of God's grace, the senses must be devoted to the proposition of discerning the kindness of the Hand that often seems rough. A few moments listening to the complaining tongue controlled by the flesh, makes painfully apparent the woeful habit of retaining in the memory all the disagreeable details of life with little or no attention to the benefits derived. These "light afflictions," not worthy to be compared with the glory to follow, are the least of experiences crowded into the life of any Christian. Until the experience comes, it is easy to speak thus about it, but let tomorrow see the hand of our dearest friend turned against us, or perhaps even that of a brother in the Lord, and if there is not the faith to be assured that all is of the Lord's permission, and essential for our eternal good, the lips that should be praising God, the life that should rise as sweetest of incense before him, will indicate that self has been exalted as a hideous idol occupying the niche that once we consecrated as devoted to the Lord, a hallowed dwelling place for him alone.

LIFE'S BLESSINGS CATALOGUED

Twice the name of Jehovah has been mentioned in our text. Now in listing some of his "benefits," the pronoun "who" carries us back five times to that name, the name of the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The supreme Gift of gifts is implied in the first benefit mentioned, the forgiveness of *all* our iniquities, It is no more possible for our feeble intellects to cope with the enormity of our transgressions than with the breadth, length, height, and depth of God's generosity. Since we are "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity," it is too familiar a companion for us to rightly appraise it. Hence the justification that covers all, cannot possibly be fully appreciated by us. Neither the blackness of the sin nor the purity of that white covering can be comprehended. It is Christ's righteousness that the Father sees when he looks at us. We therefore appear to him as white, as pure, as lovely as Jesus was when he walked this earth in his per section. Without his revelation such a claim would be blasphemous.

"God's work is perfect and not done by halves," so Matthew Henry comments in introducing the phrase, "Who healet.h all our diseases." Sad indeed would be the state of one whose sins were covered, but he himself left with soul-sickness, the putrifying power of sin still working in him. That our God could not do. Yea, further yet, the life that is redeemed from the pit is crowned with daily loving-kindness and compassion. The brow of every Christian is thus garlanded-every blessing, every compassion is a leaf resting there as an advance token of the victory to be theirs if their Thanksgiving Day can be extended to reach to the day of their change. "We are made partakers of Christ [Greek: "sharers in, partners of" Christ] if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," "if we hold the confidence *and the rejoicing* of the hope firm unto the end. " - Heb. 3:14.

This crown and "its adornment is not only a result of the divine attributes of loving-kindness and compassions, but the very things themselves, so that an effulgence from God beautifies the soul. Nor is even this all, for the same gifts which are beauty are also sustenance, and God satisfies the soul with good, especially with the only real good, himself. " (*A. Maclaren.*) "Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart," he will give thee himself, if he is the desire of thy heart. Without thankfulness for *all* that comes from his hand, there can be no evidence of delighting ourselves in him.

SATISFACTION THAT SATISFIES

"Who satisfies thy mouth with good." The natural mouth, like the grave, is never satisfied; but he who feeds on God, he who eats the flesh of his Son, finds a nourishment that results in a growth into his likeness, and those who now feed on him alone must be made partakers of the divine nature; perpetual youth is his portion, and only the bird that makes its nest on the highest crags of the eternal mountains can be a fit symbol of the one who gives all that is within him to the praising of Jehovah, the one whose rejoicing is not slackened by "infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses *for Christ's sake,*" but whose praise of Jehovah rings only the louder as he realizes that in these things he is "filling up that which is [for his sake] left behind of the afflictions of Christ."

- *P. E. Thomson.*

The Ecumenical Movement Threatens Protestantism

In the current attempts at church unity, two Baptist ministers see a rising, frightening new bigotry that endangers religious freedom.

This article by Henry A. Buchanan (chaplain of the Central Baptist Hospital in Lexington, Ky.) and Bob W. Brown (pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Lexington) appeared in the October 24, 1964, issue of *"The Saturday Evening Post"* and is used by special permission of *"The Saturday Evening Post"*; copyright 1964 by The Curtis Publishing Company.

THE AMERICAN religious system is under fire today. A legacy of the Protestant Reformation, the system that provides us such a variety of churches is being challenged and questioned by the suddenly popular ecumenical movement. Launching a zealous crusade to unite Christendom, the ecumenists have declared that a divided Body of Christ is a sin and a scandal. In fact, however, it is the ecumenical movement that presents the real danger. It could lead to creation of an ecclesiastical power structure that bears no resemblance to anything envisioned by Jesus of Nazareth. What is worse, in striving after a super church, we may destroy the heritage of diversity that has enriched our spiritual life. And still worse, Protestants may be pressured or lured into creeds and positions that will compromise their religious beliefs.

The ecumenical movement has been given a tremendous thrust by the Second Vatican Council and by Rome's overtures to the Orthodox and Protestant communions. Following the lead of John XXIII, the Vatican Council has held out to the "separated brethren" a tentative offer of "reunion." An equally powerful thrust has come from non-Catholic leaders, who entertain the hope that the church may achieve the unity which would lend authority to their pronouncements on social issues. Inside American Protestantism, meanwhile, machinery has been set in motion to unite four major Protestant bodies in this country -- the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the United Church of Christ. (The last already represents a union of two churches.) At the same time a "climate" is being created, through Protestant-Catholic "dialogue," in which it is hoped that an agreement can be reached.

With so much pressure behind the ecumenical movement, one may wonder why the walls of denominationalism do not crumble into dust immediately. The truth is that the doctrinal differences represent the honest convictions of sincere men who do not see alike on basic issues. To expect these men to dissolve their differences in the heady elixir of church union is to assume that the issues for which men have suffered and died are not really important, that Luther and Calvin and Knox and Wesley, and all their spiritual descendants down to this day, have been haggling over nonessentials. Are we not witnessing in the ecumenical movement the birth of a new and frightening form of religious bigotry--the assumption that anyone who holds out for his views is guilty of a perversely obstinate and un-Christian attitude?

What about these doctrinal differences that divide Christendom? Can honest men cast them on the refuse heap for the sake of unity? Does church union really tower like a Mount Everest over all other doctrines? Will "dialogue" dissolve disagreement on such basic doctrines as baptism, Lord's Supper, religious liberty, church government, and the role of the Virgin Mary?

To illustrate the dilemma, take the Marian controversy. The bishops at the Vatican Council can divide over such a technicality as whether the mother of Jesus should be included in the schema on the church or whether she should have a separate schema of her own. But this does not touch

the essential fact that the Roman Catholic Church has already issued two dogmas concerning Mary which are rejected by Protestants. In 1854 Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of Mary's freedom from original sin the Immaculate Conception -- and in 1950 Pius XII decreed that Mary had ascended bodily into heaven-the dogma of Assumption.

Will the Catholic Church decide now that Mary was born, died and was buried like other women, in order to make Marian dogma acceptable to Protestants? Very unlikely. Then will Protestants accept Immaculate Conception and Bodily assumption in order to get back into the church? Apparently they must, if reunion is to be accomplished. Catholic leaders have implied a willingness on Rome's part to soften Catholic views on some of the more controversial differences -- but the more conservative Vatican spokesmen are quick to point out that while new and more acceptable explanations will be given for the church's positions, there will be no surrender of what the church has proclaimed as dogma.

Will "dialogue" dissolve the difference on the meaning, purpose and method of baptism? Presbyterians and Methodists baptize by sprinkling; Nazarenes and the Church of Christ baptize by immersion; Roman Catholics baptize babies for salvation, the Christian churches baptize adults for salvation, and Baptists do not believe that baptism saves anyone. Can the various views of the Lord's Supper somehow be reconciled by discussion? To Lutherans the Communion represents the real presence of Christ, the Baptists see it as a memorial service and the Roman Catholics believe that it is a means of acquiring saving grace.

And what about some of the differences in the way men live? Take birth control, for instance. The population explosion is a moral issue. Without some sort of birth control, the increase in population will continue to exceed the increase in production of food for the already starving millions on the earth. Birth control is an issue which must be seen in theological perspective. The Roman Catholic Church has taken the position that the use of artificial means of contraception is contrary to natural law and is immoral. Many Protestant theologians hold that the concern for partners in marriage and for the children must take precedence over concern for the methods used in limiting the size of the family. The complexity of the population problem indicates the need for more than one view of the issue. We must not let one church's views dominate. We need many creative approaches to solve a problem as massive as overpopulation.

Take another practical matter: religious liberty. This is a principle for which men have suffered imprisonment and even death. When the Roman Catholic Church talks about religious liberty, it is talking about the right to preach and practice Catholicism in Communist countries such as Poland. But when Baptists talk about religious freedom, they are talking about equal rights with Catholics in Spain and Portugal.

What is the aim of the ecumenists? Protestant ecumenists talk about Catholics and Protestants reaching out toward each other, and meeting on ground which neither Catholic nor Protestant can now envision. But let us look at the facts. The Vatican Council is actually aimed at updating the Roman Catholic Church to meet the challenges of the present and the future. Roman Catholic theologians are *not* talking about a compromise with Protestants. They are talking about "the return to the one church under the one pontiff" -- the words of the theological adviser to the Dutch hierarchy at the Second Vatican Council. Some Catholic theologians do recognize the necessity for changes in the structure and outward appearance of the church, as is evidenced by the changes the Vatican Council has approved for the Catholic liturgy. But they solemnly warn Protestants against hoping for any kind of compromise. Liberal and conservative Catholic spokesmen disagree as to whether doctrine and teaching authority can change significantly in the interest of ecumenism, but they agree completely that reunion could come about only one way:

The separated brethren would have to return to the "one true church" under the successor of Peter. In the schema on ecumenism offered to the Vatican Council, the Protestant churches are not recognized as churches at all, but as "communities." Obviously, to dissolve and absorb these "Protestant communities" is the aim of Catholic ecumenists.

Many churchmen who favor a Protestant-Catholic dialogue are deceiving themselves. Through a dialogue, they seem to believe, differences can be discussed dispassionately, a common heritage can be shared, and the voice of Christendom can be heard on current social and moral issues. Advocates of dialogue seem to feel that the very fact that Protestants and Catholics -- and Jews -- have communicated is just as significant as any conclusions they might reach. This may be due to the fact that when they are honest they do not come to much agreement. We must ask whether this is a harmless flirtation which is at best a waste of time, and at worst an indulgence in self-deception by which the "broadminded" are being led to accept the basic tenets of ecumenism.

Suppose that the ecumenical movement should succeed. Suppose that all the churches unite into one, and that this one church becomes the sole repository of religious doctrine, the sole arbiter of man's spiritual destiny. Where will the discernor, the nonconformist, the individualist go? Where will a man go if he finds himself at variance with a doctrine or, worse still, the governing authority of that one church? The ultimate theological implications of the one church concept are obvious. There would be only one place for the dissenter. The one church would say he must go to hell.

If this sounds extreme, then look again at the church in Europe in the years before the Protestant Reformation, when Christendom was cloaked in a seamless robe. The pride of the papacy reached its zenith when Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII) forced the Emperor Henry IV to stand bare-footed in the snow at Canossa on 17 consecutive days before he would permit him to resume his reign. Rome was sometimes dissolute, as in the reign of the Borgias, while priests who held a monopoly on heaven dispensed indulgences for a price. And hanging like a pall over the whole scene was the stench of human flesh burning, grim reminder of the heretic's fate.

We are afraid of a super church, just as we are afraid of a super state, and not because of a lack of faith in God. What we recognize is the fact that man cannot be trusted without checks and balances upon his power and authority -- not even in the church. The various branches of Christendom now act as checks and balances, one upon the other, and they have a purifying effect on each other. Remove this tension, and we could be back to the pre-Reformation struggle between church and state with the individual man caught in the middle. Moreover, each of the branches -- Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Nazarene, Adventist, whatever it may be -- throws a different ray of light on the Christ figure in our midst. Each one has a special emphasis and consequently shows our world another facet of the glory of God who, in His creativity, apparently set a high value on diversity.

There are indeed some things that all Christians hold in common. There are also some essential differences that divide us, and the differences are as important as those things we hold in common, for they enrich the common heritage. We can see no valid reason why agreement on the significance of Mary, for example, should be a test of whether a man is a Christian.

We must ask ourselves the searching question: What is the real purpose of the church in the world? Is the church union the goal? Is bigness the end in itself? Is power the purpose? No, the church is here so that lonely, frightened men may find a refuge and a friend, that sinful men may find forgiveness and acceptance, that bruised and crippled men may find healing and strength, that men who hunger for righteousness may band together to form a more righteous society, and

that men who thirst after godliness may dedicate themselves to a life of service. If church union would contribute to the achievement of these ends, then we would be for it. But history teaches us that "the one church" soon becomes the repository of pride and power and gives very little attention to the real needs of man.

True, the Roman Catholic Church is seeking, through the Vatican Council, to reform, renew and bring itself up to date. But it is questionable whether the reform movement would happen now if it were not for the "separated brethren" who have helped to make Rome aware of her own needs. If the "separated brethren" reunite with Rome, this influence for reform will be eliminated.

Was the Protestant Reformation a great mistake? Is the big task before us now the undoing of the Reformation? What we need to do is not to annul the Reformation but to complete it.

The American religious community, in an atmosphere of freedom not experienced anywhere else in the world, has created a multitude of sects, denominations and churches. In the struggle for acceptance on the part of the newer sects, and for continued support on the part of the older, more "respectable" churches, bitterness and acrimony have often erupted. But the churches have grown strong in this atmosphere. They have won the loyalty and support of their adherents, as they have given to individuals something distinctive with which they could identify themselves. The churches have spurred one another by criticizing, one another. And they have helped to deliver society itself from the leveling, deadening effect of a trend' toward conformity. In offering man a choice, a choice between Catholic and Protestant, between Baptist and Methodist, between Presbyterian and Pentecostal, between an organized church and free thought, our pluralistic religious community has given the individual man the opportunity and the challenge to follow the Christ who cannot be confined to any one church nor yet to *all* the churches.

What we need is not more uniformity but more diversity in which the unlimited grace of God can find additional channels to reach the needs of men. Instead of one church under one human and mortal head, we need many churches. We do, indeed, worship one God, but it is highly unlikely that any one church will exhaust the wisdom and the wonder of His revelation of Himself to the world.

If we had no choice? It must never come to that. We must retain the right of choice. We will not accept the judgment of the ecumenists upon the churches.

"Breathe on us, Lord; Thy radiance pour
On all the wonders of the page
Where hidden lies the heavenly lore
That blessed our youth and guides our age.

"Give strength, blest Savior, in Thy might;
Illuminate our hearts, and we,
Transformed into Thine image bright,
Shall teach, and love, and live, like Thee! "

Faith's Foundation

The Christian faith does not center in a Dogma, or in a Book, but in a Person, and this the cause and pledge of its essential unity. Its one answer to all who, with the Philippian jailer, ask "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 pressed 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 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 is 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*.

Ministry of the Word

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend [stumble] them." - Psalm 119:165.

NOTWITHSTANDING many discouraging circumstances and the severe trial of faith which has been and still is testing the Lord's dear people, the year 1964 has brought a deepening assurance of the promise that "The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19). Again, St. Paul has put into words the assurance of our confidence as in Romans 8:28: "We know that all things work together for good" for those called into the secret things of our God. The Bible repeatedly assures us that in the days of the Son of Man we must expect that he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver to purge away the dross of the old nature.

In the transition period in which we are living and which closes the Gospel Age, should we be surprised at these tests of the Refiner? "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth on you." (1 Pet. 4:12-14).

Contributing to our sense of rejoicing is the manner in which the curtain of darkness and superstition is being lifted all around the earth, in harmony with the words of the Revelator (Rev. 8:5) "and there were voices [proclamation of ideas] and thunderings [resulting tumults and controversies] and lightnings [general enlightenment] and an earthquake [social revolution]." The world today is a living panorama of these conditions and daily news reports confirm incipient anarchy, world-wide.

These developments in this evil day are full of special danger to the Lord's people because of increase of temptation on every point of weakness to every member of Christ's Body. The besetments of the world, the flesh and the devil are more subtle and deceptive and more powerful than ever before. To be forewarned is useless unless it leads to action, the laying aside of every weight and hindrance which impedes our growth in grace, hindering sacrifice and the fulfillment of our covenant by sacrifice.

We must remove from our pathway at once every hindrance and stumblingblock which the adversary may put in our way and keep on running for the mark at which the prize will be given. To parley with besetments is to fail; to endeavor to carry them along on the way is impossible-the way is too narrow. All possessing such glorious hopes should display confidence therein; let the light of our lives shine to the glory of our Heavenly Father.

These thoughts are prompted by experiences amongst the friends across this great country during the year 1964. The benediction of peace is a blessing sought and eulogized wherever man is known, but experienced by a surprisingly small number. Careworn souls, turning away from the vision of weary years of trial and suffering and seeing some friends upon whom sorrows press lightly, wonder at the beauties of life which seem to be withheld from them, and yearn for peace. Disappointed hearts, finding earthly joys so often turn to ashes, implore for rest and peace. Bereavement breaks up the closely knit family and individuals therein seek for that hour of forgetfulness in which they may find quietness and courage.

The cause of unrest amongst the Lord's people is not the excessive weight of burdens, not the severity of trial, for often those who enjoy the sweetest rest have material surroundings of the most distressing nature. Rather the cause lies within the individual and consists in only a partial reception of the grace which would free them from this unrest. There must be the concurrence of our wills with God's will, necessitating an unreserved surrender to him. The principle seems to be stated by St. Paul (2 Cor. 13:5): "Examine yourselves . . . prove your own selves."

While the surface of our lives may sometimes show agitation, the peaceful currents of the soul will move onward to God himself, whence came this wondrous grace. His love will overwhelm the little disappointments of an hour, drowning our sorrows and washing away the stains of our tears. There will come to such the beautiful words of St. Paul, so thrilling in the expression of confidence that they should ever be before us: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:35-39). Do these words mean anything to us? Do we face life each day in this spirit of victory? May our daily complaints about a wise providence not indicate a failure on our part to have on our heads at all times the helmet of salvation, or a failure to properly use the shield of faith?

The year just ended brings to view the imperfections of even our best efforts, for which we make humble acknowledgment, but looking to the future there are many difficulties to obstruct our onward course. It will be necessary to reinforce our waning courage with the spiritual promises of divine grace given to help in every time of need. We are forewarned of all the snares and dangers that beset our onward way, so that we may avoid and overcome them. We are fully informed as to the policy and course of the Captain under whose banner we have enlisted. We have his constant presence, and his inspiring voice may always be heard above the clash and din of battle. If we are weak and inclined to be fainthearted we have only to remember the blessed promise: "The Lord will give strength unto his people." (Psa. 29:11) And again, "God is our refuge and strength." (Psa. 46:1)

This past year has also witnessed the further shaking of the heavens and the earth, the spiritual and earthly kingdom of Satan. It has afforded an opportunity for some ecclesiastical leaders to manifest their unfaithfulness to the dogmas hitherto confessed, but it has also indirectly done some good in awakening thought and bursting some of the fetters of superstition which will never be refastened. The way has been opened for the spread of general infidelity under the guise of modern man's achievements, which spreads faster and farther than the truth—the Divine Plan of the Ages. May not this condition possibly account for the peculiar lack of interest quite evident everywhere in this country in the Divine plan of salvation? To combat this assault on Christendom, conservative men of all denominations are being forced by circumstances beyond their control into a church union, now in the discussion stage.

Since the Scriptures have foretold this present shaking and indicate that many will fall into doubt and infidelity, let us remember that God is at the helm; we need not fear. We see that in the midst of the great confusion everywhere, God is surely and steadily working out his deep designs for the final and complete overthrow of false doctrine, superstition, hypocrisy, injustice, and every iniquitous device which seeks to hide truth and establish and maintain oppression. He shakes and sifts because he would separate the many who have assumed the name of Christ but who are not truly his people. The genuine saints will not fall, even though some of them may for a time

stumble; for the Lord will uphold such with the right hand of his righteousness. (See Isa. 41:10; Psa. 91:11-12)

The present world-wide commotion, not only upon religious but also social questions, is the result of the lifting of the veil of ignorance. The sudden enlightenment of the masses through education, the public press and other sources, has considerably reversed previous practices, as predicted in Daniel 12:1-4.

The trouble and shaking of the professed Church is because the selection of the true Church member, is almost complete. The trouble upon society in general will not reach its intensity until the shaking of the ecclesiastical heavens has broken the fetters of superstition and plunged the masses into skepticism and open unbelief. Then the many kingdom, and religions will pass away to make room for the one true kingdom of Christ under the whole heavens. It will take the place of power as represented by Satan's kingdom, and the Mediatorial blessing of mankind will begin first with those who pass through this great time of trouble, as did Noah and his family at the time of the flood, and afterward extending to all that are in their graves, who shall be awakened and come forth to a full knowledge and to a full opportunity of reaching perfection and everlasting life, secured for them by the cross of Calvary.

In the midst of the shaking going on around us, there are some lessons, that we must always remember. In the Church we must recognize individual rights and responsibilities, and also the fact that the accountability of each member is to our Father alone. Our dear Redeemer, who is able to read the heart, to measure the circumstances, and to judge righteous judgment, is the one before whom we must severally stand or fall. Our consecration include, the effort to build one another up in faith, hope, and love, and to encourage the spirit of self-sacrifice and our patient endurance as good soldier, of Christ.

The manner in which each of us uses consecrated talents entrusted to our care is left by the Lord with each individual. Either good or bad judgment may be used, but the Lord will commend and reward according to the motives involved and not according to actual results. In these days of manifold problems we must endeavor to use our talents properly with a single eye to the glory of God, and without reference to the spirit of the world, and then will we find confidence before the Lord.

There are many ways in which we can display to all that we are true disciples of Christ. He himself told us that the hallmark of real Christianity is the quality of love. (John 13:35) In the first place, this love will work no ill to his brother; it will neither slander his character, nor cheat, nor envy, nor in any way wrong him. On the other hand, love will be active in the service of the brethren. It will think as favorably of their motives of action as possible and decline to pronounce judgment against them. It will speak kindly and cordially to them and of them. It will sympathize in their afflictions and rejoice in their prosperity; it will, when necessary, counsel with them in perplexity and assist them when possible and when needed in adversity; it will rejoice with them in the blessing of Divine truth and engage heartily with them in its service. Indeed, all those who thus love each other will stand shoulder to shoulder in the great work to which their united talents are consecrated, not hiding the talents of any, but anxious to see as much as possible directed in the service of the Lord. So the Lord loved his disciples, and so they loved each other and worked together in the common cause.

These observations reflect lessons noted during this pilgrimage, which stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, an automobile trip of some 25,000 miles. Once again our gratitude to all the dear friends for their hospitality and generous affection in the

Lord. As with the other pilgrim brothers with whom we are associated, the goodly result of this ministry is made possible only by the grace and blessing of our Lord. Let us rejoice, dear brethren, in our common heritage and in our soon gathering together with Christ in his kingdom. The words of the prophet Isaiah come to mind "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. " (Isa. 26:20-21.) Surely today we verily need this abiding place where we may rest in quietness and confidence!

- A. L. Muir.

The Question Box

Romans 3:28; 5:1

Question:

The Scriptures make it clear that we are justified by faith. (Rom. 3:28; Romans 5:1.) Why does God set such a premium on faith? Why does he reckon us righteous on account of our faith? Why does he justify by faith rather than by one of the other graces? Why not by fortitude, patience, meekness, gentleness, humility; above all, why not by love? What is there in faith that gives it such value in God's sight?

Answer:

Faith is the root of all the other graces; it is in faith that they have their origin.

If in our hearts we have true faith, the manifestation of all the other graces will appear in our conduct. Our lives will be, or will become, characterized by fortitude, patience, meekness, gentleness, humility, and love. If we have in our hearts not a dead, but a living faith, we have in us the root of all the other graces; we have in us that which is already pregnant with them and which, in due time, under the guidance of and by the power of the holy spirit, will produce them all; whereas, if it were possible for our Christian life to begin with any one of them, even love, or with all of them put together, without faith, their root, being in us, they would be without hope of reaching maturity, but must inevitably wither, when subjected to a sufficiently strong test.

The Apostle Peter brings this strikingly to our attention in his second Epistle, (2 Peter 1:1-8). There he shows the rounded-out, well-balanced condition in which a true Christian character matures. The picture he draws is somewhat obscured in our Authorized Version by a mistranslation, so that in that Version the passage reads: "*Add to your faith, virtue, and to your virtue, knowledge,*" etc. A better translation appears in the Revised Version. We are not to first mature faith and then to our matured faith *add* virtue (or fortitude) and then to our matured fortitude *add* knowledge, etc. The word is much more vital than "add." The faith that we bring to the Christian life is to contain in itself the seeds which will produce all these graces. As faith grows, they will grow.

In your faith supply virtue (or fortitude) reads the Revised Version, and *in* your fortitude knowledge, and *in* your knowledge self-control; and *in* your self-control, patience, or steadfastness, or endurance; and *in* your steadfastness, godliness, and *in* your godliness, brotherly-kindness; and *in* your brotherly-kindness, supply love.

As further bearing on the fact that faith is the root of the other graces, we note the fine touch of spiritual wisdom which appears in the disciples' answer to the Lord when he instructed them in regard to the duty of forgiveness: "If thy brother trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again unto thee, saying, 'I repent,' thou shalt forgive him." - Luke 17:4.

Exceeding strain is this to put upon our patience, and to put upon our love-offense crowding upon offense and injury upon injury till it has grown to a seven-fold affront. But the point of special interest just now is how the disciples received this instruction. Did they say: Lord, it will take a great deal of patience before we shall have developed characters which will be able to do this. Train us in the secret of forbearance? Or did they say: Lord, it is only when we greatly love, that we can forgive to such an extent. Increase in us therefore, this grace of love?

No! -- the Apostles did not thus reply. Instead they besought the Lord to increase their faith. (Luke 17:5.) They asked that the *root might be strengthened, to brace the tree* for such trial and resistance.

So must it be with us. When a great trial comes into our lives, or when we are taxed with some unusual service, or called upon to take a larger share of fellowship in the burdens and sufferings of Christ, we may be as certain as were these disciples, that the surest way for us to be fit for the strain, is to have our faith strengthened; that we must *believe* more, if we would *do* more; that our rest in him must be in a deeper repose, a calmer and more sure trust, ere we can be greatly used in his dear service.

- P. L. Read.

Notice of Postponement of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, due to be scheduled for Saturday, June 5, has been postponed to Saturday, September 18. Plans are now under way to hold it in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

We are making this early announcement so that Institute members, who might wish to participate in conventions now being planned by Associated Bible Students in various parts of the country to be held during the summer will know that they need not reserve the June date for the Institute's Annual Meeting.

Further particulars as to the hour and place of meeting will be announced later.

RECENTLY DECEASED

David A. Allen, Seattle, Wash.
Fred Anderson, Williams Bay, Wis.
Frank Bartowski, Chicago, Ill.
Millie Blackburn, Orillia, Ont.
William Chrzanowski, Chicago, Ill.
Willie Dhein, Seattle, Wash.
Lavergne R. Gaven, Chicago, Ill.
Helen Karalow, Chicago, Ill.
Eva Konrad, Seattle, Wash.
Anna Kuybida, Chicago, Ill.
Leila Olsen, Esopus, N.Y.
C. Florence Parker, St. Louis, Mo.
Charles F. Plath, Rexford, N.Y.
Vivian Reeves, Snoqualmie, Wash.
Elisabeth K. Schelter, Green Brae, Cal.
Hattie Stark, Seattle, Wash.
Harry Surry, Barking, Essex, Eng.
George H. Vining, Channte, Kans.
Helen White, Longview, Wash.

SISTER EDITH HOSKINS

Just as we are going to press, the news reaches us that Sister Edith Hoskins (who had charge of the Institute's Correspondence Dept. from its beginning, in 1918, until her retirement in 1960), ended her earthly pilgrimage February 22, 1965, in her eighty-third year.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Pastor Russell's Out-of-Print Writings

A group of brethren are making a survey to determine the probable demand if the Watch Tower Reprints for the years 1879-1916, or any of Brother Russell's other works, were made available.

To facilitate their survey, they have prepared a questionnaire, a copy of which will be sent to any of our readers, on request. Write foil same direct to

Chicago Bible Students Book Survey Committee 11000 S. Mansfield Ave. Chicago Ridge, 111.
60415