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"Peace to Men of Good Will"

"Be not afraid! For lo! I bring you good tidings of a great joy, which shall be for all the people: That there hath been born unto you this day a Savior -- who is an Anointed Lord -- in the City of David! ... Glory in the highest unto God! And on earth peace, to men of good will." - Luke 2:10-14, Rotherham, and Tischendorf Footnote.

THE THUNDER of burly guns, reverberating to day in the ears, of "all people" of earth, well nigh drowns out the sweet strains of the angelic Proclamation echoing down the corridors of time, from that first Christmas morning. Instead of the promised peace, the art, the science, and the practice of war are still, after nineteen centuries, the chief pre-occupation of mankind.

It is therefore no wonder that men generally have come to regard this heavenly Proclamation as being in the same category as the Santa Claus tradition a pleasant story for children, a tender reminder of a young mother and her babe, "lying in a manger," and so of all motherhood and childhood, of sweetness and light; and, perhaps, of a kindness of intent on the part of heaven and of a God who means well, but cannot do much practically to end the woes of earth.

Because of the long delay and apparent failure, the sweeping significance of the Proclamation has been generally overlooked or disbelieved. Still do "the kings of the earth *set themselves*, and the rulers take counsel together, [unwittingly] against Jehovah and against His Anointed." The lords of earth -- of the present order-would not dare set themselves against the Creator of the Universe, or, against His Son, did they recognize that *They* are the authors of the "bands" and "cords" that hamper them. These comparatively slight hindrances on the reign of selfishness and evil, during the past six thousand years, have been mostly through What the Apostle calls "the foolishness of preaching" - mere *talk*. A modern and typical instance of the continual conspiracy of earth's rulers to rid themselves of these "bands" and "cords" has been the effort on the part of the European dictators and their associates to destroy the influence of Christianity on their peoples.

"Yet" -- *in spite* of all disbelief, and conspiracy and confusion and opposition, "Yet," saith Jehovah, "I have set My king upon My holy hill of Zion." This is a prophetic statement of divine intention, not of previously accomplished fact. Not yet has the head of "this present evil world,"

Satan, been laid hold upon by the Apocalyptic Messenger and bound "with a great chain" for a thousand years. Not yet have his kings, been bound with chains, and his nobles with fetters of iron, as it is declared they shall be. Not yet has his kingdom felt the "iron rod" of Jehovah's King, dashing it to pieces like a potter's vessel. Not yet has the King, so "set" by Jehovah; assumed His throne and issued His own inaugural Proclamation: "I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee" (or, "brought Thee forth" - Young; or, "acknowledged Thy paternity," or "declared Thy pedigree" - Num. 1:18). "Ask of Me and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession...." "Behold, I make all things new. It is accomplished! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." - Psalm 2; Rev. 21:5-8.

But -- "Who hath believed our' message, and to whom hath the Arm of Jehovah been revealed?" "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," said Jesus, "that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes." The world drowns on in darkness; it does not hear the Christmas Proclamation. But when the due time comes, there will be no delay, no hesitation, no procrastination, no commutation of sentence upon an evil and rebellious world. "For a full end, and that determined, will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, make in the midst of all the earth." (Isa. 10:23.) The sovereignty of this King whoser birth on earth we celebrate, is to be autocratic; His dominion co-extensive with the boundaries of earth.

Herein is an apparent inconsistency in the Proclamation of the herald angels, as reported in the Authorized Version of our Bible. It promised, without limitation, "Peace on earth, good will toward men." But the following nineteen hundred years have been years of warfare on earth; and the Kingdom of Christ, as foretold by all the Prophets, will be inaugurated, not by peaceful means, but by force, involving the destruction or restraint of His enemies. However, when the most ancient manuscripts of the Gospel are examined, the inconsistency disappears. All three of these MSS, the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and Alexandrine, show that the text originally read: "Peace on earth *to men of good will.*" . The Peace is extended only "to those who, like the King Himself, "love righteousness and hate iniquity." "Great peace have they who love Thy law." On the contrary, "*There is no peace, saith Jehovah, to the wicked.*" "Oh, that thou hadst hearkened unto My commandments! *then* had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." It would appear that; the Apostle Paul had the Proclamation in mind when he wrote to the Romans: "God . . . will render to every man according to his works . . . unto them that . . . obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish . . . but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good." - Isa. 48.18 24; Rom 2.1 11

All this is not inconsistent with the prophecies that paint the peace and prosperity of Christ's reign. Inaugurated as it will be amid scenes of violence, all opposition will be quickly suppressed. Once the intent and adequacy of His authority becomes generally known, the reaction of the people of earth will be as foretold by the Prophet Isaiah: "It shall come to pass in that day that Jehovah will' punish the host of the high ones on high. [the evil spirits, spoken of in Eph. 6:12] and the kings of the earth upon the earth... . For Jehovah of hosts will reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem.... And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have 'waited for Him and He will save us: this is Jehovah; we have waited for Him, we- will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." (Isa. 24:21, 23; 25:9.) St. Peter declared in his second recorded sermon (Acts 3:12-26) that the return of "the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus" will be to bring "seasons of refreshing" in fulfillment of the sworn covenant to Abraham: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Of this reign of blessing, asserted the Apostle, all God's holy Prophets had spoken "since the world began."

The extension of a divine offer of peace, to the well disposed individuals in a world in rebellion against God, two thousand years before the inauguration of His Kingdom in power and glory, has been a favor of the greatest importance to its beneficiaries. All are members of a fallen race, "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," unable from inherent weakness to serve God perfectly in the environment and atmosphere of "the present evil world," however good their desires and intentions. But through this divine offer, "Ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For He is our peace," writes Paul to the Ephesians. (2:13, 17.) "He came and preached peace to you [Gentiles] that were far off, and peace to them [the Jews] that were nigh: for through Him we both have our access in one spirit unto the Father." "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." (Rom. 5:1, 2.) Thus, through the "peace to men of good will," proclaimed by the angels that first Christmas 'morning, has been made possible the great "High Calling of God in Christ Jesus." No wonder this offer of amnesty was prefaced by the chorus: "*Glory in the highest unto God,*" the Author of so beneficent a Plan.

So the ones who can still hear the Christmas Proclamation of the angels, *know* that despite all discord and opposition, all the folly of men and the malignancy of demons, "*A King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*" (Jer. 23:5.) And they know that this King will be the resurrected Christ' Jesus, who was once born as the Babe of Bethlehem. "Even so, come quickly. Lord Jesus.",

- H. E. Hollister.

Glad World

*We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth,
wherein dwelleth righteousness. - 2 Peter 3:13.*

Glad world, I see you daily in my vision,
A righteous world; dear land of equity,
Where greed has given place to love of brother
And truth lies deep as waters of the sea.
The lame man leaps, the deaf ears opened, listen,
The blind behold, the stammerers declaim,
The very trees are clapping hands in gladness,
All nature praises Him who once was slain,
Each man is under his own vine and fig tree.
The fruit hangs ripe and none to make afraid,
The yawning grave spreads o'er her shame earth's flowers,
No more are old or infant in her laid.

O happy land where neither sighs nor dying
Find any place, for joy has come to stay
And prayers before they're uttered find an answer
And faces shine, all tears now wiped away.
My heart runs far ahead and has outreached me,

I hear the shouts of joy on every shore --
They drown earth's present groaning and travailing,
Thy kingdom, Lord! How could we ask for more!

- *Grace M. Harris*

A Song of Thanksgiving

"Tell . . . how great things the Lord hath done for thee." - Mark 5:19.

IT IS through the Psalms chiefly that the saint of God finds utterance for the praise and thanksgiving of a gratitude filled heart. Thus has the Lord wisely provided means of expression for the pent-up emotions within.

From among the many beautiful expressions of praise and thanksgiving we have chosen for consideration the 30th Psalm which perhaps was composed after the Psalmist's recovery from a sickness which had nearly proved fatal. The circumstances which called it forth are no longer clear to us. But what child of the Lord can consider these words of warm gratitude without his heart burning within him at the thought of his own "many benefits" received from the "Giver of every good and perfect gift."

"I will extol Thee, O Lord; for Thou hast lifted me up,
And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.
O Lord my God,
I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me.
O Lord, Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave:
Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." - Ver. 1-3.

Is not this descriptive of our own experience? Do we not remember "the hole of the pit whence we were digged"? We "who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:1-3.) "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." (Titus 3:3.) And what of our many foes who so frequently triumphed over us; those "works of the flesh," the enemies within the fortress so graphically presented in Galatians 5:19-21? "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death." (Rom. 6:21.) Yea, our feet were almost gone; our steps had well nigh slipped. We looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but found none. - Psa. 73:2; 69:20,

Then "this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." For "He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." For "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to -come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on

immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." - Psa. 34:6; 102:19, 20; Titus 3:4-7; Eph. 2:4-7; 1 Cor. 15:54-57.

"Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.
For His anger endureth but a moment; In His favor is life:
Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy cometh in the morning." - Ver. 4, 5.

Sing praise ("sweep the strings" or "make music" -Rotherham) unto Jehovah for "praise is comely for the upright." (Psa. 33:1.) Again, "Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely." (Psa. 147:1.) "I waited patiently (suffering, intensely, with earnest longings, an intensity of feeling which amounted to real suffering) for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." - Psa. 40:1-3.

In its highest and truest significance, Praise is the instinctive outburst of adoring worship that rises from a pure spirit at the knowledge and vision of an Infinite, Self-existent, All-Creative, and Sovereignly Ruling God, a God of Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and Truth. It occupies a higher vantage-ground than Thanksgiving, since it represents reverent homage and appreciative adoration for God in Himself, as He is in His eternal, glorious, perfect, and blessed Being, utterly without thought of the good He bestows upon the worshipping, recipient creature. The offering of Praise, therefore, is the one spontaneous act of the true saint, unaffected by promise of good and uninfluenced by expectation of return for service. As thus unmixed with any thought of self, Praise is the highest expression of honor to God, and it brings the purest and loftiest element into the Christian's communion with God. In both Testaments it is characterized as an "offering" or "sacrifice" by which God is glorified. (Psa. 50:14, 23; 107:22; Heb. 13:15.) Joined with the tenderer and sweeter note of Thanksgiving for ineffable and unlimited "goodness and mercy," Praise is the one revealed employment of the sinless, and redeemed hosts in the Heavenly Presence. (Rev. 5:7-14.) "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Sion." - Psa. 65:1.

The "remembrance of His holiness" means literally "His holy memorial" ("celebrate His holy memorial" - Darby) and refers probably to the passage (Exod. 3:15), "This is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations." God's name is His revelation of Himself, in all His various attributes of love, wisdom, power, holiness, truth, righteousness. God's memorial is that great history of redemption, which was, so to speak, the setting up of a monument to His glory, on which all these attributes were inscribed. The Revised Version brings out the precise thought in translating: "Give thanks to His holy memorial name."

The things of this Psalm are of continual interest. They do not belong to any one time or any one type of experience. Some of the notes in it are suitable to home and family and individuals through all the years of their history. Eminently so is the fifth verse, which tells us of the bitter and the sweet, the dark and the light, which run in various distribution, along human lives. The underlying doctrine is the great fact that "God is love," that love runs through all, rules over all, explains all.

Here is a reason why God is to be praised-because He manifests Himself in love, not in wrath; or if in wrath, but for a moment. Love directs all. Rotherham renders this verse, "For there is a Mo-

ment in His anger, a Life-time in His good-pleasure (or favor); in the evening cometh Weeping to lodge, but by the morning 'tis a shout of Triumph (or joy)." The parallelism is carefully preserved in each member-"anger . . . favor"; "a moment . . . a life-time"; "evening . . . morning"; "weeping . . . joy." Weeping is described under the image of a wayfarer who comes in at evening to lodge for the night. The suddenness and surprise of gladness, on the other hand, in the morning, are beautifully represented by the simple "at dawn, a shout of joy," without a verb. Just as the sun in Eastern lands, without any long prelude of twilight to announce his coming, leaps, as it were, in a moment above the horizon, so does the light of God's love dispel in a moment the long night and darkness of sorrow. From Isaiah we quote a beautiful parallel passage: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." (Isa. 54:7, 8.) And in the greater picture of the Restitution day which the Psalmist's words bring to mind, with what thrilled hearts do we in foretaste picture the glorious revealing, through His Christ, of the great God of the Universe, whose righteous and holy character will then be made manifest to all humanity. In that new "heaven and earth," God's blessings abundantly poured forth upon astonished mankind will result in the wiping away of all tears from their eyes and will more than offset their experience under the terrible Night of Weeping: - Isa. 65:17; Rev. 21:4; Isa. 35:10; Isa. 25:6-9.

"And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.
Lord, by Thy favor Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong;
Thou didst hide Thy face; I was troubled. I cried to Thee, O Lord;
And unto the Lord I made supplication:
What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?
Shall the dust praise Thee? shall it declare Thy truth?
Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be Thou my helper." - Ver. 6-10.

In their times of trial God's people in all ages have been brought to feel their entire dependence on Him. In days of flowing prosperity we have little sense of that dependence. As the Psalmist expresses it here: "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. We are very apt to dream, when things are well with us, that they will always be so, and never otherwise. "Tomorrow shall be as this day." Yet prosperity is more pleasant than profitable to us. Though in show it look like a fair summer, it is indeed a wasting winter, and spendeth all the fruit we have reaped in the harvest of sanctified affliction. For we are never in greater danger than in the sunshine of prosperity. It is rare to receive much of this world, and not as the prodigal to go afar off; 'tis hard to keep close to God in prosperity, when we rave much of this world to live upon and content ourselves with; to live upon God and make Him our content and stay, as if we had no other life nor livelihood but in Him. We are very apt in such a case to let go our hold of God, discustom ourselves to the exercise of faith, abate and estrange our affections from God.

It is more common to pray for strength to endure through times of adversity and suffering than for strength to endure through times of prosperity and gladness. Yet it is these latter times of buoyant self-reliance that are most full of peril. It is not in those perilous ways when every step gives fresh evidence that without our Leader we are lost, that we are most likely to turn away from Him. That supreme peril comes rather when we walk in the open plain, and have forgotten the serpents that lurk among the flowers. For every soul that is harmed by adversity, ten are harmed by prosperity. Yet you will find a hundred persons who pray against that adversity which so often brings men closer to God, where you will find one who prays against that pleasant prosperity which too often lures men away from God and from their own best future.

And how deceiving is that prosperity! When the days run smoothly, "involving happy months, and these as happy years," all seems certain to continue. But a change comes over our life. Ill-health fastens on us death invades our circle; relatives bring us into deep waters; our means of living fail; we are plunged into a very wilderness of woe. How falsely we judged when we thought that it was by its own inherent stability our mountain stood strong! No; it was solely the result of God's favor, for all our springs are in Him; the moment He hides His face we are most grievously troubled. Sad but salutary experience!

"Thou didst hide Thy face and I was troubled." What soul can be deserted and not be afflicted? All the world does no good without the favor of God. As all the stars, though they shine together, do not dispel the darkness of night; so no creatures can comfort us sufficiently when God hides His face. His absence cannot but be lamented with greatest grief, whose presence the soul prizeth above all earthly joy.

"O! may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes."

How moving is the Psalmist's plea to his God in verses 8 and 9! And yet his prayer for prolonged life was not offered with the view of any earthly possession or enjoyment, but only- with a view to the honor of God. He dreaded death as being an end of praise to God. His plea is, what would my life-blood avail if Thou shouldest send me to the grave? If I may live I shall praise God and witness to His truth before the 'living, and this will avail to the glory and honor of God. But, cut down in death, my lips are dumb thenceforth as to any testimony for God in the land of the living. Essentially the same reasoning appears in Psalm 6:5 and 88:10-12 and Isa. 38:18, 19.

Every better spirit, just in proportion to its thoughtfulness and nobility, is saddened as it compares performance with aspiration and work with aim. There are times when the words of God's most believing children about this fleeting life, and the shortness of our time for doing God's appointed work, run in the mould of the Psalmist's. There was a point of view from which life presented itself to our Lord Himself as a golden day, and death as a cheerless night. "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work."

As we ponder our own brief span, our "fleeting breath," well may we repeat the poet's words: "What need hath God of this poor clay?"

Thank God for the assurance that we shall not lie silent in the grave, but in the glorious Age of the future we shall show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light-Him whose workmanship we now are, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We therefore, with the Psalmist, ask aright for life when we have in view that we may live and praise Him.

"Lord, be Thou my helper." In every duty, in every conflict, in every trial, in every effort to promote the Lord's cause, in every season of prosperity, in every hour we live, this short prayer is suitable. If the Lord help us, there is no duty which we cannot overcome; there is no difficulty which we cannot surmount.

"Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing;
Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girdeth me with gladness;
To the end that my glory may sing praise to Thee, and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever." - Ver. 11, 12.

To bless God for mercies is the way to increase them; to bless Him for miseries is the way to remove them. No good lives so long as that which is thankfully improved; and no evil dies so soon as that which is patiently endured. The concluding words of this Psalm raise a responsive chord in our hearts: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." - Isa. 61:10.

"To the end that my glory may sing praise to Thee." This word "glory" is also found in Psalm 16:9 and signifies "tongue," and is so translated in the quotation of this verse found in Acts 2:26. As light is the glory of fire (Exod. 24:17), so speech is the glory, the bright shining of the intellect. "Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee." (Psa. 63:3.) For what have we to do in the world as once and again His creatures, anew created unto good works, but to exercise ourselves in those, and by those to advance His glory? That all may return to Him from whom all is, as the rivers run back to the sea from whence they came. Of Him and through Him, and therefore for Him are all things. "I will sing of Thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning; for Thou hast been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto Thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defense, and the God of my mercy. I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all Thy marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in Thee: I will sing praise to Thy name, O Thou Most High." - Psa. 59:16, 17; 9:1, 2.

-W. J. Siekman.

Love's True Basis and Purpose

"We know that we have passed from death unto life." - 1 John 3:14.

THROUGHOUT our Lord's teachings he made it clear that an understanding of God's purposes is reserved for those who are in harmony of heart with the Father. The Apostle Paul explained this in several ways, and particularly in his second letter to Timothy where he links "rightly divide the word of truth" with "give diligence to present thyself approved unto God." - 2 Tim. 2:15, R. V.

When the Jews marveled at Jesus' teaching, saying, "How knoweth this man learning, having never learned?" Jesus replied, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, . . ." (John 7:16, 17.) From these and many other passages it is clear that the development of Scriptural understanding is dependent on our making ourselves acceptable unto God.

At the outset he requires that we shall demonstrate a sincere faith, for without faith there is no basis for the Lord's "mighty works." (Matt. 13:58.) To understand the deep things of God, however, we need the guidance of the holy spirit, which God grants only to those who have made an acceptable consecration of their lives and wills. Thus we learn of God's purposes not by our own intellectual efforts, but by submitting ourselves to God so that his holy spirit may reveal him and his purposes to us.

Love, Jesus explained, governs our entire relationship with our Lord and with the Father. "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." (John 14:23.) "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." (John 15:9.) In these closing days of the old dispensation, when real and imagined differences have divided the brethren, are we not in danger of losing sight of the fact that no matter how profound we believe our understanding of God's Word to be, it is "as nothing if we have not love.

It may seem that love for the brethren is easy compared with love for our enemies, but that does not seem to be the thought which our Lord gave to the disciples. We might say with equal truth that it is easier for a mother to love her own child than the child of a stranger, but the strength of mother love is nevertheless known to be much greater. So it is with that higher love for the brethren. If we have the holy spirit within us, we shall find no difficulty in recognizing it in others. Thus shall we know that the divine spirit of love is within us.

The Psalmist wrote, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psa. 133:1.) In the 55th Psalm he shows how real is this love between brethren by describing the pain which is caused when it is withheld. "For it is not an enemy that reproached me, he wrote, "then would I have borne it, but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." - Psa. 55:12-14.

The Master knew that the evidence of the holy spirit of love within us would be shown in love for the brethren, and so during the last Supper with his disciples he said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another *as I have loved you.*" (John 13:34.) Later, he added, as if to emphasize the seriousness of this new charge, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.) By this test of love for the brethren, Jesus explained, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples."

The cultivation of that higher standard of love which is understood in Christ's word's, "love as I have loved you," is vital if the child of God is to make his calling and election sure. Too often it is regarded only as a very desirable quality exercised primarily for the benefit of others, but *this standard of conduct is* sometimes reached by those who are not even professing Christians. The Lord requires much more from us: namely, that our love for others *shall* not be an end in itself, but evidence of the development of a loving character. "Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart." (1 Tim. 1:5.) That is to say, explained Brother Russell, that the object of all instruction and discipline on God's part is to bring us to this character-likeness of himself. Learning to love the brethren is part of our development, and its expression is, therefore, a symptom, not of some merit of our *own*, but of the holy spirit of love within us.

The Scriptures clearly distinguish between the duty love (*Greek-Phileo*), which we are to show to all, and the higher love (Greek-Agape), which Jesus showed to the Father and which he enjoins us to cultivate. The Apostle Peter shows that brotherly kindness *or Phileo* love is a necessary step in our spiritual development, but he put its acquisition at an earlier stage than the higher love which is to crown all our spiritual endeavor. (2 Peter 1:7.) This is the love of which the Apostle Paul said, "suffereth long and is kind . . . envieth not . . . vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with truth; covereth all things [with a mantle of sympathy], believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (1 Cor. 13:18, R. V.) Finally, he concludes that love is the thing that "never faileth." Its acquisition indicates that the new creature has reached a high standard of character development.

"The fruit of the spirit is love," wrote the Apostle Paul, and using another metaphor, Christ referred to the fruit of the spirit as a "light" -- "Ye are the light of the world." It is the holy spirit within us that provides that light and causes us to shine both in love to the brethren and in doctrinal truth. Our Master knew, nevertheless, that many unconsecrated brethren would obtain a knowledge of true doctrine from those who are living under the influence of the holy spirit, although those who are not growing in Christ may not appreciate the depth of the truths they are taught. Only those who have the Lord's holy spirit, however, can have that rare and precious quality of love by which "all men shall know that ye are my disciples." - John 13:35.

Let us therefore put first things first by continued diligence in our consecration, maintain God's loving holy spirit as ruler of our lives and wills, and let us give evidence of this by the love' we have one to another. On that basis and on that alone will the Lord help us to resolve our differences and maintain the unity of faith. "Beloved, let *us* love one another; for love is of God.; and every one that loveth, is born [R.V. "begotten"] of God and knoweth God. ... If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." - 1 John 4:7, 8, 12.

-L. H. Bunker, Eng.

"Rejoice in the Lord"

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." - Philippians 4:4.

NO OTHER epistle of Paul's expresses such tenderness and love as is found in this letter to the Philippians, where we find such expressions as, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you"; "For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all"; "Dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown"; "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you." In regard to some of the other churches, he was under the necessity of using the language of reproof -for instance, to the Galatians in regard to doctrinal error, to the Corinthians about strifes and divisions and moral irregularity. In Philippi, however, there was scarcely anything that called for rebuke: on the contrary, there was much that called for commendation and gratitude. Their conduct toward the Apostle had always been noble and generous, having always shown the tenderest regard for him in his troubles, providing for his needs on every possible occasion. His response as shown in this letter is that of a tender and affectionate pastor to a much beloved flock, indicating as it does the spirit of a ripe Christian, one who was near the end of his course.

REJOICING IN PRAYER

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy" (Phil. 1:3, 4, *Authorized Version*).

What was it that gave the Apostle this joy in remembering his Philippian brethren at the throne of heavenly grace? The context indicates that it was the manifestation of their generosity and loyal support, not because of the personal benefits that were his as a consequence, but rather that it was proof to him of their love and sincerity as Christians; their willingness to participate in the sacrifices entailed in proclaiming the Gospel.

The thought of their constancy was to him an assurance that God was still working among them "both to will and to do of his good pleasure," that he would thus complete the work begun years before under the leadership of the Apostle himself. This knowledge not only gave him personal strength, but filled his heart with gratitude as he remembered them before the throne of heavenly grace, making supplication for them with joy. "For God is my witness how I long after you all with the tender sympathies of Christ Jesus"- (Phil. 1:8, *Diaglott*).

Let us now consider the prayer that the Apostle offered with such joy: "And this I pray, that your love may yet abound more and more in knowledge, and in all perception, in order that you may examine the differences of things; and that you may be sincere and inoffensive in the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:9, 10, *Diaglott*).

Weymouth gives a very interesting translation of the tenth verse as follows: "For testing things that differ, so that you may be men of transparent character, and may be blameless, in preparation for the day of Christ."

"Having been filled with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11, *Diaglott*).

It is worthy of note that in the ninth verse the Apostle ties in love (abounding love) as most necessary in the development of knowledge and perception, in order that they might carry on the work suggested in the tenth verse. The Apostle in 1 Corinthians 8:1 writes that "knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up."

Therefore, knowledge and keenness of intellect, perception, used in the testing of differences, in weighing differences of opinion, etc., apart from, or without love, even abounding love, will not bring forth that which will be pleasing to God, or edifying to the Body of Christ. How often it has been the case amongst the Lord's people that those with the most brilliant minds experience the greatest difficulty in working together harmoniously, due obviously to failure to work along the lines suggested in the Apostle's prayer, to let love abound in the acquisition and use of knowledge.

The Apostle also prays that they might be sincere in their efforts, and no doubt this would be true if love were permitted to overflow or abound in the measure which God would supply, and thus there would be purity of motive, no working at cross purposes, no self-promotion in their cooperation one with the other.

The word "sincere" means, literally, without wax, or pure and transparent, as honey. Applied to Christian character, it would mean that which is not deceitful, ambiguous, or hypocritical, that which does not proceed from selfish and interested motives, and where there is nothing disguised.

He also prays that they might be "inoffensive" in the day of Christ, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness -- that which righteousness in the heart produces, fruit that will be seen in the life, such as honesty, truth, love, kindness, meekness, and goodness. He prays that they might show abundantly by their lives that they truly were lovers of righteousness. With qualities such as these holding sway in their lives, giving offense to any one would be a remote possibility during their schooling in Christ.

Realizing the spiritual heights to which it was possible for them to attain, and aware of their good beginning, the Apostle found it a deep source of joy to remember them in the presence of the One who had begun the good work in them and would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

The great Apostle continued to declare his determination to preach Christ, whether "by life or by death," and that he was "set for the defense of the Gospel." Even though it should mean persecution and imprisonment to him, he rejoiced in the privilege of magnifying his Lord. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." That was the spirit that animated the Apostle, and the spirit that he longed to see in his brethren.

REJOICING IN THE GOSPEL

"Now I would have you know, brethren, that what I have gone through has turned out to the furtherance of the Gospel rather than otherwise. And thus it has become notorious among all the Imperial Guards, and the people generally, that it is for the sake of Christ that I am a prisoner; and the greater part of the brethren, made confident in the Lord through my imprisonment, now declare God's Word without fear, more boldly than ever.

"Some indeed actually preach Christ out of envy and contentiousness, but there are also others who do it from good will. These latter preach him from love to me, knowing that I am here for the defense of the Gospel; while the others proclaim him from motives of rivalry, and insincerely, supposing that by this they are embittering my imprisonment.

"What does it matter, however? In any case Christ is preached - either perversely or in honest truth; and in that I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice" (Phil. 1:12-18, *Weymouth*).

Nothing but purely unselfish motives could bring out such sentiments as are expressed in the foregoing passage of Scripture, for obviously bonds and imprisonment or any other thing could vitiate the power of the Gospel. Having been directly commissioned by the Lord Jesus to proclaim the message, this was of the utmost importance in the Apostle's life, and proclaim it he did, "in labors: abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequently, in scourges to excess, in deaths often, in stonings, in shipwrecks, in dangers from robbers, in dangers from kindred, in dangers from Gentiles, in dangers in the cities, in dangers in the desert, in dangers in the sea, in dangers from false brethren, in labor and toil, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness."

And besides all these outward troubles, the anxious care of all the churches (2 Cor. 11:23-28, *Weymouth*). What love, loyalty, and burning zeal we see manifested here! How it contrasts with the manner and the circumstances under which the message is preached today.

If sentiments such as the Apostle expresses to the Philippians prevailed at the present time among the Lord's people, there would be no spirit of rivalry or envy such as was found at Rome, but instead there would be a mutual rejoicing in the fact that Christ is preached.

If received into each individual heart as "Good tidings of great joy," the preaching of the message, from whatever source or through whatever channel, would elicit the same response as was the case with Paul, a prisoner at Rome: "I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

REJOICING IN FELLOWSHIP

"If then I can appeal to you as the followers of Christ, if there is any persuasive power in love and any common sharing of the spirit, or if you have any tenderheartedness and compassion, make my joy complete by being of one mind, united in mutual love, with harmony of feeling giving your minds to one and the same object" (Phil. 2:1, 2, *Weymouth*). The rejoicing in this instance would come to the Apostle with the knowledge that his Philippian brethren were living up to their privileges and responsibilities in the cultivation of the "unity of the spirit"; thinking the same thing; having the same mind; having the same love one for the other.

In what respect would the Apostle have them think the same thing? Surely he is not advising that there be no difference of opinion, no diversity of thought, or that they must see eye to eye on every point of doctrine. Succeeding verses indicate in what particular he would have them be of the same mind. He is pointing out a lesson in humility as an effective stimulus to true fellowship. He is not intimating that there is lack of humility in their midst, but he is emphasizing it as one of the most important graces for the Christian to cultivate if he would be like the one true Pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ.

To this end he continues, "Let the very spirit which was in Christ Jesus be in you also. From the beginning he had the nature of God, yet he did not regard equality with God as something at which he should grasp. Nay, he stripped himself of his glory, and took on him the nature of a bondservant by becoming a man like other men. And being recognized as truly human, he humbled himself and even stooped to die; and that, too, a death on the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8, *Weymouth*).

None but a true pastor could have such a desire for the Lord's ecclesia. Not by knowing of their professions of love for the *Lord*, but by knowing that they loved, consoled, and served one another in their fellowship in Christ, would his joy be made full. This would give him more joy than anything else he might know concerning them, for it would be pleasing to the One who had called and sanctified them in preparation for the great exaltation to the Divine nature.

In order to promote this most desirable condition in their midst, he admonishes them to see to it that nothing be done through "party spirit" or "vainglory, but in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves," not each one regarding his own interests, but each one also those of others.

In this connection he cites Jesus as the supreme example of self-effacement and humility. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" - the mind or disposition which must be found in each individual who will ultimately be of the little flock, joint-heirs with Christ, and concerning whom it was long ago predestined that they should be copies of God's dear Son. In pointing out Jesus as their great Exemplar, he takes their minds back beyond the horizon of human experience, back to the time "before the world was," when the plan of redemption was conceived, before even the foundation of the world was laid, to the time when as the Logos, the One who would be the Father's Agent in all the creative work, was alone with God. It would be impossible for the finite mind to comprehend the glory of that position! That it was indeed glorious is suggested by the words of the Son just before Gethsemane, when faced with the immediate prospect of death on the cross and contemplating the joyful reunion with the Father, he prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." It was indeed a high position, one beyond human powers to properly appreciate. From this exalted position of power and authority he stepped down - divesting himself, intent on carrying out the Father's will, entering wholeheartedly into the "Plan of Salvation," and even though he was in the form of God, a "glorious spirit being" of the highest order, next to the Father himself, yet he willingly was made in the likeness of men! Tremendous step! Wonderful condescension! -- from the realm of spirit and life down to Satan's dominion of death! But even more than this was necessary, yes, even more than being made in the likeness of men, a still further humiliation was in the Father's will for him. Even after taking upon himself the human nature with its limitations, the Apostle says, "he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," thus demonstrating his willingness to carry out the Divine Plan to the very letter by dying as man's ransom price; and not only so, for when it pleased the Father to require that the death should be a most ignominious one in every respect, even going beyond the requirement of the ransom, he did not draw back, but said, "Thy will not mine be done," and stooped to the horrible death of the cross. Here, as the Apostle points out, we have the most wonderful demonstration of humility, meekness and obedience to God that has ever been manifested or could be conceived of, and this is the pattern that the Apostle admonishes the Philippians and us to copy.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," thus making my joy complete in the knowledge that you are having genuine and satisfying fellowship.

REJOICING IN SACRIFICE

"But even if I be poured a libation on the sacrifice and public service of your faith, I am glad, and rejoice with you all; and for this be you also glad, and rejoice with me" (Phil. 2:17, 18, *Diaglott*).

The mention of his labors on their behalf, in the previous verse, seems to have suggested to him that further sufferings were to be expected. He had labored for their spiritual welfare. He had exposed himself to peril, that they and others might hear the Gospel. To this end he had suffered

much. He had been made a prisoner at Rome, and there was a possibility, if not a probability, that his life might be a forfeit for his labors on their behalf. Yet, if this should occur, he would not regret it, but would in the experience find that joy which the world cannot give, neither take away.

The word "libation" -- rendered "offered" in the *Authorized Version* -- means to pour out as a drink offering and was an adjunct to many of the sacrifices in Israel (Num. 15:5; 28:7, 14). Webster, in his definition of the word, quotes from Dryden as follows: "The act of pouring a liquid or liquor, usually wine, either on the ground or on the victim in sacrifice in honor of some deity, also the wine or liquid thus poured out."

In Israel it was in the law of the offerings as a requisite in "sweet savour offerings." Wine in so many cases being a symbol of joy, it may have had such significance, indicating that the offering, whatever it might be, was being offered with joy as well as being devoted to God. In like manner Paul may have regarded himself as being prepared for sacrifice, for he is thinking of the faith of his beloved Philippians as an offering to God, and if it were necessary that he should die in order to make that offering more acceptable, pouring out his life and strength as wine is poured out to prepare a sacrifice for the altar, he would rejoice in the opportunity. In short, he was willing to lay down his life, if by so doing he could help them make their calling and election sure, and if this should be his privilege, they should in turn rejoice with him.

What a standard this sets before our minds in regard to what we may be privileged to do for the Lord! Can it be said of what we offer that it is "willingly and with the heart?" Do we pour upon our acts of devotion, our sacrifices for the "Body members," the libation of joy? In his letter to the Hebrews the Apostle offers words of commendation for some who were apparently holding to this standard in their sacrificing; that is, they were doing it with joy. "But continually recall to mind the days now past, when on being first enlightened, you went through a great conflict and many sufferings. This was partly through allowing yourselves to be made a public spectacle amid reproaches and persecutions, and partly through coming forward to share the sufferings of those who were thus treated. For you not only showed sympathy with those who were imprisoned, but you even submitted with joy when your property was taken from you, being well aware that you have in your own selves a more valuable possession and one which will remain." "Through him, then, let us lay on the altar a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to his Name. And do not forget to be kind and liberal; for with sacrifices of that sort God is greatly pleased" (Heb. 10: 32-34; 13:15, 16, *Weymouth*).

REJOICING IN THE LORD

"In conclusion, my brethren, be joyful in the Lord" (Phil. 3:1, *Weymouth*).

In the foregoing we have seen how completely the Apostle's thoughts are centered in Christ, and with those, *his* footstep followers in Philippi. It was manifestly a great source of joy to Paul to observe the power of the holy spirit working in their midst, bringing forth a fruitage acceptable and pleasing to God. His own life had been so enriched by them that in "bowing the knee" before the Heavenly Father he always remembered them with joy.

Their generous support of him in his efforts to spread the Glad Tidings of Salvation was proof to him of their mutual rejoicing in the glory of the message. Their mutual love for Christ and their efforts to emulate his life of humility and obedience was the basis of their fellowship, and this to the Apostle was cause for rejoicing.

Their union with Christ was to Paul the most surpassing experience possible, beside which all else of this world could be counted as refuse. To be found in him, to know him, to know the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, would be realizing the supreme desire of his heart, for it would also mean a part in the resurrection from among the dead, the first resurrection. It was reason enough for the singleness of purpose which so marked his life, so aptly expressed in "this one thing I do." With thoughts such as these coursing through his sanctified mind, what more fitting exclamation could be found than appears in his letter to the Philippians: "REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS: AND AGAIN I SAY, REJOICE."

- J. B. Webster

The Question Box

IMMERSION

Question:

Is water immersion a required symbol in order to be of the Church?

Answer:

No! Water immersion is a symbol of what has taken place in the heart of one who has already become a member of the Body of Christ, the Church. What has already taken place in the heart of such may be briefly indicated as follows:

- 1) Repentance from (which includes the forsaking of) sin.
- 2) Faith in God, and in Jesus whom God sent to give his life to redeem us.
- 3) Consecration to do God's will, by walking in the steps of Jesus, to the best of one's ability, even unto death.

Note (A) -- In the Gospel Age, God has honored (and until the Church is completed it would seem that he will continue to honor) all such, by accepting their consecration; his acceptance being manifested by granting them the spirit of sonship.

Note (B) -- As above mentioned, the symbol of water immersion is not required *before* one is admitted to membership in the Church. Nor is it *required* afterwards. This symbol, constituting, as it does, a beautifully clear *witness* of the inner spiritual experience of the one being immersed, should rather be thought of as a *privilege*. Jesus himself was pleased to thus symbolize his consecration. Since it *became him* thus to fulfill righteousness, it could hardly be held to be unbecoming in us, if we seek in this, as in all other ways, humbly to follow in his steps.

The same is true of the "Memorial." The loaf and the cup which we share each spring are but symbols of the spiritual feast of which the truly consecrated partake every day in the year. This annual celebration, which shows forth the Lord's death, in the way he himself appointed, is not a requirement; rather it is a privilege.

- P. L. Read

Annual Report of Directors

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand." - Romans 13:12.

Each year, as we report the Institute's activities of the past twelve months, it is with an increased realization of the evidences, both in the world and in the Church, that the Kingdom for which we pray is near at hand. How apropos then, our Master's exhortation to lift up our heads. In this realization, too, the words of the Apostle seem to take on a deeper significance: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12).

In deep gratitude for the privilege of serving as laborers with our Master, the seven brethren whom you elected to office last year, having rendered their account to the Lord, now submit to you this report of their stewardship.

THE HERALD

Prominent among the several branches of the Institute's ministry is that of our bimonthly magazine, *The Herald of Christ's Kingdom*.

Recognizing the truth implicit in the Apostle's inquiry: "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Cor. 14:8), each issue of the *Herald* has carried a statement of its position under the caption, "This Journal and Its Mission." To give more emphasis to this feature, the small type in which it was formerly printed, was changed to a larger size, and the entire announcement relocated in a box on the back page. There, not only what the *Herald* "stands firmly for," but what "it stands free from," is also plainly stated. Notwithstanding the views of some to the contrary, we must insist that our "trumpet" gives forth no uncertain sound, and each, therefore, should prepare himself to the battle.

"He whose soul does not burn,
Let him take up his tent and return."

Encouraging reports reach us that the *Herald* continues to be used of the Lord for the spiritual comfort and strength of many. It has been especially encouraging to receive testimonials from distant lands, and to mark the hunger for the light of God's Word. Who but the Lord can-measure the spiritual benefits resulting from this expansion of *The Herald's* testimony?

At the close of the Fiscal Year the total number of *Herald* subscribers was 11,194 (slightly less than at the end of the previous year). This included readers in 76 foreign countries.

Again we remind the brethren of their privilege of sending us the addresses of any whom they have reason to believe would profit from a free six-month trial subscription. Excellent results have come from this method in the past. Doubtless there are many more who would appreciate the spiritual inspiration of the *Herald* if they were introduced to it. We urge upon all who themselves appreciate the ministry of our Journal to make use of this simple means of service.

THE PILGRIM MINISTRY

"Feed my sheep" -- thrice did the Master indicate this as the way in which the Apostle Peter was to prove the existence of the love for the Master which he claimed to possess. And faithfully he carried out his commission. This has been the keynote of our own Pilgrim ministry "through the years," and not less so in the year just ended.

Just what the future holds for us, in this branch of the Institute's ministry, we are not presently able to say. For the last couple of years the number of brethren serving full time in the Pilgrim service has been reduced to three, namely, Brothers Essler, Muir, and John T. Read. It seems clear that, for reasons of health, their own and/or their immediate relatives, it will become mandatory for each of these three brethren to substantially reduce their labors in this direction.

Besides these three full-time Pilgrims, a number of others have served on weekends. Additionally, our Institute is often called upon to send brethren to conduct funerals. Only the bereaved know what it means to have a consecrated brother, possessed of the necessary ability, declare clearly, considerately, and courageously, our resurrection hopes. Letters in our files tell of the strength and spiritual uplift such services have brought.

HELPS TO BIBLE STUDY

Some years ago, in a report which appeared in these pages, we said:

"The writings of our late Pastor, Brother Russell, providentially preserved to us in the six volumes of *Scripture Studies* and the *Reprints*, continue to hold first place among the helps to which we ourselves turn for assistance in understanding the Lord's Word, and we are conscious of the fact that they cannot be neglected or ignored by us without appreciable loss to both our clearness of vision and consequent walk in life. Believing thus, we strongly recommend them to others."

This position we still hold. However, some of the friends evidently received a mistaken idea from our words--an idea which they do not contain, and which did not enter our minds. We were not recommending these works "as being the whole truth." *That* was not our intention. Our words appeared under the caption, "Helps to Bible Study." *That is* what their author intended them to be; and valuable helps they have proved to be, and still do. However, we did not, nor do we now, recommend them *instead of* the Bible, but as *helps to its study*. Almost as though he had foreseen the danger of some stumbling along this line, the author, in the very First Volume of his justly famous *Scripture Studies*, included a few paragraphs directly in point. We quote:

"The truth is progressive, shining more and more unto the perfect day, to those who search for it and walk in the light of it" (page 11).

"We believe it to be a common failing of the present and all times for men to believe certain doctrines because others did so, in whom they had confidence. This is manifestly a fruitful cause of error, for many good people have believed and taught error in all good conscience" (page 12).

"The light will continue to increase beyond the present [1886] -- 'unto the perfect day.' It is one continuous path, and the one continuous and increasing light is the Divine Record, illuminating as it becomes due" (page 21).

"There are other dispensational truths constantly becoming due, of which, if walking in the light of the lamp we shall know; so, if we have all the light which was due several hundred years ago [or eighty years ago], and that only, we are measurably in darkness" (page 24).

"Perfection of knowledge is not a thing of the past, but of the futurethe very near future, we trust; and until we recognize this fact we are unprepared to appreciate and expect fresh unfoldings of our Father's plan" (page 25).

These are but samples of the wise counsel our faithful Pastor gave us. Moreover, when we open Volume II of his *Scripture Studies*, we find this theme reiterated. For example, on page 16, the seeker after truth is counseled "to cast away" his "preconceived opinions as fast as he comes to see their lack of harmony with God's Word."

Such counsel, to the best of our ability, we have sought to follow, and we have no intention of forsaking it in the days ahead. We recognize, of course, that the difficulty is not in stating the principle, but in practically applying it to the constantly changing conditions arising in these closing days of the Church's history.

A number of our recent subscribers have written us for particulars as to any courses of Bible study offered by our Institute. After informing them that we do not offer any residence courses, we invariably counsel all such inquirers that, before they consider any other method of study, they read and study the Bible itself. Foremost among the helps to its study we continue to rank *The Divine Plan of the Ages*.

As our older readers know, this able work furnishes satisfactory proof that the Bible is a revelation from God; that it discloses what God's plan for mankind is; and shows it to be in full harmony with the principles of wisdom, justice and love.

In brief, it shows that God's plan is to select and save the Church during the Gospel Age, the Age now nearly ended, and then to use the Church to bless Israel, and through Israel the remainder of mankind, during the next Age -- the Millennium.

Brother Streeter's volumes on *The Revelation* and *Daniel, the Beloved of Jehovah* continue in steady demand; and readers write to us telling of the blessings experienced as they study and meditate therein. (We are presently out of stock of the *Daniel* volume and of Volume I of *The Revelation*. Volume II of *The Revelation* is still available).

WITNESSING TO THE PUBLIC

Because we believe it to be still true, the back page of each issue of the *Herald* contains, among others, the following statement:

"To us the scriptures clearly teach ... that the present mission of the Church is . . . to be God's witness to the world."

In addition to growing in grace, the Church is to be a light-bearer, bearing witness to God, and to Christ, and to the Gospel. While it is true that throughout the New Testament the Apostles stress, above all things, the supreme importance of holiness, at all costs, in the common, everyday life, they nevertheless take it for granted that this spirit will not be allowed to degenerate into a mere amiability, which makes itself pleasant to everyone, and forgets the solemn fact that the consecrated ones are servants of a Master whom the world knows not, the messengers of a King against whom it is in revolt.

The truth and beauty of a life possessed by Christ is to be the basis of the Christian's witnessing activities. But the witness is to be articulate, not merely implied; he is to hold out the *Word* of Life; he is to seize occasion to give a reason of the hope that is in him, although always remembering to do so

in meekness and fear. In conduct he is to be kind and gracious, letting his light shine that men might see his good *works*. But he is not only *thus* to shine; he is also to speak.

In agreement with these beliefs, and with a sense of urgency because of our conviction that "the time is short," we continue to make available followup literature for public meetings. Our twenty booklets continue to be widely circulated. Others are in preparation, and will be issued as soon as pressure of other matters permits.

Perhaps it would be appropriate for us to say here that, except for a few issues, we can still supply, and will be pleased to do so, complete sets of back issues of the *Herald*. Price: twenty copies for \$1.00.

No! -- we do not expect to convert the world. But who knows whether or not a true grain of wheat, or two, or three, may yet be found? "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" (Eccl. 11:6).

CORRESPONDENCE

As in prior years, the various branches of the ministry mentioned foregoing, are supplemented by correspondence. The nature of the correspondence varies. Some are brief words of appreciation, in connection with the transmission of orders for literature, *Herald* subscriptions, etc. Some request further explanation of a difficult passage of Scripture; or ask questions in regard to one or another feature of the ministry. Others, again, are of general fellowship, sometimes relating to Christian experiences of both joy and sorrow; others asking for counsel in connection with some deep perplexity or crucial trial.

These messages are all most welcome, even though we are not always able to give as extended or as prompt replies as we could wish. Moreover, such fellowship through the mails is mutually profitable, and often serves as a guide to our Editorial Committee in the preparation of articles for publication in the *Herald* dealing with the questions, problems, and issues which are very evidently uppermost in the minds of the brethren who write.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Pastoral Bible Institute is, and always has been, open to any consecrated brother or sister who "is in full harmony with the purpose, spirit, and policy of the Institute," and who intends to support it "in all reasonable ways as he or she shall deem to be the Lord's will."

This being true, it is particularly gratifying to note that during the year just ended, 11 more brethren applied for, and were granted, membership. To these, on behalf of the directors, and of the entire membership, we extend a hearty welcome in the name of the Lord. We feel sure, brethren, that your association with us will be mutually profitable, and trust that the continued favor of the Lord will be with us all, as we labor together in the ministry.

Your brethren in the Master's service,
Board of Directors
By: *James C. Jordan*, Chairman

The Annual Meeting

The fifty-third Annual Meeting of the members of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., was held on Saturday, September 18, at 10:00 a.m. in the Central Y.M.C.A., 1315 Pacific Avenue, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

After the customary devotions, Brother J. C. Jordan was elected chairman of the meeting, and Brother W. J. Siekman, secretary.

Next followed the reading and approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, held September 19, 1970.

The annual report of the Directors, for the fiscal year ended April 30, 1971, was then presented. This, including the Treasurer's Financial Statements, is published on pages 92-95.

The names of recently deceased members were next read -- also of those brethren who had become members of the Institute during the previous year; after which the meeting proceeded with the election of a new Board. Sisters Ann-Truth Lange and Alice Smith were appointed to act as tellers. While they were counting the votes, the rest of the friends enjoyed a season of fellowship in praise and testimony. At the conclusion of the count, the names of the following brethren were announced as elected: F. A. Essler, A. Gonczewski, A. L. Muir, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, and J. B. Webster.

A devotional service concluded the meeting.

Following the Annual Meeting, the new Board met. Among other actions taken, they elected officers as follows: J. B. Webster, Chairman; A. Gonczewski, Vice-Chairman; P. L. Read, Secretary-Treasurer; W. J. Siekman, Assistant Secretary; A. L. Muir, Assistant Treasurer; J. C. Jordan, L. Petran, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, P. E. Thomson, Editorial Committee.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 1971

(1) Balance Sheet as of April 30, 1971

Assets

Cash in Bank		\$ 4,602.69
Accounts Receivable		85.78
Prepaid Expense		1,864.89
Inventory of Books, etc.:		
Pocket Edition-Divine Plan (1,505)	\$1,505.00	
Revelation Exposition-Vol. 2 (176)	264.00	
Miscellaneous Items	<u>739.30</u>	
Total Inventory		<u>2,508.30</u>
Total Assets		\$9,061.66
Liabilities		<u>None .</u>
Net Worth (as per Analysis below)		\$9,061.66

(2) Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth
Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1971

Income

Contributions		\$24,276.18
Herald Subscriptions		11,194.00
Legacies		<u>2,000.00</u>
Total Income		\$37,470.18

Operating Expense

Pilgrim Expense	\$ 9,933.36	
Herald Expense Including Printing, Mailing and Clerical	21,723.25	
Free Literature	1,217.91	
Administrative and Office Expense	<u>1,768.09</u>	
Total Operating Expense		<u>34,642.61</u>
Net Expense for Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1971		\$ 2,827.57
Net Worth, May 1, 1970		<u>8,234.09</u>
Net Worth, April 30, 1971 (as per Balance Sheet above)		\$ 9,061.66

Entered Into Rest

William Draheim, Longwood, Wis.
Karl Ekroth, Williams Bay, Wis.
Christos Katsoulis, Memphis, Tenn.
Katherine Kypros, Chicago, Ill.
Guy E. McVey, Kirkland, Wash. .
Mary Mitz, Lodi, N.J.
Phoebe Moyle, Racine, Wis.
Harold F. Muchall, England
Richard Neary, N. Ireland
Joseph R. Sabatine, Roseto, Pa.
Mrs. Fred Schmick, Allentown, Pa.
Florence Smith, England
Mabel C. Smith, Norfolk, Va.
John Stewart, England
Joy St. John, Weeping Water, Neb.
Leila Topping, N. Ireland
Nell E. Wood, Royal Oak, Mich.