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God's Patient Workmanship

"You are God's field; you are God's building." - 1 Cor. 3:9.

WHAT an exhibit of God's wonder-working grace the glorified Church will be! What a manifestation of His patience and loving-kindness will be seen in the perfecting of His saints. Those who are to be thus perfected as "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus," He has chosen from among the not many wise, noble or great according to the world's rule of values. No flesh may therefore glory in His sight however highly honoured. And having chosen to work out the marvels of His grace on material so imperfect, so prone to be otherwise then pliable in His hands, how greatly God has needed the patience of an undiscouraged workman. So often the clay has broken on the wheel as He sought to make it a vessel of usefulness and beauty. But in grace He has taken it up again and made yet another vessel. Again and again it has been proven true, "He shall not crush a broken reed, nor quench a wick that dimly burns." (Isa. 42:3. Moffatt) Seven times the just man may fall, but through grace he is lifted up again by a hand mighty to save. Truly "the Lord is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish." - 2 Peter 3:9.

In all His workings the ways of God are marvelous in our eyes. He not only knows how to steal the bitterness out of the woes of life, but He also knows how to discard the unworthy material we bring in word and deed, and to preserve the commendable and good. In the Old Testament records, where faults and failings are set forth without partiality, Moses leaves Egypt in fear for his life. But when the record is written in the spirit of New Testament grace, how beautifully his virtues are brought to view in the words, "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king." The flight in fear *is* forgotten and the triumph of faith recorded. And we are under that operation of grace, for our lives are hidden and complete in Christ.

Among the illustrations of how God continues to discard the wood, hay and stubble neither He or we desire to have in our building, there are on record the virtues and the failings of such men as the Wesleys and Toplady, Bernard of Clairvaux and others. How few to whom the names of these men are familiar know that between the Wesleys and Toplady a war of controversy was waged over free grace

and the Calvinistic doctrine of election. There was little of confidence shown in each others depth of spiritual vision, and so the war of words went on. But though the controversy is now so generally forgotten, as long as the Church remains in the flesh, Charles Wesley's "Jesus lover of my soul" and others of his beautiful hymns, will be sung with gladness by rejoicing hearts. Likewise, "Rock of Ages cleft for me" by Toplady. Bernard of Clairvaux was one of the misguided crusaders engaged in the wage attempt to possess the Holy Land, yet the knowledge of this lies in musty archives of the old world, known to but few. But his inspiring hymn remains as ever green as when it was written, and loving hearts continue to sing it with a gratitude bearing testimony to God's preserving care over that which is good. Happy are they who can sing these words,

"Jesus, the very thought of Thee,
With sweetness fills my breast,
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

"No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Thy blest name,
O Savior of mankind."

Thus God works His wonders to perform in characters fundamentally sound, and in hearts intentionally pure and loving. He sees us as we want to be, for so we are through Christ. He knows that in our imperfections "we misrepresent ourselves oftener than others misrepresent us. It is our foibles, our own blemishes of temper, our own false steps, which help to make our lives an enigma to others. It is with our own foolish hand the interrogation point is often dashed in after life's most earnest utterance. These are tremendous discouragements, silencing discouragements. They sometimes shake courage to its foundations; they fill the heart with bitterness and agitation; they scatter the tender uprisings of holy purpose, and throw us back in confusion and sorrow. We feel that others doubt us, look askance at us, point at us behind our backs, or smile with skepticism over our confession of faith in Jesus Christ and our vows of discipleship. And the sting of this bitterness is in the thought that we are discrediting a deeper selfhood which, beneath these variabilities of temper, these inconsistencies of speech and conduct, these futile attempts at self-expression, is after all the greatest and truest part of us. We know that we are sound at the core; we know that when, through all the shadows of fault and deficiency, Christ's great question, 'Lovest thou Me?' searches down into our depths, there is that which gives back the unfaltering answer, 'Yes.' But can we demonstrate this love so that it will be believed? Can we find anywhere a basis for a new beginning in which our confidence, shaken by failure and misunderstanding, can once more lift itself up into joy? Blessed is he who realizes in such an hour that he still has left love's last and greatest refuge, Christ's knowledge of our sincerity: 'Thou knowest that I love Thee.' Whatever my poor, faulty words and ways may say to others, awakening in their minds doubts of my sincerity; whatever the verdict of others may be concerning me; whatever my own memory holds up before me of inconsistency and error -- 'Thou knowest that I love Thee.'

"And in every new experience, in every new temptation, in hours of strength, in hours of contrition, still we say to Him those same words of the deeper, holier fellowship, 'Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee.'"

"These words speak to us of Christ's knowledge of our better selves. Day by day we struggle to explain ourselves, to live intelligibly, to utter the best that is in us. In vain! short successes alternate with swift failures. The very words and deeds by which we would explain ourselves become in our faulty hands like masks and disguises. The unreality of living grows insurmountable. Sometimes it seems as if lives were simply stumbling against one another in the dark, so few understand us, so few do we understand. We appear at our worst in perverse hours when we would have shown our best; we talk of commonplaces when we would have spoken the very secrets of God; we grieve the life we sought to

cheer. We weep with vexation over days that are mere comedies of errors, or deserts of dullness. The eternal, the glorious relief from all this is Christ's knowledge of our better self. Jesus knows. He sees the glorious purpose which by some flash of temper or by some maladroit words we nullified this very morning. He realizes and accepts the heaven soaring prayer which potentially filled our spirit when, under the drowning surge of weariness, we could pant forth but one ejaculation. He measures the celestial ideal of living, which like a city of gold, flashes continually before our ambition, and fails continually before our blundering life. He knows us not only as we are, but as we mean to be." Here then is the saint's rest, here faith may drop its anchor in the sure haven of a comforting, strengthening assurance that "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Nothing is too hard for the Lord.

- J. J. Blackburn

"My Chain"

"I am bound with this chain." - Acts 28:20.

"My chain." - 2 Tim. 1:16.

It bound him close-that Roman chain!
A pris'ner now, he had to stay!
To strain or drag were worse than vain;
Nor did he seek to 'scape away.

Yet chained -- he did not idly fret!
While *frame* was bound, his *heart* was free:
As pris'ner of the Lord he yet
A richer means of help might be.

And so it was, that, from that place
Of fettered frame there so outflowed
Such words of truth! such wealth of grace!
Such messages to men from God!

Thou too, oh soul, dost know today
The meaning of those words -- "My chain"!
Would'st thou most gladly 'scape away?
Or, find thy fetters yielding gain?

Full many forms the "chain" may take:
Perchance 'tis some infirmity
That cloth for thee thy fetter make;
Or duty-call; or poverty.

Or circumstances strangely hard;
Or life 'midst hearts untuned with thine,
Where love's sweet pleasantries are barred,
Is such the "chain" that makes thee pine?

Whate'er, oh soul, thy "chain" may be,
With dragging weight -- and limit near --
Like Paul, thy *heart* hath liberty
To live above the "limit" sphere.

If thou art His-then this thy rest --
If in His will disposed to be --
Thy "chain" may be a thing *most blest*,
Though, meantime, it so fetters thee.

And at the End it may be seen,
When things, now dark, are all made clear
The "chain" God's method kind hath been
To hold us safe -- to keep us near.

- J. Danson Smith.

The Father of the Faithful

"Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian whose name was Hagar." - Gen. 16:1.

ALWAYS there are Egyptians at hand to relieve the Christian of the necessity of relying on God's promise. To the flesh the worldly method always seems a quicker, a surer, an easier way of getting the blessing. And who is there that cannot sympathize with Abram as the dark shadow of unbelief casts again its length across his spirit, enticing him for a time from the path of simple, undoubting confidence in his God. The usual impatience of half belief is in Sarah's: "Behold the Lord hath restrained me from bearing." Instead of succumbing to the doubting, Abram should have waited patiently for the Lord to fulfill His own promise in His own way, treating Sarah's doubting as it deserved; but nothing is more unnatural to nature than waiting. The promise must take full control of one's mind, or nature will be busily engaged securing in its own time and way the end it impatiently seeks. Any resource, any expedient to the flesh is better than waiting. A thing far beyond mere believing, is quiet waiting for our God. An illustration of seeking our own way of fulfillment is hardly necessary; the experience is too familiar to most Christians. But should an illustration be needed, promise a child some treasure that has been long hoped for; require a period of waiting; and you will probably soon see it busy building some useless contrivance faintly resembling the treasure you have promised. No wonder we smile so indulgently -- we see ourselves mirrored in the child. It is our own fault in duplication; and we would treat it gently.

The Present Worth of God's Promise

The fifteenth chapter of Genesis shows the Abram of faith. A night and a day of vigil with his God was not too great a test of that faith; but the assurance of the vision given there was apparently intended to prepare Abram for many months, yea even years of waiting until the promise which the vision had renewed and ratified should begin its fulfillment. Chapter 16 reveals that there is need of further growth in patient waiting before he can be a proper example for those who are exhorted to be "followers of them who through **faith** and **patience** inherit the promises."

"There is such a thing, in the commercial world, as 'the present worth' of a bill or promissory note; for if men are called upon to wait for their money, they must be paid for waiting. Now, in faith's world there is such a thing as the **present** worth of God's promise; and the scale by which that worth is regulated, is the heart's experimental knowledge of God; for according to my estimate of God, will be my estimate of His promise; and, moreover, the subdued and patient spirit finds its rich and full reward in waiting upon Him for the accomplishment of all that He has promised."

Ideal State Reached After Long Periods of Waiting

"We none of us know all that is involved when we tear ourselves from the familiar scenes of our Harans to follow God into the lands of separation which lie beyond the river. The separated life cannot be an easy one.. We may dimly guess this as we step out into the untried and unknown; but God graciously veils from our eyes that which would needlessly startle and daunt us; unfolding to us His requirements, only as we are able to bear them." The difficulties of living in the world while maintaining a state of such separation from it that we cannot be said to be of it,

are quite apparent, and would seem to be almost insurmountable; but to live in the flesh, to continue to make use of all its powers, and remain entirely separate from it, is indeed a task to be accomplished only by those who are "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power."

Not instantly, but by means of many stages of advancement attended with long periods of waiting, is this ideal state reached, when we can humbly say with the Apostle without reservations, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) To boast of this death of self is to -proclaim, in that very assertion, our impotence, our blindness to our true condition. Nothing can more surely presage our downfall than a smug indifference to this state of living **after** the flesh, if not actually, fully up to its desires. It is a form of strategy that every general recognizes as among the most successful-to convince the one he would attack, that his forces have been far removed into another quarter. Even better is the ruse of the flesh when it convinces the new creature inhabiting it that it is permanently dead. The unsuspecting new creature is convinced that henceforth he has nothing to fear, and consequently the infinitesimal evidences of life that a watching and praying new creature would have discovered, pass unnoticed.

Consecration is not willingness to be **reckoned** dead, but it is the actual putting to death of the desires of the flesh. The consecration honestly made, and God having accepted it, He undertakes the twofold work of revealing the hideousness of the insidious self-life, and of nailing it to the cross -- a bitter and painful death. The first reaction is one of extreme horror as one realizes the baseness of the old self; and the cry for forgiveness and mercy is often on his lips. While this condition lasts, the walk is one of comparative safety and of swift progress, for the Lord is nigh unto those of a "broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." But "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," thus keeping us continually reminded of the hopelessness of our condition except as His grace shall be with us. Daily then there should be the prayer that we may not be permitted to forget either our need or His grace.

The Slow and Painful Process to Completeness

There is in the incident in the life of Abram which we are examining, a startling demonstration of the tenacity with which the self-life of Abram still survived. By this time we might have suspected that it would have been extinguished, and an unyielding faith have been established. But "character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant; at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of His grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of His character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience; and then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And, little by little as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty, and grace, until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected -- through suffering."

Abram was so sure that God would give him the land, that he would not even take from the king of Sodom so much as a shoe-latchet. Though eagerly anticipating the time when he would receive the promise, no sign of disappointment was shown when instead he was given the assurance, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." How strange that one who has this much of faith was not prompt to reject any suggestion that he seek by the ways of the flesh to secure for himself the promised seed! Apparently the reasoning of expediency fitted well with his own thoughts. But let us not, showing a similar impatience, demand immediate perfection in Abram. As God works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, so He was working in Abram. We are now having set

before us in the record of Genesis, not the perfected Abram, but the process, slow and painful, by which he was brought to God -- satisfying completeness. Until that is reached, mistrust mars each step; and some excuse fully satisfactory to the flesh is always ready at hand to justify, substituting self-effort for the patient waiting of faith. Witness the satisfaction of Saul as he brought his bleating sheep and lowing cattle to the altar. How confident he was of the acceptance of his sacrifice, yea, even proud "I forced myself, and offered a burnt offering." Note the Saul of the New Testament, walking the way of the flesh but verily thinking he was doing God service.

It would seem that Sarah had not had Abram's advantage of numerous contacts with Jehovah, and there is therefore still more reason to excuse the reasonings of her flesh, especially as God had never said the child was to 'be hers. Why not adopt the laxer morals of their neighbors? All these women counted as their own all children born to their 'husbands in their home. And then she recalled how she had been taken into the house of Pharaoh, and how "he dealt well with Abram for her sake-so that he came to have flocks and herds and he-asses, and men-servants and maid-servants." (Gen. 12:16 - Rotherham.) Had not God sanctioned this way of their neighbors? From a reading of the account one might conclude that the thought was no more than offered to Sarah's mind than she accepted it. It is more probable however that there was first a heroic struggle before her lord could be resigned to another. Such a proposal bluntly made to her would have been promptly rejected; but, as with our testings, it no doubt came to her subtly. She had become accustomed to Hagar in the home, and perhaps now no longer thought of her as having been brought out of Egypt, but as one of her own kindred. How like to many of our experiences! How many of our temptations could have been avoided if the spirit of consecration had always guided our use of the things with which the world has surrounded us!

Importance of Weighing Suggestions Before Divine Counsel

Such a well-laid plot surely suggests Satan as the instigator. It was most important to his purposes that this scheme should appeal first to the mind of Sarah. The suggestion coming to Abram from any other source would surely have had prompt rejection. But now he might even convince himself that the whole matter was evidently "from the Lord." The way of the flesh is easy when one in following it can say, "God be glorified." But it is self that lives again whenever reason usurps revelation's rightful place.

Temptation which appeals to our nature or to "unbelief" is always hard to resist. But the temptation is still more severe when it comes through some one whom we love and in whom we have confidence-one who like Sarah shares our hopes and shows a self-sacrificing attitude-a willingness to sacrifice earthly prospects that a blessing God 'has promised might be obtained. How exceedingly careful we should be in taking suggestions of any, that they be weighed before divine counsel, lest we be following the tendencies of our self-life. "If the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, . . . thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare." - Deut. 13:6-8.

Promptly, and as usual, the outcome showed the fallacy of human reasoning. The fleshly mind can deal very convincingly with the past or the present, but how miserably it fails when planning the future! If Abraham had said, Nature has failed us, but God never can-how different the atmosphere of that home would have been, how much more of the Holy Spirit their future would have evidenced! Instead of the flowers of purity, peace, and serenity, there immediately sprang up a crop .of nettles-hatred, contempt, intolerance-Sarah even blaming her own faults on Abram. How despicable it all must have looked to her in later years. With what amazement she must have recalled her upbraiding of her faithful husband: "My wrong be upon thee: the Lord judge between me and thee." "How true this is to human nature! We take one false step, unsanctioned by God

and when we begin to discover our mistake, we give way to outbursts of wounded pride. But instead of chiding ourselves, we turn upon others, whom we may have instigated to take the wrong course and we bitterly reproach them for wrongs of which they at most were only instruments, whilst we were the final cause."

Far-Reaching Results of Evil

Far beyond the third and fourth generation have gone the evil results of Sarah's planning. There is in process of fulfillment in Palestine today the prophecy to Hagar regarding her son and his descendants: "He shall be as a wild ass among men; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against 'him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren," always at hand to harass them until the lesson of full obedience to God is learned.

"And when Hagar [the untutored slave girl] saw that she had conceived, -her mistress was despised in her eyes. And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and thee. But Abram [for the sake of peace in the home] said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when [not slow to act with his consent] Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face," seeking out the caravan routes to her native land.

Simply, but with what pathos, the narrative continues. The Hagar who only a short time before had such high hopes for herself and her son, the heir of all Abram's wealth, now waiting in despair in a wilderness with only a trickle of water to comfort her dreary hours as she scanned the horizon for the cloud of dust that would tell her of an approaching caravan that would guide her back to Egypt. But God had other use for that wild man of the desert.

That Which is Sown Must be Reaped

An expression to be often repeated throughout the inspired Word for the first time appears here in the narrative "The angel of the Lord" found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness. There was a work for Hagar and her son yet to do. It was in God's plan to rid Abram's home of her, but Abram and Sarah must learn first that God's time, and His alone, is the right time. "The bond woman cannot be gotten rid of by hard treatment. When we make mistakes, and find ourselves called upon to encounter the results thereof, we cannot counteract those results by carrying ourselves with a high hand. We frequently try this method, but we are sure to make matters worse thereby. If we have done wrong, we should humble ourselves and confess the wrong, and wait on God for deliverance. But there was nothing like this manifested in Sarah's case. Quite the reverse, There is no sense of having done wrong; and, so far from waiting on God for deliverance, she seeks to deliver herself in her own way. However, it will always be found that every effort which we make to rectify our errors, previous to the full confession thereof, only tends to render our path more difficult. Thus Hagar had to return, and give birth to her son, which son proved to be not the child of promise at all, but a very great trial to Abraham and his house." For Hagar God's will was, "Return, and submit." For Abram and Sarah it was, "Wait on Me, saith the Lord."

There is much of value in all this for the Christian: "We may learn that when, through the unbelief of our hearts, we make mistakes, it is not all in a moment, nor yet by our own devices, we can remedy them. Things must take their course. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.' This is an unalterable principle, meeting us again and again on the page of inspiration, and also on the page of our personal history. Grace forgives

the sin and restores the soul, but that which is sown must be reaped. Abraham and Sarah had to endure the presence of the bondwoman and her son for a number of years, and then get rid of them in God's way. There is a peculiar blessedness in leaving ourselves in God's hands. Had Abraham and Sarah done so, on the present occasion, they would never have been troubled with the presence of the bondwoman and her son; but, having made themselves debtors to nature, they had to endure the consequences. But, alas! we are often like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, when it would be our exceeding comfort to behave and quiet ourselves as a child that is weaned of his mother. No two figures can be more opposite than a stubborn bullock and a weaned child. The former represents a person senselessly struggling, under the yoke of circumstances, and rendering his yoke all the more galling by his efforts to get rid of it; the latter represents one meekly bowing his head to everything, and rendering his portion all the sweeter by entire subjection of spirit . . .

"We are authorized to look at Hagar and her son as figures of the covenant of works, and all who are thereby brought into bondage. (See Gal. 4:22-25.) 'The flesh' is, in this important passage, contrasted with 'Promise'; and thus we not only get the divine idea as to what the term 'flesh' implies, but also as to Abraham's effort to obtain the seed by means of Hagar, instead of resting in God's 'promise.' The two covenants are allegorized by Hagar and Sarah, and are diametrically opposite the one to the other. The one gendering to bondage, inasmuch as it raised the question as to man's competency 'to do' and 'not to do,' and made life entirely dependent upon that competency. 'The man that doeth these things shall live in them.' This was the Hagar covenant. But the Sarah covenant reveals God as the God of promise, which promise is entirely independent of man, and founded upon God's willingness and ability to fulfill it. . . It needs no effort of nature to reach the accomplishment of a divine promise. Here was precisely where Abraham and Sarah failed. They made an effort of nature to reach a certain end, which end was absolutely secured by a promise of God. This is the grand mistake of unbelief. By its restless activity, it raises a hazy *mist* around the soul, which hinders the 'beams of the divine glory from reaching it. 'He could there do no mighty works, because of their unbelief.' One great characteristic virtue of faith is, that it ever leaves, the platform clear for God to show Himself; and truly, when He shows Himself, man, must take the place of a happy worshiper."

- *The Herald*

The Christian's True Riches

"The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." - Proverbs 10:22.

ACCUMULATION of money and acquisition of large amount of material wealth is generally considered riches in this world. Such earthly riches is highly esteemed and coveted by the people of this world, because it makes possible to obtain many comforts and conveniences. However, earthly riches, regardless of the amount, cannot fully satisfy human needs, because there are many things that neither money nor any of the treasures of this world can buy. One of the things that the wealth of this world cannot buy is everlasting life. Our Lord puts before us this wise question: "What good will it do a man to gain the whole world, if he forfeits his life? or what will a man give that is of equal value with his life?" - Matt. 16:26, *20th Century Version*.

The records of the Old Testament, as well as secular history bear testimony to the truth of the above given statement of our Lord. It is recorded that "Abraham was very rich." But he could not preserve his life. Of him is written that he "died in a good old age" (Gen. 25:7, 8). Concerning king Solomon it is written that he was richer and wiser than all the kings of the earth, but of him it is also written, "And Solomon slept [in death] with his fathers and was buried in the city of David." - 2 Chron. 9:22, 25, 31.

In Psalm 39:4-6, we read: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand breath; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them." This same inspired writer gives us further advice against the unwise course of those who store up treasures on earth and put their trust in them. His wise counsel is expressed in these words: "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor can give to God a ransom for him, . . . that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption." - Psalm 49:6-10.

The Apostle Peter who was well acquainted with the divine plan of redemption, makes this enlightening statement: "Knowing that it was not with perishable wealth, silver or gold, that you were ransomed from the futile habits of life inherited from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ -as of an unblemished and spotless lamb" (1 Pet. 1:18, 19, *Weymouth*). To this we may add the words of our Lord, as found in Luke 12:15, "And Jesus said to them, Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

THE UNRELIABILITY OF EARTHLY RICHES

The inspired Apostle Paul gives this wholesome advice to the Christian: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded [haughty], *nor trust in uncertain [undependable] riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*" (1 Tim. 6:17). In Proverbs 11:28, we read:

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch." The unreliability of earthly riches is described by the wise man in these words, "riches certainly makes themselves wings: they fly away." And again: "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." - Prov. 23:5; Psalm 62:10.

Desiring to protect Christians from such unnecessary distress and suffering, the Great Teacher gave them this advice: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust cloth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." - Matt. 6:19-21.

How wise and true are these words of our Lord Jesus! Note that He reminds us that worldly treasures are perishable; wear and tear or rust and corrosion may destroy them; thieves may steal them or bandits may take them away, or fire may destroy them, and after that comes sorrow and unrest because of the loss. We must also note that the above quoted words of our Master show the difference and the durability and dependability between false riches and true riches; between desirable and undesirable riches. False riches consist of money, houses and lands acquired, in some cases, by oppression and exploitation. Such selfishly acquired riches the Scriptures call "filthy lucre."

Selfish persons love power, fame and luxuries, which their money give them, and for this reason it is written in the Scriptures, that "the love of money is a root of all evil." The evil is not in the money itself, but money results in evil because of the love of gain and power that money brings to the one that possesses and wrongfully uses it. If one honestly obtains money and properly uses it in a righteous cause and to the glory of God, that money does not result in evil, but in good. To use our time, talents or money in the service of the Lord, is a great privilege.

TRUE RICHES DESIRABLE

You have now seen that the Scriptures show a marked difference between the riches that will be beneficial to the Christian and false riches, which are deceptive and injurious. Remember now the words of Jesus: "For where your treasure is, there is your heart also." The Christian is a true follower of Christ Jesus. He has made a full consecration to do God's will. In other words, such a person has given his heart to God. Therefore, the advice to such is: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2). The Lord gives them further instruction by his Prophet, saying: "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine [consecrated] heart: Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." - Psalm 37:4, 5.

What, then, are the true riches that the Christian should gather and increase or "store up?" The answer is found in the Bible, wherein is written: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days [everlasting life] is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor." - Prov. 3:13-16.

Elsewhere it is stated that the fear [reverence] of God is the beginning of wisdom. It is very evident that here is no reference made to worldly wisdom, which is foolishness in God's sight, but to the true knowledge of the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth, The difference between the true and false wisdom is shown by the Apostle James in 3:17, where he says: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." In this same chapter the Apostle furthermore says, that there also is an "earthly, sensual, devilish" wisdom.

THE SOURCE OF TRUE RICHES

A man may be very rich in this world's goods, and at the same time be very poor in God's sight. (See Luke 12:21; Rev. 3:17). If a man has no knowledge of the true God and of his Redeemer, then he has no promise of everlasting life, and no human riches can be of any use to such a person. (John 3:36; 17:3). Riches of any value come from heaven, the true source of all riches. Such true and useful riches come to those who acquaint themselves with God's Word of Truth and then endeavor to keep his commandments. Those who consecrate themselves to the doing of God's will, gather and lay up for themselves valuable and lasting treasures.

The riches that the sanctified and obedient children of God do receive and will receive more abundantly, are from above. God is the Giver of all good and perfect treasures, as it is written in James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Worldly riches, for which most people now fight and labor sooner or later always bring sorrow. But the heavenly riches, which God giveth his people, have just the opposite results. Remember again the words of our text: "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich; and he addeth no sorrow with it."

God's blessings are accompanied with peace and joy, as it is written: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isa. 26:3). All true riches proceed from God and are administered by Christ Jesus to faithful and obedient disciples. God's loving gifts are the spiritual riches we may store up in heaven. Some of these heavenly treasures are knowledge, faith, love, peace, joy, friendship, etc.

These are true riches that we are also privileged to enjoy in this present life. The Apostle Paul, the faithful servant of Jesus Christ, having shared in many of the heavenly riches that came from the Great Giver, was filled with gratitude and praise. In writing to his brethren in the Lord, he had this to say: "I do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." - Eph. 1:16-18.

Having then such an abundant supply of heavenly riches, may we not joyfully sing:

Ah, tell me not of gold or treasure,
Of pomp and beauty here on earth!
There's not a thing that gives me pleasure,
Of all this world displays for worth.
Each heart will seek and love its own;
My goal is Christ and Christ alone.

HOW TO GAIN THE HEAVENLY RICHES

To accumulate these heavenly riches, it is necessary to strive, to put forth honest effort. To acquire wealth or treasures of any value, in most cases, requires endeavor and labor; and for this reason the Lord's Prophet gives this exhortation: "Labor not to be rich [in this world's goods]" (Prov. 23:4). If anyone heeds this wise instruction, he will save time and energy to gain and store up heavenly treasures. Similar advice is given by our Lord in John 6:27: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life."

In other words, Jesus is saying to all who take heed to his words: Strive not for the temporal food which perisheth, which can sustain this life only; but be mindful of the words of Life that proceed out of the mouth of God and will produce everlasting life. Strive your hardest to enter by the narrow gate. Seek first God's Kingdom and his righteousness. Earnestly seek to commend yourself to God as his co-laborer, worthy of his approval; so that eventually you may hear the gracious words, well done, my good and faithful servant, you can now enter into my joy.

True Christians have renounced the world and hopes of a future life on this earth. Their walk in the footsteps of Jesus signifies that as He cast aside all earthy ambitions, hopes, aims, and all claims to the possessions or wealth of this earth, so do they, taking instead heavenly ambitions, hopes and aims. In other words, the Christian lives not only for the present, but for the future also. The true followers of the Lord, seeking to know and to do the Divine will, must have a large measure of 'the spirit of a sound mind.' This means that are to live wisely and economy.

"MAKING MANY RICH"

The Apostle James (James 2:5), writes: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" This text, and many others, evidence that among true Christians very few have much of the wealth of this world. According to the Scriptures, God has called and chosen few of the worldly-wise, of the influential, of the rich in this world's goods. But He has called and sanctified mostly "the weak and the despised of the world"; and why? "to prevent any mortal man from boasting before God."

This fact is supported by the incident recorded in Acts 3:6: "Then Peter said: Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." The Apostle, although poor in this world's goods, was "rich in faith," and thus able to impart this wealth to others. He was one of the trusted and highly favored "ambassadors for Christ," "poor, yet making many rich" (2 Cor. 6:10). True Christians, throughout the Gospel Age, were privileged by God's grace to enrich the lives of those to whom they ministered, by helping them to a better understanding of the Truth of God's Word. Therefore they joyfully sang:

"E'en now with Thee I'm richer
Than monarch on his throne."

Our Lord was the most outstanding example of "making many rich." He Himself, while on this earth, was "poor," and of him it is written that, "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). Here the Apostle compares our Lord's prehuman existence (no doubt having in mind the Master's words: "Before Abraham was, I am," and again: "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" John 8:58; 17:5) with his lowly estate as a man.

Referring to his own poverty our Lord made this statement: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). From this we are not to understand that Jesus never had a bed to sleep in at night. His words, rather, implied that he never owned a home or any other estate. He became still poorer by giving up all the rights of a perfect man, and sacrificing these for the sins of the world. "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." - Phil. 2:8.

Surely our Lord Jesus made himself poor for our sakes. But how rich indeed are we today in spiritual things because of His sacrifice on our behalf! We can truly say that Jesus has made

"many rich." The same can be said of the faithful Apostles who laid down their lives in our behalf. We as Christians, the Lord's faithful followers, are privileged also to lay down our lives; to use our time, talents, money and other means in "making many rich." Rich in faith, in our glorious hope and in divine love. Rich in many of the spiritual "gifts" or "fruits of the Spirit." Let us remember the beautiful words of the Song-"Count Your Blessings."

"When you look at others with their lands and gold,
Think that Christ has promised you his wealth untold."

- J. R. Muzikant.

The Question Box

John 5:28, 29; 2 Tim. 1:10.

Question (1):

"The hour is coming," said our Lord, "in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice; and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28, 29.) In these verses two resurrections are mentioned. Who has part in the resurrection of life, and who in that of judgment?

Answer:

In this passage our Lord divides the races of mankind into two general classes: First, they that have done good and, second, they that have done evil. St. Paul, in his defense before Felix did the same. In Acts 24:15 he tells us that "he had hope towards God ... that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

From other Scriptures we learn that in these expressions, "the just" or "they that have done good" are included three classes, namely (1) The Church which is His body (Eph. 1:23); (2) the rest of the Church of the First-born, sometimes referred to as the Great Multitude or Great Company (Heb. 12:23; Rev. 7:9); and (3) the Ancient Worthies. (Heb. 11; Luke 7:28.) It is our understanding that none of these three will experience a resurrection of judgment.

The Church which is His Body has part in the "first" resurrection. (Rev. 20:5,6.) This, surely, is a resurrection "of life." It is "His" resurrection. (Phil. 3:10, 11.) None will have part in this resurrection save those who "shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Next we see another class, experiencing the resurrection "of life." "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." They serve God "day and night in his temple." (Rev. 7:14, 15.) Their trial time, too is completed in this life.

The Ancient Worthies have a "better resurrection" awaiting them. (Heb. 11:35.) Not better than the "first" resurrection in which only our Lord and the "Little Flock" have part; not better than that experienced by the "Great Company" (the rest of the Church of the First-born); but better than the resurrection "of judgment" which awaits the remainder of mankind. The resurrection "of judgment" is a resurrection by trial-by painstaking, step-by-step attempts to regain the divine

likeness. The resurrection of the Ancient Worthies will be better than this in that they will come forth to *instantaneous* perfection. They have already successfully stood their trial time, under conditions of utmost severity, and won God's approval.

These three classes, then, according to our understanding of the Scriptures, will come forth unto the resurrection of life -- the "Little Flock" to the divine nature; the "Great Company" to a spirit nature lower than the divine, although highly exalted; and the "Ancient Worthies" to human perfection -- "princes in all the earth." - Psa. 45:16.

The remainder of mankind will come forth to a resurrection "of judgment" -- a resurrection, not of "damnation" or of "condemnation," but of "judgment" -- the thought in the word being that of a trial followed by a sentence. The trial time will be one of large opportunities -- all the stumbling stones being removed (Isa. 62:10), and every assistance being rendered them under the Mediatorial Kingdom of Christ Jesus and his Bride, until they attain perfection of being on the human plane.

One other point may be appropriately mentioned: The word "resurrection," twice used here by our Lord in John 5:29 (as also by St. Paul in Acts 24:15), is from the Greek "*anastasis*," which, according to Strong, signifies "a standing up again"; (Young: "a standing or rising up") *Anastasis* signifies much more than a mere awakening from the sleep of death, such as was experienced by the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:54,55); by the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:15); or by Lazarus, the friend of Jesus. (John 11:11, 43, 44.) These were merely awakened for a brief season, only to fall asleep in death again. *Anastasis* implies complete recovery from all the effects of the death sentence -- from all the imperfections of mind and body which have afflicted mankind since the fall of Adam. In point of time the awakening experience of Lazarus and the other two mentioned took place before our Lord's resurrection. Nevertheless the Scriptures truly speak of him as being *the first* to rise from the dead. (Acts 26:23.) He was not the first to be awakened from the sleep of death, but he was the first to experience *anastasis*.

They who have done good will come forth to an instantaneous *anastasis*, as we have above noted. They that have done evil will also come forth to *anastasis* -- *but* it will be by the judgment process. As Isaiah has foretold: "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." - Isa. 26:9.

Question (2):

In 2 Tim. 1:10 we read concerning our Savior that he "abolished death." In view of the fact that death continues, how are we to understand this statement?

Answer:

This question is an excellent one. To answer it satisfactorily requires a knowledge of the Divine Plan. All true Christians believe that the man Christ Jesus, by giving his life to be a ransom for all, abolished, OT rendered powerless, the death sentence passed upon our race. Not all, however, are able to see in what sense this is true: To some, every funeral service seems to speak in contradiction of the Apostle's statement. Moreover, did not the Apostle himself, in another place, speak as though the destruction of death, far from being a past event was yet to occur? In 1 Cor. 15:25, 26, he writes: "For the [Christ] must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," and that, the context plainly indicates, is an event to occur not even at the beginning of the Millennial Age, but at its close! How shall we reconcile the passage in Timothy with this one in the Corinthian letter, and how shall we reconcile it with the stern realities of death on every side, with which we are encompassed?

This reconciliation is not difficult if we do but remember that the work of recovering Adam, and his race from the power of death, while based on the ransom sacrifice, goes beyond the provision of that sacrifice. While that sacrifice was provided nearly two thousand years ago, it is manifest that the work of restoration has not yet been accomplished; indeed, it has scarcely begun. The only disposition thus far of the ransom has been to make it available for the Church, and for them 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 that it will take the entire thousand years of Messiah's reign -- 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. In order that any of the race of Adam might profit by the sacrifice of Jesus, it was necessary that he should be raised from the dead, 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, as distinguished from the Church, it was necessary also that in the Father's due time he should come again to earth, a glorious divine being, to be to them 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. The ransom sacrifice of Jesus, therefore, "abolished death" only in the sense of satisfying the claims of Divine justice against Adam and the race condemned in him, but the restoration from the effects of condemnation will not be accomplished until the results of death are entirely obliterated. If faithful to our covenant of sacrifice, we, the feet-members of Christ's Body, are promised a share with him, in his mediatorial Kingdom, as we sometimes sing:

"O! that I may be one found worthy,
To reign with him a thousand years."

- *P. L. Read.*

A Difficult Text Examined

"Jealousy is cruel as the grave." - Solomon's Song 8:6

THAT jealousy is cruel as the grave none will deny. That such a thought, however, was present to the mind of the inspired writer when he penned the words of which this phrase is a translation, no scholar will admit. As a matter of fact, in the musical and suggestive phrases of verses 6 and 7 of chapter 8 of the Song of Solomon, we have a brief Hymn in praise of Love, which is the Old Testament prelude and counterpart of St. Paul's matchless Psalm in praise of Love-1 Cor. 13. Unfortunately for the English reader, the beauty of the Hymn, the very fact that it is a Hymn, is concealed from him by the malarrangement and mistranslations of the Authorized Version. It is the object of this brief article to bring out that fact, and to indicate the meaning and beauty of this tiny masterpiece.

The Hymn begins with the second clause of verse 6, and extends to the close of verse 7 (Song of Solomon 8:6-7). Literally rendered, it runs as follows: *For strong as death is Love*. This is the first line of the Hymn, and our Authorized Version gives it correctly. But in the second line it mistranslates every word. The word rendered "jealousy" in "jealousy is cruel as the grave," means, not "jealousy," but "love." In a footnote to the Variorum, Drs. Ewald and Ginsburg are both cited as rendering the word in this connection "*ardent love*"; Dr. Samuel Cox comments: "Love regarded in its ardor and inexorable force, the love that can neither yield nor share possession of its object."

The word rendered "cruel" indicates the tenacity of its ardent affection, not its cruelty; it implies, not that it will ill-treat or torture its object, but that it will never let it go. The word rendered "grave" is "Sheol," the condition of death, which holds all who enter it with such a firm and unyielding grasp. "So that, as we have no such synonym for the word 'love' as the Hebrew uses here, we had better, to avoid repeating the same word, omit it from the second line altogether, and translate the whole passage thus: *For love is strong as death, tenacious as Hades itself*. And, obviously, what the Poet intends is to set forth this master passion of the soul as an elemental principle of being, the sole power in us which, because it is of God, is capable of coping with Death and Hades, and of overcoming them.

In the next two lines he proceeds to describe this passion as an all pervading fire, kindled by God Himself, and sharing His own divine nature; for instead of "the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame," we ought to read as it is given in the American Revised Version: "*The flashes thereof are flashes of fire, a very flame of Jehovah*. " That is to say, Love is divine, a flame kindled and fed by the God who is a quickening as well as a consuming Fire." - Heb. 12:29.

The next two lines, "*Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods, or streams, drown it,* " are accurately rendered in the Authorized Version, and represent this divine principle as triumphing, by its inherent might, over all the forces that oppose or may oppose it. *Fire is a symbol of Love*; and therefore its antagonist element, *water, is used to set forth the powers that are hostile to Love, but which must, in the end, be overcome by it*.

The last two lines are also rendered with accuracy, though the final line is even more emphatic in the original than in our Authorized Version: - "*If a man would give all the substance of his house for Love, with scorn should it be scorned*"; at the same time there is so quaint and choice a touch

in the Authorized rendering of this line, that we can hardly but prefer to retain the words, "*it would be utterly contemned.*" And doubtless the thought of this final passage *is the sacredness* of Love. It is not a commodity to be bought and sold in the market; no money, no price, can purchase an affection so priceless, because so holy and divine. .

So that the whole little Hymn, whose meaning and beauty must by this time be in some measure apparent, runs thus: --

"For Love is strong as Death,
Tenacious as Hades itself;
The flashes of it are flashes of fire,
Even a flame from the Lord.
Many waters cannot quench Love,
Neither can the streams drown it.
Were a man to give his whole substance for Love
Even that would be utterly contemned."

And the intention of the Poet is to sing the inherent majesty of Love, its divine origin, its victorious course, its unpurchasable sanctity. He is speaking of Love not simply, nor mainly, as it shows itself in our imperfect affections for each other, but as a universal and divine principle, the motive and supreme principle of eternal life; he is speaking of the Love which is from God, the Love which *is* God, and in which He dwells; the love in which if we dwell, God dwells in us and we in Him. And, taken in this sense, the Hymn is surely no unworthy precursor, no mean rival even, of St. Paul's noble and famous song in praise of that Love which "never faileth." - 1 Cor. 13:8.

-P. L. Read

Agency -Divine and Human

"For we are laborers together with God. - ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." - 1 Cor. 3:9.

THROUGH his Prophet (Jer. 18:1-10), in the familiar figure of the potter and the clay, God forcibly calls to our attention His absolute sovereignty over the life and being of every man. The illustration vividly represents the subjection of our nature and our personal history to the divine control. And yet the fact of our moral freedom, the prerogative that belongs to us of choosing and following our own way, would seem to make the comparison defective; for physical analogies fail to perfectly set forth the realities of moral and spiritual life. Nevertheless the figure is deeply true as suggestive of the power God has over us to mold us as He pleases. Free as are our wills, our whole nature is as plastic material in the hands of Him who made us, the "Divinity that shapes our ends."

God exercises His agency, with gracious provision for the freedom of the human will. The Apostle in the words of our text thus reveals a harmonious cooperation between the saint and his God; for the Lord is not content to arbitrarily work His will, but has provided for the agency of His creature the privilege of participation in the outworkings of His glorious purposes. Divine willing and working are the source and the cause. Human willing and doing are the condition and the means. Human agency is demanded. Divine agency assures results. To illustrate this we have selected copious Scripture references.

Human Agency	Divine Agency
Phil. 2:12: "Work out your own salvation."	Phil. 2:13: "God worketh in you to will and to do."
Lev. 19:14: "Thou shalt fear thy God."	Jer. 32:40: "I will put My fear in their hearts."
Isa. 1:16: "Wash you, make you clean."	1 John 1:9: "Will cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
Ezek. 18:31: "Make you a new heart."	Ezek. 36:26: "A new heart will I give you."
Eph. 4:23: "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind."	2 Cor. 4:16: "Our inward man is renewed day by day."
Eph. 4:22: "Put off the old man."	Eph. 4:24: "Put on the new."
Rom. 6:12: "Let not sin reign in your body."	Rom. 6:14: "Sin shall not have dominion over you."
Rom. 13:14: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."	Col. 1:27: "Christ in you."
Rom. 12:2: "Be not conformed to this world."	Rom. 8:29: "Foreordained to be conformed."
Prov. 4:23: "Keep thy heart."	Phil. 4:7: "Peace of God shall keep your hearts."
Prov. 3:1: "Let thy heart keep My commandments."	Jer. 31:33: "I will write My law in their hearts."
1 Tim. 5:22: "Keep thyself pure."	Jude 24: "To Him that is able to keep you."
1 Pet. 1:5: "Kept through faith,	By the power of God."
Eph. 6:10: "Be strong	In the lord and in the strength of His might."
Phil. 4:13: "I can do all things	Through Christ who strengtheneth me."
Phil. 3:12: "I press on that I may apprehend that	For which I was apprehended by Christ Jesus."
2 Cor. 6:1: "Working together with Him."	Col. 1:29: "Worketh in me."
Psa. 119:32: "I will run the way of Thy commandments	When Thou shalt enlarge my heart."
1 Pet. 1:22: "Ye have purified yourselves	Through the Spirit."
Rom. 8:13: "Ye mortify the deeds of the body	By the Spirit."
2 Thess. 2:13: "Belief of the truth and	Sanctification of the Spirit."
Luke 13:24: "Strive to enter in by the narrow door."	John 10:9: "By Me if any man enter in."
Matt. 11:28: "Come unto Me."	John 6:44: "Can come to Me except the Father."
Matt. 5:48: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father."	Heb. 13:21: "God make you perfect."
2 Tim. 1:14: "That good thing keep	By the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us."
Jude 21: "Keep yourselves in the love of God."	Rom. 5:5: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts."
John 15:4: "Abide in Me and	I in you."
Heb. 2:3: "How escape if we neglect so great salvation."	Titus 2:11: "The grace of God bringeth salvation."

The merging of the divine and the human wills is thus amply witnessed. Even the acceptance of the Gospel must be by a process in which the will has a part, and to which the heart gives determinant force. It offers to man reasonable grounds for decision without crushing his individuality. The prodigal remembers his Father's house, and is melted. The sinner looks to Him that "first loved him," but is neither captured by force nor imprisoned with violence. He is saved in the exercising of that which is most distinctive of him as an individual, the use of God's noblest gift to man, the free human will. And having come into closer relationship with his God, freed from the bondage of sin, he is yet the "bondslave of Christ." Joyfully and willingly he seeks ever the will of God, for it is now his will. The rich supplies of divine grace are returned again to the Giver in the form of heart obedience, and his prayer is ever that of the old saint: "Demand what Thou wilt, only give what Thou demandest."

- *W. J. Siekman*

The Annual Meeting

The sixty-first Annual Meeting of the members of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., was held on Saturday, June 6, at 11:00 a.m. at 145 N. Grand St., West Suffield, Conn.

After the customary devotions, Brother J. B. Webster 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 June 7, 1980, in West Suffield, Conn.

The annual report of the Directors, for the fiscal year ended April 30, 1981, was then presented. This, including the Treasurer's Financial Statements, is published on pages 62 and 63.

The names of recently deceased members were read next-also names 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. Sister and Brother L. Hindle 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: J. L. Buss, A. Gonczewski, H. C. Hoglebe, L. Petran, W. J. Siekman, E. R. Villman, 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; W. J. Siekman, Secretary; H. C. Hoglebe, Treasurer; L. L. Kynion, C. B. Odell, P. J. Pazucha, W. J. Siekman, T. M. Thomassen, Editorial Committee.

Annual Report of Directors

"Look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh." - Luke 21:28.

With these encouraging words from our blessed Lord Jesus -- spoken long ago but with special reference to his people in these "latter days" - we open our sixty-third yearly report of the Institute's ministry. These precious words have been oft quoted now many years but increase in impressiveness as we approach every day the consummation of our glorious Hope -- our union "forever with the Lord."

Only a few more trials;
Only a few more tears."

The time for us all draws to its close. There is a feeling of expectancy in the air, a sense of impending events fraught with significance for all the world. Solemn thoughts move us. The Church's course is almost run. The great "Secret of God" is almost finished. The time for individual parting has arrived. And now, as the sun sinks at the close of each day, and the shadows gather round us, how sweet to sing, "I'm one day nearer home." We have nearly reached the mountaintop, and every day multiplies the evidences that our journey is nearing its end. Just how long it will be we cannot know; probably it is best we do not know. But we believe it will not be very long.

"We see the marriage splendor
within the open door;
We know that those who enter
are blest forever more."

However, the glorious "vision is yet for an appointed time," and meanwhile we must "occupy till He come." And this we have endeavored to do this past year, under the Lord's direction, in ministering to his people. We thankfully report much blessing to ourselves, and we trust some to those we have served. As always it is very evident that all credit must go to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift." The brethren have been very generous in their messages of encouragement. Their prayers assured us that the ministry of the Institute has given welcome assistance in the thing of greatest practical value to the true Christian, even the work of their sanctification, "the will of God concerning you." While witnessing to the world has as always taken second place to this, yet it has also been a joyful part of the service, limited though our portion be.

One of God's faithful long ago, was asked "the secret of his service." His answer was, "There was a day when I died, utterly died-died to myself, my opinions, preferences, tastes and will-died to the world, its approval or censure -died to the approval or blame of my brethren and friends-and since then I have studied to show myself approved unto God."

This is the spirit, we are confident, that all who are participating in the Institute's service are earnestly desirous shall fill their life and ministry.

INSTITUTE STATISTICS

In conformance to the teaching of our Lord and his apostles, the Institute continues its policy of emphasizing the principles of liberty, fellowship, and unity of all consecrated believers in Christ. Therefore the pages of its journal -- *The Herald of Christ's Kingdom* -- are devoted to articles we trust accord with St. Paul's admonition -- "wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness" (1 Tim. 6:3). Each issue is the result of prayer and much effort that it may minister to the spiritual needs of all readers. Our Editorial Committee of five brethren are grateful for the prayers offered on their behalf.

Our subscription list continues relatively steady, and includes names in 62 foreign countries. A surprising number of inquiries reach us from Africa. To these we witness by sample Heralds and our various booklets. We continue to send the Herald to any names submitted for a free six-month trial subscription. Our booklets are also free and provide to all a simple and profitable method for individual witness.

The Pilgrim ministry, so blessed in past years, remains largely restricted to local and Convention services, and for funerals. For these our Directors and Editors are always available. Visits to shut-ins now so numerous, is a special privilege, and in this we all may share, surely a personal service approved by our Master.

Our correspondence is considerable. Many hundreds of letters are received yearly, to many of which we endeavor to reply. We are grateful for the fellowship thus provided, and would it could be more extensive. Please remember our limitations in your prayers.

In summary, we express our gratitude for the Lord's blessing upon this past Fiscal Year's ministry. It has been a joyful privilege to serve. As to the future, we believe it is the Lord's will that we continue the same ministries in which for so many years the Institute has been engaged. As always, so now again, we earnestly solicit all to join their prayers with ours that the Lord's leading may be clearly discerned and faithfully followed, as we strive to "follow on to know the Lord" and his will.

Your brethren in the Master's service,
Board of Directors,
By: *J. B. Webster*, Chairman

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 1981

(1) Balance Sheet as of April 30, 1981

Assets

Cash on hand		\$12,516.35
U. S. Treasury Bills		57,924.95
Accounts Receivable		212.00
Prepaid Expense		500.00
Inventory of Books, etc.:		
Pocket Edition-Divine Plan	(757)	\$757.00
Miscellaneous Items		<u>283.75</u>
Total Inventory		<u>1,040.75</u>
Total Assets		\$72,194.05
Liabilities		<u>19.00</u>
Net Worth (as per analysis below)		<u>\$72,175.05</u>

(2) Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth
Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1981

Income

Contributions		\$11,610.58
Herald Subscriptions		3,937.00
Legacies		4,613.66
Interest Earned		<u>7,672.80</u>
Total Income		<u>\$27,834.04</u>

Operating Expense

Pilgrim Expense	\$ 7,144.39	
Herald Expense Including Printing, Mailing and Clerical	16,041.30	
Free literature	192.80	
Administrative and Office Expense	<u>1065.07</u>	
Total Operating Expense		<u>24,443.56</u>
Net Expense for Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1981		\$ <u>3,390.48</u>
Net Worth, May 1, 1980		<u>68,784.57</u>
Net Worth, April 30, 1981 (as per Balance Sheet above)		<u>\$ 72,175.05</u>

Entered Into Rest

Hilda Boyce, England

Esther E. Cunningham, Quincy, Mass.

Joseph Kilbase, Elkhart, Ind.

Belle I. Orrock, Richmond, Va.

Mamie Parker, Idleyld Park, Ore.

William Schultz, N. Brookfield, Mass.

Walter E. Stenback, Brooklyn, N.Y.

John N. Walker, England

Gene M. Waters, Ola, Ark.