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The Sons of God

"God dealeth with you as with sons." - Hebrews 12:5, 7.

BY THESE words the writer to the Hebrew Christians shows the distinctive manner of God's dealings with some -- *"as with sons."* The word "children" used in the A.V. (v. 5) is from the Greek word *Huios* and is more correctly rendered "sons" as in most critical translations and also in Heb. 2:10. This latter passage indicates who are being addressed. They are recipients of the amazing grace of God in that they comprise an entirely New Creation, have become sons of God -- *"born of God"* -- and thereby brought into living union with Christ. They are brethren of the Lord Jesus who is their Head, the "captain of their salvation," the "so great salvation" unto glory. They follow in His steps and "look unto Him" alone (Eph. 2:10; 2 Cor. 5:17; John 1:13; Heb. 2:3; 12:2). Or in other words used by the same writer in Heb. 3:1, these are "Holy [sanctified] brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling."

The force of this definition -- *"as with sons"* -- is seen by reference to Moses "as a servant" as set in contrast with "Christ as a son" (Heb. 3:5, 6). Those to whom the apostle writes belong to "Christ as a son over His own house." The servant, though he be faithful in ever respect, is under restraints and instruction to serve the needs of his master; he cannot and does not enjoy the privileges, the freedom and the rights the son possesses. In one vital and important respect there is the difference of relationship. The son is in and of the family by reason of birth; whereas the servant, however faithful his service and honored his position may be, remains a servant and subservient.

Although spoken in a particular context and relating to the servitude of sin, our Lord and Master draws out another distinction between the position of a servant in a household and that of a son. He says: "The servant abideth not in the house permanently; but the son does" (John 8:35, *Gspd*). The son is free to approach his father, but the servant only when bidden or to fulfill a duty. Furthermore, a son is an heir and has a birthright; but a servant enjoys no such privilege.

THIS AMAZING FAVOR

It is good for us to meditate upon the holiness and grandeur, the greatness and glory of the Almighty; that He is "the Most High God" and that "of Him are all things." We are humbled thereby and made to realize the greatness of the honor and privilege that is ours. Especially when we think of His marvelous condescending grace; that He deigns to become our Father, to bestow so high an honor and glory upon us as to bring us into His own immediate family and to deal with us "*as with sons!*" In the main, we are of the weak, despised and low born of this world. No wonder the apostle holds this before us, as in 1 Cor. 1:26-31. Our hearts are filled with amazement and overwhelmed, and are drawn out in love for Him and for Christ our Lord, in and through whom such a blessed state is even now, ours -- a glory begun below.

Quite properly, we can adapt the very graphic language in the prayer of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:8): "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill to set them among princes and to make them inherit the throne of glory." The contrast could scarcely be greater and such words may be seen as almost prophetic. They emphasize what is revealed more fully in the New Testament; the vastness and degree of Divine love and grace in the design and work of God respecting some, chosen by Him to be His, from among sinful mankind. Here reason fails and love adores, whilst faith simply lays hold of and rests upon the promises and faithfulness of God who has called. Assurance. is given through His dealings with *us* -- "*as with sons.*" We can never remind ourselves too often of these and to trace the leadings of the Lord throughout our pilgrimage; to recall how His hand has been upon us so that we can truly sing "all the way my Savior leads me," in thankful praise and adoration.

The need is for us to continually reassure our hearts along these lines for it is at this point the adversary is ready at all times to thrust his "fiery darts" of doubts and fears. He thus attacked our Lord -"If Thou be the Son of God?" (Luke 4:3, 9), even He who came forth from the Father. How much more then does he see this as his greatest weapon against us (John 16:28, Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9). Our resistance to the doubts he would inject are, as with our Lord, the Word of God, the shield of faith, and the evidence of the Father's love we have known and experienced (Eph. 6:11-18; John 14:1-3; 16:27). Let us ever remember the words of our Master after His resurrection-"I ascend unto my Father *and your Father.*" These words come to us also and are ours if we are His (Gal. 5:24); and the victory He gained over sin, the devil, the world and all the powers of evil, is ours in and through Him (2 Cor. 5:14; Rev. 12:11).

"GOD DEALETH WITH YOU"

The apostle refers to this in terms of chastening and chastisement, a word which has come chiefly to mean punishment or correction. But correction is not the predominant thought in the word used by the apostle; it is rather that of *discipline*. It is so translated by Rotherham. In Eph. 6:4 the same Greek word is given as "nurture." The word *paideia* used in the original, denotes the training of a child, its guidance, instruction, discipline and correction. In 2 Tim. 3:16 it is rendered as instruction.

Our heavenly Father does not deal with all in this manner but only with some, His sons. He thus dealt with our Lord-"the captain of our salvation" -- as He lived in this world of sin and suffered the "contradiction of sinners against Himself." For, "what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" (*Heb. 2:7*). So the apostle admonishes that we "look unto Him" lest we become weary and faint in our minds (*Heb. 2:2, 3*). The rigors and the discipline to which a well trained child is subjected by a loving father may at times seem irksome, unpleasant, even painful, but it is for the ultimate good and development of the child in every sense. So it is in the life of the child of God but in a perfect manner. The tests of faith, of fidelity, of love for God and righteousness, of obedience, of patient endurance and suffering wrongfully, the discipline of the Word under

adversity, the submission in love to the Father's will, and *an awareness* of the guidance of the Spirit, are some aspects of the Father's discipline as He trains us for the purpose He has in view. These are all tangible evidences of the heavenly Father's love and concern. Like those to whom the apostle wrote, we also tend to forget this when the way is hard and difficult. Frustrations, pressures, and perplexities surround us -- "Ye have forgotten" says the apostle, "the exhortation that speaketh unto you *as unto sons*" (*Heb. 2:5*). If we remembered this always, we would rejoice even when all things seem to be against us as we earnestly seek to do His will, inasmuch as we know we are under His loving hand.

The life of the child of God, wholly surrendered to Him and to Christ, is an entirely *new* life, in and of the Spirit, under its control and leading, the heavenly Father's constant special and infinite care. It is "hid with Christ in God" (*Rom. 8:1-4; 8:14, 28; John 1:13; 16:27; Luke 12:4-7, 22-32; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7; Col. 3:1-4*). Sometimes the Father withholds or hides Himself in order that the depth of our longing and love for Him and for Christ may be put to the test, that we may be conscious of a sense of loss, that He may reveal Himself more fully in all His love and tenderness (*John 14:21-23; Psa. 30:17*).

THE END IN VIEW

Just as a good earthly father trains, educates and disciplines his son to prepare him for a future position, even possibly to enter upon an inheritance, so much more is this true of our heavenly Father. An astounding statement concerning the sons of God is found in *Rom. 8:17*: "if children, then heirs, *heirs of God* and joint heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with Him." Nothing could be greater than this and because of it the apostle declares further (*Rom. 8:28*) that *God works* in each life to fulfill the purpose in His calling of these (see *Diag. note; Gspd; R. S. V; R. V. footnote; C. V.*). It is not that in some way all things seem to work out alright (the man of the world often finds it so), but rather that the heavenly Father *works, He controls all things* in the life of His child to fulfill His design and purpose for him. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." - Psalm 37:23.

In Hebrews 12:10, the purpose of the heavenly Father in dealing with His sons is expressed to be "that we might be partakers of His holiness." We should note first, the use of the personal pronoun -"His," and second, that the Greek word translated "holiness" is the only instance of its use. Therefore it is true of God only, and now of course, of His beloved Son our Lord and Savior who is like unto Him (*Heb. 1:13*) and represents the absolute intrinsic holiness and purity of God; what the hymn writer speaks of as "His awful purity." The word in *Heb. 1:14* that follows is from the Greek word generally used for "holiness." By extension, "His holiness" mentioned in *Heb. 1:10* means not only that sin is inadmissible but impossible; in the same sense that "God *cannot* lie" (*Titus 1:2*). He is "the incorruptible God" -impervious to decay or corruption. The glory and wonder of this is beyond our conception. But it is to prepare us for this that, in His great love and grace, the heavenly Father deals with us "*as with sons*." Let us never forget, as we await the blessed day of the appearing of our Lord (*1 John 3:1-3*), the exhortation that speaketh unto us *as unto sons* and ever, always remember, that whatever the circumstances as we faithfully seek to do His will, that this is the Father's design and work, and that

The work which His goodness began,
The arm of His strength will complete;
His promise is "Yea and Amen,"
And never was forfeited yet;
Things future, nor things that are now,
Not all things below nor above,

Can make Him His purpose forego,
Or sever my soul from His love.

(Romans 8:38, 39)

- *G. H. Jennings*

I Will Praise Thee

God of my life, through all my days
My grateful powers shall sound thy praise
The song shall wake with opening light,
And warble to the silent night.

When anxious cares would break my rest,
And griefs would make me sore distress,
Thy tuneful praises raised on high,
Shall check the murmur and the sigh.

Were half the breath that's vainly spent,
To heav'n in supplication sent,
Our cheerful song would oft'ner be,
"Hear what the Lord hath done for me."

Yes, done for me; Lord, I confess
Thy wisdom and thy righteousness,
And all my days shall therefore be
Of praise a tribute, Lord, to thee.

PENALTY AND PARDON

Schamyl was the great religious and military leader of the Caucasus who for thirty years baffled the advance of Russia in that region, and after the most adventurous of lives, died in 1871. At one time bribery and corruption had become so prevalent about him that he was driven to severe measures, and he announced that in every case discovered the punishment would be one hundred lashes. Before long a culprit was discovered. It was his own mother! He shut himself up in his tent for two days without food or water, sunk in prayer. On the third day he gathered the people, and, pale as a corpse, commanded the executioner to inflict the punishment. But, at the fifth stroke, he called "Halt," had his mother removed, bared his own back, and ordered the official to lay on him the other ninety-five, with severest threats if he did not give full weight to each blow.

This is a case where his penalty sanctified her punishment both to herself and to the awe-struck people.

Every remission imperils the sanctity of law unless he who remits suffers something in the penalty foregone; and such atoning suffering is essential to the revelation of love which is to remain great, high and holy.

"Christ also suffered for us . . . by whose stripes we were healed." - 1 Peter 2:21-24.

Some Lessons in Prayer

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." - Colossians 4:2.

What are the deep desires of our hearts? What do we seek after in our daily lives? Whatever they are, they are our real prayers, and they may be quite at variance with the words -- the carefully phrased petitions, we address to God. "This people ... with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me" (Isa. 29:13). This was said of God's people of old. Let us beware lest it be true of us today. When we come to the throne of grace, with our conventionally proper petitions, it is awfully possible for us to have in our hearts unvoiced but controlling desires which are, nevertheless, not hidden from our Heavenly Father. These are the deep prayers of our lives, because our hearts are set upon them. Ordinarily prayer is regarded as the act of our best hours, but in this deeper sense, prayers may be offered in our worst hours. Let us be especially on guard respecting this danger. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." The ounce of prevention that we can take against it (far better than any pound of cure after it has entered in) is to have our hearts permeated with the spirit of love, of which we are told: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Rom. 13:10); "Love envieth not; seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. 13:4, 5). However, we should "covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. 12:31), the gifts of divine grace.

Once we see the power of dominant desire in our prayers, we begin to see why we have unanswered prayers. It suggests that while our outward petition may have been denied, yet the inward controlling desire may be granted. This was true of the prodigal in Jesus' parable (Luke 15). When, in the far country, he came to himself, with friends gone, reputation gone, willpower almost gone, and found himself poor, hungry, feeding swine, he was suffering from the consequence of an answered prayer, a dominant desire fulfilled. In a similar sense Lot desired Sodom and got it, with tragic results. Ahab craved Naboth's vineyard and seized it. Judas desired thirty pieces of silver for betraying his Master and obtained them. Many are the answered prayers of the Bible that ruined the individuals. How true are the words in Psalm 106:15: "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul."

HAVE FAITH IN GOD

The lesson of faith to those who have become the Lord's consecrated people is not merely faith in doctrines and theories, nor, indeed, chiefly present truth. The chief feature of faith is confidence in God: that what he has promised he is able and willing to fulfill. This faith grasps not only the things to come, but also the things present: this faith rejoices not only in the glory that shall be revealed, but also in the sufferings and trials and difficulties, and in all the rich experiences which an all-wise Father sees best to permit. Let us therefore rejoice evermore, "in everything give thanks" (1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20).

The best illustration of this true faith, this continuous confidence in God, is found, as we should expect, in the narration of our dear Redeemer's experiences. Realizing that he was in the world for the purpose of serving the divine plan, he experienced continually the supervision of divine wisdom in respect to all his affairs; consequently, he not only went to the Father frequently in prayer and searched the Word for guidance, but recognized every experience through which he passed, and all the opposition with which he met, as being under divine supervision. His dominant desire was to do the Father's will, and, being fully consecrated to him, he knew that the Father's providential care was over all the affairs of his life.

Similarly with us, if we can feel sure that we have fully surrendered ourselves to God according to his call, we may also feel sure that all things are working for our good; we may realize in every emergency in life that the Father has prepared the cup, and will sustain and bless us while we drink it. This knowledge should not only enable us to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods (anything that we deem precious; trade, influence, good name, etc.), but should enable us also to entreat with kindness and gentleness and with a spirit of forgiveness those who prepare and administer the cup of our sufferings. But none can have this confidence of faith except those who have believed in the precious blood unto justification and who have, as members of the Body of Christ, consecrated themselves unreservedly to walk in their Redeemer's footsteps, to suffer with him, and to be finally glorified together.

PRESENT TRUTH SHOULD SANCTIFY US

These lessons are especially opportune at the present time. The Lord, by his grace, has removed many errors from our minds and given us clearer insight into his wonderful plan, and revealed to us his glorious character in connection with his plan, and there has perhaps been more or less danger that in such a study of theology the real object of all this knowledge might be lost sight of. It is not God's object merely to find an intellectual people, nor to instruct a people with reference to his plan, but to sanctify a people with the truth, and thus to make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12). We are of the opinion that the tests imposed by the Lord are not merely doctrinal, but will be considerably along the lines of character and of the fruit of the spirit.

Thus, as soldiers of Christ we must put on not only the intellectual covering, the helmet of salvation, but also the heart covering, love of righteousness and truth and goodness and purity, with the shield of faith. The breastplate of righteousness will be found to be one of the most important pieces of armor in the battle in which we are engaged, and respecting which we are told that thousands shall fall at our side (Ps. 91:7; Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:11).

Faith in the divine supervision of all our affairs not only gives peace and contentment but it saps the root of all selfish ambitions and vain gloryings and boastings, because of our faith in the Word: "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased" (Matt. 23:12).

Another feature to be remembered is that our Lord laid emphasis upon sincerity in prayer, meaning that the petition should be the genuine overflow of inward desire. Doubtless the Pharisees who prayed on street corners asked for worthy things, springing out of Scriptural ideas and couched in Scriptural language. The fault was that those prayers did not represent their inward and determining wishes. Their outward lives demonstrated that their ambitions did not agree with their outward prayers.

Our Lord, in Matthew 6:5, advises us to pray to our Father in private and the Father, who seeth in secret, will answer openly, as shown in the development of the fruit and graces of the spirit in our characters. Prayer is no hasty visit to the Throne of Grace at the close of day, no formal deference to custom, but is the coming of the heart to be at peace in our Father's presence that we might unburden ourselves and receive comfort.

PRAYER IS A BATTLEFIELD

While prayer may be considered as the act of communion with God, yet we must recognize that prayer is a battlefield, and through prayer we are calling upon our Father for aid because we have a fight on our hands. In the language of St. Paul, "Without were fightings; within, fears" (2 Cor. 7:5). Again, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh" (Gal. 5:17), showing that in the development of character there is a hidden battlefield in each one's life. Thus in our dear Redeemer's experience, his ability to cope with the enmity of the Sanhedrin and the oppositions of Satan, stemmed from the many occasions in which he was closeted alone with his Father in prayer and fought out the controlling principles of his life. In similar fashion Gethsemane was the place where our Lord settled the issue of his consecration alone with God, and thereafter nothing could ruffle his calm or peace of mind (Heb. 5:7). His, indeed, was a heart singly set on pleasing his Father, no matter the cost.

We must do more than renounce sin in our minds; we are to give our hearts to the Lord. We are to fight the good fight of faith against the Adversary and the world's spirit of selfishness. The Lord requires some evidence from us of activity against the motions of sin in our flesh, and that we are alive to our responsibilities as soldiers of the Cross.

Cleansing our minds requires great strength of character, great power of the will, and all the overcomers will be found to be strong characters, principally because of conflicts with the flesh. Of course the flesh will not be made absolutely pure, but it can be cleansed of its filthiness, so that everything coarse, rude, slovenly, or unrefined would be reprehensible to us. The cleansing process begins at once, but continues until our latest breath. The power which begins this cleansing and which continues it acceptably in the Lord's sight is the new will, and this very fight against sin and uncleanness strengthens the will so that each victory makes it more ready and more capable for the next conflict.

God also works in us (Phil. 2:12, 13) by revealing to us more and more clearly the significance of the exceeding great and precious promises. Thus, through prayer and study of the Word we are to see to it that the dominating idea of our life is the cleansing both of the mind and of the flesh (2 Cor. 6:15-18). We are to be, said Jesus, "perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). At the same time our Lord well knew that in the present life, and acting through our present mortal bodies, it would be an absolute impossibility for anyone of his followers to ever attain perfection in the sense that the Father is perfect. Yet he set the standard so that we might continually attempt to copy his perfection and to recognize no inferior standard. We must do our best to reach the standard of perfection in holiness to the Lord, a little nearer every day we live.

WATCHING UNTO PRAYER

It is in view of the urgent necessity of sober watchfulness and attention to the will of God regarding us that we are exhorted to put away the worldly spirit and awake to the importance of being filled with the spirit of God.

Let us heed the Master's words "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth 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).

Besides the treasures of friendship which will never die, there will be treasures of love that will never grow old, treasures of esteem for the sake of our work and personal sacrificing that will never be forgotten, treasures of experience that will serve us eternally, treasures of wisdom that will enrich us forever, treasures of divine approval that will wreath a halo of glory around us which shall never pale, and treasures of glory, honor, and immortality beyond our present powers to fully appreciate. - *A. L. Muir*

The Plan of God -- In Brief

*"According to a Plan of the Ages, which He formed for the Anointed Jesus our Lord."
- Eph. 3:11 (Diaglott).*

STUDY 7 -- Ransom and Restoration

"For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord [Ruler, Controller] of both the dead and the living."

That is to say, the object of our Lord's death and resurrection was not merely to bless and rule over and restore the living of mankind, but to give Him authority over, or full control of, the dead as well as the living, insuring the benefits of His ransom as much to the one as to the other. He "gave Himself a ransom [corresponding price] for all," in order that He might bless all, and give to every man an individual trial for life. To claim that He gave "ransom for all," and yet to claim that only a mere handful of the ransomed ones will ever receive any benefit from it, is absurd; for it would imply either that God accepted the ransom-price and then unjustly refused to grant the release of the redeemed, or else that the Lord, after redeeming all, was either unable or unwilling to carry out the original benevolent design. The unchangeableness of the divine plans, no less than the perfection of the divine justice and love, repels and contradicts such a thought, and gives us assurance that the original and benevolent plan, of which the "ransom for all" was the basis, will be fully carried out in God's "due time," and will bring to faithful believers the blessing of release from the Adamic condemnation and an opportunity to return to the rights and liberties of sons of God, as enjoyed before sin and the curse.

Let the actual benefits and results of the ransom be clearly seen, and all objects to its being of universal application must vanish. The "ransom for all" given by "the man Christ Jesus" does not give or guarantee everlasting life or blessing to any man; but it does guarantee to every man another opportunity or trial for life everlasting. The first trial of man, which resulted in the loss of the blessings at first conferred, is really turned into a blessing of experience to the loyal-hearted, by reason of the ransom which God has provided. But the fact that men are ransomed from the first penalty does not guarantee that they may not, when individually tried for everlasting life, fail to render the obedience without which none will be permitted to live everlastingly. Man, by reason of present experience with sin and its bitter penalty, will be fully forewarned; and when, as a result of the ransom, he is granted another, an individual trial, under the eye and control of Him who so loved him as to give His life for him, and who would not that any should perish, but that all should turn to God and live, we may be sure that only the willfully disobedient will receive the penalty of the second trial. That penalty will be the second death, from which there will be no ransom, no release, because there would be no object for another ransom or a further trial. All will have fully seen and tasted both good and evil; all will have witnessed and experienced the goodness and love of God; all will have had a full, fair, individual trial for life, under most favorable conditions. More could not be asked, and more will not be given. That trial will decide forever who would be righteous and holy under a thousand trials; and it will determine also who would be unjust, and unholy and filthy still, under a thousand trials.

The ransom given does not excuse sin in any; it does not propose to count sinners as saints, and usher them into everlasting bliss. It merely releases the accepting sinner from the first condemnation and its results, both direct and indirect, and places him again on trial for life, in

which trial his own willful obedience or willful disobedience will decide whether he may or may not have life everlasting.

One difference between the experiences of the Church under trial now and the experiences of the world during its trial will be that the obedient of the world will begin at once to receive the blessings of restoration by a gradual removal of their weaknesses -- mental and physical; whereas the Gospel Church, consecrated to the Lord's service even unto death, goes down into death and gets her perfection instantaneously in the first resurrection. Another difference between the two trials is in the more favorable to righteousness, rewarding faith and obedience, and punishing sin; whereas now, under the prince of this world, the Church's trial is under circumstances unfavorable to righteousness, faith, etc. But this is to be compensated for in the prize of the glory and honor of the divine nature offered to the Church, in addition to the gift of everlasting life.

Adam's death was sure, though it was reached by nine hundred and thirty years of dying. Since he was himself dying, all his children were born in the same dying condition and without right to life; and, like their parents, they all die after a more or less lingering process. It should be remembered, however, that it is not the pain and suffering in dying, but death -- the extinction of life -- in which the dying culminates, that is the penalty of sin. The suffering is only incidental to it, and the penalty falls on many with but little or no suffering. It should further be remembered that when Adam forfeited life, he forfeited it forever; and not one of his posterity has ever been able to expiate his guilt or to regain the lost inheritance. All the race are either dead or dying. And if they could not expiate their guilt before death, they certainly could not do it when dead -- when not in existence. The penalty of sin was not simply to die, with the privilege and right thereafter of returning to life. In the penalty pronounced there was no intimation of release. (Genesis 2:17). The restoration, therefore, is an act of free grace or favor on God's part. And as soon as the penalty had been incurred, even while it was being pronounced, the free favor of God was intimated, which, when realized, will so fully declare His love.

Had it not been for the gleam of hope, afforded by the statement that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, the race would have been in utter despair; but this promise indicated that God had some plan for their benefit. When God swore to Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, it implied a resurrection or restoration of all; for many were then dead and others have since died, unblessed. Nevertheless, the promise is still sure: all shall be blessed when the times of restoration or refreshing shall come. (Acts 3:19). Moreover, since blessing indicates favor, and since God's favor was withdrawn and His curse came instead because of sin, this promise of a future blessing implied the removal of the curse, and consequently a return of His favor. It also implied either that God would relent, change His decree and clear the guilty race, or else that He had some plan by which it could be redeemed, by having man's penalty paid by another.

God did not leave Abraham in doubt as to which was His plan, but showed, by various typical sacrifices which all who approached Him had to bring, that He could not and did not relent, nor excuse the sin; and that the only way to blot it out and abolish its penalty would be by a sufficiency of sacrifice to meet that penalty. This was shown to Abraham in a very significant type: Abraham's son, in whom the promised blessing centered, had first to be a sacrifice before he could bless, and Abraham received him from the dead in a figure. (Hebrews 11:19). In that figure Isaac typified the true seed, Christ Jesus, who died to redeem men, in order that the redeemed might all receive the promised blessing. Had Abraham thought that the Lord would excuse and clear the guilty, he would have felt that God was changeable, and therefore could not have had full confidence in the promise made to him. He might have reasoned, If God has changed His mind once, why may He not change it again? If He relents concerning the

concerning the promised favor and blessing? But God leaves us in no such uncertainty. He gives us ample assurance of both His justice and His unchangeableness. He could not clear the guilty, even though he loved them so much that "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up [to death] for us all."

As the entire race was in Adam when he was condemned, and lost life through him, so when Adam's life was redeemed by the man Christ Jesus, a possible race in his loins died also, and a full satisfaction, or corresponding price, was rendered to justice for all men; and He who bought all has full authority to restore all who come unto God by Him.

"As by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Romans 5:18, 19). The proposition is a plain one: As many as have shared death on account of Adam's sin will have life-privileges offered to them by our Lord Jesus, who paid their penalty to Justice, who became Adam's substitute before the broken law, and "gave Himself a ransom for all." He died, "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter 3:18). It should never be overlooked, however, that all of God's provisions for our race recognize the human will as a factor in the securing of the divine favors so abundantly provided. Some have overlooked this feature in examining the text just quoted -- Romans 5:18, 19. The Apostle's statement, however, is that, as the sentence of condemnation extended to all the seed of Adam, even so, through the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Father's plan, by the sacrifice of Himself on our behalf, a free gift is extended to all -- a gift of forgiveness, which, if accepted, will constitute a justification or basis for life everlasting. And "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be [not were] made righteous." If the ransom alone, without our acceptance of it, made us righteous, then it would have read, by the obedience of one many were made righteous. But though the ransom has been given by the Redeemer and has been accepted by Jehovah, only a few during the Gospel age have been, though many during the Millennial age will be, made righteous -- justified -- "through faith in His blood." Since Christ is the propitiation (satisfaction) for the sins of the whole world, all men may on this account be absolved and released from the penalty of Adam's sin by Him -- under the New Covenant.

There is no unrighteousness with God; hence "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9). As He would have been unjust to have allowed us to escape the pronounced penalty before satisfaction was rendered, so also He here gives us to understand that it would be unjust were He to forbid our restoration, since by His own arrangement our penalty has been paid for us. The same unswerving justice that once condemned man to death now stands pledged for the release of all who, confessing their sins, apply for life through Christ. "It is God that justifies -- who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." -- Romans 8:33, 34.

The completeness of the ransom is the very strongest possible argument for the restoration of all mankind who will accept it on the proffered terms. (Revelation 22:17). The very character of God for justice and honor stands pledged to it; every promise which He has made implies it; and every typical sacrifice pointed to the great and sufficient sacrifice -- "the Lamb of God, which takes away the SIN OF THE WORLD" -- who is "the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the Church's], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (John 1:29; 1 John 2:2). Since death is the penalty or wages of sin, when the sin is cancelled the wages must in due time cease. Any other view would be both unreasonable and unjust. The fact that no recovery

from the Adamic loss is yet accomplished, though nearly two thousand years have elapsed since our Lord died, is no more an argument against restoration than is the fact that four thousand years elapsed before His death, a proof that God had not planned the redemption before the foundation of the world. Both the two thousand years since and the four thousand years before the death of Christ were appointed times for other parts of the work, preparatory to "the times of restoration of all things."

- C. T. Russell

(to be continued)

Fervent in Spirit, Serving the Lord

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." - Phil 1:27 .

IT WAS Paul's custom on arrival in any city to visit the synagogue of his Jewish brethren, and to reason with them out of their Scriptures. (Acts 17:2.) Strange to say there is no record of a synagogue at Philippi. If that was so, he would be forcibly reminded that he was in Gentile land and that his special mission to Gentiles had begun in earnest. No doubt each of us on arrival in some strange city would seek fellowship with those of like faith, and failing that, to join with our countrymen, perchance to hear of some gathering "where prayer was wont to be made," and where we would find an ear for the truth. And if, after a few days, we heard of such a meeting down by the riverside, our feet would soon take us there. This is just what Paul did, and it was the women there that Paul spoke to with joy. Could it have been that no men had arranged a service of worship and that the believing women had made their own service arrangements? Had there been a synagogue, the men would have been in charge. Whatever the answer be to the question, it must be noted that women first responded to the message of truth in Europe, and the woman specially referred to in the narrative was Lydia of Thyatira. But Thyatira was in Asia, the very region where Paul had recently served the faith. Perhaps she had heard of Paul's work there; perhaps she had told the women at the riverside; perhaps it was due to them and in answer to their prayers that the vision was given to Paul "to come over and help us." No doubt the Apostle was gratified by this response to the message, and in that response was the answer why he had been hindered from going into Asia to preach.

That was the commencement of Paul's European service and from that small riverside prayer meeting grew the Church which Paul loved so much. And so, when writing later to them, he would affectionately speak of the fellowship in the Gospel he had had with them "from the *first* day until now" -the first day he came to the riverside. (Phil: 1:5.) Later in the epistle his regard and love for them prompts him to refer to them as "my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown." (Phil. 4:1.) Paul proceeded from Philippi to other Grecian cities, and then sailed for Ephesus on his way back to Jerusalem where he was arrested and, after tedious waiting, sent to Rome for trial. In Rome at last, with his liberty somewhat restricted, but dwelling in his own hired house (Acts 28:30), what more likely that that he would recall his brethren in other lands and decide to write them, exhort them, and hope to hear in return of their steadfastness. And to encourage them, he told them how he himself had fared in the faith and how he still served; his example adding point to his exhortation when, in our text, he urged them to stand and serve.

Though hindered from traveling to other cities and lands as previously, he found willing ears right in Caesar's Praetorium. - Phil. 1:12, 13.

The following verses speak of his bonds and tell of his life devoted to the Gospel even to the point of death, which he does not fear. Yet while he personally longs for the return of Christ and the consummation of the Church's hope, he knows that to abide in the flesh and continue in service is needful for the Philippian and other ecclesias, though he could not be sure that he would ever see them again in the flesh. Phil. 1:25, 26 express the hope that he would see them again, and some say that upon acquittal in his first trial he revisited this and other churches. But whether he see them or not, he hopes to hear two things of them. And now we have come to the words in our opening text.

LET YOUR CONVERSATION BE WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL

Phil. 1:27 urges that our conversation be worthy of the Gospel of Christ. Other versions remind us that the word rendered "conversation" is better thought of as "citizenship," yet we need not fly to the correct translation of the Greek as though the A.V. had no useful instruction for us. The translators again render '*politeuma*' as "conversation" in Phil. 3:20; hence we must conclude that they had some good purpose in so doing. By one's speech we learn what country or district a man hails from, and by his conversation we know what his interests are. Conversation includes fellowship and discussion; and probably the translators are using the word in this good sense. (And we may be sure that if men hear us converse on scriptural themes, at least they will judge that we belong to no earthly country.) And so it is but a short step from conversation to citizenship. Further, when in the Apostle Peter's writings we read "conversation" the thought behind the word is "behavior" -- another trait of character which reveals citizenship. Our citizenship is in heaven; our conversation reveals this; and our behavior agrees with this also. Our citizenship is in heaven because we are "risen with Christ and seek those things which are above" (Col: 3:1-3) and having found them, "set our affections" on them, for "where our treasure is there will our heart be also."

Citizenship carries privileges which we may humbly claim. The Apostle Paul himself furnishes us a good example of this during his last visit to Jerusalem. Asian Jews stirred up the people, saying that Paul had polluted the temple, and the Captain of the guard intervened to stop the Jews who were beating Paul, and he took him under guard to the castle. Upon Paul asking permission to speak, the Captain replied, "Canst thou speak Greek? Art thou not that Egyptian, etc....?" Paul replied that he was a Jew of Tarsus, a citizen of no mean city; and receiving permission to speak to the people, he spoke in the Hebrew tongue. This temporarily silenced the mob (Acts 22:2) and Paul gave a spirited defense of life and Christian mission until the uproar began again. Then the Chief Captain ordered Paul to be examined by scourging, whereupon Paul immediately claimed that he was a Roman. On learning this, the Captain feared to hurt him, and loosed him from his bonds commanding the council to give Paul a hearing. Thus did Paul use his Hebrew speech, his Tarsus citizenship, and also his Roman, to obtain freedom to defend himself.

Paul began his defense before the council by saying, "I have *lived* in all good conscience before God until this day." The word translated "lived" is the same as that in Phil. 1:27 rendered "conversation." Citizenship, behavior, and living are all in this word "conversation. Who better than Paul could write on this subject?

But citizenship carries responsibilities as well as privileges-the responsibility to uphold the dignity of the country we claim. If the citizen of another country living among us claims special privileges and dignity, we may find that he is also an ambassador to us. He re resents the king and

country from which he came, and if ever questioned on his actions would claim his rights and the protection of his own country. Another visiting citizen claiming special rights while among us might be the king's son. Surely we may claim all of these; so that we may read in Phil. 1:27 conversation, behavior, citizenship, ambassadorship, or sonship without destroying the sense of the verse.

STAND FAST IN ONE SPIRIT

The Apostle hopes to hear of the Philippian brethren (whether present or absent) that their conversation becometh the Gospel, and that they stand fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel. These two injunctions to stand and to strive appear at first sight to be the reverse of each other, for one speaks of holding on while the other tells of activity. One assumes work done; the other, work still to be done. The first belongs to the internal life of the Church, the latter to the Church's outside activities. The first assumes the Philippian Ecclesia to be convinced and confident, the other, that they defend what they believe. These two phases of Christian life assist each other, for he who stands fast is well suited to defend the faith, and he who defends the faith will increase his own steadfastness.

The first injunction is that they and we stand fast in one spirit. There are other exhortations in Paul's writings to stand fast -- "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free"; "stand fast and hold the traditions ye have been taught"; "stand fast in the Lord"; and that one which above all others exhorts us "having done all, to stand."

In what spirit should we stand fast? When used by man, the word spirit may mean intellect, disposition, or courage, but these do not seem to be included in this advice. The Greek word here (*pneuma*) has many shades of meaning, but always has some connection with its root meaning, "breath" -- that is, the breath of life. James, speaking about another matter, voiced the accepted truth that the body without the spirit is dead. The spirit, the breath, is the universally acknowledged sign of life, and as the breath is the sign of life in the human body, so is the holy spirit the sign of life in the body of Christ, for by one spirit are we all baptized into one body. Further, the holy spirit is that gift from God which distinguishes the Church from other human beings, making them in fact New Creatures with heavenly hopes. Again the holy spirit makes us, and is personal proof to us, that we are sons of God. So we may read Paul's words as "stand fast in the holy spirit which has made us New Creatures and Sons of God."

STRIVE TOGETHER FOR THE FAITH

The second injunction is that they should be "with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel," just as Paul himself was doing at that very time. This word "mind" like "spirit" is used by men to include thoughts of intellect, disposition, and courage. But again, are these ideas the ones Paul would intend to convey in this verse? Here the Greek word is "*psuche*" (thus we have the two Greek words associated with life, "*pneuma*" and "*psuche*," in one verse) and is used of active life, whereas "*pneuma*" is used of the life within. "*Psuche*" is used here as though we are alive, active, with one soul, one being, one corporate body standing shoulder to shoulder defending the faith. This "*psuche*" life is that which others will see by our striving; the "*pneuma*" life is that internal and eternal life which proves to ourselves how and where we stand.

And so, Paul's words summarized seem to mean -- let your citizenship be worthy of the Gospel of Christ, so that you are firm in your sonship and active in your service. Once again we have the thoughts coupled elsewhere in the Scripture that we are sons and yet servants. We serve because we are sons. The advice in Phil. 1:27 is repeated in Phil. 2:15, 16, "That ye may be blameless and

harmless [good citizens, in fact], sons of God, not meriting rebuke, in the midst of a crooked nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (in other words striving for the faith of the Gospel). When Paul heard of the Philippian steadfastness in these respects, he would know that he had not labored in vain there, and the Macedonian vision would again be confirmed; and he again would say "*We live if ye stand fast in the Lord.*" - 1 Thess. 3:8.

- B. J. Drinkwater

Not Beating the Air

*"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize?
So run, that ye may obtain." - 1 Cor. 9:24.*

EVERY spirit-begotten individual must surely desire to win "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The difficulty lies in determining the necessary procedure. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure" -- but how best may we do this? "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" -- but in what manner is this accomplished? "So run I, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air" -- but just how did Paul go about it?

To assist in answering this question let us consider some principles of efficiency which have been developed in modern industry and which should be of help to every Christian. If we have found our progress unsatisfactory, perhaps a check of the six principles we have selected, with supporting Scripture texts, may help in determining wherein we have been lax.

OBJECTIVE

Firstly, we must have an *objective*. There can be only one *major* objective. A straight line is the shortest distance between any two points. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." "No man can serve two masters-ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "Friends of this world are enemies of God." "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." "I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "This one thin I do." It is here that many find difficulty, as it is necessary to fully make up our minds and count the cost before consecration, as "he that puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of heaven."

But though we have a long-range objective -- a lifetime of effort -- we need certain *minor* goals as we progress, all of which must be compatible with our major purpose. Some of these might be listed as discharge of obligations, physical health, spirituality, and activity in the Lord's service. As to obligations, "He that provideth not for his own hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever", provide things honest" -- "owe no man anything save love." As to physical health, we are to use it wisely to God's glory, subject to the rule that we be "instant in season, out of season." "Whatsoever ye eat or drink or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." As to our spirituality, we need to consider study, testimony, prayer, and fellowship. As to activity in service, we should be alert to do good unto all, especially to the household of faith.

COMPETENT COUNSEL

Secondly, we need *competent counsel*. He who has a law-suit, retains an able attorney. There is a saying that "the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a lawyer." Let us not make the same mistake. It is so easy to "lean to our own understanding" instead of "in all our ways acknowledging him that he may direct our paths."

Our chief guide is the Bible. "Sanctify them through thy truth-thy word is truth." "Search the Scriptures." "Study to show thyself approved unto God ... rightly dividing the word of truth." "All Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable ... that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." "We have a more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed, as unto a lamp that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn."

Other guides are God's *spirit* and his providences. We should watch for his leadings. He has also given to us "apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists," and the brethren with whom we come in contact, to help us on our way.

PLANS AND SCHEDULES

Thirdly, we must have *plans and schedules*. We must plan the details of our daily lives, for if we do not, the Adversary is ever willing to do so. "Redeem the time for the days are evil." "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." We need to set apart definite times for study, assembly locally and at Conventions, prayer, and service. The world has become so complex that it is difficult to "live on twenty-four hours per day." We can overdo the making of a living, the keeping of our house, and the many items of trivia that beset us. It was the "cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches" that kept some of the seed in good ground from bringing forth fruit unto perfection. It is the "little foxes" that spoil the vines. A few minutes here and a few minutes there, and the day is gone and little has been done. But we can always "gird up the loins of our minds" and try again. Each day is a challenge as to whether we will "keep our hearts with all diligence."

DISPATCHING

Fourthly, there is the matter of *dispatching*. With plans all made, the will must act. "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." Jesus said that those who hear and do not are like the man who built his house on the sand with disastrous results. A house of hope is built on sand if one fails to heed the Master's words as to "taking his yoke upon them 'and' taking up their cross and following him." One remembers the two brothers to whom their father had give a command. One said "I go" but went not. The other said "I will not go" but later went. God works in us "both to *will* and to *do* his good pleasure." And delay can be dangerous, even fatal. To Paul it was said "And now, why tarriest thou?" Elijah said "How long halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah be God, follow him, but if Baal, follow him." We are to be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He wishes us either cold or hot, and will spue out the lukewarm. "If we do these things, we shall never fail." Let us always say, "Here am I, Lord, send me!"

DISCIPLINE

Fifthly, there is the matter of *discipline*. There are three kinds of discipline. First, that which Nature's laws enforce and which is very severe. They sum up in "The wages of sin is death" and "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Physical laws cannot be violated. It matters not that you did not know "that the gun was loaded," that the wire was "live," that you were near the edge of the roof when you stepped back! So also in the moral realm. Hate, envy, greed, fear, anger, worry., jealousy, covetousness, and the like will inevitably redound to the practicer's sorrow and suffering.

Then there is the second type of discipline. It is that imposed by a parent on a child, a teacher on a pupil, an employer on an employee, to save from the penalties of a wrong course. Earthly parents discipline in order that their child be kept from a wrong course in life and a possible tragic end. So likewise "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." A wise parent also subjects his children to certain experiences to develop the judgment and character needed at maturity. Jesus had no faults, yet "It pleased God, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." We, too, need to be "made perfect," strengthened, established, and only divine wisdom and love can accomplish this! And how wonderful his watchful care over us! Industry has what are called "unavoidable accidents," but there are none such among God's anointed ones. "He that began a good work in you is able to finish it." "There will be no temptation befall you above what ye are able to bear" -- yet how merciful is he when we fail. He arranges our daily lives into a situation where a self-denying decision becomes necessary, and if, in stubbornness of will we elude it, he patiently repeats the experience until the decision is unavoidable. And thus we grow. If "a branch bear fruit, he purgeth it that it may bear more fruit." Too wise to err, too good to be unkind -- how priceless the knowledge of his fatherly watchfulness!

The third form of discipline is that which we enforce upon ourselves. "If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged of the Lord." We can "Make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed." We may not know all the ways in which we are "lame" but we certainly know those which are obvious. We can discipline ourselves by inflicting our own penalties for breaches of conduct or thought. Paul "browbeat his body and brought it into subjection," which indicates he took certain strong measures himself. This he did "lest, after having preached unto others" he, himself, might become a castaway. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the *spirit* do *mortify* the flesh, ye shall live." There is a proper use of "fear." Here is an example: "Let us fear, lest a promise having been left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Religious systems have tried to use fear as an engine is used to drive a car, but the eternal torment doctrine has had little effect. Fear is not your "engine" -- it is your "brake"! So, if you get to going too fast or down a steep grade, or some other equivalent spiritual danger, use your "brake"! The early church used fasting and other means. We also need to take steps to check harmful tendencies. Let us fear to displease our Father, to whom we owe so much. May we be guided by his eye, rather than his rod.

HOPE OF REWARD

Sixthly, there is the *hope of reward*. It may be thought that while rewards are a proper incentive to the world they are inappropriate for the Christian. But if the reward is unselfish, it is quite proper and helpful. "Abraham looked for a city with foundations" and it was a great help to him to see that even "afar off." Moses "looked unto the recompense of reward." All of the worthies mentioned in Hebrews 11 underwent many trials and scourgings "that they might obtain a better resurrection." Jesus, "for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." And to the Church are given "exceeding great and precious promises, *that by these* we might be partakers of the divine nature."

What would we do without hope? "We glory in tribulation, because tribulation worketh perseverance, and perseverance hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." Think of the promise -- "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"! Astounding incentive! And that glorious kingdom -- it is "our meat and drink." If we never "looked away to the unseen things," we would never "be changed into that image"; for it is only as we do so that we are transformed.

Love is the energizing power that keeps us in this blessed Way. What expectations we have of the joys at the final "Convention," the seeing again of those we have loved and been parted from; yes, and the seeing of many others whom we have not known here in the flesh, but all possessors of the same sweet spirit! Will not this great gathering be most wonderful? "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." Halleluia!

- *M. J. Adams*

Your Faith

The following was written to an invalid sister by Brother Sargeant shortly before his death.

I came to your door and I met your faith. I had met faith at various times, but not *your* faith. Faith indeed had much to do with my experience with life. When I had come to the borderland where the country of knowledge ends, Faith had taken my hand and led me forward and shown me things that were strange and of wondrous interest. But your faith had an individuality of its own, and impressed me with directness and with power. Perhaps that was because I was weary. I do not know. I only know that I was glad to rest awhile and to bask in the sunshine of your faith.

The way had been toilsome and long. There had been the mountains to cross, and there had been avalanches and great storms. There had been the forest, where wild beasts roamed at large and where to lose one's way was easy enough. At times my strength seemed unequal to such a journey, but I had undertaken it, and my mind was a citadel where resolution had entrenched itself and where it was not likely to yield to conditions of difficulty and opposition from without.

The sun was declining in the west and a golden shaft of light fell upon your door as I stood there before you for the first time and met your faith. There was music as of many birds singing, and then your faith enveloped me as with a mantle of peace.

Conspicuous elements of your faith were kindness, tranquility, and strength. You received me as I was and took for granted that my intentions were the best. As I looked upon your faith, it translated life into beauty. It cheered me with the hope -of higher and better things to come. It sat upon you with outstretched wings as a thing meant to soar. I still think of your faith as I met it that day.

And your faith has not lost anything with the passing of years. When illness entered into my dwelling, the memory of you and your faith was there as a, soothing balm. And then-wondrous to relate-your faith became my faith and this with no loss to you. I mean that my faith took on the hue and -color and power of your faith, which seemed greater than mine had been heretofore. When pain assailed my tabernacle of flesh, faith stood beside me. His locks were all of gold, and his eyes were bright with the shining of joy. When he smiled upon me, the darkness passed away, and I knew there were ministering angels at hand, and I was enabled to look beyond the present things to those realms where love and peace abide forever.

Oh I am glad -- glad because of victories gained along the trail that runs through the years. Glad because of stars and flowers and the songs -of birds. Glad because of white-robed peaks that spear the sky and whisper of eternal realities that shall not fade with the fading of earth. Glad because that -once when I was weary, and my heart was heavy after a toilsome way, and when the vanities of life looked down upon me with somber eyes, after the mountain had been crossed, I came to your door and I met your faith, and it led me to heights where today I can look up and see the smile of God.

"I sat me down in earth's benighted vale,
And had no courage and no strength to rise;
Sad, to the passing breeze I told my tale,
And bowed my head and drained my weeping eyes.

"But Faith came by, and took me by the hand;
And now the valleys rise, the mountains fall;
Welcome the stormy sea, the dangerous land!
With faith to aid me, I can conquer all."

Annual Report of Directors

"Behold, I make all things new ... these words are true and faithful. " - Rev. 21:5.

THESE inspiring words open our sixty-fourth yearly report of the Institute's ministry. "The shaking of all nations" which commence in 1914, has so increased to our day that now, from highly positioned authorities, we hear expressions such as "the end of all civilization" -- "all life will end" -- the planet will be destroyed" -- "Doomsday hangs over the world" -- etc. Our generation's apprehension of Nuclear holocaust is generalizing into hysteria. What a predicament for poor war-prone mankind!

But how remarkable the fulfillment of our Master's predictive words of nineteen centuries ago (Luke 21:25): "Upon the earth, anguish of nations in perplexity; roarings of the sea and waves; men fainting from fear and apprehension of the things coming on the habitable earth." And how comforting His further words -- "When these things are beginning to occur, raise yourselves, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance is drawing near" (Luke 21:28). Blessed are we who can appropriate the consolations of Psalm 46!

Humanity's sufferings re-echo in our hearts the cry of the souls under the altar -- "How long, O Lord?" But we remember the provisions of our merciful God. The very design of the great time of trouble is to break the stony hearts of the whole world, to bow down into the dust the proud, and to break up the fallow ground with deep furrows of pain, trouble, sorrow, and thus ready the world for the great blessings of the Millennial Kingdom. And it will serve its intended purpose as the Prophet declares: "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9). Humanity will by that time be longing for, but despairing of, a reign of righteousness, little realizing how near at hand it is. "The desire of all nations *shall* come."

We know that God's Kingdom "is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). We steadfastly await the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13). *We know* we are in the terminal period of the Church's history. Were then, exactly, are we on the stream of time?

A century ago, a deep Prophecy student, H. G. Guinness, wrote: "We are in the position of travelers approaching a large and to them unknown city, at the end of a long railway journey. They are aware of the distance to be traversed, of the stations to be passed on the way, and of the time required for the transit. The milestones have long shown them that they are rapidly nearing their goal; the time the journey was to occupy has elapsed, and they have observed that the station just passed was the last one. Yet the terminus in the strange city may have several distinct platforms separated from each other by short distances; the train may draw up to one or two before it comes to the last. They are ignorant of the exact localities in the metropolis, and at which station they will meet their expectant friends. Still they have no hesitation in making preparations for leaving the train and in congratulating each other with a glad 'here we are at last!' They would smile at any who should dispute their conviction, though unable to decide whether it will be ten minutes or only two or three, before they actually arrive. It is a mere question of minutes and miles; if one platform is not the right one, the next may be. At any rate, the long journey lies behind, the desire goal is all but reached. It is easy to be patient, and not difficult to bear a momentary disappointment. The, main result is certain, and the end is close at hand."

And so is it with us, dear brethren, as we continue in this wonderful "Narrow Way" heeding the Apostle's admonition 1 Pet. 1:13): *"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope perfectly for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. "*

INSTITUTE STATISTICS

The details of our past year's activity are necessarily brief. We continue to emphasize the liberty, fellowship, and unity of all consecrated believers in Christ, united in the Christian bond for mutual comfort and assistance, with joy for every privilege of service, be it large or small.

Our Herald continues its message in devotional, practical, and spiritual articles emphasizing truths beneficial to the New Creature, though doctrinal truths are neither ignored or considered unimportant. Our subscription list is relatively stable and includes readers in sixty four foreign countries. We continue to send sample Heralds to any names submitted for a free six month trial subscription. To the extent of our ability, we witness to God's glorious Plan of the Ages, and our hearts rejoice in the similar public witness of our brethren in other groupings, larger and smaller; even individuals alone.

The Pilgrim ministry, in the Lord's providence so extensively blessed in past years, continues limited due to circumstances known to all. However, all the members of the Director and Editorial Boards serve as the Institute's representatives at conventions, special meetings, and at funerals, as requested.

We continue to stress the importance in our day for not only our traveling brethren, but for all who may be able, to visit the so many dear shut-ins, a service which surely has the Lord's approval and blessing.

Our correspondence is considerable and the letters received provide fellowship, always treasured. Replies cannot always be as extended as we desire, but are to the best of our ability, with a prayer for understanding hearts in the recipients. We are deeply grateful for encouraging messages which diffuse the fragrance of the Lord in our midst.

To assist in Bible study, we offer some helps, foremost of which is the volume -- The Divine Plan of the Ages. Also the Diaglott translation of the New Testament. In addition, our free sixteen booklets on a variety of Bible subjects are available for personal witness to interested individuals. These booklets are adaptable for class study.

So much for the Fiscal Year just ended. As to the future of the Institute, the Directors continue in the belief the Lord would have them engage in the same ministries as in the past, expanding or contracting them in dependence on the resources, personal and financial, that He is pleased to send.

Once again we earnestly solicit all to join their prayers with ours that the Lord's leadings may be clearly discerned and faithfully followed, as we all "follow on to know the Lord."

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

The Annual Meeting

The sixty-second 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, 1981, in West Suffield, Conn.

The annual report of the Directors, for the fiscal year ended April 30, 1982, 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. Hogrebe, 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. Hogrebe, Treasurer; L. L. Kynion, C. B. Odell, P. J. Pazucha, W. J. Siekman, T. M. Thomassen, Editorial Committee.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 1982

(1) Balance Sheet as of April 30, 1982

Assets

Cash on hand		\$14,954.39
U. S. Treasury Bills		58,205.20
Accounts Receivable		712.00
Prepaid Expense		500.00
Inventory of Books, etc.:		
Pocket Edition-Divine Plan	(697)	\$697.00
Miscellaneous Items		<u>131.40</u>
Total Inventory		<u>828.40</u>
Total Assets		<u>\$75,199.99</u>
Liabilities		<u>20.00</u>
Net Worth (as per analysis below)		<u>\$75,179.99</u>

(2) Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth
Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1982

Income

Contributions		\$12,659.31
Herald Subscriptions		3,791.00
Legacies		2,757.87
Interest Earned		<u>8,162.35</u>
Total Income		<u>\$27,370.53</u>

Operating Expense

Pilgrim Expense	\$ 6,056.77	
Herald Expense Including Printing, Mailing and Clerical	15,390.39	
Free literature	1,805.33	
Administrative and Office Expense	<u>1,113.10</u>	
Total Operating Expense		<u>24,365.59</u>
Net Expense for Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1982		<u>\$ 3,004.94</u>
Net Worth, May 1, 1981		<u>72,175.05</u>
Net Worth, April 30, 1982 (as per Balance Sheet above)		<u>\$ 75,179.99</u>

Entered Into Rest

Rudolf Broeksma, Milwaukee, Wis.

Mildred Chrimes, England

Clarence Dolan, Seattle, Wash.

James Finlay, North Ireland

Richard R. Frey, Baltimore, Md.

Sis. J. D. Jones, Columbus, Wis.

Isaac Nyssen, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Bro. E. Parker, England

Bertram T. Woodbury, Lynn, Mass.

Gladys Young, Pueblo, Colo.