

PERSECUTION PRECEDENTS

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Hymn 13, Self Examination.

Text: John 15:20, "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my sayings they will keep yours also."

We all realize that we are in the end of the age and the feet members of The Christ are having their final experiences. We do not know exactly what is before us; therefore we should study the words and conduct of Jesus and the apostles as they endured persecution, so that we may catch the spirit they had and imitate them when we might be required to endure similar treatment. They measured up to a standard and were inspired by God's promises.

According to the Psalmist (46:1-3) we should be courageous, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." We are in the very midst of these events today.

Our duty is to show forth God's praises and set an example for one another. Our Pastor advised us to study carefully, if we be prepared in spirit to meet persecution as did Jesus and the Apostles. Our precedents are the words and conduct of Jesus and the Apostles. But how do we understand Matt. 10:19 in view of our Pastor's advice? -- "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." We are in a different position than were our brethren in Jesus' day. We have the completed Bible to guide and instruct us, while they did not.

Understanding the cause of persecution helps us to bear it without bitterness. People are ignorant, superstitious, beset with inborn selfishness and the deceptions of Satan. We long for the time when Satan will be fully bound; when blind eyes will be opened and men will know their true friends, and act accordingly. Now they are confused and bewildered.

We shall consider first the words and acts of the Apostles, and then the words and acts of the Master. We shall use these as a basis for self-examination: am I spiritually prepared; is my heart in tune with the conduct of the Apostles and Jesus?

The first incident we shall examine is found in the 3rd and 4th chapters of the book of Acts. A remarkable miracle was performed by Peter and John when they had come to the

temple at the hour of prayer, apparently around three o'clock in the afternoon. A man was there who was lame from his mother's womb. He was over forty years old, and he asked for alms from Peter and John. Peter said they had no silver or gold to give the man, but there was something Peter could give and that was healing in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Naturally this caused a great commotion amongst the people; and Peter used the occasion for the preaching of a sermon in behalf of Jesus, and gave credit for the miracle to faith in the Prince of Life. This was the occasion when he urged the people to repent and be converted that their sins would be blotted out when the times of refreshing should come from the presence of God. Then "the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now evening." This was a notable occasion for at this time almost 5,000 believed. The next day Peter and John were questioned and were asked "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" Peter, being filled with the Holy Spirit of Truth preached a stirring sermon -- "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." We note the courage of Peter -- he was not concerned in trying to protect himself and John from the wrath of the religious leaders, but he was filled with zeal for the truth -- the truth that Jesus was the Redeemer and there is salvation in no other name than the name of Jesus. And he told the truth too, that the leaders were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.

The leaders were on the spot -- "they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it." The leaders conferred amongst themselves and would not change their spirit of opposition to Jesus. They did not want to give up their position of leadership amongst the Jewish people. Selfishness was the controlling motive apparently, and so they called to Peter and John and "commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." Now we take special note of the response of Peter and John, for this is what we are concerned about for our own sakes. "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." The leaders threatened them further, but "let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done." Peter and John left and joined themselves to the brethren, and reported all that had happened and they then had a glorious testimony meeting together, praising God for the truth and asking God's grace to be bold for the truth and do further

healings, "that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spake the word of God with boldness."

We can gain several vital lessons from the example of Peter and John. Even though Jesus had been crucified as a criminal, these two apostles showed not the slightest shame for what had happened to Jesus -- they sponsored the cause of Jesus even though he was an outcast as far as the Jewish leaders were concerned. Jesus was innocent and the leaders were wrong, and these two apostles acted accordingly. Peter and John showed boldness in preaching the gospel concerning redemption accomplished by the death of Jesus; and the resurrection of the dead was their constant theme. They did not fear man, but obeyed God no matter what. They were threatened, but paid no attention to the threats. Their faith and loyalty to God made them bold and fearless in doing the will of God. So we have important precedents for our actions and the spirit we should have when we meet up with opposition by religious leaders who are blind to the truth and opposing it. (Reprint page 5840.)

Perhaps we all remember the case of Ananias and his wife, Sapphira who attempted to deceive the apostles concerning a certain property they sold. They both lost their lives for their lying course. After this it was said that "by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.)" Many believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Sick people were brought to them and were healed. "There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one. (Acts 5:15) "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." But the "angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." The apostles obeyed the commission of the angel of the Lord. You can imagine the amazement of the leaders when they discovered that the apostles were not in prison, but were preaching the truth in the temple. The apostles were arrested again, but were taken without violence as "they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned." The apostles were set before the council and the high priest asked them, "Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him." When they

heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them." However a man by the name of "Gamaliel, a doctor of the law." cautioned the leaders -- "And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." The counsel harkened to the advice of Gamaliel and "when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go." The apostles "departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Apparent there were listening ears in this area, for the apostles continued their preaching as commissioned by the angel of the Lord.

In this second incident we are considering (from the 5th chapter of Acts), the precedents are the same -- we are not to be ashamed of the gospel, and we are not to fear men, no matter who, and we are to have the courage to preach the truth as a witness and to any who might listen. (Reprint 2103-11)

We turn now to Acts 8:1 and 4: "And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. "Therefore they went everywhere preaching the word." How courageous were the Lord's people! When the persecution scattered them throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, this had the effect of scattering the preaching of the gospel -- what was a hardship to the brethren was to the advantage of the gospel. So the brethren back there set us a wonderful example of religious courage and bravery in preaching the truth by turning a personal disaster into an opportunity of scattering the truth into hearts hungering for the message. We do well to impress these things upon our hearts that we catch the spirit of the truth more fully.

Sometimes the apostles fled. For instance we read in Matt. 10:23, "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another." What seems to be the principle for our guidance? -- when our lives are threatened and we cannot serve effectively, then we are to change our course of action or our location -- "The servant of the Lord must not strive." Note the following scriptures: Acts 9:23-25, 29, 30; 12:17; 13:50, 51; 14:4-6; 16:40; 17:5 to 10, 14; 20:1. In considering Acts 14:4-6 we note that the apostles showed their great love for the flock by returning later to strengthen and confirm the faith of the believers. But no public meetings. (Reprint 2151-4) See Acts 14:21, 22 -- courageous, noble apostles!

Two mistakes are made regarding our rights: some insist too much on their rights; while others do not defend their rights enough. (4407-9) We find an interesting example of Paul defending his rights -- this is recorded in Acts 16:14 to 40. Lydia, a seller of purple had

responded to the preaching of the gospel and she opened up her home to Paul and Silas so they could have a place to stay while working in the area. And it came to pass as Paul and Silas went to prayer "a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: the same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." This went on for several days; but "Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers." Paul and Silas were given rough treatment -- they were beaten with many stripes and were cast into prison and their feet were made fast in the stocks. This is the time when Paul and Silas sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them. There was a great earthquake which opened all the doors "and every one's bands were loosed." The keeper awoke and supposing all the prisoners had escaped he was about to commit suicide. But Paul called to him and said "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." It is interesting to note the effect upon the keeper -- "Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Now we take note of what followed when it was day, for this is what we are specially interested in -- to see how Paul acted regarding the defending of his rights. "And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace." How did Paul respond? "But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out." Paul wisely used his Roman citizenship to gain for himself and the gospel certain rights that were due to a Roman. Paul proceeded properly for when the serjeants "told these words unto the magistrates; they feared when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city." We note verse 40 as it is very significant for our guidance -- "And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." Paul did not insist on his rights to the limit, but left causing the magistrates no embarrassment. Here is an important precedent for our guidance -- we should catch the spirit of Paul and act as he did, right from the heart. (Reprint page 4407, par. 8 and 9.)

Paul defended himself several times and we do well to study the principles involved. Let us turn to Acts 22:24-30 (in part), "The chief captain commanded him to be brought unto the castle, and bade that he be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they

cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" The principle for our guidance can be found in the words to Moses, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses had a power in his grasp and it was to be used. So Paul used his Roman citizenship to protect himself so he could work to better advantage in the preaching of the gospel. This is an important precedent for our guidance -- we should use to advantage every power in our possession. But we must refrain from bitter retaliation, ALWAYS.

It is interesting and instructive to note Paul's use of wisdom when he was in prison. This is related in Acts 23:12-24. "And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul." And what did Paul do? Did he say to his nephew, Thank you for telling me, but we will just leave this entirely in the hands of the Lord? Is that what he said? No, he did that which was practical at the time -- "Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain; for he hath a certain thing to tell him." And what was the result? Paul was removed to a safe place at the third hour of night; and he was protected by 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen and 200 spearmen.

Again, when Paul was falsely accused he appealed to a higher court -- Acts 23:10-21; 25:8-11; 26:1-32. Paul watched out, not for his personal safety chiefly, but for the furtherance of the interests of the truth. In all his activities, Paul freely and comprehensively took advantage of everything that was practical. On one occasion when he saw an opening he appealed to those that believed in the resurrection as he did. He was "wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove." See Acts 24:24-29 and 23:6-9.

We consider one more experience of Paul. When he was on board ship and was a prisoner, he was a model prisoner. He was helpful, cheerful, gave good advice; he was not bitter, grouchy or revengeful. (See Acts 27 and 28) During World War One, some conscientious objectors were balky and uncooperative, and they were severely treated for the spirit they showed. Our conclusion is that it is quite proper and right to do anything that is necessary to life or the health of man, and we should be cooperative and cheerful as representatives of the Master.

Now for some precedents from the life of Jesus

We shall consider first the spirit shown by Jesus when impulsive Peter used the sword to cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant. This incident is found recorded in Matt. 26:51-54; Luke 22:50, 51 and John 18:10 and 11. We quote now from reprint page 2469, par. 2 as our Pastor expressed the matter so accurately and beautifully: "The healing of the smitten ear, our Lord's last miracle, was most beautifully illustrative of his character and teachings. It exemplified his words, 'Love your enemies, do good to them that

persecute you.' It showed that he was filled with the divine love which his teachings inculcated, and that he had no bitterness toward those who despitefully used and persecuted him." Perhaps no precedent is more important than this one to make a very part of our character-structure. We must never have a bitter spirit toward those who oppose us, but must be willing even to do good to our enemies when they are in trouble, as was the case with Malchus, the servant of the high priest. To have his ear cut off, must have been a painful experience to Malchus, and Jesus relieved him of the pain and disfigurement.

Jesus' conduct when submitting to arrest is worthy of careful study. Did he assume the air of a martyr? Did he threaten those who came against him? His attitude was expressed very clearly in John 18:11, "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? It was of the Father's planning and permission and he submitted himself without complaint. He did not rail against his persecutors. This proper spirit is well expressed by Paul in Eph. 4:31, "Let all clamor be put away from you." We can believe that his knowledge of the divine plan assisted him to submit without noisy complaint. Also it doubtless helped him when he realized that those who came against him were under the fall and were taking orders from others who were likewise under the fall. And Jesus knew his reward would be very great as he, himself had expressed the matter in his sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in heaven." These words of Jesus are found in Matt. 5:11, 12. (Reprint page 2468, last par., and 2469, par. 1)

When Jesus was being apprehended, he must have felt in need of comfort. This would be the normal reaction of one who was righteous and who was being treated unjustly as a criminal. But Jesus thought of his beloved disciples and he wanted to spare them the ordeal of being arrested with him. We note his words in John 18:7, 8, "Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these (my disciples) go their way." (Matt. 26:55; Mark 14:48, 49; Luke 22:52, 53; John 18:4-6.) Thus Jesus set us an example of always thinking of the comfort and welfare of others. (Reprint page 2468, par. 2 and 3; page 4169, par. 1.) This is a vital element of Christian character that we must not overlook. We must become like him in disposition.

What did Jesus do when questioned by authorities or when accused? Did he always answer? If so, when? If not, when? What principles guided him? Analyzing his words and actions, apparently Jesus was influenced by three things. First, the spirit of the questioner or accuser; second, whether the truth was involved or not; third, whether a question or accusation was consistent or applicable to him. Jesus' spirit was characterized by soundness of mind, reason, dignity as an ambassador of God.

Here is an occasion when Jesus refused to answer questions, Matt. 26:59 to 63, "Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; but found none; yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At last came two false witnesses and said, This fellow said I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace." Why did Jesus refuse to make reply? One reason was that the accusation was nonsensical (reprint page 2781-3), and second, the questioner did not desire the facts (reprint page 1809, par. 7 and reprint page 3367, par. 2 to 4.) (See also Mark 14:57-61.)

However, right after this, Jesus did answer a question, Mark 14:61 and 62, "Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Jesus answered this question because the question concerned the high priest as a representative of God's covenanted people. (3888, col. 2, par. 1.) But Jesus refused to answer the same question from Pilate because it concerned not Pilate at all -- the Roman law was not violated if Jesus had said the same thing. (John 19:7-9) Apparently we are to use discrimination in such matters. Jesus did not attempt to defend himself before civil rulers regarding a strictly religious question or matter.

Jesus showed consideration for courteous questions from civil rulers. An example of this is found in Matt. 27:11, "And Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him saying, Art thou the King of the Jews: And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest." (Mark 15:2; Luke 23:2, 3) Another example of this is found in John 18:33-38, "Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thy self, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world, if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." This courteous reply of Jesus set Pilate's mind at rest; but Jesus said very little about the kingdom, for he knew he must not cast precious pearls of truth before the unappreciative. (Reprint page 3368, par. 4) Pilate was sincere and had a right to know. Jesus was brief and wise. (Reprint page 3351-1)

When Jesus was wrongly accused he kept silent, "And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing." (Matt. 27:12; Mark 15: 3 to 5) But when a

great truth was involved, he did reply, "And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? Tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you, ye will not answer. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am." (Luke 22:66-70)

Jesus ignored curiosity and entertainment seekers, "And when Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing." (Luke 23:8, 9) Jesus' work was too lofty to stoop to entertainment with the power of God. (Reprint page 3368, col. 2, par. 4; page 2786, par. 1.)

Jesus defended himself twice as recorded in John 18:19-23, "The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort and in secret have I said nothing. Why asketh thou me? ask them which heard me what I have said unto them: Behold they know what I said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answereth thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; But if well, why smitest thou me?" Jesus was pointing out that a cause for his arrest was being sought, and he applied to reason and civil law. When Jesus taught to "turn the other cheek," he meant that we are not to "resist evil with evil"; because literally he did not "turn the other cheek." (Acts 23:1-6; reprint page 2469, col. 2, par. 4 and 5; page 2470, par. 1.)

Jesus did not oppose false verdicts, -- those representing the law would not give him justice anyway. This is illustrated in Matt. 26:65 and 66, and Mark 14:63 and 64. Jesus never did anything useless or that which would result in noisy demonstration. Peter gives us a clue to Jesus' strength, "When reviled, reviled not again; when suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth rightly."

Jesus must have had lofty ideals to submit to what he did. He endured evil acts, evil words, evil looks, indignities, shame, injustices. He was spit upon, pushed about, slapped in the face by those far below him mentally, morally and socially. He was blindfolded and then slapped in the face, and those who slapped him, asked, "who did it?" He was bound and carried away as a common criminal. He was tied to a post and scourged. Roman soldiers paid him mock obescience. He was struck on the head with a stick. He was forced to carry the heavy cross near a well traveled road, subject to the gaze of all. His tormentors taunted him when he was on the cross: "If thou be the Son of God"; "If you

are a healer"; "If you are a doer of miracles" -- "PROVE IT BY SAVING YOURSELF."

To endure all these cruel indignities, Jesus must have had a perfect faith toward God, and deep redeeming love toward mankind. Jesus did not utter a single word expressing anger, wrath, contempt, vengeance. Speaking of vengeance, it is God's law that is violated, not ours. If we remember this, we can conduct ourselves as Jesus did. (Watt. 26:65-68; 27:2, 26-31, 39-44; Mark 14:65; 15:1, 15-20, 29-32; Luke 22:63-65; 23:35-37, 39, John 19:1-3, 5; reprint page 3888, col. 2, par. 4.)

One would think Jesus could think of nothing but his own shame and suffering, but such was not the case: "And there followed him a great company of people and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke 23:27-31) And John 19:26, 27, "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." (Reprint page 5578, col. 2, par. 3.)

Jesus showed appreciation for the sponge offered him on the cross. Jesus always took into consideration the motives. (Matt. 27:34; Mark 15:23) He gave a ray of hope to the repentant thief on the cross. Luke 23:40-43.

We must remember, in conclusion that the principles which guided Jesus, are the same principles which are to guide us.

Jesus set us a perfect example. If he met a good spirit, he always treated it graciously. He never allowed life's experiences to sour him or make him bitter. He had absolute faith in God's love, wisdom and power. Doubtless he remembered that in the "Day of Visitation" men would act differently and would glorify God.

If we are faithful to the end we shall enjoy some choice fruit: to see a restored race, and know that we had a part in it; and as with Jesus, we shall see the "travail of soul and be satisfied.

We should keep three important things in mind: first, that we might glorify God by our conduct; second, that we should set a good example and benefit some in the "Day of Visitation"; third, that we might win the prize of joint-heirship with our Redeemer.

We are deeply impressed that we need great faith, so we pray, "Lord increase our faith."

Close with hymn #172, "More Love to Thee."