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ZION'S
Watch Tower
AND
HERALD OF
CHRIST'S PRESENCE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

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The Editor recognizes a responsibility to the Master, relative to what shall appear in these columns, which he cannot and does not cast aside; yet he should not be understood as endorsing every expression of correspondents, or of articles selected from other periodicals.

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TAKE NOTICE.

This paper will be sent free to any of the Lord's poor who will send a card yearly requesting it. Freely we have received and freely we would give the truth. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat--yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." And you that have it-- "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently--and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."-- ISAIAH 55:1,2.

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VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

You know that you have weaknesses; special points upon which you are aware by past experience you are specially liable to fail, under trial and temptation. It may be the pride of life and love of the world, which seem to draw your feet from the narrow way oftenest. It may be that business has such an attraction to you that you have at times been almost swallowed up with its ambitions and cares, and that its demands upon your time and talent have been for a season almost overwhelming, and that you found your appetite for spiritual things forestalled by the earthly, and your consecrated time absorbed in labor for the meat that perisheth.

Or it may be that your special weakness is a love of approbation, which absorbs consecrated time in making your person, your home, and your family charming, as well as hinders you from engaging in service for the Lord and your fellow-saints in carrying them spiritual food, lest some should think you "peculiar," and "strange," and should "cut" your acquaintance.

Or your difficulty may be uncongenial family relationship and opposition to study and Christian growth from that quarter.

Or, it may be that seeming duties and necessities in your circumstances demand your time and keep you as they did Martha from communing with the Master, and from engaging in and enjoying the higher and grander privilege of breaking to others spiritual food. No matter in which particular direction your besetment lies, rest assured that yours is not an exceptional case. Every soul knoweth its own burdens, and before each one Satan is permitted to lay obstacles and hindrances in order that each may be tried and thus have opportunity of overcoming and proving his love and his appreciation of the prize and of the Lord's approval, by faithfulness under adverse conditions.

What is your duty? What shall you do? Give up, because the way is not smooth? Why certainly you did not expect to be classed an "overcomer" without having something opposing you to overcome. No, you knew well when you started, that the Master and forerunner on this way, said: "Straight (difficult) is the gate and

narrow is the way." You remember he said that every follower in his footsteps must expect to endure the crossing of his human will and interest all through the "way." You remember how strongly he put it that none might deceive themselves, when he said, "If any man come to me, and hate not [love less] his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:26,27.

And do you not know that your temptation on these weak points of your besetment are daily becoming more absorbing, more difficult to resist? Do you not see that we are living in the "evil day" which is evil or full of special danger, because of its increase of temptation on every point of weakness to every member of the body? that the besetments of the world, the flesh and the devil are more subtle and deceptive, and more powerful than ever before? Yes, you realize it. To be forewarned is useless unless it leads us to action, that we may be forearmed and protected. What are you going to do about it? We answer, Break the bondage at any cost; though it be dear to your heart as your eye or hand--pluck it out, cut it off, cast it from you. Make thorough work of it, strangle it, overcome your besetments at once and thoroughly. Lay aside every weight and hindrance which impedes your growth in grace, which hinders your sacrifice, the fulfillment of your covenant in the service of the truth, that you may patiently run the race set before you. You must either overcome these besetments by changing your course and cutting them off, or they will overcome you, and bring you more and more under their control. Hence the Apostle's advice, Make straight paths for your feet. Remove from your pathway at once every hindrance and stumbling-block which the adversary may put in your way, and keep right on, running for the prize of the high calling and keeping your eye on Jesus and Paul as examples of endurance and overcoming. They endured the temptation, but speedily ended it by promptly casting it from them. We must do likewise; to parley with besetments is to fail; to endeavor to carry them along on the way is impossible --the way is too narrow. We must choose at once whether we will be turned aside by circumstances and obstructions, or whether we will turn them aside and follow on to the end of the way--to glory, honor and immortality.

With time and talents fully on the altar, and with thorough determination and work in overcoming the obstacles put before you by the adversary, what a power for the truth could be daily exercised by the readers of the TOWER. Not that the truth will fail without our effort, but that we need to make the effort on behalf of truth for our own development in grace, and as proof that we are of the overcomers accounted worthy both to suffer the reproach of Christ and to share his glory.

Everyone who possesses these glorious hopes should be a preacher of them; should let the light so shine as to glorify our Father in

heaven. Some can labor in a special manner but one hour a day, some more; all can let a general halo of light shine from the daily walk before their fellow Christians and the world, but not without overcoming the obstacles and besetments with which the adversary is sure to attempt to hinder you. Who is on the Lord's side? Let him make it manifest. It is the weak and small side in the world now, but shall not be so long. Now is the grand opportunity to champion truth. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind and fight a good fight, and soon palms and crowns of glory we shall wear.

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EXTRACTS FROM INTERESTING LETTERS.

Lamar County, Texas, March 30th, 1885.

BROTHER C. T. RUSSELL:--Please send me a few copies of your "Food for Thinking Christians," also a few copies of the TOWER for free distribution. My own number of the TOWER comes regularly and is read with interest by myself and wife, and then carried from one neighbor's house to another till I lose track of them entirely: but they shed light enough in every household that they pass through to awaken an interest in the minds of the readers--enough at least to make them search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so. Several have called on me for the pamphlet entitled "Food for Thinking Christians," and also the "Tabernacle." I think I will be able to send you some subscriptions soon.

Your brother in the one hope.

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Manchester, Mass., May 19, 1885.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I herewith send two dollars for the WATCH TOWER; I cannot afford to go without it. It is about all the teacher I have. There are none in this place that believe with me. I was brought up a Roman Catholic. The dear Lord enlightened my mind and I joined the Baptist Church; but the light grew brighter and I had to come out of the churches or stop growing in grace and knowledge of the truth. I praise God that he has enabled me to follow him, and now I have Catholics and Protestants alike mine enemies, but I realize that he that is for me is more than all them that are against me; and like Paul, I rejoice that he has counted me worthy to suffer with him. The TOWER has been a great comfort to me, and I try to have others read them. The word of the Lord will accomplish that whereunto it was sent, and his servants will obey his commandments and do his will.

If you have any tracts that would enlighten those bound by the creeds, yet striving to serve God, if you send a few, I will use them prudently and be very thankful.

Yours in the Lord.

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Springfield, Mass.

BROTHER RUSSELL, Dear Sir:--I have just received this month's TOWER. Please let my subscription commence with this year. I do not want to lose the reading of any. I feel like one just waking out of sound sleep, dazed and bewildered, and yet feeling that I am really waking up to the truth.

Yours, etc., _____.

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Canton, Ills.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL.--We, that is wife and I, have become so much attached to the Watch Tower that we cannot give it up now. I know not how you got my name, or how it came to us. It came as a light to our minds clearing away the mists of creeds and enables us to see the truths of the Bible in a clearer light. We are still reading and comparing scripture with scripture. We have the privilege of reading the WATCH TOWER "Food" and "Tabernacle," and the chart, and think that through a full consecration and an earnest search after truth, all will be made plainer still. We hope before long to be able to help advance the interests of the work.

Yours in Christ.

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GRADUALLY, NOT SUDDENLY.

Some evidently misunderstood our remarks in last issue relative to faith healing. We do not wish to be understood that during the Millennial age God will limit the methods of restoration to health, to prayer and anointing with oil. We are by no means sure that medicine and other agencies will be discarded. The methods of restitution will doubtless be as varied as were the methods employed by Jesus in healing diseases at his first advent. One secretly touched the hem of his garment; another stretched forth his withered hand; for another he prayed. Some were healed in answer to their own faith (Mark 5:34); some in answer to the faith of another (Matt. 8:5-13; Mark 5:23,42); some were healed instantly (Matt. 8:14,15), and some sent

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away unhealed were cured on the way (Luke 17:14); some were healed by means of an ointment and washing (John 9:7), some gradually (Mark 8:24,25). Likewise we may expect diversities in the operation of restitution now beginning.

Again, some get the idea that we expect that every one now healed by faith, prayer, and anointing with oil, in the name of the Lord, would be sick no more, but speedily attain to human perfection. By no means; we have repeatedly endeavored to show that the entire Millennial age will be a time of restitution, that the work will be very gradual, and that perfection will not be attained by the race until the close of that age. Those who now experience healing, will require healing for other ailments doubtless, and to some extent their freedom from sicknesses will depend upon their purity of life. (John 5:14, and James 5:15,16.) That none could possibly attain to perfection as men yet, is absolutely certain, for the same reason that none healed at Jesus' first advent were made perfect. The sacrifice of the anointed was not yet completed. The body of Christ will not have filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, until the last member of that body has drunk to the dregs the cup of death. Until then, the "Body"

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will not be complete and perfected in spiritual nature, and hence the world's restitution could only have a slight and illustrative beginning until then; for they without us shall not be made perfect. Heb. 11:40.

Others write, saying that though some of the present healings were undoubtedly of God, yet others were performed by Spiritists and were evidently of the devil. We answer, that even admitting this as claimed, it would be no argument against our acknowledging that which is of God as such. Satan has ever sought to counteract the force of truth by counterfeiting it. God sent out the gospel by Jesus and the Apostles, preaching peace and reconciliation by Jesus Christ and his ransom sacrifice, and straightway Satan sends out his ministers as messengers of light (2 Cor. 11:13-15), preaching "another gospel" and "perverting the gospel of Christ." (Gal. 1:6,7). Jesus promised a kingdom and dominion to his faithful followers, and Satan grasping that promise perverted it, and establishing Papacy, taught that it was the kingdom of God promised, etc.

When the apostacy had done its worst, and truth was trampled under the feet of Babylon, and the time came for calling the saints out of Babylon to a higher realization of truth, and a closer communion with God under increasing light from his Word, Satan also began to call "come out," and set snares for the truth hungry in what he is pleased to have called "Churches" also, chief among which are Spiritism and Swedenborgianism, whose bait is "new light." Thus he ensnares some, while he alarms others so greatly that they will not even look outside the so-called "Orthodox" sects for food or light, and are thus kept in bondage and his object

equally subserved. But shall we who have the light and food fear to show it because of Satan's counterfeits? Satan is an old hand at counterfeiting and over three thousand years ago acting through Jannes and Jambres he withstood the truth at the hand of Moses, deceiving the people by his imitations. But did Moses stop, and say, Because others can do to some extent the same things, therefore I will cease? Nay, he did his part and presently the power of his opponents was swallowed up before him. Of a similar class "in the last days" of this age, having "a form of Godliness" Paul speaks (2 Tim. 3:1,5-8), saying that from such we should "turn away," and he assures us that as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so shall these resist the TRUTH. "But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men as their's also was."

We are well aware that spirit-mediums have been creating a great "talk" about their healing of the sick and their successful diagnosing of disease, but we do not know of any actual healing of diseases by these. Satan has considerable of "the power of death," including disease (Heb. 2:14 and Job 2:7), but we are not informed that he has the power of life, which includes health; and if he had the power (which Jesus' words rather intimate--Luke 11:14,17,18), he surely has not the desire to do good and bless except as a means to delude and counteract by counterfeiting the truth.

With Jesus' words before us, we may safely say, that if Satan has turned from being a destroyer to be a restorer, then evidently he is reduced to desperate efforts to maintain his power over mankind, and we may hail this as another sign of the end of his empire; for, If Satan casts out Satan, his kingdom cannot long stand and will the sooner fall.

If Satan and his angels will do good, and heal and bless mankind, we certainly will not cast a straw in their way. Let them do all the good works they will, and the more the better. Commend their good deeds, reprove their evil deeds and false doctrines with the word of the Spirit, the Word of God, and as the Apostle said, They will not proceed far before their folly and inconsistency will be manifest to all.

It is well that we should remember always Jesus' words to the disciples. John said, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us." And Jesus answered that they should not forbid or interfere with anyone doing good works. He does not approve the man's method, etc., but states, as a general principle which none of us should lose sight of, that "He who is not against us is on our part." Mark 9:38-40.

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THE FAITH OF CHRIST.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." 2 Cor. 13:5.

All must admit that there can be no reliable testimony as to what constitutes the faith of Jesus and what are the evidences of its possession outside of God's Word. We must conclude therefore that he who desires that information with its bearing on his relationship to God must seek it there. To do this successfully and satisfactorily the closest scrutiny must be observed in examining not only the foundation upon which we have built, but also the material (truth or error) we have used in building thereon. Faith means belief, confidence or trust: these applied to anything would be faith; but "the faith" is much more than these. This faith besides believing the word of God solely, is productive of and results in the life corresponding to the character of him (Jesus) whom it lays hold on; induced by promises of God's word. First of all, however, by faith in the vicarious ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, we became reconciled and at peace with God. (Rom. 5:1-10.) In this way we became "justified freely from all things" not because of our faith but through faith and because of Jesus work of sacrifice whom we thus rely on as our substitute or ransom. Thus Jesus is made to us the only foundation of hope--"other foundation can no man lay." The faith of Christ however involves much more than acceptance of or belief in Jesus' sacrifice as the at-one-ment between us and the Father. This opened the door of favor to us, that he might become not only all that to us, but also "wisdom and knowledge and sanctification and redemption." In him are hid all these treasures which must be received by us if at all, by faith. After we became reconciled to God, our increased appreciation of the riches of his favor depended on our further progress in presenting ourselves living sacrifices "holy and acceptable to God." In this way we became sharers of THE FAITH which Jesus had; the faith of Christ, of all those who are joint-sacrifices with Jesus and who are promised joint heir-ship, and this is the faith of Christ.

United with Jesus as sacrificers, we have become by THE FAITH sons of God on the divine plane. We were buried with him (Jesus) by baptism into death (Rom. 6:4) to self--the human; and as we reckoned ourselves dead, we became alive, and are living to God by the faith in the Son of God, being "sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise."

Having therefore the same spirit that was in Jesus, the same self-sacrificing life that characterized him will also characterize us if we abide in him and in the faith. And by this we shall know if we be in the faith. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his, and if Christ be in you the body is dead," Rom. 8:9,10. We know we have the faith and the Spirit of Christ by its working out in us as in him, prompt obedience and willing sacrifice. This is the witness of the Holy Spirit to us. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16). "By this we know ...we love God and keep his commandments,and [to us]

his commandments are not grievous" [so that we rejoice to sacrifice in doing his will]. 1 John 5:2,3. This is also manifest to those that are without--"We are living epistles known and read of all men." "Ye shall know them by their fruits" whether THE FAITH of Christ actuates them.

A false presentation of God's character has been Satan's most powerful weapon of attack against the Christian faith. Those who have taken the torment plan of making men repent and believe the gospel have foiled their own purpose. In this they have shown less wisdom than men of the world in blackening God's character to create love, and despising the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth men to repentance. Rom. 2:4. This stigma on the character of God they endeavor to excuse by saying, He must be just. They fail to notice, however, that they make him less just than imperfect man, for in the administration of human justice torture is abhorrent.

Thus by false theories, and neglect of THE faith laid down in the Scripture, God's attributes are made at war with each other, and such cannot say with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the glad tidings...for the righteousness of God by faith is revealed therein in order to faith. Rom. 1:6.--E.D. If God therefore declare through Paul that his goodness leads men to repentance, and his righteousness is revealed for the express purpose of inducing men to have faith in him, how say some that the restraints of society would be gone if the truth were presented. In this they err greatly; God being the judge of what is best.

S. O. BLUNDEN.

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QUESTION COLUMN.

Ques.--Some are disposed still to question the necessity of the outward symbol of Baptism. Can you tell us whether the apostles were ever immersed?

Ans.--A number of Jesus' disciples were previously the disciples of "John the Immerser" and it is scarcely within the limits of reason to suppose that while with John and Jesus they would baptize others and neglect it themselves. Paul was not a whit less than the chiefest of the apostles and he was baptized forthwith by the first of God's children he met. (Acts 9:18.) The Eunuch to whom Phillip preached but one sermon caught the force of baptism to such an extent that he embraced the first opportunity of sufficiency of water to be planted in the likeness of Christ's death. (Acts 8:33-39.) When Cornelius and his house believed and after they had received the Holy Spirit, Peter commanded the symbolic, water immersion. (Acts 10:48.) Is it probable that he commanded others to obey the

Master's example while he himself neglected it? Do those who now question the "necessity" of this symbol, command others to thus follow the Master's footprints and fulfill all righteousness?

But we have never presented this question as one of "necessity," but as one of joyful privilege to all who really see its force and are really buried with Christ. To treat it as compulsory is the very opposite of its spirit. That which is compulsory is not a sacrifice. Hence the propriety of this being presented both by the Lord and by us as a privilege.

Another letter inquires whether the fact of the Lord's presence does not in some manner relieve them from the necessity of performing this symbol. We answer here, that so long as the sacrifice is in process, it is certainly proper as it ever was for those who have never done so to symbolize that sacrifice. When the sacrifice is over and the whole "body" glorified with the head, there will be neither opportunity nor propriety for either the actual drinking of the "cup" of Christ's sufferings and being "buried" with him, nor will there then be propriety in drinking the symbolic "cup" (wine) or performing the symbolic baptism, in water.

No; there is no necessity laid upon you to be baptized, either actually or symbolically; neither is there necessity that you should be of Christ's Bride and joint heir; neither is there necessity that you must sit with him in the throne and share his crown of glory and honor and immortality. The Lord will find a sufficient number to complete the "little flock" without forcing or urging anyone. But if you are in the race at all, "take heed, let no man take thy crown." See that you have the spirit of sacrifice burning within you and you will not seek what you can avoid, but cry "Lord what will thou have me to do." As in the beginning, so it must be now: "They that gladly received his word were baptized." Acts 2:41.

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COMING BY-AND-BY.

A better day is coming, a morning promised long,
When truth and right with holy might, shall overthrow the wrong;
When Christ the Lord will listen to every plaintive sigh,
And stretch his hand o'er sea and land, with justice by and by.

The boast of haughty tyrants no more shall fill the air,
But aged and youth shall love the truth and speed it everywhere;
No more from want and sorrow shall come the hopeless cry,
But war shall cease, and perfect peace will flourish by and by.

The tidal wave is coming, the year of jubilee,
With shout and song it sweeps along, like billows of the sea;
The jubilee of nations shall ring through earth and sky,
The dawn of grace draws on apace, 'tis coming by and by.

Oh, for that glorious dawning we watch and wait and pray,
Till o'er the height the morning light shall drive the gloom away,
And when the heavenly glory shall flood the earth and sky,
We'll bless the Lord for all his works and praise him by and by.

--Sel.

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CHRISTIANITY DEFINED.

An Exchange gives the following definition of the word Christian:--

"A Christ-ian is one who has the Christ spirit. This is our understanding of the original meaning of the word. We suppose all will assent to and accept it as correct....Men are Christ-ians according to the spirit of the Christ which is in them and manifested in the flesh. In some persons it is small, in others large. Either hidden or manifest this spirit resides in all. Consciously or unconsciously it is contained in every man or woman that lives or has lived."

We are well aware that the above passes current for truth, and that nearly "all assent to and accept it as correct;" but we shall neither by silence nor in any other way, leave the impression that the TOWER assents to such a definition. We strongly protest that it is a false representation, and a rapidly growing error. One reason perhaps for the growing popularity of the above definition is that it embraces nearly all mankind under a name which has grown popular among civilized people.

According to this definition, nearly every one outside of prisons, gambling dens, etc., and many in them, are Christians; for is there not something true and noble in ninety-nine out of every hundred people? Our Exchange declares that "consciously or unconsciously, it [the spirit of Christ] is contained in every man or woman that lives, or has lived." Then it would follow according to its idea, that "every man or woman that lives or has lived," has been a Christian. Only by following to its legitimate conclusion such a definition of Christianity is its absurdity manifest. And yet to this absurd definition, as our Exchange asserts, nearly all assent.

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Confucius, Plato and other moral philosophers truly deserve the respect and esteem of all who can appreciate their strivings after righteousness and truth, but to hold them up as Christians -- Apostles of Christianity--because they recognized and practiced some of the truths which Christianity inculcates, would be as absurd and illogical, as to call every stone a diamond, because a diamond is a stone.

Truly "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."
But this does not prove that because a man possesses some elements of character corresponding to some elements of the spirit or disposition of Christ, he is therefore one of His followers--a Christian. In like manner it would be correct to say, If this be not a stone, it is not a diamond; but such a statement would not imply to any intelligent mind, that everything that has any of the qualities of a stone, is a diamond.

Those who call morality, Christianity, and who recognize everyone possessed of moral qualities as a Christian, have accepted a false standard, and all the conclusions they may draw therefrom, must be equally false. According to this false standard, the Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day at whose instance he was crucified were very eminent Christians; for certainly a more morally exact people, it would be difficult to find on the pages of history. They were people of noted piety according to this same worldly moral standard. They were noted as such, as highly in their day, as are the clergy of the various religious systems to-day; yet if these were Christians, the founder of the system, Jesus, did not know it, for He said of them "Ye are of your father the devil." (John 8:44.) Not that they were utterly devoid of every moral principle, but they were under the control of evil in the main as is the large majority of mankind to-day, who are no more Christians than were those who crucified Jesus. The apostles' estimate of who are Christians differs widely from that of our Exchange, but agree with that of Jesus. John says (1 John 5:19) "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." And again (3:1.) "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the SONS OF GOD [Christians]: therefore, the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not."

According to the moralist's estimate set forth by our Exchange, the preaching of Christ Jesus throughout the world was unnecessary. If preaching be necessary it should be morality and not justification and remissions of sins in the name of Jesus through faith in him, and a work accomplished on behalf of all by Him. Thus they could go among the Chinese and teach morality in the name of Confucius; they could go among the Mohamedians preaching morality in the name of Mahomet and find what our Exchange calls "Christians." Many of these are doubtless as moral as people living in so called Christian lands. But Paul knew and taught far differently, and our Exchange and all who accept such as its definition of Christianity as correct, would do well to carefully consider the teachings of the great Apostle and exponent of Christianity. He believed with Peter and John that Jesus was the only "door" of access to God, that "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." "Neither is there salvation in any other." Acts 4:12.

It was because he believed that faith in Jesus was the only way of salvation, that he labored and sacrificed to spread that name; and in

this light how forcible his argument when he says (Rom. 10:14): "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," but "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" His argument is that Faith in Christ is essential, and that knowledge is a pre-requisite to faith.

Hence our argument is: No one can be a Christian without first having a knowledge of Christ. Not merely a historic knowledge that such person lived, died and rose, but a knowledge of the object of these, and the results accomplished thereby, for us. All this and a grateful mental acceptance of those results, constitutes believing in Jesus--believing in Him as our ransom, who in consequence shall soon deliver from death those whom he redeemed with his own precious blood.

To such a believer only, is the name Christian at all applicable, and in its strictest sense it applies only to those, who heartily believing, present themselves joint sacrifices together with Jesus; or as he himself expresses it, (Matt. 16:24): "If any man come after me [be my disciple, a Christ-ian] let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Let him deny all ability to wash away his own sins, let him deny his own righteousness and accept of mine, and then become my follower.

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ" in this respect--to sacrifice earthly advantages and things highly esteemed among men, for the sake of being co-workers with Jesus in the accomplishing of the plans of Jehovah-- "he is none of His;" (Rom. 8:9.) he is not in the true sense of the word a Christian. Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.... If any man suffer as a CHRISTIAN let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." 1 Pet. 4:12-16.

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TO THE ELECT OF GOD (IN A TIME OF TROUBLE.)

The elect of God exist, although no man can individually identify them. They are after a common family likeness, although differently situated in the present evil world. They have one faith, and one aim, and one mind, though following different occupations, and living in different parts of the earth. We greet them in the name of the Lord, wishing them and praying for them grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Beloved, ye are known of God, though you may not be discerned by men. You are scattered up and down the world, in a cloudy and dark day, undistinguishable to human eyes, from the common mass of mankind. Your divine mark or seal, wherever you are to be

found, consists of the belief, obedience and love of the truth which God has caused to be set forth in the writings of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Apostles. Having this mark, you are precious in his eyes. Your faith is well-pleasing to him; your obedience, your free-will offerings, your sacrifices in his service at a time when all the world ignores him ascend before him as the odor of a sweet smell, and are acceptable to him through the High Priest of our profession. And they will be spoken of again, to your great joy, in a day when they will seem to have been all forgotten, and when they will seem too small to be mentioned in the presence of the world-stirring events that will belong to the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. I write to you concerning our common affliction--common in a large sense. I do not write to you because I know you. Some of you I doubtless know; but no man knows you as "the Lord knows them that are his." A man cannot even know himself in this sense. As our beloved brother Paul has said, "I judge not mine ownself; he that judgeth me is the Lord." We know the principles upon which men will be saved, because they have been revealed; but we are not capable of discerning infallibly where these principles have had their effectual work, though we may discern where they are set aside and violated. I write to you as those whom the Lord loves, and who will be banded together in a joyous company when the Lord comes. I write to you as one of you, having the same experience and the same

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need. The scorner may mockingly enquire what right I have to write to such. I answer, the right of brotherly love, which belongs to every man who can rise to his privileges in Christ. Brotherly love leads to brotherly concern in all things, but particularly in those that relate to our standing in God, our position in the present probation and our hope concerning the purpose of God which will surely be accomplished. Your present lot is grievous in many respects; and at times you are greatly cast down, and nigh despairing altogether of the Lord's promised kindness in Christ. I write to remind you of the cause you also have for encouragement and joy.

You feel unworthy of the great salvation to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; remember that, though, only those whom the Lord esteems worthy will enter the kingdom, yet part of that worthiness consists in the very sense of unworthiness which oppresses you. God's favor is for those only who rate themselves at God's standard; and by this standard we are, as Jacob confessed himself to be, "unworthy of the least of all the mercy and the truth" that the Lord shows to his people. For what are we at best but worms of the earth, fashioned in God's image, made of his clay, and permitted to live for a few years on the face of his glorious earth. The most righteous man can say with Job, whom the Lord approved, "Behold, I am vile...wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." If a righteous man could feel this abasement -- (most reasonable abasement in mortal flesh in the presence of the

divine glory)--is it a marvel that we who add error to weakness and sin to corruptibility should sometimes feel "broken in heart and contrite in spirit"? It is right: but be not destroyed by this abasement. It is pleasing to God. To such he more than once plainly declared he looks with approval.

But your sins, they distress you: it is right they should; but look again and be comforted. There is a sin not unto death. You are not callous towards the Lord. You do not run in the way he has forbidden. You do not love the present world, and run with it in all its "ungodliness and worldly lusts--the lusts of the eye and the pride of life." You do not deny God and live in deliberate disobedience of his commandments. On the contrary, you love his name and word; you believe his testimonies and rejoice in his institutions; you love, and look, and long for the appearing of his Son whom he has promised to send; and you are striving in all the ways of life, so far as in you lies, to do his will as expressed in his commandments. But you fail often. You come short of what you would do. You frequently do things you would not do; and you are distressed on this account. It is right to be so; but do not forget the provision that has been made: Christ has taken away our sins. We are washed in his blood. He stands in the

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Father's presence, not only as the accepted sacrifice, but as the appointed high priest for his house. He ever liveth to make intercession for us, according to the will of God. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to forgive us all our iniquity. If we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins. God forgives us for Christ's sake.

Perhaps you are oppressed with a sense of the unsuitability of such persons as you, being promoted to honor and power in the kingdom of God. Remember it is God's deliberate plan to make choice of such. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called,...but God hath chosen the weak things of this world." Jesus spoke of this, and said: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." He even gave thanks to the Father for proceeding on this plan. There is a reason in it all. The kingdom is to be established for God's honor, not man's; for the Spirit's objects and not those of flesh. Hence, it is a necessity that men be provided for its administration who are not proud and lifted up in their eyes, but who are lowly and who know and reverence God so deeply as to find pleasure in his exaltation. The blessing of man will come out of it all, but glory to God first. If God made choice of the aristocracy, his purpose, ("I will be exalted among the heathen") would not be accomplished. They are full of themselves. He chooses men who are empty of themselves that they may be full of God. Poor men, in the day of evil, are the kind of material out of which he can provide the earthen vessels in which his eternal treasure can be deposited, "that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man."

But you say: "Such poor weak people as we, are not fit to be kings and priests." True, not as you are now. It is not as you are now that you will be elevated to that position. You will be changed from the mortal to the immortal, and this change will fit you in every way for what you will have to do. It will give you strength and grace and capacity and gladness of heart. You will be able to carry yourselves as kings, and to sustain yourselves without fatigue, and to bring the wisdom of Solomon to bear in the judgment of all matters you may have in charge. Qualification of this sort is all in God, who will liberally crown his children with the highest gifts in the day of their exaltation. The one thing needful is a humble, loving, obedient heart and pliant will, which can only be developed and put to the proof by the exercise of faith in a day like this; and the operation can only be successfully performed, in most cases, in circumstances of poverty and self-denial. Consequently your lowly position and inefficient state, instead of being a cause of dubitation, should help your confidence, as furnishing in your case, the likely elements of suitability for the glory to be revealed.

But in another way, you may feel the cloud return. The time is long, and human nature is weak, and power fails, and you feel yourselves walking towards the darkness which bounds the horizon of all natural life; yea, the darkness will oftentimes steal into your inmost soul, and fill you with an indescribable horror, as you survey the vastness of the universe, in which God is apparently silent, and the almost infinite mass of abortive life that appears upon the earth from generation to generation. Be comforted concerning this, also: this darkness is inseparable from God's plan. Nay more: it is essential to it. Human life on the earth can no more reach the glory to be revealed without this experience, than the fruits of the field can appear without ploughing and harrowing. It is part of the plan. God's wisdom is in it, and his love, for God is love. We shall see it. Meanwhile we must exercise faith, without which he cannot be pleased. Faith working by love can see a little even now--by starlight, as it were. The darkness is prolonged for the world as a whole; but it is short for any generation. It has been on the earth for ages, but no generation lasts for ages. We knew nothing of it last century; our turn had not come. Our turn has now come: it depresses, but it will soon be over, and when over, the next thing in our experience (apparently the immediate next) if actually delayed however long, is the eternal sunshine of the Father's manifested presence, power and glory. We shall find then what has been done for us by present exposure in the darkness and coldness of earth's winter. It is the Father's appointment for us meanwhile. What can we say but "Thy will be done?" He doth not willingly afflict. Not only so, but he ministers to our need while we pass through the darkness. None of the elect of God is left alone. God is with him to guide and strengthen in many invisible ways. God cares for him: pities him; chastens him; upholds and prepares him for the inheritance that is in store for all the sons of light: an inheritance in which they will commune with unspeakable joy, after

the prolonged and bitter fight of faith victoriously waged in their several evil days. But remember the end. Remember the joyful muster of the Lord's elect.

This touches another sorrow you have. In your several spheres of probation, you are yearning for what you never realise. You hunger and thirst for the prevalence of a noble enlightenment among men. You love God yourselves with all your heart and souls. You long to see others rejoice in him and exalt him in a sincere and intelligent way. You have a compassionate regard for the condition of mankind, and desire, with even a tearful earnestness, to see them in a blessed condition. You sigh and faint for the delights of sanctified and intellectual friendship in which the hearts of companions should open with a noble warmth to the great and noble topics that the universe presents to the mind, instead of gravitating heavily to the petty accidents of animal life. Ah, and you are afflicted with your own incapacities that blur the sight and enfeeble the hands, and drag you into abysses of gloom as dark and dreadful as Jonah's habitation in the storm-tost sea.--Now, there is comfort concerning all this. It is somewhat negative in its form; but, then, it is true, and true comfort wears well, whereas false comfort fails you in the long run. The comfort is that these things are unattainable in the present condition of human life upon earth, but they are attainable and will be realized in their very perfection in the kingdom of God. The recognition of this is a help. We reconcile ourselves hopefully to our lot, enduring the hardness of the desert by knowing that it is a desert, and in the confident anticipation of the land of promise at the end of the journey. One comfort more. It is not displeasing to the Father that we thus hunger and thirst to the point even of misery, after righteousness. On the contrary, Jesus said, "Blessed are ye that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for ye shall be filled."

Finally, you are troubled and distressed by dissensions in the household of faith. Many of you have been plunged into deep grief, even unto many tears. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial." It is nothing new. It is the modern form of a very ancient and

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frequent experience, resulting from the fermentation of diverse elements brought together by the knowledge of the truth. We must trust to God's wisdom in permitting of the admixture of these elements. He has done so from the beginning. Do not be too much distressed by it. The results that come of it do not alter things; they only prove, and try, and manifest things. The word of the Lord standeth sure amid all the chafes, and changes, and corruptions of men. The Lord Jesus, from the serene exaltation of the heavens, has for centuries beheld the confusions, and commotions, and wars that have wrought havoc among men in his absence. He has beheld them without surprise. He foresaw them and foretold them. He said there would be strife and division; that iniquity would abound;

that the love of many would wax cold; that the trial would be too severe for some, but he that should endure to the end would be saved. Can we imagine that such things are permitted without a purpose? The apostolic age was rife with them; is it a marvel if we have our share? There is but one answer on the part of enlightened reason, and that answer will help us to stand in the midst of the evil and to hold fast unmoved the hope of the gospel, looking to Christ, who lives, distrusting ourselves, who die. Our life is fleeting away; the battle will soon be over. Be strong and of good comfort. Stand fast; quit you like men. Keep close to the word in daily reading, and the peace of God will rule your hearts and minds and preserve you amid all chafes and tumults, unto his glorious kingdom, which will heal all sores, and chase all darkness for ever away.

Your fellow-sufferer, fellow-soldier, fellow-pilgrim and fellow-suppliant of the mercy of God unto eternal life.

--Robert Roberts.

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THEN, THE END.

"Then, the End, when he shall give up the kingdom to the God and Father; when he shall have abrogated all government and all authority and power. For he must reign till he has placed all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. 15:24,25.

It is a blessed privilege which the Church of Christ may now enjoy, to trace the plan of God for human salvation clear through to its consummation, and then to read with joyful satisfaction --Finis.

So we find it foretold. Six thousand years of man's suffering and dying experience is ended, and we are in the beginning of the seventh (thousand year) day of human existence. This seventh millennium is to be the most marked and eventful day in the history of the race, a day to be specially remembered throughout the multiplied ages to follow. For six thousand years death has been swallowing up the human race as fast as it came into existence. The elements of decay, both physical and moral, are at work at the heart of every opening bud of human life. But the now dawning seventh day shall witness the reversing of this order, the undoing of all this work of destruction.

It is variously designated in the Scriptures as the Day of Judgment, the Times of Restitution, the Resurrection Day, and the Day of Christ. In the dawn of this day the kingdom is to be set up, and so thorough will be its work that when this seventh day shall close, no force or governmental power will be necessary to secure obedience to God's will; for his will shall then be done on earth as it is done in heaven, without compulsion, freely, and from choice.

The great work of Christ during this age is Resurrection, Restitution. Few can believe that such a work is possible, even with God; and in order to exercise faith in the promise of a resurrection, and at the same time to help themselves over the difficulty of a seeming impossibility, the majority of Christians ignore the true meaning of death, and claim that after death the being is more alive than ever. But admitting the true significance of death as the Scriptures so clearly define it, viz.: extinction, annihilation, we ask, with Paul, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:8.

It is not presumable that we should be able to fully comprehend the philosophy of the resurrection or re-creation. The work of creating a living intelligent being is a work which we find it impossible to understand. Many men have great inventive genius, and have done many wonderful works, yet not one knows the secret of creative power: it is superhuman, beyond both our power and our comprehension. But to re-create an intelligent being who had once been utterly destroyed, so that it and others will recognize its identity, is a still greater work; but why should it be thought beyond the scope of divine power? It is not surprising that the world does not believe it, but the child of God led by the Spirit should find no such barrier to his faith. The world will, in due time, be convinced of the truth by actual demonstration, while the Church is taught by a different, yet equally convincing method; if we continue under the Spirit's leading, and turn not back to the darkness of unguided human reason.

The awakening from death will be one of the early events in the day of Christ, though not one of the first. As we have learned, the living nations must first be brought to a degree of readiness for such an event. The dead shall not be awakened until surrounding circumstances, etc., are more favorable for their discipline and development. The great "day of his preparation," "The Day of the Lord," the Day of Wrath upon the Nations, must first do its work in overthrowing the oppressing kingdoms of this world, in casting down great Babylon with its deceptions and snares, and in binding Satan, the great enemy.

The new, the heavenly kingdom, must be fully established, and its power and authority recognized by all the living, and the work of reformation among them be under way first. We do not presume that any of the dead will be brought back to be subjected to the same temptation and snare which now make shipwreck of the virtue of so many. There will be no licensed evils, and allurements to vice will not be permitted under that reign.

When the angry nations, worn out with their own vain endeavors to adjust human affairs, shall realize that only

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anarchy is the result, and shall learn to be still and to know that Christ is Lord (Psa. 46:10), and shall recognize His authority and

power, then the preparatory work will be accomplished, and the proper work of the new kingdom may begin--the glorious work of restitution; bringing mankind back to their "former estate" of human perfection and Godlikeness. Gen. 1:26,27.

The awakening from death, as well as the healing of those who have not completely died, are only the beginnings of restitution or resurrection, which will not be complete until the original perfection of mind and body, lost for the race by Adam, and redeemed by Christ, shall have been restored to all who would come to the waters of life and drink freely.

The awakening will find men morally and intellectually as they were when their existence terminated; hence the raising to perfection will require training, discipline, etc., etc.; and we are told that Christ shall reign until the work shall be fully accomplished-- "He must reign till he has placed all enemies under his feet. Even death, the last enemy, will be rendered powerless," [or, Death shall finally be rendered powerless]. Vs. 25,26. When sin is completely eradicated; when sickness and pain are no more; when all sorrow and sighing and tears are forever banished; then, and not until then, will death be destroyed, Adamic death, the great enemy, will be rendered powerless, destroyed, blotted out completely under the reign of him who obtained this authority and power by the sacrifice of himself. The object of Christ's reign is to bring about the grand results for which he died. The world redeemed by his death shall be saved by his life. Rom. 5:10. We are assured by the prophet, as well as by the Apostle, that he shall not fail, but shall come off victorious over death. Isa. 25:8; Hos. 13:14; 1 Cor. 15:25,54-57. Jesus shall not fail to accomplish his great mission. He must reign until he has accomplished it, when he will deliver up the restored empire to "God even the Father." Were we to guess how long a time this restitution would require, we would probably estimate differently, some longer, some a shorter period; but we are not left to conjecture. We are informed that it will be fully accomplished in a thousand years, during which time Satan and evil will be under restraints, and the saints, with Jesus their Head, shall live and reign. Rev. 20:3,4. And how fitting, six days of evil and degradation, and one day of restitution, ushering in the countless ages of everlasting righteousness and happiness on earth as in heaven, among men as among angels.

It follows then, that the thousand years of Christ's reign shall complete the great work of salvation, and beyond it there is no probation for any; all will have had a full opportunity, with every favorable advantage. In the end or closing period of that age Satan is to be loosed for a little season for the final testing of mankind, and at its close he and those who follow his spirit and leadership shall be destroyed. That will be the "second death," from which there is no recovery. Rev. 21:7,8.

Jesus ransomed no one from the second death; the ransom he gave was in settlement of the first or Adamic death only (Rom. 5:17-19), and it is it, that

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he shall destroy during his reign, by releasing from its dominion, all whose liberty he purchased with his own precious blood. All Jesus' enemies shall be subjected to his power, and every person and principle wilfully opposed to his and the Father's righteous law shall be destroyed. The second death is not Christ's enemy, but becomes a servant of righteousness in the permanent removal of everything opposed to righteousness. Nothing will be left to mar the perfectly restored creation. Then Christ shall present his finished work to the Father--a work whose perfection and glory will highly honor both the Father's plan and the Son's execution of it--a work which will make manifest the wisdom, power, justice, and love of God to all his intelligent creatures, and which will lead men to honor the Son who executed the plan, even as they honor the Father who arranged it.

When the work of restoration is complete and mankind has regained the image of God obliterated by sin, there will no longer be necessity for coercion. Obedience will be cheerfully and joyfully rendered when God's law is written in every heart. Hence, when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, his will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven--freely and from choice--joyfully. The language of every heart will then be, "I delight to do thy will O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." The perfect human nature will then be as it was at first, a law inscribed nature. (Jer. 31:33.) There is no necessity for the exercise of compulsory power where knowledge and ability are perfect, and where love reigns supreme in the heart.

To deliver up mankind to Jehovah's government before they have been perfectly restored, would be to deprive them of the protection of the precious blood before they had obtained all the blessing it was designed to afford them. To deliver them over imperfect to God's government, would be to deliver them to sure destruction; for God's law is perfect and approves only those who are absolutely perfect, and condemns all others as it did Adam, for even one sin. Therefore as Paul expresses it (Heb. 10:31), when speaking of some who would ignore and deny Jesus' ransom and protection: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." It is fearful because of the absolute perfection of God's law, and the fact that His only allowance for imperfection is through Jesus, until the imperfect ones have been restored. But when at the close of the Millennial reign the whole world shall be delivered up to God, even the Father, it will no longer be a fearful thing, because having been perfectly restored by the Redeemer, all will then delight to do God's will perfectly.

It has been suggested and publicly taught by some that the ages to follow the Millennium will afford opportunity for the perfecting of such as during the Millennial age will not submit to the authority of Christ; and that by repeated endeavors, through ages if necessary, the incorrigible shall all be brought to obedience to God; and that thus, not one of God's creatures shall ever be destroyed --even Satan not excepted.

This idea is regarded by its advocates as a marked evidence of their superior generosity, love, and good will toward all. But leaving this out of the question for the present, let us consider briefly if the suggestion has any real foundation.

First, we have seen that the reign of Christ is foretold to be of a thousand years' duration (Rev. 20:4), and that at the end of that time he gives up the kingdom. (1 Cor. 15:24.) From this we must conclude that if there is to be any probation, or reconciliation of any beyond that time, it must be accomplished through some other agency than that of Christ.

Secondly, we have seen that the object of Christ's reign is stated to be the restitution of all things, the resurrection work Acts 3:19-24; 1 Cor. 15:20-26.

If the above suggestion were true, if it could be proven from the Scriptures, then it would follow that Christ shall fail to fully accomplish the work assigned to him, and that he will give it up at the end of the thousand years because of his inability to complete it, and that some other agency shall accomplish it.

But is this true? We answer unhesitatingly and emphatically, No. We are sure that the entire work of reconciliation --restoration, is to be accomplished through Christ, because it is written, that God "hath committed all judgment unto the Son," that "He shall not fail nor be discouraged until he have set judgment in the earth" (Isa. 42:4), and that "He must reign till he hath placed all enemies under his feet,"--in subjection.

We are not left in doubt that the work of reconciling the world will be accomplished within the limits of Christ's reign (Rev. 20:4), because this is the very object of that reign. And beyond doubt God is able to undo in one thousand years, the work which Satan has accomplished in six thousand years.

There is absolutely no ground for believing in a probation for any beyond that time, because it is expressly stated, that in the end of that time, Satan and those who follow his leading shall be destroyed, and that Christ shall have put all enemies under his feet. (Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20:15).

On the strength of these scriptures we consider it clearly proven that God can and will make a thorough end of evil, and of evil doers who prove themselves incorrigible, and that speedily; and that the ages following the Millennium shall be ages of eternal blessedness, without the least alloy of sin. The righteous shall

flourish and "evil doers shall be cut off"--"in His day"--the Millennial day.

Generosity, benevolence, and good will, are beautiful and commendable traits of character when centered on proper objects, but if extended towards the enemies of God, they become obnoxious in his sight, and worthy of condemnation. When the law of God condemned a guilty criminal to death, all Israel was commanded to stone him, thus expressing their acquiescence and approval of God's judgment. (Deut. 13:9.)

To claim a generosity and benevolence beyond that expressed in the Word of God, is to assume superiority to God, and is very un-Christlike. He who sympathizes with the evil doer whom God condemns, is partaker of his evil deeds. (2 John 11; Psa. 15:4.)

Let us seek God's will in God's way and it will speedily reprove and correct the vanity of frail humanity, should it attempt to be either wise or benevolent above and beyond what is written. "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach His way." Psa. 25:9. Let all the meek answer with assurance, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways."

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"BEFORE honor is humility; and before exaltation is humiliation. Pride is a besetting sin of this age, and spiritual pride is one of the devil's strongest snares. Beware of these pitfalls."

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EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION.

"It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: and to you who are troubled, rest, [together] with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels [agencies], in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction [aionion--not limited, i.e., upon which destruction no limit has been placed,] from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power: When he shall [have] come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe (...) in that day." 2 Thes. 1:6-10.

This passage positively contradicts two classes of theorists. Those who claim that all will be saved eternally, are contradicted by the Apostle's statement that a class will merit and receive destruction, in harmony with Jesus' statement relative to the same "goat" class in Matt. 25:46. The large class which claims on the contrary that the punishment of the wicked is everlasting torture, are equally contradicted by the Apostle. He declares that the capital

punishment which God will inflict upon the finally impenitent is DESTRUCTION, and that a class will receive this punishment or wages of sin--death.

But we notice the above passage specially, because some have thought it to teach that the class "who know not God," will be destroyed immediately when the Lord shall become "present," and thus fail to share in the Millennial blessings.

Aside from the saints who shall rest, the Apostle refers to two classes: the ignorant, who know not God [do not appreciate God's character and plans] and obey not the gospel," and "all them that believe" in that [Millennial] day.

First the Lord comes--is present; next comes the revealing of his presence. Until the revealing or manifesting of the Lord's presence, none will know of it except his saints, his "friends," (John 15:14) to whom it is revealed by faith through the testimony of the Scripture. Presently comes the revealing to the world which will be in flaming fire; trouble, judgments--consumingly destructive to evil and ignorance, and wrongs of every sort; taking vengeance, visiting tribulation upon evil systems and all wrong-doers.

This flaming fire, or punishment of wrong doing, with stripes and penalties, will continue to burn during the entire

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Millennial age against wrong-doers, for Jesus reigns in order to "put down" all evil and the final result is stated to be the development of the two classes above referred to.

Those "who believe in that day" when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and who come into harmony with him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life shall be blessed; and He shall be "glorified" in the final perfection of all such in the end of the Millennial age--"all them that believe--in that day." On the other hand those who shall continue to be of the class who appreciate not God's character and obey not the good tidings of restitution shall be then accounted wilful sinners against full light and opportunity; and as such meet the specified and just reward: they shall "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." For these there is not a further gleam of hope in either reason or Scripture. The object of Jesus' reign is to permit all who desire life on God's conditions, to obtain it. That reign will not close until its object shall have been fully accomplished every redeemed son of Adam shall have

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full opportunity of proving himself worthy to retain the life which the great Restorer redeemed with his own. With the full end of trial must come a full end of evil: Neither sin nor sinners can go beyond the Millennial age and with its close all such shall be destroyed.

Seven thousand years of mingled evil God sets before us as the limit. "The Lord preserveth all them that love him, but all the wicked will he destroy." Psa. 145:20.

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GOD'S ORDER.

But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. 1 Cor. 11:3.

The Apostle Paul here uses the human body as an illustration of God's order and arrangement among his intelligent creatures. The symbol is an apt one, and suggestive of perfect harmony. The head is the director and care-taker of the body; every interest of the body is taken into consideration by the head, and every possible provision made and applied to meet those interests. And in turn, the members of the body are always at the prompt and willing service of the head. And such is the sympathy between the various members that if one is disabled the other members are ever on the alert to execute the plans devised by the head for its recovery.

The headship of Jehovah was expressed to Adam in his perfect condition in Eden, when God said: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, dying, thou shalt die (Gen. 2:16,17,-- margin). Here was an expression of Jehovah's rightful authority, his loving care and his generous provision--his headship. Man in turn should have expected to reverence, respect and obey the authority, to reciprocate the love and to gratefully accept and enjoy Jehovah's bounty. In the obedience expected, the idea of base servility was absent. Love commanded and love should have delighted in obedience.

Even Christ Jesus, highly exalted as he is, delights to acknowledge the headship of Jehovah--"My Father is greater than I"; "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." And again: "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psa. 40:8). In harmony with this thought of the headship of Jehovah, the prophet Isaiah represents Christ as the "Arm of Jehovah" (Isa. 53:1; 59:16), and in obedience to Jehovah's will he was active, prompt and willing, even unto death. Thus our Lord set us an example of the true relationship which should exist between himself the head and the members of His body.

Since Christ has redeemed mankind from death, all judgment, authority and power is given unto him; the office of the head is now vested in him; hence Paul declares: The head of man is Christ. And whatever is implied by this term in expressing the relationship between our Lord Jesus and Jehovah, his head, is also implied in that relation between Christ and man. He, then, who would be

perfect, must find his chief delight in learning and doing the will of Christ, even as Christ Jesus delights to do the will of Jehovah. It should be his constant aim to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:5.

The next step in God's order indicated by the Apostle, is man the head of woman, or as shown in Eph. 5:23, the husband the head of the wife. Many who see clearly the headship of Jehovah, and the headship of Christ, fail to see the headship of man in the domestic relation. Prejudice, public sentiment and the abuse of power, have made this and similar expressions of the faithful Apostle quite unpopular. And this is not surprising, in the fallen and disordered condition of humanity. The Apostle Paul is variously charged with being a despiser of women, and as speaking without divine authority; and this even among Christians. But when rightly viewed, Paul, as usual, is found to give faithful expression to the divine order dictated by unerring wisdom for the highest good and happiness of all.

If the husband is the head of the wife, it implies exactly the same responsibilities on the part of each as named above. The husband should be the protector, provider and director in the affairs of life, and the wife the cheerful, willing co-worker in harmony with his will. He, therefore, who would assume the relation of head, should see that he is capable and willing to fill it after the divine pattern; and she who would become a man's partner in life, should see that she is ready to fill such position according to the divine arrangement.

Yes, says some one, that would all do very well if men were perfect, but we know that it not unfrequently happens that the wife has more ability and judgment to act as head than the husband. Very true, but that should be considered before such contracts are made. If unhappily it has not been considered in time, such wives should make the best of the situation and quietly assist in the office of head, with as much modesty, and as little appearance of doing so, as the circumstances will admit. It also happens, says another, that the husband's will often runs counter to the Lord's will; how then? We answer, If the husband is consecrated to the Lord, and yet his will appears to be out of harmony with the Lord's will, he will be very ready, either to prove his course to be in harmony with the Lord's will or to change it. And here we see the wisdom which dictates that we should not be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14). But if such contracts have been formed before we became consecrated believers, we must bear in mind that our first responsibility is now to our Lord our Heavenly Bridegroom. The worldly husband is not the head of his wife as a "new creature" espoused to Christ. Her first allegiance, is, therefore, to her real though invisible Lord, and in so far as may be consistent with this new relation, she should endeavor to fulfill the old also--a thing not possible in every respect. For one of those consecrated to God as living sacrifices to thereafter become unequally yoked with one of

the world's children, is to violate the direct command of God (2 Cor. 6:14), and to take a long step towards ignoring union with Christ, "for what communion hath light with darkness"? The children of this world strive for the things of this world and delight in the world's approval, while the consecrated child of God has renounced all these and should be striving only to obtain those things which are beyond and entirely unknown to the world. But if both are united in the Lord, and walking after the Spirit, to do the will of the husband is to do the will of Christ.

The Christian wife sustains the same relation to the Christian husband that the Christian husband sustains to Christ, and that Christ sustains to God who is head over all. Should submission on the part of any be regarded as mere servility? By no means. Christ did not so regard it; why should we? There is neither servility nor tyranny where love rules. Love is neither boastful of its authority nor ashamed of its submission.

This order of headship we believe will still be God's order when all things are brought to perfection; and although there is much friction and lack of harmony now, because of human imperfection, there will be none whatever then. When Christ having finished his work delivers up the kingdom to the Father, he shall still be "subject to the Father." The wife will then be subject to the husband because it will be her delight to do his will, for the woman was made for the man; and the husband will delight to honor the wife, because she is the glory of her husband.

Ah, says Mr. Ingersol, when God said: "Thy husband shall rule over thee," he established domestic slavery. Truly domestic slavery has followed, but did God establish it? Not at all. Sin established it. It is a part of the wages of sin. Man, created to bless by his power to rule, too often falls into the error of tyrannical misrule, and the desire of the wife which is toward her husband, alas, often ends in bitter disappointment --just as God had said. And not until the remedy is fully applied will the curse be lifted. And when that remedy is fully applied, man will recognize his true position and fill it, and woman likewise. The husband will delight to honor the wife as the weaker vessel, and the wife will see that she reverences her husband. The wife will look up with a lawful pride in her husband's

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manly strength and glory, while he will regard with admiration and affection her womanly grace--not equal and alike in all respects, but each possessing those qualities of heart and mind which make them companions for each other.

If the relationship between husband and wife in the divine order stands thus, it cannot be true as some teach, that man and woman are exact equals in every respect. God never makes one the head over another exact equal. Jehovah is superior to Christ, Christ superior to man and man superior to woman the weaker vessel.

Man's superiority consists in his greater strength, both physical and mental. These various steps are in God's order. True, in the present mixed and imperfect condition, many women are superior to many men, but such women should be very sure not to become wives of such men; for in so doing they must either violate the divine order (Eph. 5:22), or else submit themselves to an inferior which is also out of harmony with the Lord's design.

In view of these considerations, let us note the instruction of the Apostle Paul, and see that its very object is the same as that contemplated in the union of the first perfect pair in Eden: "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Church, and he is the Saviour [preserver, care-taker] of the body. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in every thing. Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought man to love their wives as their own bodies" (Eph. 5:22-28). Children may then obey both parents, since each will be in harmony with the other and with the Lord.

In recognition of the same principle, the headship of man, Paul further states: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over man, but to be quiet" (1 Tim. 2:12). Surely Paul does not mean that a woman's lips must be forever sealed that she may not declare the good tidings of great joy to others. Does not the same Apostle say: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus." And does not the prophet Isaiah teach that all the anointed, are anointed to preach the good tidings. It is in harmony with these, then, that we must understand the above words of the Apostle.

The Apostle's idea seems therefore to be, that in no case, however important the truth we are commissioned to bear, is woman to assume a position of authority and command. She may tell the blessed tidings of great joy anywhere and everywhere, and to whomsoever she has opportunity; but always with becoming modesty, stating the truth so clearly that of itself it may carry conviction with it and her own individuality be lost sight of. This element of character is one which naturally belongs to woman, but is generally very soon lost by those who attempt to work in a public way. The work for the majority of women, is the individual, quiet and none the less effective work. Her greatest influence is that exerted strictly within her divinely appointed sphere. If opportunity and ability should point out a more public sphere of usefulness, she may fill it as long as such opportunity lasts, if in so doing, she bears that modest, quiet demeanor, in action, word, and apparel, which becometh woman professing Godliness.

Again, we see that in this relationship of husband and wife, is prefigured the beautiful relationship between Christ Jesus and the church. And as in the type, so in the antitype, the church, the bride of Christ is to be subject unto him in everything; earnestly seeking at all times to know, and then delighting to do his will. As the woman is not to assume authority and direct the man, so the church is not to assume authority and to attempt to direct in the Lord's work, but is to be "quiet," searching diligently to know his plan and methods, and then endeavoring faithfully to execute them.

When God's plan shall be brought fully into execution, we see that loving authority and joyful submission will fill the universe with blessed peace and everlasting joy--and "God shall be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). Head over all --his will done in earth as it is done in heaven. Seeing this to be God's ultimate design, it should be our endeavor now, so far as it is in our power, to carry out and illustrate that purpose now. It can only be fully illustrated, however, by those who are "united in the Lord."

The Apostle's high regard for woman and woman's work is shown by his mention of several faithful co-laborers and helpers among them--see Rom. 16:1-6,13;

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also Phil. 4:3: "I entreat thee...help those women which labored with me in the gospel.... whose names are in the book of life." And Acts 1:14: "All continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women." And 1 Cor. 11:5: "Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth (teacheth)."

These scriptures teach, that women did a work in the Apostles' days which was approved and appreciated by them and by the Lord. Yet women usually spoke only at the smaller gatherings; and when Paul said, "Let the women keep silence in the congregations," he probably had reference to the public gatherings at which it was the custom to have more or less debate. In these public debates, Paul thought a woman's voice would be out of place, and this is the opinion of most thinking men and women to-day, though it has by many been carried to an extreme, forbidding them to pray or teach on any occasion, even in more private assemblies of Christians; this we regard as an error.

God has arranged that the man and woman are representative of Christ and his Bride, the Church, and this rule by which the husband is the head of the wife is always maintained in the Scriptures. And probably this is one reason that men have always been given the more active and public work of the ministry, and women more the work of assisting and more private teaching, yet equally as acceptable to God. So Christ is the active agent in carrying out his own plan. He is the great minister of all, and we as his Church are permitted to be helps meet for his use; to do a lesser part and yet an acceptable part, well pleasing to God.

These remarks are suggested as answers to many inquiries from beloved sisters in Christ who love to tell the blessed story of God's wonderful plan, who yet doubted the propriety of so doing lest they might be in conflict with the inspired teaching of our Brother Paul.

We hope that all such will thus be aided in clearly reading their commission, to declare the glad tidings in such manner as becometh women of the anointed body.

MRS. C. T. R.

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"THE LORD YOUR GOD PROVETH YOU."

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."
"There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you before." Matt. 24:11-24.

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass whereof he spoke unto thee, saying, let us go after other gods which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." Deut. 13:1-3.

When the disciples came to Jesus inquiring what should be the sign of his presence and of the end of the age, before answering their question [See art. "The Sign of His Presence" in our January issue.] he took occasion to give some important information as to events which should transpire before that time. Among others he foretells the rise of many false prophets and false Christs, and of their power to deceive. Then he adds, "Behold I have told you."

To be forewarned is to be forearmed, if we heed the warning. But forgetting the warning and instruction, the many, as Jesus foretold, are deceived by these pretenders, and because iniquity abounds, the love of many of God's children waxes cold. Standing where we do to-day, in "The Time of the End," and looking back, we are able to discern many false Christs and false prophets, and can see how Jesus' words have proved true, that many have been deceived thereby.

The word Christ means anointed, and is applicable not only to the anointed head, but also to the anointed body of Christ, all who as followers of Jesus have made a covenant with him by sacrifice: hence those systems pretending to be the anointed body, and who are not really such, are false Christs. The various great religious systems each claim to be the anointed body, the church, the body of Christ, though each regards its founder as its head. Though these

systems contain members of the true church whom they have blinded and enslaved, yet as systems they are false--false Christs and being deceitful ensnarers of the true they are really anti-Christs.

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The chief and greatest of these systems is the great "Mystery of Iniquity," the Church of Rome, whose head is the Pope. Its "lying wonders" have truly deceived many, and out of this system have sprung the various minor systems, each claiming to be the church, the body of Christ, and each acknowledging and following others than the true head of the true Church--Christ Jesus, though all assume his name.

Not only have these great false christs anti-christs arisen, flourished, and deceived many, but many individual false prophets, or false teachers have also arisen; and through the combined influence of all these, iniquity (erroneous faith and practice) abounds. The truth has been covered, and error has been advanced, accepted, and acted upon. In the significant language of the prophet (Isa. 59:14,15), "Truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey."

Since inquiring minds begin to weary of the confusing errors presented by the various and conflicting false christs and false prophets, it is becoming quite a popular method with all of these, to silence inquirers with the assurance that what they believe is really of little importance, that the all important thing is to live a virtuous life, and to give their influence and support to some one of the many false christs or false prophets, and to work in harmony with them and under their direction.

But let us consider for a moment what has been the effect of some of the false doctrines which have been advanced, and see if this idea, which has now become so common, is a correct one. Take for example the dogma of inherent immortality. This idea was first advanced as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity by the apostate church of Rome, and has been held and guarded with special care by all denominations of so-called Protestants. From this as a root principle, have grown the dogmas of eternal torment, of purgatory, of death as a mere transition period, an instant of change with no cessation of life, for say they, man is immortal, and cannot die. If man must live forever somewhere, they argue that such everlasting existence must be in torment if not in bliss. In harmony with this idea, death cannot be regarded as an enemy, nor as the punishment of sin; nor can any blessing be seen in the scripture teaching of a resurrection. And further, if death be not regarded as the punishment of sin, the logical inference is, that the death of Christ as man's Redeemer or Substitute, availed nothing. This logical inference has not yet been drawn by the masses of those who compose these great systems, simply because of their drowsy lethargy; but for centuries the false idea of inherent immortality has

been strengthening its roots, and shooting out and building up its branches, and soon the sure fruit will be a general denial of the redemption secured through Jesus' death. Already, prominent thinking ones in these various systems, reasoning, not from the Scriptures, but from the so-called orthodox standpoint, are boldly declaring their conclusions, and with no little effect upon others.

This is the logical effect so far as faith is concerned, of that one single item of error firmly rooted. This error and those which have grown out of it, have also deterred the church from pursuing the most important part of her work, viz.: the building up of each other in the truth as presented in the Scriptures, from which alone come the highest and purest incentives to a holy life and to untiring zeal in the divine service. Furthermore, by inculcating ideas of God which represent him as cruel and vindictive, encouragement has been given to those base qualities of man's depraved nature, and as a consequence, the most cruel persecutions and pitiless and revolting crimes that the world has ever witnessed, have been perpetrated in the name of Christianity, and by those claiming to be the followers of Christ.

Take another dogma which is held and guarded with the utmost jealousy by all these systems, viz.: the dogma of The Trinity, an idea so absurd that its very absurdity is taken as proof of its divine authority, though not a text of scripture can be quoted in its support, save a single spurious clause (1 John 5:7-8. Without the interpolated words it reads plainly as follows:--"For there are three that bear record, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one" testimony), introduced for this express purpose, now generally known and admitted to be an interpolation. This dogma teaches that God is three separate and distinct persons, equal in power and glory; that the Father is a person, the Son is a person, and the Holy Spirit is a person, yet all three are one person. In this confusion of ideas none can form a clear conception of God, and all their thoughts of him must be very mixed and cloudy. It tends also to mystify their comprehension of the sacrifice which Jesus made for our redemption; for, if the three persons are one person, then when one died all must have died, and the universe was left without God for three days, and mere chance must have raised him up from death if the true idea of death be accepted; or if death be considered but a period of transition from one nature to another, then this must have been the case with Jesus also, and consequently if he was of the divine nature before death, he must be a different nature now.

And so one absurdity leads to another, and leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ as set forth in the Scriptures, the various false bodies of Christ have built themselves up into systems of great size and influence in the world. Their great claims and apparent success have deceived very many of God's children; repressed their zeal for the truth, left them in almost complete ignorance of the Gospel hopes, both for the world and for the little flock of overcomers, led them to worldly conformity, and prejudiced them against the truth

and against all true truth seekers. And as the prophet said, the few remaining truth seekers become a prey--a prey to the hatred, opposition and persecution of the church nominal. Ah, yes, what we believe makes a very great difference. Our FAITH has a most potent influence in moulding both our character and our destiny; and every child of God should beware of any system or person that seeks to guard its theory against thorough examination and criticism by underrating the importance of a correct faith.

True to Jesus' words, because iniquity (erroneous doctrine and consequent erroneous practice--worldliness, etc.) abounds, the love of many waxes cold. The Lord seems afar off, incomprehensible and almost unknown. How can they delight in his word who are ignorant of it? or how rejoice in his promises who do not comprehend them? or how strive for the offered prize who do not discern it?

The elect of God cannot be thus deceived; they have walked and are walking with God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, searching, believing and trusting his word, walking in its light and striving to fulfill the conditions for the attainment of its exceeding great and precious promises. This fixedness of purpose, and adherence to it, not only designates such to be the elect of God, but it shields them from the deceptions and snares of false christs and false prophets (teachers). Though many such have doubtless lived and died in those false systems, they overcame their influence through faith and loyalty to God. We should not forget that the separation of the wheat from the tares was not commanded until the "harvest." Matt. 13:30. It was the Lord's design to let wheat and tares grow together until the harvest; but in this harvest time it is his will that all such should come out and be separate when his truth makes manifest the true character of these systems.

But even after coming out of these anti-christ or false-christ systems, there are many false prophets who assume authority to direct the consecrated, who teach theories subversive of the truth and pervert the Scriptures to support them. Such false prophets always have been and always will be found, so long as Satan has power in his hands; that is, until he is bound.

And our Heavenly Father permits it so to be: why? To prove his people: "For the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." The Lord would prove whether we have received the truth in the love of it and of its Author. It is very often the case that truth is received by some because of their love for those who bear it, and without personal searching to prove that it is from God. Such have not received the truth in the love of IT, and sooner or later some circumstances will unsettle them. If the prop falls into error such will surely fall with it; or if love for the prop grows

cold, the love for truth thus received grows cold with it. But love for our brethren in Christ, and special love for those who serve us most, will never overthrow the faith of those who receive the truth in the love of it.

Should controversy arise because the way of truth is evil spoken of even among those through whom the blessed Gospel has been received, and who have been greatly loved for their work's sake, it will only impel those who are wholly the Lord's, to a more diligent searching of the Scriptures, and thus more earnest inquiring of the Lord to make very plain the way.

Peter reminds us that there were false prophets in Israel, even as there should be false teachers among us; (2 Peter 2:1) and Moses declares that it was permitted to prove Israel. If faithful to God, no consideration of a personal character, should lead them to turn away from God's truth after these false teachers. When we remember that these things happened to Israel as types for our instruction, the words of Moses become very significant:--"If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and

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serve other gods...thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him. But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death and afterwards the hand of all the people." (Deut. 13:6-9.)

Thus the Lord proved Israel's determination to obey him at the sacrifice of any earthly friendship if need be. And in this Israel was a type of both the world in the age to come, and also of the church in the present time. Temptations even from dearest friends to depart from the living God and serve idols, whether those idols be self-exaltation, or any other thing, must be resolutely met with a fixed purpose to follow the Lord wholly. Such suggestions may not be harbored nor consented to by those fully consecrated to God, even though they come in the most deceptive disguise, and by dearest friends. And not only so, but deceptive errors and influences must be put to death; they must be pelted to death by the stones of truth. Our weapons are not like those of fleshly Israel--not carnal but spiritual, and mighty in pulling down the strongholds of error. 2 Cor. 10:4.

Ever bearing in mind that the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and whether your love to him is paramount to every other love, however strong, we may meet the trials of severing friendships and dissolving earthly ties, with firm unflinching confidence in God, who will crown with everlasting joy, the faithful overcomer who has fought to the end the good fight of faith.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

I exhort you therefore...to walk in a manner worthy of the calling wherewith ye were called; with all lowliness of mind and meekness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love, giving diligence to keep the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace: one body [church] and one spirit [aim-- mind] according as ye were also called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Immersion, one God and Father of all he who is over all, and through all, and in all....

"And he gave some indeed [as] apostles, and some [as] prophets, and some [as] evangelists, and some [as] shepherds and teachers; with a view to the fitting of the saints for work of ministry, for an up-building of the body of Christ; until we all advance into the ONENESS of the faith, and of the full knowledge of the Son of God; into a man of full growth, into a measure of stature of the fullness of the Christ; that we may no longer be infants, billow-tossed and shifted around with every wind of teaching, in the craft of men, in knavery, suited to the artifice of error; but pursuing truth in love, may grow into Him in all things who is the head, Christ; out of whom all the body fitly framing itself together and connecting itself through means of every joint of supply, according to an inward working in measure of each single part, is securing the growth of the body unto an up-building of itself in love. Eph. 4:1-16. Rotherham's Trans.

Christian Union is an end greatly to be desired and sought for among God's children, yet it is of great importance that we have union on the true and Scriptural basis. Union on any other is as detrimental, as true union is advantageous.

In the above exhortation of the apostle, we have christian union presented as a possibility, as a thing to be desired, and as a necessity to the healthy growth and development of the body of Christ. He presents also the conditions under which it may be attained, and by which it may be perpetuated.

Let us notice first the character of that union of which Paul speaks. He says it is a union in which all so united acknowledge the one Lord, are inspired by the one faith, are baptized with the one baptism, begotten of the same Father, filled with the same spirit, and discerning and striving to attain the same high calling, recognizing one another as fellow members of the same body, and fellow-heirs of the exceeding great and precious promises. Being in the world yet not of it, walking separate from it, misunderstood and despised by it, how natural it would seem for those of such common hopes and experiences, to feel bound together by an almost indissoluble tie of love and sympathy.

To a very great extent this union is felt and is strengthening among the consecrated ones; yet we apprehend that its necessity and advantage are not fully appreciated by all the body. Frequently we hear such expressions as the following among christians:--"Of course we cannot all see alike; the Lord permits you to see some things which he will not show to me and vice versa." "Of course our minds being differently constituted, some portions of truth you or I must fail to comprehend, while others may enjoy them." And so they think it impossible to be in fullest accord and sympathy; and if any two or three do agree perfectly, it is counted by them as an evidence of weakness on the part of some of the number; for surely say they, "Independent thought and study must develop differences." And with this belief pride often steps in and suggests the desirability of a little difference, lest too close an agreement be understood by others as an evidence of weakness. We doubt not that this very suggestion is the prime cause of much of the division which arises among saints; and that it is the special danger of those who having escaped from the confusion of Babylon, are seeking independently to prove what is truth. Let us beware of this little root of bitterness, so small at first as scarcely to be discerned in our hearts; yet if not plucked up, it will soon grow and crowd out the truth, as well as the love of it.

Christian Union is a possibility. The same Spirit is promised for the guidance of the entire church--every member of it, and it is impossible to conceive that the Spirit would lead some into truth, and others into the exact contradiction of it. One member is not set to building up the body, and another to tearing it down; and where such work is being done, it behooves each one to see to it that he is not of the latter class, nor in the slightest sympathy with it. With such opposing sentiments we find the various denominations of the great Nominal Church attempting to form a certain kind of union, and then calling it "Christian Union." This union is effected not in the manner Paul indicates --through a common faith, hope, and experience; but by ignoring doctrine, agreeing to disagree and that each one shall speak well of and advance his own denominational interests without opposing what he believes to be error in the other, and so each one tells the world that the other is all right, that somehow, in some way, (inconceivable) these different roads are all so many different pathways to heaven, and they may please themselves as to which one they take; and though the most extreme discord exists among them, they claim that it is of utmost importance to be identified with some one of them. But this is not the kind of union of which Paul speaks.

If as Paul teaches true christian unity is a possibility, let us note the conditions under which it may be attained:--First, he suggests that in all so united there must be lowliness of mind, meekness, a mutual bearing with one another's weaknesses and frailties covering all such things with the mantle of love; and then a constant watchfulness lest we grow weary in so doing. But the one Lord,

one faith, one immersion, and one hope must be there as the primal basis of union.

The plan which the Lord has adopted for building up and cementing the body of Christ, is by the appointment of various members to various offices for the general good of all: He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers, not that the other members should receive their teaching without investigation, but in order to aid them in that work. Every thought suggested and every exposition of Scripture advanced by these must be brought to the test of the Word; and the testing may be of great service, if the assemblings of the saints be largely devoted to this important work, not in the spirit which so often marks controversy, each more anxious to maintain and establish his own opinions than to discover truth, but in the spirit of meekness which totally ignores such base considerations, in an all-absorbing desire to discover the Lord's will and plan.

Controversy, and the closest scrutiny and criticism, under such circumstances and in such a frame of mind on the part of each cannot fail, under the promised guidance, to bring all such into a blessed unity, into oneness of faith; and to strongly cement the uniting bond of love and peace. He whose privilege it is to teach, will not be offended by such criticism if filled with this meekness and lowliness of mind, but will desire and encourage it so long as it will be satisfied by a Thus saith the Lord, as proof. But vain babblings and strife about matters of no importance should be avoided. A realization of the importance of truth, and a hungering for it, will find no time for "babbling."

Those so united and harmoniously working together for the upbuilding of the body, must of necessity advance, and that rapidly in knowledge and fitness for the work of ministry. We should not forget that every member of the anointed body is anointed to preach (Isa. 61:1), called to the ministry [to the service of Christ, head and body,] and all our assemblings together, either personally or by means of the press and mails, are so many ministerial conferences

R769 : page 8 for the purpose of enabling each to do more efficient service for the upbuilding of the body itself, fortifying the various members against the attacks of error and strengthening in each the comprehension and love of the truth.

Thus all the members of the anointed body in communion with the Lord, filled with the same spirit, and being baptized with the same baptism [See article "Baptism" in TOWER of October, 1884,] may together advance into the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God," being firmly bound together by the uniting bond of peace--love.

Let us then no longer hinder our oneness of faith by the vain and sinful idea that we must not see things exactly as others do, but must be "independent." He that is independent of the body is independent of its head also, and is not a member of the body, for in

it each member is made dependent on others. So surely as we are living in the "Day of the Lord," so surely as the bringing back of Zion is in progress, so surely we are living in the time when the "watchmen shall see eye to eye," with clearness and harmony of vision; all should be of one faith and enabled to point out the waymarks and bulwarks so clearly that every earnest member of the body may see light in God's light.

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