

page 337

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CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower.....339
 Death of Christ a Puzzle to Dr.
 Morgan.....339
 A Naval Officer on Personal
 Religion.....340
 Our Memorial Number.....341
 Followers of Jesus: Crossbearers.....342
 Overcoming Evil With Good.....347
 Great Opportunities Misused.....350
 Public Ministries of the Truth.....352
 Special Items.....338

page 338

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Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
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the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

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FAVORABLE METHODS OF SERVICE.

The chiefest service we could commend, open to all
who are unencumbered and in active use of their faculties,
is the Colporteur work. It is an honorable form of ministering
the truth from house to house, as the apostles
served. It is a service which the Lord seems to have

blessed as much or more than any other for gathering the "wheat." It is apparent at once to all that to sell such books as the DAWNS at 35 cents each, cannot be for money-making: that it is merely another way of preaching the truth. No other religious books are sold at any such price. Indeed, few subscription books sell for less than two to three dollars each. Any who can serve in this work are invited to write to us for "Hints to Colporteurs."

EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT, LEATHER EDITION.

We are mailing this edition to all whose orders are now in, and all new orders will have prompt attention. Remember that the price of this book, in leather, on thin paper, is \$2.50--a year's subscription to the TOWER being given free with each when desired. In cloth binding, the price is \$1.50, a year's subscription being given free with each.

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R3234 : page 339

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

DEATH OF CHRIST A PUZZLE TO DR. MORGAN.

THE Rev. G. Campbell Morgan preached on the life of Christ to a large congregation at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church yesterday. "In the light of the revelation of the life of Christ, I come face to face with a great moral mystery," said Dr. Morgan. "There is some infinite meaning in the death of Jesus, and it is the stumbling block of my faith. At the cross of Christ I must be either an infidel or a believer. In the presence of the death of Christ I am compelled to deny the existence of a moral governor and admit his death a most terrible blunder or the presence of the most wonderful love that man has known. Notwithstanding the wonderful teachings of this man, God permitted him to die at the age of thirty-three. Humanly speaking, his work was undone --just commenced, as a matter of fact. Not a volume written, not a school founded, but just as he reached the commencement of his career he was foully murdered. I want an explanation of this. My mind demands it."--Exchange.

* * *

It is astounding that any man should consider himself competent to preach the Gospel who does not know why Christ died. It is still more astounding

that a body of Christians should appoint, engage and salary, as their teacher, a man who gives us every reason for believing that he needs that some one teach him the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. We can only conclude that the people recognizing and employing such a teacher are similarly ignorant of Christian fundamentals.

To what advantage is it that thousands of church edifices are built every year, and that millions of money are spent on theological seminaries, and on salaries for preachers, organists and choristers, if this is the net result;--ignorance of the fundamentals.

Are such people, who know not why Christ died, to be considered Christians? Certainly not. It is not good clothes, nor Sunday observance, nor even good morals that constitute men and women Christians, but faith--faith in the very thing that these people confess that they know nothing about. A Buddhist or Mohammedan or Confucian may have, and some of them do have, everything that a Christian has except this one all-important essential to Christianity--faith that Christ died as man's sin-offering, as his ransom-price, in order that God might be just and yet be the justifier of sinners who believe in this sacrifice and by faith accept forgiveness of sins and become on this basis followers of Christ.

How plain the whole matter from the standpoint of the ransom, its necessity and results. How clearly we can see that all the sermons and books imaginable would have been of no avail until first of all the New Covenant had been sealed with the precious blood. Hearken to our Lord's words, "The Son of Man came ...to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:28.) He came not to preach and write books. Others under divine power and inspiration could do and have done those things, but he alone had an unforfeited life "to give for the life of the world." As he said again, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that is written in the prophets: ought not Christ to suffer and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:25,26.) He did suffer death--"the just for the unjust"--and thus made atonement for our sins, paying the death penalty against us. He did enter into his glory and is fully prepared to give forth the vivifying blessing so much needed by the whole groaning creation.

Why then did he not at once--as soon as glorified--begin the Kingdom work of rescuing Adam and his children from the grasp of sin and its penalty, death? Because in the divine plan it was arranged that first a church-bride should be selected as his companions in

R3234 : page 340

sufferings and future glories. Soon the testing of those called to this joint-heirship will be completed and then our prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," will be

answered, and the blessing of the world at the hands of the Good Physician and his bride will begin. The great uplift of that blessed Millennial day will be not merely physical but mental and moral--not partial and temporal, but to those who will to obey it will be made complete and everlasting.

A NAVAL OFFICER ON PERSONAL RELIGION.

Captain Mahan, of the U.S. Navy, evidently knows something else than naval warfare. He delivered an address worthy of being considered by a larger audience than heard it. He said:--

"In my judgment the Church of today, laity and clergy, have made the capital mistake in generalship of reversing the two great commandments of the Law; the two fundamental principles of her war, established by Christ himself. Practically, as I observe, the laity hold, and the clergy teach, that the first and great commandment is 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' Incidentally thereto, it is admitted, 'Thou shouldst love the Lord thy God.' It is of course too egregious an absurdity to openly call that the second commandment. It is simply quietly relegated to a secondary place.

"You may perhaps dispute this deduction as a matter of fact or remind me of St. John's words, 'He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, can not love God whom he hath not seen.' It is evident, however, on reflection that St. John is in no sense inverting our Lord's order. He simply appeals to evidence. This man says he loves God. Very well, where is the proof of it? Does he love his brother? If not, he certainly does not love God, for the love of the brethren is the sure, inevitable fruit of loving God. In fact the whole missionary spirit, and much that is not narrowly missionary, involves love for brethren whom we have no more seen than we have seen God. The love of God is the one sure motive and source of the love for man."

Is it not true, Captain Mahan inquires, that within the last thirty years the Church has been teaching that "a man's personal piety is of small consequence alongside of his external benevolent activities"? Has not the Church come to stand for the idea that "external activities, outward benevolence, are not merely the fruit of Christian life, but the Christian life itself"? He continued:

"Is not the judgment of the world expressed, and is it not a true judgment, in the words of indifferent contempt for a man who is trying to save his own soul--his miserable soul, as I have sometimes read? And yet what is a man's soul? It is the one thing inexpressibly dear to God, for which, if there had

been but one, he was content to give his Son, and this he has intrusted to man as his own particular charge. I do not say his only charge, but the one clearly and solely committed to him to make the most of. It is the talent which he is to multiply by diligent care; not that he may delight in it himself, but that he may present it to God through Jesus Christ....Because care of one's own soul, by internal effort and discipline, seemed selfish, men have rushed to the extreme of finding in external action, in organized benevolence, in philanthropic effort, in the love of the neighbor--and particularly of the neighbor's body, for the neighbor's soul was naturally of not more account than one's own--not merely the fruit of Christian life, but the Christian life itself. That the kingdom of God is within you, an individual matter primarily and in essence, and only in consequence, and incidentally external, as all activity is but a manifestation of life and not life itself--all this was forgotten. This I conceive to be the state of the Church now, I mean as an organization; for I doubt not the multitudes of earnest cultivators of their own souls for the glory of God--perfecting holiness, as St. Paul says, in the fear of the Lord."

There is but one remedy, declares the Captain, and that is the restoration of "personal religion"--"the direct relation of the individual soul to God--to that primary place in the Christian scheme which it has momentarily lost. In conclusion he said:

"Within this generation there has been given much vogue to a secular phrase, the prevalence of which seems so indicative of the temper of the day as to point just where the sagacious Christian warrior, crafty as St. Paul was to seize opportunity and capture men with guile for Jesus Christ, may lay hold upon men's hearts and minds. Self-culture--we have all heard much of it; sweetness and light, and all the rest of it. No new thing. The Stoics cultivated themselves, their personality, that they might reach self-sufficingness, which, being attained, could be presented to themselves in the form of self-contentment. Let this human conception receive consecration. What is self culture, but deliverance from evil unto good--salvation from sin? And who shall thus save his people? Who but Jesus Christ? And what is Personal Religion but the cooperation of man's will with the power of Jesus Christ, that man's soul, man's whole being, may be saved; not for his own profit chiefly, but that he may lay it, thus redeemed, thus exalted, at the feet of him who loved him and gave himself for him."

* * *

The "salvation" of the philosopher is the growing one today, everywhere; because faith in the Bible

is giving way to Higher Criticism and Evolutionism, which are mere human philosophies. A living faith must have a foundation in the divine revelation, the Bible. It alone shows what righteousness is and that "there is none righteous, no not one." It alone shows how sin came into the world (Rom. 5:12) and that personal faith in a personal Savior is the only ground for hope of a personal salvation.

"Truth people," as well as others, need to be on guard on this subject. Some of them seem to get the false impression that head-knowledge is the basis of brotherhood. While encouraging Bible study

R3235 : page 341

and growth in knowledge we must still recognize heart-salvation as the aim and object of all our proclamations of the Gospel. Knowledge is merely the lamp which guides the way toward heart-salvation,-- "sanctification of the spirit [mind] through the belief of the Truth."

With some, the thought that "our salvation is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior" at his second advent seems to mean that it would be a mistake to speak also of a present heart-salvation translating us, even now, out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. We may be sure that none will attain the "great salvation" promised to the elect who does not in the present time experience heart-regeneration or salvation from the love of sin.

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R3235 : page 341

OUR MEMORIAL NUMBER.

OUR subscribers have recently received Vol. I. of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series as a number of this journal. This cheap edition we are supplying at 5c per copy postpaid to any address you please in the United States and Canada, or 9c per copy to any foreign address, except Canada. Confident that our readers will want to send these out to their friends in large quantities, we have given an order for 300,000 copies, and of these we have already received 100,000. Thus you see we are prepared for your orders and ready to execute them promptly--20 copies for \$1, or more or less at the same rate.

The experience of our readers we are sure agrees with our own, viz., that tracts and sample TOWERS and conversations and sermons are valuable in spreading the Present Truth only in proportion as they lead up to a study of the DAWNS. Whoever will not give time and attention to a careful reading of the DAWN,

will apparently never become thoroughly rooted and grounded in Present Truth. And those who are most clear in the Truth have re-read the books several times. These books stand re-reading, because they are practically the Bible put in another form--Bible topics treated systematically,--the testimony of the various prophets and apostles, etc., being gathered together and arranged under the various appropriate heads. We could wish that our readers would all begin afresh the study of these volumes. It is noted sometimes how rapidly beginners now make progress, and occasionally seem to outstrip others who have been much longer in the way. The reason generally is that they have studied the DAWNS more recently, and therefore have the various features more distinctly before the mind, with their strong interlocking and corroborative testimonies.

Our readers are aware from the annual reports that large numbers of DAWNS are continually going out, but very few, perhaps, are aware that the first volume has passed the one million (1,000,000) point, and is rushing along more rapidly than ever before. The new WATCH TOWER edition at 5c per copy may be considered a memorial of the one million copies already in circulation. The Lord's hand seems very markedly manifest in connection with this great sale; for booksellers, under the influence of denominational prejudice, will not handle the DAWNS. The Lord seems to intend that it shall be circulated only by those who are consecrated to him and his service; and he is raising up evangelists--colporteurs--who are carrying this message of the divine plan of the ages to all parts of the world. We are continually finding, too, that some of these have borne fruit without our knowledge--some coming into the light of Present Truth without learning of the WATCH TOWER and getting into our list. We trust that all of the dear brethren and sisters who love to serve the Truth will be more and more on the alert to introduce the WATCH TOWER to all of the consecrated, who have a deep interest in the things of the Kingdom. We want their names on the list, and that they should have the regular visits of the TOWER, whether they can afford to pay for it or not. We have a fund for the very purpose of paying the subscriptions of those who cannot afford to pay.

We cannot say that all who purchase the DAWNS are deeply interested in them. Quite the contrary. Some are prejudiced by misrepresentations so that they will not read, even after having purchased them. However, we do find indications which lead us to believe that, when the great time of trouble shall be upon the world, many of the sincere-hearted who now are prejudiced by misrepresentations will look up these books and study them earnestly, and receive both comfort and profit from them under the trying conditions

in which they will then be placed.

When we inform you that over 14,000 DAWNS (quite apart from the new cheap edition) went out during June, as many more during July, and that the August output bids fair to be still larger, you will get an idea of the growing magnitude of the harvest work. It keeps us busy urging our printers and binders up to the notch, thus to keep the colporteurs in every quarter properly supplied; and all hands connected with the service here are endeavoring to do with their might for the service of the Lord and his cause. The WATCH TOWER office force consists of twenty-five persons

R3235 : page 342

engaged in various parts of the service, yet we do not do any printing or binding of our own. Five printing establishments are turning out papers, books and tracts, so that the total number employed in the work, directly and indirectly, must be very considerable.

Incidentally, we note that the Volunteer work, this year, is progressing remarkably. The two million Volunteer tracts prepared in the Spring are practically all in circulation, and another million is ready for delivery now. These are aside from our ordinary tracts, which are going out freely also. Order all you can use judiciously.

Pray for the divine blessing upon our service, and join to the extent of your ability in the reaping work of this time, and thus add to your joy, both now and everlastingly.

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R3235 : page 342

FOLLOWERS OF JESUS: CROSS-BEARERS.

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."--Matt. 16:24.

OUR Lord's invitation to forsake all and follow him is presented in very different language from the usual invitations given in his name today;--the thought, the sentiment, is wholly different. The general thought today, in connection with an invitation to "Come to Jesus," might be expressed thus:--"We invite, we urge upon you to escape an eternity of torture, of misery, by accepting Jesus as your Savior. It is a question of eternal happiness or eternal misery, and, therefore, you have practically no alternative, but must accept him." How different from this is our Lord's presentation of the matter in this text. He says nothing whatever about there being no choice, nor about an eternity of misery for those who do not elect to become his followers. His words

imply that it is a matter of choice with the individual, and not a matter of compulsion in any sense of the word.

Our text contains no urging, no insistence that there is no alternative. On the contrary it presents to the mind obstacles which must be encountered by those who become the Lord's followers--the crosses they must expect; and thus it invites them to consider well what they are doing, before taking the step. The invitation contains neither rant nor cant, but is, in every sense of the word, logical and reasonable, and so stated as to avoid any misunderstanding. In this respect it corresponds with our Lord's other utterances on the subject; as, for instance, when he gave the parable of the man who proposed to build a house and laid the foundation, but afterwards was not able to complete the structure. On this parable the Lord builds the teaching that his followers should count the cost of discipleship, in the same cool, methodical, calculating manner in which they would count the cost of the erection of a building; and that they should make sure that they sufficiently desire the result to carry forward the conditions necessary to attain them. His words are, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." He explains, further, that this implies that he will love the Lord more than father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters--yea, more than his own life.--Luke 14:26-30.

Furthermore, it is proper that we notice the class of people to whom the Lord addresses these searching requirements of discipleship. He addressed not vile sinners, not aliens, strangers, foreigners from God's covenants and blessings; but those who were already the recipients of these--Israelites. Our text shows that his invitation was addressed to those who were already, in some sense of the word at least, our Lord's "disciples"--believers in him and, to some extent, already cooperating with him. And so, still, we understand

R3236 : page 342

these words to be applicable, not to sinners but to those who have accepted of God's grace in Christ to the forgiveness of their sins. The Lord is seeking a very special class of followers, separate not only from the world in general, but separate and distinct from the ordinary class of followers or disciples. Without prejudice to the general interests of the world, the blessing of which will come in due time; --without prejudice to the general disciple or believer, who will experience some blessing, some favors more than the world;--our text is pointing out the conditions of that highest degree of discipleship, the reward of which will be to be with the Master, see him as he is and share his glory as joint-heir with him in the

Kingdom which the Father has promised him-- through the instrumentality of which Kingdom all the ordinary disciples and the world in general shall be eventually blessed.

Our Lord wished, evidently, to draw a sharp line of distinction between all other classes and those followers who would walk in his steps, bearing their crosses after him. It is of this class that he declares, "No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62.) This special class must be thoroughly imbued with a zeal for God and for righteousness; must gain some reasonable conceptions of the good things which God has in reservation for them; must have some appreciation of the Kingdom privileges, else they will not be persevering enough, nor zealous enough, to "fight the

R3236 : page 343

good fight of faith" and overcome the spirit of the world, with the Lord's assisting grace. It will require these qualities of heart, in addition to the grace, mercy and strength which the Lord has promised, to enable them to take up their cross and follow the Lord in the narrow way of self-sacrifice. And it was not only a kindness on the Lord's part to make clear and definite the terms of the sacrifice, but it was reasonable also that he should not inveigle any into taking such a course contrary to the true zeal of their hearts. It was eminently proper that he should put the matter just as he did put it and that we, as his followers and mouthpieces, should present the matter to each other and to all who purpose to become his disciples in the same straightforward manner.

Some might be inclined to think that urging to accept the Lord and to seek to be his follower, with the thought that any other course would mean eternal torture, might be considered a deception which would work out benefit to the deceived ones--a deception which would do good rather than harm. We dispute this. We hold, on the contrary, that the erroneous teaching has done great injury in various ways.

(1) Its misrepresentation of the divine methods and arrangements has caused many to doubt not only the love but the justice of God.

(2) While people have theoretically claimed that only those who follow closely in the footsteps of Jesus and take up their crosses, following him in self-sacrifice, will be saved, and all the remainder of mankind be damned to eternal torture, nevertheless few believe it, few act upon such a belief, few are making an effort to be followers of the Lord as if they believed it; and extremely few of the many who are not trying to take up their crosses and follow the Lord give evidence of any fear of an eternity of torment because of neglecting his words.

(3) As a consequence there is a nominal church of professed followers of Christ, extremely few of whom are followers in the sense comprehended by the Lord in the text.

(4) As a result of this, nominal Christianity and nominal discipleship having crowded out the true condition of discipleship which our Lord specified as necessary to joint-heirship in the Kingdom, we find that nearly all the preaching and other religious efforts and services of today are going in another direction entirely--to produce merely justified believers, and not to produce the sanctified followers described.

(5) As a consequence, present conditions, teachings, etc., are extremely unfavorable to the development of the very class which this Gospel age was intended to select and perfect as joint-heirs with their Lord in the Kingdom.

It is because, under the Lord's providences, the mists of the dark ages are scattering and the light of the Millennial morning creeping in, that we are privileged to see the inconsistencies and falsities of the traditions of men which have beclouded the inspired records; and, therefore, we are led to inquire for the "old paths," and to listen, not for the confused babel of error, but for the clear words of the great Shepherd of the flock and his inspired representatives, the apostles. Listening to these--listening to the voice of God through these--the inspired plan of God is becoming clear and luminous to us, and its every feature reasonable, harmonious and beautiful.

It is from this standpoint that we are enabled to view our text with pleasure; and seeing the grand designs of our Almighty Father, are enabled to rejoice that we are accounted worthy, through our Redeemer's merit, to be invited to walk in his footsteps and to take up our crosses and to follow him through evil and through good report. And we are assured of his sustaining grace by the way, and of final victory and joint-heirship with him in the Kingdom, if we thus continue steadfast to the end.

"If any man will come after me," signifies, If any man desires to be a follower of mine, to walk in my steps of obedience to the Father's will, and to share with me in the Father's reward. Such are to know that the cost of such discipleship will be cross-bearing. Cross-bearing signifies endurance of trials, difficulties, disappointments--the crossing of the human will and preferences by circumstances and conditions permitted of the Father. Our Lord's will was fully submitted to God, so that it was his delight to do the Father's will, and this must be our attitude to commence with; but after this consecration has taken place comes the trial and testing. If we were in heaven, where all is in full accord with the divine will, we could have no crosses from the time we fully consecrated to the Lord; because our wills being in accord

with the Father's will and with all righteousness, and there being nothing in heaven contrary to that which is right, we would be in accord with everything, and everything would be in accord with our newly consecrated minds. Our crosses come because we are living in "this present evil world," because the spirit of the world is contrary to the Lord and his Spirit of righteousness and equity, and because our Adversary, Satan, seeketh continually to stumble and ensnare us; because, also, our new wills are circumscribed and hindered and opposed by the desires of our natural bodies, which are more or less in accord with the things of this present time, its conditions, its aims, its sentiments; and because the new will strives to use the body in a manner and in a service which, under

R3236 : page 344

present evil conditions, continually causes it annoyance and suffering. These things are to be taken into consideration as the cost of discipleship--the cost of a share in the Kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality, promised to the "called, chosen and faithful."

"GOD KINDLY VEILS OUR EYES."

It is fortunate for us that in the outstart we do not, can not, estimate or appreciate the full meaning of the words, sacrifice, cross-bearing, etc. If we could look into the future and see from the start the various trials and difficulties to be encountered in the "narrow way," doubtless few of us would have the courage to make the consecration and the start--if we could not see or appreciate, beforehand, the rewards and blessings which under divine providence come to us in connection with every trial--more than compensating us for every earthly self-denial and endurance. Nor can we in advance appreciate how the Lord wishes to test our zeal and our faith, by letting us come to the crosses of life one at a time, and letting us see their ruggedness, --hiding from us the assisting hand by which, as soon as we take hold of the cross and put forth our efforts, our Lord lifts the real weight of it, so that we have no more at any time than we are able to bear. So careful is he of all those who thus become his footstep followers and cross-bearers, and prospectively his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, that he will not "suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but with the temptation will provide also a way of escape."-- 1 Cor. 10:13.

SACRIFICING PRECEDES CROSS-BEARING.

The first step in following the Lord is properly designated in the Scriptures a sacrifice; but it is not

a taking up of the cross. When we sacrifice our wills, when we submit ourselves fully to the Lord, it is the sum of all sacrifice--in the sense that the giving up of the will means the surrender of our all to the Lord, that his will may be done in respect to all our affairs. The will is the individual, the ego, and holds the command, the rulership of our time, influence, abilities, and every talent; hence the surrender of the will to God means a surrender of all these things to him. All subsequent sacrifices which we may make in the Lord's service are included in and represented by this sacrifice of the will. If the will changes, draws back, ceases to be obedient to God, ceases to be submissive to his arrangements, the whole condition changes and the relationship to God as a member of the body of Christ terminates. But if the will continues faithful to God and desirous of serving him and his cause, though the service and cross-bearing be not done faithfully, the Lord will carry such through, and by chastisements and corrections in righteousness they shall

R3237 : page 344

ultimately be "saved so as by fire"--by tribulation. This is the essence of the doctrine of "the final perseverance of the saints." So long as they continue to be consecrated--to have their wills sanctified to the Lord--they continue to be his, even should they, from lack of zeal, fail to win the prize offered to the zealous, the "overcomers."

But if the will remain loyal to the Lord, and the crosses are approached and lifted and borne in faith and trust, not only will the Lord's grace suffice, but his comfort and assistance will be given in the narrow way;--so that its trials and difficulties may be esteemed as "light afflictions, but for a moment." Eventually this class shall be the victors, joint-heirs with the Master in his Kingdom, because by his assisting grace they shall have walked in his footsteps faithfully, even unto death--and that with greater ease and peace and joy and satisfaction than others who with less zeal seek to avoid the crosses of their consecration.

The statement that the consecration of the will --its surrender, its sacrifice, that the Lord's will may be received instead--is not one of the crosses we are called on to bear, may need further explanation. In order for the sacrifice of our wills to be acceptable to the Lord at all, it must be no cross to us; the desire to give up our own will and to accept God's will must be a joy, a pleasure. Our wills must be sacrificed willingly, else the sacrifice will not be accepted of the Lord, and we shall have neither part nor lot with him. Unless the will be joyfully resigned to the Lord's will, all subsequent sacrificing or cross-bearing will count nothing whatever to our advantage. Our Master's

expression respecting the surrender, the sacrifice, of his will to do the Father's will, illustrates this matter clearly; and it will be noticed from the language that there was no cross connected therewith.

Our Lord's sentiments were, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psa. 40:8.) And so all who would be his disciples must not only count the cost of cross-bearing because of the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil, but they must have a somewhat similar spirit to that of our Lord in connection with the sacrificing of their wills; they, too, must delight to have God's will done in them--delight to surrender or sacrifice their own wills. Let us see this clearly, and if there is anything lacking in respect to the sacrifice of our wills let us give it our first attention. He who has completely sacrificed his will to the Lord's will has gained the victory at the start which will make all the remainder of the "narrow way" comparatively easy. He who has merely hacked and mutilated his will

R3237 : page 345

instead of killing it outright, will find extra difficulty at every step of his journey, and can never gain the victory until he has finished the sacrifice which he imperfectly began.

IN WHAT DOES CROSS-BEARING CONSIST?

The Master's cross-bearing did not consist in fighting the weaknesses of the flesh, for he had none; nor are these weaknesses of the flesh our crosses. Because all our weaknesses of the flesh are fully covered by the merit of our Lord's sacrifice; our standing before God is as New Creatures and not as imperfect fleshly creatures--the imperfections of the flesh, which are contrary to our wills and opposed by them, being fully pardoned by the Lord. The Lord's cross-bearing consisted in the doing of the Father's will under unfavorable conditions. This course brought upon him the envy, hatred, malice, strife, persecution, etc., of those who thought themselves to be God's people, but whom our Lord, who read their hearts, declared to be of their father, the devil. We are not able to read the hearts of those about us who profess to be the Lord's people, yet we may be sure that there are plenty still who profess the name of God and of Christ and who have none of his Spirit and are not his children, but are the children of the Adversary,--begotten of an evil spirit.

Since we are walking in the same "narrow way" that our Master walked, we may reasonably expect that our crosses will be of similar kind to his--oppositions to our doing the will of our Father in heaven--oppositions to our serving his cause and letting the

light shine out as our Master and Leader directed. It is a pleasure for us to do the Father's will--no cross about that. We delight not only to consecrate our wills, but the Lord's law of righteousness is in our hearts to such an extent that we delight to serve the right, the Truth. Our cross-bearing comes when we find that the Truth, so beautiful to us, so charming, is hated by others and draws upon us their anger, malice, hatred, as the same truths drew the same opposition upon our Master. Our faithfulness in cross-bearing consists in our willingness to stand up for the Truth and for every principle of righteousness; --meekly, humbly, yet firmly, speaking the truth in love, no matter what the cost of friendships broken or enmities enkindled, or evil words spoken against us falsely for the Truth's sake.

Our Master forewarned us of just such experiences when he spoke of our crosses in following him. He was explaining the matter more fully when he said, "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "If ye were of the world the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, --prince of devils,--think it not strange if they will call his followers by evil names also. Yea, he forewarned us, "They shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake." He even implied that some who are not children of the devil would be found amongst the persecutors of the cross-bearers, and assured us that some of these would verily think that they were doing God service. And are they not doing God and us also a service in the sense that Satan is serving God's purposes in the present time, in the persecution of the Church;--in making her path a "narrow" one, and filling it with difficulties; that thus the Lord's faithful cross-bearers might be tested and proven, and that he might thus select and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works and zealous of the Truth?

CROSS-BEARERS MUST BATTLE WITH THE FLESH, ALSO.

While we pointed out, foregoing, that cross-bearing is quite separate from battling with the weaknesses of the flesh, nevertheless whoever has the mind of Christ, whoever is seeking to be a cross-bearer and to stand up as a representative of the Lord and the Truth in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, as an ambassador of God, will surely realize that he could not be an acceptable ambassador and could not claim that his will is sacrificed to the Lord's will, if he did not strive against the weaknesses and imperfections in himself as well as stand for the general principles of righteousness and truth everywhere.

The Apostle included this thought and much more in this expression,--"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." (1 John 2:6.) He is to walk as our Lord walked, in his general deportment and relationship to everything that is good; and correspondingly to avoid everything that is evil. He is to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of Jesus.

This, however, does not mean that he either should or could, in an imperfect body, walk up to all the perfection of his Lord, who even in the flesh was perfect. It means just what it says, that we should walk as he walked--in the same way, in the same direction, toward the same mark and standard that he recognized and established. The Apostle Paul gives us a suggestion along this line, very helpful when rightly understood. His words are, "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4.) To walk after the flesh is to walk after sin--to knowingly, willingly, intentionally, do those things which we

R3237 : page 346

recognize to be contrary to the divine will, even though we should not go to the extreme of wickedness. So, likewise, to walk after the Spirit does not mean to walk up to the standard of the Spirit, which would be impossible for us who were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and thus blemished by sin according to the flesh. As "New Creatures" we are living in the earthly tabernacle, which is imperfect; and so long as we are thus limited, we cannot do all that we would. As "New Creatures," begotten of the holy Spirit, we desire to do perfectly. We desire that every thought, word and act should be perfect in the sight of our heavenly Father,--as perfect as were those of our dear Redeemer; but this we know from the Scriptures and from experience is impossible. We are glad, therefore, that the Lord shows us, as in this statement of the Apostle, that what he requires is that we should walk after the Spirit;--that he does not require of us that we should walk up to it, which would be an impossibility.

It is because we could not walk up to the Spirit, up to the perfect standard of the divine requirement, that God has mercifully provided an arrangement of grace on our behalf. By this grace, those who start as members of the body of Christ, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus--to walk henceforth not after the flesh, but on the contrary to walk after the Spirit, and as nearly as possible up to the Spirit's requirements--have their deficiencies made up for them by their Redeemer's meritorious sacrifice. The divine arrangement for this is a unique one, which adapts itself to the various conditions and circumstances of each and

all called to walk in this narrow way. If one by reason of being well born and having a good environment has for this reason a better balanced and equipped mortal body in which the new mind can exercise itself with the greater freedom;--and if such a one by reason of these advantages be able to walk nearer to the Spirit's standard than a less favored brother, whose will, however, is equally loyal to the

R3238 : page 346

Lord, the divine arrangement is that each shall have imputed to him grace sufficient,--so that both may be counted perfect--counted as having walked up to the Spirit's requirements.

This matter may be more clearly before our minds if we imagine a scale marked off from naught (0) to one hundred (100)--a scale on which we will suppose moral stamina to be measurable, one hundred representing the full, complete character which God requires. On this scale imagine five brethren with different degrees of physical imperfections, yet all fully consecrated to the Lord, all seeking to the best of their ability to "walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit"--as nearly up to the full (one hundred) standard as possible. One has ten points of character, another twenty, another thirty, another forty, another fifty. From the Lord's standpoint, because they are all trusting in Christ and walking in his way, and seeking to do his will, they are all counted as up to the full standard, one hundred--all acceptable with the Lord--the weakest as well as the strongest of them. This wonderful divine arrangement for man's necessities tells of the wisdom of God as well as of his mercy and love. Who else could have devised such an equitable plan, by which whosoever cometh unto the Father through the Redeemer, with full consecration of heart, of will, and full intention of life, might be acceptable --nothing short of perfection being acceptable.

It is for this reason that we are told that we are reckonedly justified--"justified by faith." Mark now the words of the Apostle, "Where sin abounded, there did grace so much more abound." He here expresses a general principle of the divine arrangement. Those hearing the invitation in this present time, and desiring to accept God's grace and call, are all thus put on an equality: he who has little character with many weaknesses and imperfections, has accredited to him of the Lord's grace and merit proportionately; he who has more of character naturally and who needs, therefore, less of grace, gets also according to his needs. But let it be clearly noted that there is "none righteous, no, not one"--none who can come up to the divine standard. All need to have the Lord's merit imputed to them, and hence the Lord makes this arrangement for all who would approach him and

accept his favor, his call to joint-heirship with his Son. They can have neither part nor lot in the matter until they have acknowledged their own imperfections and have accepted the imputed merits of our Redeemer, "In whom we have redemption through his blood."

All of the Lord's people--not all of the nominal church, not merely nominal disciples, but the true followers mentioned in the text--are not only walking in the same pathway, but similarly all find it narrow and difficult. Similarly all in this pathway have the same spirit, mind or disposition--to do the Father's will and to serve his cause. This is the Spirit of Christ, and by it all men may take knowledge of his disciples; they, like him, will be loyal to the principles of righteousness and truth. They will be willing to suffer opposition and persecution for the Truth's sake, for righteousness' sake, and thus with him to be cross-bearers.

The Apostle Paul brings out this thought when, writing to the Corinthians respecting Titus, he asks, "Walked we not in the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps?" (2 Cor. 12:18.) Assuredly Paul

R3238 : page 347

and Titus must have been walking in the same spirit and the same steps if they were both walking in the Spirit and steps of the Master,--taking up life's crosses and following him. And this, dear brethren and sisters, will be true of each and all of us. While we each have our individual peculiarities and differences of temperament, conditions, surroundings, opportunities, etc., the same spirit and the same steps can be noted in all who are followers of the Lamb. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If any man walk not in the footsteps of Jesus he is not one of his followers, in this special sense pointed out by our text, and consequently would not be one of the joint-heirs in the Kingdom. But let us keep in memory the Lord's assurance that his grace is sufficient for us, and that his strength is made perfect in our weakness, and that this is the victory that overcometh the world--even our faith.

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R3238 : page 347

OVERCOMING EVIL WITH GOOD.

--1 SAM. 26:5-12,21-25.--AUGUST 30.--

Golden Text.--"Love your enemies,
do good to them that hate you."

THIS lesson concerns the seven years of David's experiences as a fugitive from the envy and hatred of King Saul. The latter, though still the nominal representative of the Lord upon the throne of Israel, had lost the divine blessing and power which, in considerable measure, had been transferred to David after his anointing to be Saul's successor. The lesson brings before our minds in sharp contrast the king, whose better judgment was overcome by evil impulses, and David, the "man after God's own heart," who, although far from perfect, strove successfully for mastery over himself, and overcame promptings of evil under the guidance of principles of righteousness. We are not to think of David as perfect. Neither are we to be blind to his faults and sins, nor to excuse them nor to copy them. David was not one of the "saints" in the New Testament sense. He lived at too early a date to share in the high calling, nor could he follow in the footsteps of Jesus, since the Captain of our salvation and our forerunner in the narrow way had not yet come. David was a man after God's own heart, in the sense that he was full of faith in God and aimed aright. At heart he desired to do the Lord's will, and wherever he failed of this it caused him grief and led him to repentance. He lived before the time of God's revelation of his own character and plan and perfect will concerning his people. All things considered, David's attainments in faith and obedience were quite remarkable, so that although as a whole he was not to be considered as a model or pattern by the Church of the Gospel age, nevertheless many beautiful illustrations of proper faith and obedience may be drawn from his career, and some of them are noted in the lesson before us.

The seven years from the time David fled from the wrath of Saul until Saul died must have seemed to David a peculiarly long period of trial of faith and patience. His own course had been a noble and true one. He had served his king and his nation most loyally, yet he suffered as a reward. He was for a time an exile in a foreign land, and his father's family was obliged to remove to Moab for protection. It must have seemed peculiar to David that the Lord should permit him, anointed to succeed King Saul, to be thus delayed from coming into his kingdom, and instead to be hunted and persecuted as an outlaw. This, however, was a valuable test of his faith, and doubtless helped to strengthen its roots, and thus to make his character stronger and his trust in the Lord firmer. But besides this, we may readily see that those seven years were valuable to David as a preparation for his kingly office. They made him intimately acquainted with the people and their usual manner of life and general sentiments --acquainted also with the neighboring peoples. Above all, he became intimately acquainted with the Lord, and, we may be sure, learned to trust his providences

even where he could not trace them. Several of the Psalms were either written during this period and describe David's experiences on the spot, or written subsequently describing the lessons learned from those experiences. Amongst these Psalms may be mentioned numbers 34, 52, 56, 57, 63.

Spiritual Israelites who have already received the adoption and anointing of the Lord to future service as kings and priests, who shall reign on the earth with our blessed Lord and Head, to bless all the families of the earth, can easily trace valuable lessons in the trying experiences of David at the time of this lesson. The Prince of this world is our enemy, not because we have done evil, but because he realizes that he has but a short time, and because he has a spirit that is opposed to the Lord's Spirit in us. We too, at times, may wonder why the Lord--having anointed us and assured us of the glory, honor and immortality in the Kingdom--permits us to have such trying experiences and such severe conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil. The reason becomes evident as we learn the way of the Lord more particularly--as we learn that the present "afflictions which are but for a moment [comparatively] are working out for us [fitting

R3238 : page 348

us for] a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We have need of patience, and that can only be gained by trials. We have need of faith, and that can only be developed by necessities. We have need of experience for our future work, which can be gained only by such experiences, which permit us to be touched with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of those about us, to whom we shall be ministers and representatives when we reach the throne. For us, then, as for David, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil,--and not with evil but with good.

In considering the story of David and other Bible heroes we are impressed with the candor of the narratives --that the evil things of their conduct are told with the same frankness as their good deeds. This is one of the peculiarities of the Bible and one of the internal

R3239 : page 348

evidences of its truthfulness. How easy it would have been to have glossed the history of David so as to have avoided everything that would be to his discredit; and how surely this would have been done, especially in the case of a king, had the preparation of the Bible not been under divine supervision. Some, we are sure, incline to the thought that the Bible would have been much better reading had some of the faults of its prominent persons been omitted; we, however, are not sure

of this. The story of the trials and failures and repentances of some of these noble characters have been no less blessings than the records of their noble deeds and sentiments. As some of the Lord's people have realized their own weaknesses in the flesh, having at times come short of their ideals in the battle against sin, they have found encouragement in the experiences of others related in the Scriptures--not to delve further into sin but to realize that "there is forgiveness with the Lord that he might be feared." As such have noted the failures of David on various occasions and his repentance, contrition and restoration to the Lord's favor, it has given them courage to similarly repent and to similarly trust in God's mercy and in their own forgiveness, and similarly to be encouraged to arise from their dejection and sin and start afresh in the battle for righteousness, truth, purity, etc.

Our lesson deals with one of David's experiences when pursued by Saul. The erratic course of King Saul under the control of an evil spirit doubtless led him to deal unjustly with other men, as he did with David,--with some for one cause, with some for another. Such people as incurred Saul's enmity, and those that were forced to become fugitives and to be ranked with outlaws, sought out David and put themselves under his superior control. These numbered at one time 400 and later on 600. (1 Sam. 22:2; 25:13; 27:2.) These men, hindered from engaging in the ordinary pursuits of life by reason of the king's erratic course, moved about from place to place, and, since they must eat, their presence was doubtless an affliction upon the farmers wherever they went. Their foragings may have been carried on in harmony with the Jewish law, which provided that any hungry persons might enter any farm, orchard or vineyard and eat to his satisfaction without molestation.

Doubtless it was because the people of the village of Ziph desired to curry the king's favor, and also because they feared the foragings of so many men, that they sent word to King Saul that David and his company could be found in their vicinity. The king hurriedly gathered a troop of 3,000 and went to the place, probably anxious to capture David and his followers. The latter, however, were not so easily caught; indeed they were much better used to scouting than the regular army would be. They readily ascertained all about the king and his army, while the king knew little or nothing of them.

The story shows how David with one trusty companion went into Saul's camp. King Saul and the whole army were sleeping without tents, clothed in their outer robes, as is frequently the custom in Palestine even yet. The king lay not in a "trench" but in a space or corral formed by the army wagons; and at his head, to distinguish him from the rest of the army, his spear was erected near his head-rest, as is still the

custom among the chiefs of the Bedouins of that country. Secure in the thought that David and his handful of followers would be afraid of the king and his army and would not think of coming nigh them, no provision had been made for pickets or watchmen, so that David and his companion readily found the king, and could have murdered him in his sleep and escaped without detection had they chosen so to do. It was not that David was so obtuse that he could not see the advantage that would come to him that he refrained from killing the king, but because of his respect for God and his loyalty to him. David recognized fully that God was the King of Israel, and that God had set Saul in the position he occupied and anointed him as king; and that it was the duty of the people to honor the king as God's representative. (Kings among the Gentiles are not thus divinely set.) He did not have so weak a conscience as would have permitted him to reason that as God had anointed him to be Saul's successor he had now providentially put Saul's life in his power. On the contrary he reasoned properly that God was still King and that he had all the power necessary to dethrone Saul and to bring him to the throne in his own way; and that the Almighty needed not the assistance of murder on his part for the accomplishment of his plan.

R3239 : page 349

To make the test still stronger David's companion suggested all this, and proposed to carry it out; so that the entire matter might have been done without David saying a word or lifting a finger. To a weaker mind this would have been an extremely strong temptation --he would have argued with himself that the crime would not be his,--that by merely keeping silent and refusing to interfere the whole matter might be accomplished by another. But David knew that his companion would not act without his consent, either formal or implied. He recognized that the responsibility still would be his, whoever might be the tool in the murder. He decided that he would not meet Saul's envy, malice, hatred and murderous spirit with the same spirit,--returning evil for evil,--but, instead, he would requite his evil and murderous intentions with mercy. This was not merely a matter of policy, but evidently David never had in his heart any murderous spirit towards Saul, for this was now the second time he had him in his power and might have destroyed him. We are not to suppose that David loved Saul with an affectionate love any more than he would have loved any other person of such a character. He loved him in the sense referred to in our Golden Text--with the kind of love it is proper to feel toward our enemies; --the love of sympathy and compassion which, however it might disapprove the character, etc., of the

enemy, would neither do him injury nor encourage others to do so, but would spare his life and be ready in any manner to do him a kindness.

There is a good lesson here for all spiritual Israelites. We are to recognize the Lord's appointments and permissions, not in respect only to earthly governments, but also, and particularly, in respect to those whom God has set in the Church. Even though such should become enemies of righteousness, it is not for us to accomplish their destruction. The Lord, who called us to the Kingdom and who has promised to give it to us in his own due time, declares it his will that in the present time we should live peaceably, and to exercise patience, moderation and kindness even toward our enemies--toward those who would destroy us or who are pursuing us with the intention of assassinating our characters, or what not. We are not to render evil for evil, nor railing for railing, nor slander for slander; but contrariwise, are to speak as kindly of our enemies as we can, and to think as generously of them as possible --in no sense of the word either physically or with our tongues or otherwise may we retaliate or manifest their spirit, but return good for evil, mercy and compassion for malice and injury.

After David and his companion had reached a position of safety, and when the proper time had come, they hailed the king and his chief general, and called their attention to the fact that the king's life had been in jeopardy, but had been spared; and as proofs they showed the spear and water bottle and informed the king that these would be returned to a messenger whom he might send for them. It was not improper that David should let all know the spirit of magnanimity which had controlled his conduct in this matter. The king at once recognized the situation, and had manhood enough to confess it promptly and to apologize for his own contrary course. David's procedure conquered him.

The results of well-doing are not always so apparent as in this case, because some evil-doers have less character and principle than had Saul,--unappreciative, envious and malicious as he was. But even if our rendering of good for evil fail to bring the acknowledgment of the evil-doer it nevertheless is right, and becomes a blessing to us. It is the evil-doer who loses by his failure to be conquered by our kindness. Although Saul evidently repented, David knew better than to trust himself to his power; and there is a lesson in this for us also, viz., that while generous toward our enemies, returning them good for their evil, we should not be too readily convinced of reformation on their part, but should realize, as David did in Saul's case, that he was under control of an evil spirit, and that therefore any acknowledgment of wrong or profession of reformation should be esteemed a passing emotion rather than a change of disposition until reasonable

time should be given for a demonstration of a change of heart.

David's answer to Saul, under all the circumstances, was a model of truthfulness and forbearance. He neither affirmed nor denied Saul's guilt, nor did he solicit the king's favor and mercy. On the other hand he declared his confidence in God--that he would deal with every man according to his righteousness and mercy--and showed that it was his respect for God and his standards that spared the king's life. He declared that as he had shown mercy toward the king he was trusting in the Lord to show mercy toward him, and that in the Lord--not in the king--he trusted for compassion and help, to deliver him from all tribulations. To what extent David appreciated the high standard of his own expression we do not know. Being a prophet, he frequently typified the Christ, Head and body. His words are certainly more appropriate for the Church than they were for him personally. David was still under the Law and must therefore be judged by the Law, which, as the Apostle declares, proves that there is none righteous, no not one. In our day, however, we may be covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, so that "the righteousness of the Law may be fulfilled in us who are walking not

R3240 : page 350

after the flesh but after the Spirit." Our heart intentions for righteousness are acceptable to the Lord under the merits of Christ's sacrifice. Our desires and endeavors to be faithful to him and to his Word are accepted instead of perfect works, and hence we may expect that in due time the Lord will accept us in the Beloved, to the glory of his Kingdom. Again David's sentiments are ours and his principles those which appeal to us when he declares that God would have mercy upon him as he had mercy upon Saul. This is the very essence of our Master's teaching--"If ye forgive not men for trespasses against you neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses"--he who shows no mercy shall obtain no mercy.

As Saul recognized the spirit that was in David as being more righteous than his own, and declared that ultimately David would be prospered greatly, so do the enemies of spiritual Israelites realize the difference between their conduct and that of those who are guided by the Lord's Spirit--although they do not often candidly acknowledge the matter as did Saul. The class represented by Saul is a numerous one. It discerns and acknowledges righteousness but follows unrighteousness: it discerns the good but opposes it with evil. Let us, in respect to faith in God and desire to please him, be like David, whose name signifies Beloved, and who, as already intimated, in many respects was a type of the Beloved--Christ, Head and body.

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES MISUSED.

--1 SAM. 31:1-13.--SEPTEMBER 6.--

Golden Text:--"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."--Prov. 14:12.

KING SAUL'S life as a whole was a blunder and a failure. It opened with grand possibilities and opportunities under divine favor and the love and adoration of his countrymen. Not only his personal qualities were in many respects estimable, but even his physical proportions--head and shoulders above his fellows, goodly to look upon, and attractive to his people--had added to his influence. Yet he failed. A valuable lesson may be drawn by each of us from the causes of his failure. A contemporary sums up his case thus:

"Saul had many noble and lovable qualities, such as bravery, promptitude--in his earlier days modesty and generosity. All these he had by nature, but there is no sign that he ever sought to cultivate his moral character or to win any grace that did not come naturally to him; nor is there any reason to suppose that religion had ever had any strong hold upon him. From the baleful influence of his selfishness, as before some hot poison-wind, all the flowers of good dispositions were burned up, and the bad stimulated to growth. His earlier virtues disappeared and passed into their opposites. Modesty became arrogance, and a long course of indulgence in self-will developed cruelty, gloomy suspicion and passionate anger, and left him the victim and slave of his own causeless hate. He who rebels against God mars his own character. The miserable last years of Saul, haunted and hunted as by a demon by his own indulged and swollen rebellion and unsleeping suspicion, are an example of the sorrows that ever dog sin; and, as he fell by his own sword in his final battle at Gilboa, the terrible saying recurs to our memory: 'He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.'"

Saul's difficulty, which led to all this disaster, was his selfishness--and he was not unusually selfish either. The great majority of mankind are equally selfish--self-willed; and the great majority, like him, make a failure of whatever possibilities were before them at the first. As David's career illustrates the wisdom and advantage of an early consecration to the will of the Lord, and the blessing which must surely attend such a course--even though those blessings be accompanied

with trials and difficulties--so Saul's course in a general way illustrates the error of those who measurably ignore the Lord and attempt to direct their own paths. Such will surely find themselves misled by their selfish ambitions as Saul was by his. Saul's two special transgressions were: (1) his offering of sacrifice, which, according to divine arrangement, he had no right to offer (1 Sam. 13:1-14); (2) his disobedience of another direct command of the Lord, as recorded in 1 Sam. 15:1-13. It may be argued that King David also erred and did contrary to the Lord's will on several occasions, but we are to notice the wide difference between these two characters, in that David's heart was apparently always loyal to the Lord, and that when overtaken in a fault his sorrow therefor was sincere and led to greater carefulness in the future. With Saul, on the contrary, the difficulty seems to have been with the heart--that at heart he was not submissive to the Lord's will but was guided by his own will, and merely repented and apologized through fear of consequences and not from sorrow at having deviated from the Lord's way.

Herein we may note a great difference between people nominally the Lord's today: The truly consecrated may stumble, may err, but at heart they are ever loyal to the Lord and wish to serve and please him. These are spiritual Israelites indeed, and the blessing of the Lord is upon them. The other class professes to be the Lord's people, but at heart are far from him, and merely draw nigh with their lips and outward ceremonies. They have neither part nor lot

R3240 : page 351

with the others, and will surely reap the results of their own self-will so far as any opportunities under the present call are concerned. Another writer has well said:

"When Saul forsook God there necessarily was a separation between him and God; and an evil spirit took possession of his heart. We see no sign of God's doing anything direct to hasten Saul's doom. He was left to work out the natural results of an evil heart, and a life guided by passion and selfishness, without the help and direction of God. He spent his time in hunting David instead of overcoming his enemies. His kingdom was thus neglected, his people discontented, many of his best men abandoned him and went over to David, and together were driven into the enemies' country. His army lost courage, and in the last great battle he was weakened and worn by spending the night in consulting a witch instead of preparing for his work. So that he perished miserably by suicide at last. He ate of the fruit of his own way, and was filled with his own devices."--Prov. 1:3.

Our lesson concerns the closing days of Saul's experiences. The Philistines with an army had penetrated

the kingdom of Israel, and Saul, with an opposing army, went forth to engage them in battle. The two armies encamped not far from Nazareth. We can easily imagine the dejection of mind which led King Saul on the night before the battle to consult the witch at Endor. In his self-will he neglected the Lord's will in general and was filled with hatred for David, because he realized that it was the Lord's will to ultimately bring the latter to the throne of Israel. He realized, therefore, that in opposing David, who did him no harm, but was really one of his most loyal subjects, he was in fact fighting against God. And now, on the eve of battle, it is no wonder that he felt downcast and dejected, because when he sought to inquire of the Lord he got no response. He bethought him of the witch of Endor and concluded to inquire of her respecting the outcome of the battle on the morrow. Here again he knew that his course was in opposition to the divine will; for he himself had given instructions for the execution of the Lord's command of Deut. 18:10,12; Exod. 22:18. His course in this matter illustrated the quality of his disposition which the Lord disapproved. Knowing that communication with the evil spirits through mediums was disapproved of God, he nevertheless pursued the wrong course. Similarly some of God's people today, notwithstanding the instruction of the Scriptures that they should not seek those having familiar spirits, etc., have attended Spiritualistic seances "just to see how it is done." Such a disposition to be careless of the Lord's instruction, self-willed, was the one which got Saul into trouble and surely will make trouble for those who have it today. God is not pleased with those who are careless of his commands: he lets them take their own way as he permitted Saul to take his own way; but, however wise such a self-willed way may appear at the time, the end is sure to be disastrous so far as peace and fellowship with the Lord are concerned. Only those who are fully committed to the Lord and who love the Lord's will better than their own can expect to have fulfilled toward them the promise, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God."

The narrative of the lesson is very simple and requires very little comment. Saul and three of his sons and his entire bodyguard perished in the battle, in which the Philistines seemed to have specially pursued the royal party. Saul committed suicide, lest falling alive into the hands of his enemies they would have tortured him, as was not infrequently the custom in that day. The Philistines, of course, rejoiced in his discomfiture, and as an evidence of their victory his head was sent as a trophy to one and another of their cities. They were worshipers of the goddess Ashtaroth,

and as a memorial of their victory Saul's armor was hung in one of her temples. The bodies of Saul and his sons were fastened to the outside wall of the city of Bethshan as a mark of special indignity, but they were soon recovered by men from the tribe of Manasseh, who, probably to prevent further desecration to the bodies, burned them, and subsequently buried the ashes, unconsumed bones, etc.

The Golden Text is worthy of being committed to memory by all. Its lesson is that we are not competent to guide and direct our own affairs; that we need divine counsel. Human judgment would be unreliable even if supported by absolute knowledge; but in view of our deficiency in knowledge as well as in judgment, very evidently to man many ways seem right and wise and advantageous and desirable which, pursued, lead to disappointment and chagrin and ultimately would lead to death--second death. The wise, proper course for all, therefore, is to realize and acknowledge our own insufficiency, un wisdom, and to look to our great Creator for guidance. Happy are those who heed the Scriptural injunction, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." The earlier this right course is begun the better will be the results every way, the easier will it be for us to bend our wills to the will of the Lord; and the lessons and satisfaction and peace coming to us through the Lord's guidance will be the more precious. A full consecration of the heart and life and all our interests to the Lord, that his will may be done in us in all things, is the consecration necessary to the bringing of every justified believer into fellowship in the body of Christ, which is the Church.

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page 353

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CONTENTS.

Views from the Watch Tower.....355
 Lynchings Precursory to Anarchy.....355
 Lawlessness on the Increase.....356
 War in Macedonia, Bulgaria and
 Turkey.....357
 Dancing Preferred to Devotion.....357
 Your Righteousness.....358
 St. Luke as Artist.....359
 Waiting Patiently on the Lord.....361
 The Gospel Preached to the Dead.....363
 "The Lord is My Light and My

Salvation.....364
Interesting Questions Answered.....364

page 354

LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

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or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER, will be supplied FREE, if
they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting
the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

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FAVORABLE METHODS OF SERVICE.

The chiefest service we could commend, open to all
who are unencumbered and in active use of their faculties,
is the Colporteur work. It is an honorable form of ministering
the truth from house to house, as the apostles
served. It is a service which the Lord seems to have
blessed as much or more than any other for gathering the
"wheat." It is apparent at once to all that to sell such
books as the DAWNS at 35 cents each, cannot be for money-making:
that it is merely another way of preaching the
truth. No other religious books are sold at any such price.
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We are mailing this edition to all whose orders are now
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is \$2.50--a year's subscription to the TOWER being given
free with each when desired. In cloth binding, the price

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R3241 : page 355

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

LYNCHINGS PRECURSORY TO ANARCHY.

THE prevalence of an anarchious spirit has for some time past been manifesting itself in the lynching of reputed criminals. The law-supporting and law-defying elements seem to clash in some men's minds, and the lynchers merely try to gratify both at one time. They gratify their desire to violate law and still their consciences with the thought that they are meting out justice. Doubtless the same mixture of sentiment accompanied the religious stake-burnings and rackings of the past; the victims were declared by high Church dignitaries to be "heretics," propagators of "monstrous doctrines," "injurious to the Church and the State." To the ignorant these charges justified any and every torture in their destruction. Doubtless there would again be danger to those dubbed "unorthodox" were it not for the Babel of doctrine now prevailing, which renders it difficult to determine where the lines of "orthodoxy" could be drawn to the satisfaction of a great majority. Who knows that in the near future, under the proposed consolidation of Christian religions (which we have for the past twenty years predicted from the Scriptures, and which comes closer yearly), this condition may not be reached--that mobs may not burn "heretics"? The Scriptures lead us to expect some such anarchistic conditions now,--preceding the establishment of the Kingdom.

THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS ON MOB VIOLENCE.

Governor Durbin of Indiana not only called out the state militia to suppress a lynching, but under his commands the mob was scattered with considerable loss of life. The President of the United States, in an open letter, thanked him for his vindication of the law. We make liberal extracts from his letter as follows:--

My Dear Governor Durbin:--

Permit me to thank you as an American citizen for the admirable way in which you have vindicated the majesty of the law by your recent action in reference to lynching. I feel, my dear sir, that you have made all men your debtors who believe, as all far-seeing men must, that the well-being, indeed the very existence, of the republic depends

upon that spirit of orderly liberty under the law which is as incompatible with mob violence as with any form of despotism. Of course mob violence is simply one form of anarchy; and anarchy is now, as it always has been, the handmaid and forerunner of tyranny.

I feel that you have not only reflected honor upon the state which for its good fortune has you for its chief executive, but upon the whole nation. It is incumbent upon every man throughout this country not only to hold up your hands in the course you have been following, but to show his realization that the matter is one of vital concern to us all.

All thoughtful men must feel the gravest alarm over the growth of lynching in this country, and especially over the peculiarly hideous forms so often taken by mob violence when colored men are the victims--on which occasion the mob seems to lay most weight, not on the crime, but on the color of the criminal. In a certain proportion of these cases the man lynched has been guilty of a crime horrible beyond description; a crime so horrible that as far as he himself is concerned he has forfeited the right to any kind of sympathy whatsoever.

The feeling of all good citizens that such a hideous crime shall not be hideously punished by mob violence is due not in the least to sympathy for the criminal, but to a very lively sense of the train of dreadful consequences which follow the course taken by the mob in exacting inhuman vengeance for an inhuman wrong. In such cases, moreover, it is well to remember that the criminal not merely sins against humanity in inexpiable and unpardonable fashion, but sins particularly against his own race, and does them a wrong far greater than any white man can possibly do them....

Moreover, every effort should be made under the law

R3241 : page 356

to expedite the proceedings of justice in the case of such an awful crime. But it cannot be necessary in order to accomplish this to deprive any citizen of those fundamental rights to be heard in his own defense which are so dear to us all and lie at the root of our liberty. It certainly ought to be possible by the proper administration of the laws to secure swift vengeance upon the criminal; and the best and immediate efforts of all legislators, judges and citizens should be addressed to securing such reforms in our legal procedure as to leave no vestige of excuse for those misguided men who undertake to reap vengeance through violent measures....

But even where the real criminal is reached, the wrong done by the mob to the community itself is well nigh as great. Especially is this true where the lynching is accompanied with torture. There are certain hideous sights which when once seen can never be wholly erased from the mental retina. The mere fact of having seen them implies degradation. This is a thousand fold stronger

when instead of merely seeing the deed the man has participated in it. Whoever in any part of our country has ever taken part in lawlessly putting to death a criminal by the dreadful torture of fire must forever after have the awful spectacle of his own handiwork seared into his brain and soul. He can never again be the same man.

This matter of lynching would be a terrible thing even if it stopped with the lynching of men guilty of the inhuman and hideous crime of rape; but as a matter of fact lawlessness of this type never does stop and never can stop in such fashion. Every violent man in the community is encouraged by every case of lynching in which the lynchers go unpunished to himself take the law into his own hands whenever it suits his own convenience.

In the same way the use of torture by the mob in certain cases is sure to spread until it is applied more or less indiscriminately in other cases. The spirit of lawlessness grows with what it feeds on, and when mobs with impunity lynch criminals for one crime, they are certain to begin to lynch real or alleged criminals for other causes....

The nation, like the individual, cannot commit a crime with impunity. If we are guilty of lawlessness and brutal violence, whether our guilt consists in active participation therein or in mere connivance and encouragement, we shall assuredly suffer later on because of what we have done. The corner stone of this republic, as of all free governments, is respect for and obedience to the law. Where we permit the law to be defied or evaded, whether by rich man or poor man, by black man or white, we are by just so much weakening the bonds of our civilization and increasing the chances of its overthrow, and of the substitution therefor of a system in which there shall be violent alternations of anarchy and tyranny. Sincerely yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

LAWLESSNESS ON THE INCREASE.

On this subject the Jewish Exponent says:--

"'The earth was filled with violence.' (Gen. 6:11.)

Are these words less true today than they were in the days of which the Bible speaks? Mob violence, race hatred, the subjugation of weaker nations --these things are accepted almost as matters of course by a large section of humanity. Each outbreak of lawless violence furnishes the fuel to kindle anew the flames of passion and of hatred, until respect

R3242 : page 356

for law and authority is derisively mocked at and whole communities bow in helpless impotence before the cruel, brutal instincts of the unbridled mob.

"The truth of the matter is that all good men must have the courage of their convictions and their

religious professions in instilling the lesson of respect for the law. The mob that burns a negro at the stake, even though he be guilty of the most heinous crime; the officer of high rank who ruthlessly orders his subordinates to burn and kill, even when a state of insurrection prevails; the private soldier who applies the fiendish water-cure to an uncommunicative prisoner-- all these are alike enemies of human society. To condone their offense is simply an invitation for the inauguration of the reign of lawlessness, which in the end must result in the triumph of anarchy and the rule of the unreasoning mob. Failure to visit condign punishment for such offenses must eventually result in the paralysis of legal and orderly forms of government. 'Cruel and unusual punishment' is forbidden by the Constitution of the United States, which therein speaks not only the language of governmental authority, but voices the divine protest against man's inhumanity to man.

"The questions arising out of these recurrent exhibitions of lawlessness go to the root of all religious and ethical principles. To ignore them is the worst form of religious cowardice. To excuse or defend outbreaks against the fundamental law is the most dangerous because it is the most insidious form of treason. Civilized society cannot exist where offenders against the laws of the state are not tried calmly, fairly, dispassionately; nor can religion exercise its proper influence over the consciences of men unless it teaches them imperatively to yield a ready obedience to the constituted authorities. This is a lesson that all sections of the people must learn. Unless they learn it speedily, dark and sorrowful days are in store for those who love their fellow-men."

* * *

The Apostle foretold that evil men and seducers would wax worse and worse, and that disobedience to parents, headiness, boastfulness, and love of pleasure more than love of God, would mark nominal Christian sentiment in the end of this age. And if so, what wild excesses may we not anticipate from those who have not even "the form of godliness"? The Scriptures clearly indicate that the result will be world-wide anarchy --lawlessness.

For three reasons all who are of the Truth should be specially on guard that the influence of their every word and act should be in accord with law and order and peace. (1) It is the command that each shall so far as possible "live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18), and be not a "brawler" nor a "striker" nor a "busybody." (Titus 3:2; 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:15.) (2) Such "moderation" (Phil. 4:5) will commend the gospel we preach and give us the greater influence in its service. (3) The time may come when the mob

spirit will be incited against us as it was incited against the apostles and other early Christians. And although

R3242 : page 357

we should rejoice in a martyr's death if God so willed, we should do nothing to encourage or abet such lawlessness. The Master's word is, "In your patience possess ye your souls!"

WAR IN MACEDONIA, BULGARIA AND TURKEY.

Present appearances are that war has started in earnest in the Balkans, and no human being can say where it will end. To us it appears wholly political, and not a war against Christians by Mohammedans. So far as we are able to judge the Christianity of that region is of a merely nominal sort. The Gazette gives a fairly good summary of the situation as follows:--

"Bulgarian and Macedonian agitators have perpetrated continuous outrages in the hope of inflaming the masses, and apparently they have succeeded in exhausting Turkish patience. The Turk has only been restrained up to the present time by the order of the Powers to keep hands off Bulgaria and to introduce prescribed reforms in Macedonia. The cables now indicate that the Turk has thrown off this restraint and proposes to at once inaugurate a campaign of pillage and slaughter, inciting fanatical Mohammedans to exterminate the Christian trouble-makers.

"This war of extermination is exactly what the Bulgarian agitators have been trying to bring about. They do not believe that Russia and Austria will permit the Turks to annihilate the Christian population of the Balkan states. Their program is first to have Bulgaria declare war in behalf of the Macedonians and to keep the turmoil going until Russia or Austria, or possibly both, shall intervene. Their ultimate object is to have the Balkan territories taken from Turkish rule, and it is not improbable that Turkey's resolution to begin active operations will lead to that result. The Powers have not wanted to be mixed in the matter, but they may find it impossible to stay out, for once the Turk is started he knows neither reason nor humanity.

"If Russia becomes involved, there is little doubt it will endeavor to make Turkey pay as the price of hostilities the surrender of Constantinople and the Bosphorus. That will let Russia down to the Mediterranean. It has long desired to reach that goal. It was prevented from securing it at the conclusion of the last war with Turkey by the interference of the other Powers of Europe. Since then it has avoided conflict in order to develop its financial position and industrial

resources. But if Russia is forced to fight for the restoration of peace on its Balkan borders it will not be cheated again. It will take over the direct management of the turbulent territory, and it will take along with that troublesome charge its coveted outlet to the southern sea. Hence the situation may fairly be regarded as a very serious one."

BURNED LIVE KITTENS.

HUMANE SOCIETY CHARGES A WOMAN WITH A HORRIBLE ACT OF CRUELTY.

Mrs. Fannie Salmosky of No. 1534 Pike street is charged with cruelty to animals by Humane Agent Edward Thompson before Alderman G. F. Oyer. It is said that on Wednesday some boys put a grape basket in her yard containing five small kittens. The woman heard the kittens crying, and after locating them in the basket ordered her little son to put the basket in a fire that was burning in the street. The boy took the basket and threw it in the flames. The kittens began to feel the heat of the basket burning and set up a loud cry. The woman was arrested and gave \$300 bail for a hearing--Pittsburg Gazette.

* * *

Does it not seem remarkable that, in our day, when such anti-cruelty sentiments so generally prevail and the cruelties of the dark ages are so generally condemned, that the creeds of those times still have their votaries, who somehow consider that they honor God in ascribing to him a character for cruelty and cruel designs against his human creatures such as quite overshadow the meanest cruelties known to the most depraved of earth? Oh, shame! Let God be true though it prove every creed of men a lie! Let us get back to the Bible and assure ourselves that the Lord is truthful when he says: "Their fear is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of men."--Isa. 29:13.

A reexamination of the subject will show that misconceptions of the Bible's teachings are built upon an unconscious violation of language which makes of such words as perish, lost, lose life, destroy, death, etc., mean their very opposites, viz., preserve in torture everlastingly. When we learn to give words their true meaning, and learn that in parables the fire is as symbolic as the sheep and goats and wheat and tares; and that the Book of Revelation is wholly symbolic, and that its "lake of fire and brimstone" is explained to mean "the Second Death" (Rev. 20:14), then our eyes will begin to see out of the smoke

and confusion of mystic Babylon. Then we can see God's true character, and love and praise him with our whole heart.

"DANCING PREFERRED TO DEVOTION."

Prof. Goldwin Smith, whose repute as a man of letters is world-wide, remarks as follows:--

"Methodism in England is downcast at finding that the increase of the Church has only been one per cent. Leaders complain that zeal is growing cold, that whist is preferred to class meetings, and dancing to devotion. The original enthusiasm, which wrought such wonders in its day, has done its work and is now spent. There is no use and there is considerable danger in struggling to keep up the hollow forms of it. The ordinary man must have pleasure, whist, valseing or whatever it may be; without it not only would life be dreary, but character would sour. A reasonable share of it in innocent forms is almost as necessary as food. Nor does it interfere with spiritual life, if by spiritual life is meant a life of aspiration to a character superior to our animal wants and desires. The

R3242 : page 358

Methodist Church on this continent seems to have recognized the fact, and to be cultivating in various ways the element of social enjoyment in the religious union. Its danger here, and a serious danger, is that into the place of spiritual aspiration may creep social and political ambition."

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R3243 : page 358

YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Ye are the light of the world;...let your light shine....Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all shall be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees ye shall in nowise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."--Matt. 5:14-20.

OUR Lord's sermon on the mount, from which these words are chosen for our present consideration, was a discourse remarkable for its

simplicity and its weighty import. From beginning to end there are in it no attempts at literary embellishment nor oratory nor flights of fancy to please and entertain. His object was to instruct, and he did so in the most simple and forcible language. It will be observed, too, that he did not on this occasion seek a public place where the largest audience could be gathered; but, on the contrary, he chose a place of retirement where he could be alone with his disciples. The multitudes had thronged about him to witness his miracles and to hear his words, and he had healed their sicknesses and taught them many things, but this discourse was one specially designed for his disciples, the household of faith. And here it has been faithfully recorded, that its instructions may extend to the entire household, even to the end of the age. So while we consider these words of our Lord, we may almost realize that in company with Peter and James and John, and many of the brethren and sisters of the early Church, we, too, are sitting on the grassy slopes of the mountain side and hearing the words as they fall from the lips of the greatest preacher the world has ever known. And as we turn away from the hallowed spot, let us not be forgetful hearers, but let us treasure up the words of life; let them sink deep into our hearts and bring forth their rich fruitage unto eternal life.

This fragment of our Lord's discourse indicates a responsibility toward the truth received which it is feared many Christians do not carefully observe and consider. Mark the expression, "Ye are the light of the world;...let your light shine." And again he said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world;...he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 9:5; 8:12.) And now, instructed and enlightened from his Word, he would have us remember that we, as his representatives, are the light of the world, and that we should keep our light constantly trimmed and burning--that we must let our light shine so that those following us may not walk in darkness.

Light is a symbol of truth, both in the Scriptures and in common parlance. So the expression, "Ye are the light of the world;...let your light shine," is equivalent to saying--"You are now so illuminated by the truth that you yourself have become a living representative of the truth. So do not in any way obscure it, but let it shine out more and more, that others may be similarly blessed by it." This truth is "the light of life"; it is what the world needs-- what all must have before they can attain unto everlasting life. Men must know the truth before the truth can make them free from the bondage of sin and death; they must know the truth before the truth can cleanse and sanctify them. It is the will of God, therefore, that all men shall come to an accurate

knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4.) And therefore it is the duty of every child of God to be very active in the dissemination of the truth--in letting his light shine, and in keeping it trimmed and burning.

"Trimmed and burning!" 'trimmed and burning!'" says some thoughtful soul. "I have often sung with fervor those words, 'Let the lower lights be burning,' 'Trim your lamps,' etc., but what does it mean?" It means that we must give very close attention to the words of life that we may come to an exact knowledge of the truth, and that we must carefully and faithfully trim away every vestige of error as fast as it becomes apparent to us--whether it be an error in doctrine or in our daily walk and conversation --so that the pure light of divine truth may shine out with as little obstruction as possible through the medium of a clear and transparent character.

It is a lamentable fact that many of the Lord's children seem very indifferent to this matter of trimming their lights. They get some truth and with it a great deal of error; and instead of trying to eliminate the error, they hold and teach the two together, so that the light they shed is not a pure light, but is colored and distorted by the shades with which it is mixed. And again, even when much pure truth is held, there are those who fail to let it have its cleansing effect upon the character, and so the light is obscured and misrepresented by the unclean medium through which it passes. Any who continue thus to hold the sacred trust of truth are really unworthy of

R3243 : page 359

it, and must eventually lose it; for it is written, "Light [truth] is sown for the righteous"; and such indifference to the claims of the truth is unrighteousness.

In our Lord's day there were those who openly professed to be teachers and representatives of divine truth. The scribes and pharisees professed to be very zealous for the truth, and thought themselves very creditable manifestations of its cleansing power. They claimed to have the light and to be letting it shine. "God," said the pharisee, "I thank thee that I am not as other men....I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess." But the Lord said, "Woe unto you;...ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and deceit." So they appeared in the Lord's sight; but they were revered and honored of men and esteemed as holy, and as guides in the way of truth and holiness. To God's law they presumed to add their own vain and foolish traditions, which made void the law of God, and they were very zealous in teaching these traditions to the people.

In so doing those teachers were inexcusable. The law of God was open before them, and it was their privilege and their duty to be correctly informed with reference to it. And especially after Christ had come, and by his teaching had made the truth so manifest, and the absurdity of their vain traditions so apparent, they were without excuse. And our Lord's accusation of hypocrisy well fitted their case when they resolutely determined to hold and teach the traditions of the Elders and to oppose the increasing light of truth which made their absurdity so manifest.

The scribes and pharisees had much truth: they had the whole law of God and claimed to believe and teach it; but they miserably colored and distorted it by their traditions and their really ignoble, though whitewashed, characters. And consequently their efforts, professedly to convert men to God, resulted only in making more hypocrites like themselves.

"I say unto you," said the Lord to his disciples, "that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Let us beware of that kind of righteousness which to men may indeed appear fair and praiseworthy, but which, in God's estimation, is mere sham and hypocrisy. God, who reads the heart, quickly discerns the motives with which we receive or disseminate the Truth; and foolish indeed is the man who attempts to make merchandise of this divine treasure for the paltry gains of this fleeting life, who prefers to hold and to teach error and becloud or oppose the truth of God, or to sell it after having once accepted it, for money, or influence, or popularity among his dying fellow-travelers on the way to the tomb, or for any consideration whatever.

And yet there are some who, though they do not thus hypocritically make merchandise of the Truth, do in a measure undervalue it, and who, both in the present and in the future, will be the losers thereby. If we permit prejudice, or some measure of self emulation, or of pride, or of combativeness, or any other thing, to interrupt the freedom of artless candor and simplicity and that spirit of meekness which alone befits the searchers after truth, we will find ourselves approaching the pharisaical spirit which, when fully ripe, becomes glaring hypocrisy. Those who avoid such a disposition, and who, therefore, in meekness and sincerity fully accept the Truth and zealously teach it at any cost or sacrifice, shall, the Lord says, be called great in the kingdom of heaven; while those who hold and teach a measure of error when it was their privilege to have clear Truth, had they been in the right condition of heart to receive it, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.--Matt. 5:19.

Prejudices and various old deformities of disposition often greatly retard the progress of some of God's

sincerely consecrated children; and in consequence their efforts, which are verily meant to be in God's service, are misdirected, and they are found both believing and teaching contrary to the Truth on points where God's Word is very explicit. Let us beware of these things, and, diligently casting behind us every hindrance to our personal progress in the way of truth and to our usefulness in the Master's service, let us run with patience, with meekness and diligence the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness."

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R3244 : page 359

ST. LUKE AS ARTIST.

ST. LUKE, the Evangelist, physician and historian, is said by tradition to have been a painter, and perhaps in the picturesque qualities of his writing we may trace the origin of this pious opinion. There is a legend that he painted the portrait of the Virgin, and certainly the greater part of the little we know of our Lord's mother is due to St. Luke, who preserved for us the Magnificat, and drew in words that poetic picture of the Nativity, adorned with the Nunc Dimittis and the Benedictus, which pictorial art has never ceased to reproduce. There is just now a widespread desire to discover the

R3244 : page 360

personalities of all great writers, and surely there is no one who has any feeling for Christianity but must regret our ignorance about the four Evangelists. St. Luke is the only one of whose character it is possible to form any definite idea. Even in his case we must rely mainly upon conjecture, for the modest chronicler of the Acts of the Apostles has purposely withdrawn himself from the gaze of his readers. He never tells us who he was, nor asks for our sympathy or our praise for the many hardships which he and St. Paul bore, and the many heroisms they displayed together. He never even betrays his presence except by the use of the pronoun "we." All we know for certain is that the "beloved physician" never failed his friend, but was alone with him when he made "ready to be offered." There is no direct evidence as to whether he was a Jew or a Greek, but many authorities, including Renan and Professor Ramsay, adhere to the latter conclusion. To the ordinary reader their view would appear the more plausible. St. Luke shows little sympathy with the Jews as a nation, and always paints them as hindering the work of the Church. On the

other hand, he betrays some tolerance for the heathen religion around him, and a just and sympathetic comprehension of the attitude of the Roman Governors towards the new faith.

But whether he belonged to "the people" or "the nations," the historian was an artist,--a man of great literary genius, whose heaven-instilled purpose, while it inspired his work, never for a moment obscured his artistic skill. The object of the book of the Acts is, as we read it, twofold. First, the author desires to draw a picture of the early Church while it was still but an offshoot of Judaism; and secondly, to describe the bursting of the Judaic bonds by the real hero of the book--St. Paul. Inspired by his wonderful--we are tempted to say his Greek--love of beauty and happiness, St. Luke begins with an exquisite picture of the early Christian community. An ideal social life prevailed among the brethren. "No man lacked anything," for "they had but one heart and one mind." No one "called anything his own, but they had all things in common," and "breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." We are told that "a great peace was upon them all," and that they possessed singular gifts of healing. Their increasing influence with the people disquieted the high priests, who, "doubting how far this would grow," summoned the apostles to appear before them and tried to bind them over to silence. Peter and John, however, replied to their accusers with light-hearted courage, saying, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than to God, judge ye," and so far impressed the learned Gamaliel with their assurance that he begged his brethren to let them alone lest they themselves should be found fighting against God. When persecution threatened them St. Luke shows us the disciples assembling themselves together and praying that God, seeing their peril, would "grant unto his servants that with all boldness they might speak his word by stretching out his hand to heal, that signs and wonders might be done by the might of his holy child." In the next picture which St. Luke puts before us the state of the Church is somewhat changed. The brotherhood has been greatly enlarged, and we trace some diminution in the early simplicity and joyousness. There arose, we are told, a murmuring among the Christian poor because some were better cared for than others;--evidently there is no longer community of goods. Certain men are chosen for the work of practical philanthropy, among them Stephen, who, by giving offence to the orthodox Jews, became the first martyr. In presenting Stephen to his readers St. Luke departs a little from his ordinary method of character-drawing. Generally he adheres strictly to the dramatic method, and allows his characters to reveal themselves by their own words. But in the

case of Stephen it is not so, and the world knows Stephen better by what St. Luke tells us about him than by the long discourse which is reported as his. We are convinced by his biographer rather than by his eloquence that "he was full of faith and power," and that his hearers "were not able to resist the wisdom and power by which he spake," so that "all that sat in the council looking steadfastly upon him saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." By the description of his actual martyrdom this impression of spiritual fascination is confirmed in the reader's mind, and perhaps the picture of Stephen "looking into heaven," seeing the "glory of God," and forgiving his enemies, while they, "cut to the heart, gnashed upon him with their teeth," is for mere beauty of depiction the finest passage in the Acts. This moment of tragedy is the one which St. Luke chooses as the one in which to present St. Paul. "The witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul."

Once more the scene changes. Henceforward the reader's interest centers round Paul,—his conversion, his perils, his trials and his defences. As we read St. Paul's words as recorded by his friend it is impossible not to wonder to what extent they have been modified by passing through the medium of another mind. Was St. Luke's report always accurate? Verbal accuracy was surely impossible. It is out of the question. If a speech took some hours to deliver it is not possible to compress it into a short paragraph and

R3244 : page 361

maintain verbal accuracy. All the same, the short report may be a true one. A man may give in ten minutes an account of a speech he has heard in the House of Commons, and may convey truly both the subject matter of what was spoken, and also the manner and mental characteristics of the speaker, though he give up all attempt at a literal repetition of the sentences. Such a report could not be called imaginary, though it makes of necessity some tax upon the understanding and imagination of the reporter. The account would remain essentially true, and in this matter of essential truth, so far as St. Paul is concerned, every reader of the Bible who has the smallest grasp of character is in a position to check St. Luke. Is the Paul whose adventures we follow in the Acts the same perfectly original character who reveals himself to us so unreservedly in his letters? Undoubtedly he is. No one could fail to recognize the Great Apostle.

Nevertheless, every portrait reveals the painter in some degree, and in all St. Luke's sketches of character we see the same aversion to dogmatism, and the same fair attitude toward "those of the contrary

part." He dwells particularly upon any sympathetic allusion to the classical standpoint made by the apostles, repeating with evident sympathy the words spoken by St. Paul suggesting the nearness of God toward those philosophers who had "felt after him"; and again, when Paul prevents the populace from worshipping him, we catch a glimpse of St. Luke's artistic appreciation of the joyousness inherent in a point of view which, however erroneous, bore testimony to the goodness of God, "who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

All through his book St. Luke shows the characteristics of a man of much education. He seems almost to share the high priest's surprise at the eloquence and force of Peter and John, "seeing that they were unlearned and ignorant men," and he displays that distrust of the multitude so common in men of exceptional gifts exceptionally cultivated. Witness his allusions to "fellows of the baser sort," and his account of the mass meeting of the Ephesian silversmiths, where "some cried one thing and some another, for the more part knew not why they were come together." The sudden changes of mind observable in crowds strike the historian's notice. He describes how the barbarians of the island on which Paul was shipwrecked, on seeing him bitten by a snake, concluded that he must be some murderer flying from justice whom vengeance had overtaken. "They looked that he should have swollen and fallen down dead suddenly; but after they had looked a great while and seen no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god." Again we see a trace of the same feeling in the almost satirical account of the behavior of the Jewish rabble before Gallio, when with utter inconsequence they beat Sosthenes in the Judgment Hall because they could not be revenged on Paul, and we feel St. Luke is not wholly out of sympathy with the supercilious Gallio, who looked on at what he considered a quarrel "about words and names and their law," and "cared for none of these things." To Gallio himself it can never have occurred that his name would be known two thousand years later solely in connection with a petty riot he hardly noticed, any more than it occurred to Festus how bitterly the course of history would satirize his contemptuous summing-up of Christianity as a question of Jewish "superstition," and of "one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Man has a treacherous memory. It is hopeless to say what he may remember, or to gauge how much he will forget. Agrippa, Felix, Festus, Gallio, would have been as dead men out of mind but for St. Luke's pencil. St. Luke showed wherein lies "the artist's

vantage o'er the king."--London Spectator.

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R3245 : page 361

WAITING PATIENTLY ON THE LORD.

--1 SAMUEL 2:1-10; 5:1-10.--SEPTEMBER 13.--

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"--Psa. 133:1.

"YE have need of patience," writes the Apostle. "In your patience possess ye your souls," instructs our Lord. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," the Apostle explains. Very evidently patience, therefore, includes other graces of character--implies their possession to a certain extent. Amongst the Lord's people patience surely must be preceded by faith, and the degree of patience very generally measures the amount of the faith. The Christian who finds himself impatient and restless evidently is lacking in faith toward the Lord; for otherwise he would be able to rest in the Lord's gracious promises, and wait for their fulfilment. After using reasonable diligence and energy he should be content to leave the results and the times and seasons with the Lord.

Our lesson deals with David's attainment to the kingdom to which he was anointed, while a shepherd boy, by the Prophet Samuel. His patient trust in the Lord, and waiting for his time and way to give him the

R3245 : page 362

kingdom, are worthy of note, and constitute the most striking feature of this lesson. As a youth he exercised patience until the Lord's providence brought him the opportunity of meeting Goliath, and being advanced to the position of a captain in the army and made King Saul's son-in-law. Then came the check in his career, when for seven years he was treated as an outlaw by the king, and more or less so regarded by his fellow-countrymen. We have seen his patience under these trying circumstances, and noted his unwillingness to hasten the Lord's arrangements, in which he fully trusted, his unwillingness to raise his hand against the king, or to sanction his death at the hands of another. This lesson shows us that even after the death of Saul David still waited patiently on the Lord to give him, in his own way, the honors and powers promised.

For some time before Saul's death David and his six hundred followers had been living in the country of the Philistines, and been treated by them as allies; and when the Philistines went to war with Israel--to

fight against King Saul, who had been the enemy of David and his companions--it would have appeared strange had the latter refused to join in the war. In the Lord's providence they were very graciously spared from either fighting against their brethren or seeming unappreciative of their hosts, the Philistines, by the decision of the latter that they would prefer not to have David and his company go with them. After the defeat of

R3246 : page 362

Saul and his army the Philistines took possession of a considerable portion of the land of Israel, and it became a question for David as to what should be his proper course--how would the Lord give to him the throne of Israel, as promised? That David's heart was loyal to the Lord, as the needle to the pole, is evidenced by the fact that he did not conclude for himself what his course should be, but made inquiry of the Lord. This was probably done through the medium of the High Priest, Abiathar. He got the Lord's answer and followed it to the letter, locating, with his companions and their families, at Hebron and the adjacent towns. David was of the tribe of Judah, and thus settling in a central city of that tribe, where he and his family were well known, he was safe amongst friends;--besides, the Philistines were his friends. It was not long before the people of his own tribe chose him for their king, and anointed him accordingly--thus falling into line with the Lord's choice and anointing, already expressed years before.

This was seemingly a good start toward the fulfilment of the Lord's promise of the kingdom, but again the matter was deferred for another seven years, during which time David patiently saw Ishbosheth, Saul's surviving son, anointed to be king over one province after another of Israel, and, with his general, Abner, gaining victory after victory over the Philistines,--seemingly establishing himself firmly in the power of the kingdom which David had certainly supposed was to come to him at the death of Saul. The experiences of these seven years surely were as strong tests of David's faith and patience as any in his career. To a man of his courageous temperament and energy the disposition must have been to assert the dominance of Judah over the other tribes, and to have declared them to be in rebellion, and to have attempted their conquest in the name of the Lord, with the assertion that he was the Lord's choice, anointed by Samuel, etc.

David's course during this time shows forth distinctly the true character of the man. He trusted that the Lord, who had been with him as a boy, and had delivered him from the lion and the bear, and had used him as Israel's champion in the battle with Goliath, and had guided him thus far, would continue to guide and direct, if he would continue to be submissive, and to act only along the lines of the Lord's direction. The

wisdom of this course is manifest from the narrative. David showed, not only in his dealings with the men of Jabesh Gilead, but on other occasions, that he entertained no animosity toward those who were Saul's friends, and the friends of his family. A man of smaller heart would have done very differently, but would not have been "a man after God's own heart." David's course was defensive. The tribe of Judah he knew was acting in accord with the divine program, and hence, when Ishbosheth and his army attempted to coerce the people of Judah and compel them to recognize Ishbosheth, David and his supporters resisted this intrusion, though we have no evidence that David attempted to extend his authority over the other tribes --except as they might voluntarily choose to accept him as their king. This they finally did, at the end of seven and half years, and a grand coronation made him king over all Israel. His patient waiting for the Lord's time and the Lord's way evidently was very much better than any other course he could have pursued. The Lord's wisdom is always superior; though in the midst of their trials, his people, being unable to see the end from the beginning, may have too much confidence in their own schemes and methods and too little faith in the Lord.

The Lord's people of today should take well to heart this lesson of faith, obedience and patient waiting on the Lord. We, too, are waiting for a Kingdom, and for the peace and blessing which the Lord has promised shall come therewith. We, too, see Philistines in the way, and rival brethren, who, though really the Lord's, do not see so clearly as we the Lord's program for the establishment of his Kingdom. It is for us to wait patiently on the Lord, while he uses the wrath of man to praise him, and to make straight the way of the

R3246 : page 363

Lord, and to usher in eventually his Kingdom under more favorable conditions than would be possible if we were to attempt to act for ourselves, or in any manner or sense to hasten his arrangements.

The Golden Text is an excellent one, and applied to this lesson we see it illustrated in David's course. Although he was a man of war, courageous and aggressive toward the enemies of the Lord and of Israel, David was most emphatically a man of peace toward his brethren of all the tribes;--careful to treat them as brethren, and to do all in his power to maintain unity and brotherly love and friendship. Although misunderstood and persecuted by them for a time, he finally was appreciated and proclaimed king of all Israel, with the result that all the brethren, thus united by his wise counsel and conduct, did dwell together in unity, and Israel had peace and prosperity, whereas by a different course on David's part a fierce and long-lasting civil

war might readily have been enkindled.

We are reminded, too, of the fact that it was the Lord's own brethren who persecuted him, but that, as the Apostle explains, "in ignorance they did it." We rejoice to know that when the Lord shall have fully established his Kingdom, all who are the Lord's people, all desirous of being on the side of righteousness, will hail him gladly as their King; and that the unity and peace and blessing of that glorious Millennial age will far exceed anything that our minds can grasp or our tongues express. Like our Lord, let us seek to be peacemakers, and to dwell together with all the brethren in the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace. Let our activities, our combativeness, etc., be engaged against the great enemy and all the works of sin,--including those in our members, our own fallen flesh. We, and all the brethren, will thus find sufficient engagement for every combative element of our nature, in ways well pleasing to the Lord, and employment for every lovable and helpful quality we possess, in building one another up, and doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.

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R3246 : page 363

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE DEAD.

--1 PET. 4:1-11.--SEPTEMBER 20.--

"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess."--Eph. 5:18.

THE Apostle's argument is that dead people cannot sin; and that the Lord's consecrated ones, having devoted themselves even unto death, already reckon themselves "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:11.) We have become followers of him who, realizing the sinfulness of sin, and that the whole human family was hopelessly under its control, gave himself even unto death, that he might redeem us from sin and its wages--death. If we appreciate our Lord and his work, his love for righteousness, and his sacrifice on our behalf; and if we desire to be truly his disciples, followers in his footsteps, it will mean that we will "arm ourselves with the same mind" that he had--the same opposition to sin, the same determination to lay down our lives in opposition to it, and in endeavors to assist in delivering those who are under its control. Not that any sacrifice of ours could effect the cancellation of the divine sentence, but that our Lord's sacrifice, being quite sufficient to accomplish this, we are privileged to show our devotion to him and to the principles governing his conduct: the inducement being held out to us that those who suffer with him shall share also his

glory, his Kingdom, his immortality.

Those who have made such a consecration unto death, in opposition to sin, will certainly not commit sin wilfully, for to do so would prove that their wills had changed--that they were no longer begotten of the new will, the new mind, the holy Spirit or disposition, but had become alive again as the servants of sin. Such a course would prove that such persons had ceased to be New Creatures, and the loss of this new life to them would mean the Second Death. But so long as they remain willingly faithful to their vows of fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, in his opposition to sin--so long as they remain thus reckonedly dead to sin and reckonedly alive as New Creatures, they have no sin. As the Apostle John expresses it, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him;...whosoever is born [begotten] of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; he cannot sin because he is born [begotten] of God."--1 John 3:6,9.

The thought here is not that any of the Lord's people become perfect in the flesh, so that they never err in thought, word or deed. The thought is that the new will is counted the New Creature, separate and distinct from the flesh, so that while the will, the heart, is fully loyal to the Lord, in opposition to sin, the flesh is reckoned dead to sin, and hence any of its weaknesses and imperfections which are unintentional, not assented to by the new will, the New Creature, are not counted by the Lord, who knows us not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Thus, as the Apostle Paul declares, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh [desiring to serve it], but after the spirit [endeavoring to do the Lord's will]."

The "time past of our lives," referred to in vss. 3 and 4,

R3247 : page 364

was the time when we were natural men, before we became New Creatures, begotten of the Lord's Spirit. That time past, and that past experience of life, sufficeth us--we want no more of it, we have found a better life. We would not return to the former condition of natural-mindedness and alienation from God under any consideration. The list of excesses mentioned by the Apostle--lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelries, carousings and abominable idolatries--were not the same with all of us; and yet there is a certain amount of correspondency in every case. Some of the early Christians were lifted by the Lord's grace out of very deep degradation of mind and body, and some of the Lord's people of today have been similarly lifted from the depths of Satan and sin, while still others, never having been so deeply degraded, were not lifted from such great depths. However, all who have the new mind of full consecration to the Lord can realize a

great change from the mind or disposition which was theirs naturally.

Even those born of Christian parents, who therefore were born on the plane of justification, realize that their natural hearts had more or less affinity for the things of sin, even including idolatries--idolizing themselves or others or money or fame or influence or whatnot. A change takes place in all, but the degree of change is necessarily marked by the degree of degradation preceding our consecration. How thankful some of us should be that in the Lord's providence we were born of Christian parents and under Christian influences! How careful all of the Lord's people should be that any children which they have brought into the world, or may yet bring, shall come under the most favorable influences to make them the more amenable to the "reasonable service" of a full consecration of their all to the Lord!

The idolatrous companions of those who once lived in sin doubtless spoke of the latter as hypocrites, when they turned from these things, becoming dead to them and alive toward the Lord and his service. Their disposition would be to attribute such a change to some ignoble motive. It would be beyond their comprehension that anyone should voluntarily make such a change, for truly they would say that the course was "unnatural"! Likewise, in our day, those who step out of churchianity, with its forms of godliness without the power, with its social revelry, intoxication with the spirit of this world and of false doctrines (Rev. 17:2), and its idolatries of money, influence, etc., are considered peculiar people, and not infrequently their sanity is questioned. The natural man understandeth not why any should seek for more than that which would be outwardly respectable and honorable. The world knoweth us not, even as it knew not the Lord.--Rev. 18:3.

The fifth verse according to our Common Version seems to refer to those who speak evil, and to say that they will be obliged to give an account in the day of judgment--in the Millennial Day, when they will be on trial. This is undoubtedly true. As our Lord declared, every act and word done in injury of the Lord and his faithful will receive a just recompense of reward --justly proportionate to the amount of their wilfulness in the matter. But there is another way of viewing this verse, equally true, viz., by connecting it with the preceding verse, so as to have it read, "Speaking evil of you who shall give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead." This last thought seems more fully in accord with the entire testimony of the Word on the subject. It is we, the Church, who are expecting shortly to give such an account. It is we who are being specially tried and tested during the present time, because to us the light and knowledge and opportunity have come in advance of the world. This is our trial time, and the Lord's judgment or decision with reference to

who shall constitute the very elect, and respecting who shall be accounted worthy of joint heirship with the Lord, is the very decision that is to be rendered.

The Apostle continues with this thought, saying that it is for this reason (because we who are dead to the world and alive toward God are being called out now, as the Lord's elect class, therefore) the Gospel is preached to us who are (thus) dead, so that while the world judges us as in the flesh, like all other men, the Lord may judge us as in the spirit, begotten to a newness of life. This is in exact accord with what we saw in the first two paragraphs of this lesson. The world discerns not that the New Creatures are any different from other men; hence it wonders at their devotion, calls it folly or hypocrisy, and discerning the imperfections of the flesh may not at all times be able to see so great a difference between the New Creatures and the world. But God, who knoweth the heart, and who has from the moment of our consecration counted the flesh as dead, and who charges nothing against us as New Creatures, begotten spirit beings, except that which is wilfully wrong, is the One with whom we have to do, and in whose favor and love and promises we rejoice. God is "for us"! None can prevail against us; all things must work together for good to us, because we are his, because he has called us according to his purpose, because we are seeking to walk in his way, not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

The end of all present things is near. Present institutions, under the supervision of "the prince of this world" (Satan), and controlled largely by his spirit, must soon, according to the divine promise, give place to the new conditions of God's Kingdom, when the great Redeemer shall take to himself his great power

R3247 : page 365

and reign--binding Satan and putting down all insubordination and everything contrary to the righteousness which is of God. We who so believe can look with great equanimity upon the changing conditions of this present time; and the evil-speaking of the world and its antagonism manifested toward us in various ways, because we are New Creatures, walking after the spirit to the extent of our ability, need not alarm us, for greater is he who is on our part than all that be against us. Hence it behooves us to be sober-minded --to take this reasonable and proper view, which does not overlook the future to see the present, but rather overlooks the present to see the future, held up before us in the Lord's Word. It behooves us also to watch unto prayer, to remember that we are not of ourselves sufficient for these things, that "our sufficiency is of God."

"Above all things," urges the Apostle, these who are dead to the world, and misunderstood by the world,

but alive toward God and accepted through Christ as God's sons (despite all the blemishes of the flesh), these should be fervent in love amongst themselves. Such as realize the true situation, such as are standing for the principles of righteousness and truth and loyalty to the Lord, and enduring hardness as good soldiers, must have a deeply sympathetic love for all others who, like themselves, are battling for the Lord, and for the same principles of right. Whoever has not a fervent (burning) love for his fellows has reason to question to what extent he is one with the Lord and with the little flock whose experiences the Apostle is here delineating.

True, there are some of the Lord's accepted ones whom he counts dead as respects the flesh and alive as respects their spirit, their new natures, who are less lovely naturally (in mind and body) than some who are of the world, less fallen naturally: but wherever the true love of the Lord prevails it will indeed cover a multitude of sins, a multitude of blemishes, a multitude of imperfections, in those whom it will recognize as fellow-pilgrims in "the narrow way," "brethren" of the one family of God. This proper love, the love of God, will enable those who possess it to consider one another from the divine standpoint, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the heart, the intention.

Amongst those who are dead to the world and alive as New Creatures, there should be a special exercise of hospitality, and that without grudging. It should be hearty, and not merely because the Lord commends and commands it. Hospitality, indeed, is, as the Apostle points out, an element of character which should be cultivated toward all men: We should "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith." There are some who can recognize this principle of hospitality quite keenly, and who, if hospitality be denied them, will be inclined to berate the brethren for their lack of the proper spirit. Such and all should inquire of themselves to what extent they have ever exercised hospitality and generosity to others; and anyone who realizes that he has received more from the brethren than he has given them should feel ashamed, and should seek of the Lord wisdom, that he may know wherein is his weakness, that he has so far come short of the great privileges of the Lord's followers, all of whom are to be givers rather than receivers--except under special conditions of distress. But let none of us forget that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Let each of us seek to enjoy the blessing which comes from a liberal interpretation of this word hospitality.

The Lord's grace and bounty are manifold; they come to us in numberless forms, in things both spiritual and temporal. Some of us may receive a larger number of these favors than others, but in that event

the responsibility or stewardship is proportionately increased; and the Apostle urges (vs. 10) that we should seek to serve out to others whatever gifts we possess. He who waters others shall himself be watered. This principle applies to everything, both temporal and spiritual.

Still speaking of this Church class, dead to the world, and judged by the world as though they were men, but alive toward God, and judged by God as New Creatures, spirit beings merely sojourning in these fleshly bodies, as in a tent, and waiting in this wilderness condition to learn the lessons necessary before entering the land of promise, the heavenly Canaan, by sharing the First Resurrection, the Apostle proceeds to point out that these, when they speak, should be as "God's oracles," absolutely truthful, wholly reliable. If they serve they should do it with all the ability

R3248 : page 365

which they possess, recognizing that the ability is God-given as well as the talent. These exhortations to truth and faithfulness in utterance and service are applicable first of all to believers (the Church) amongst ourselves, but applicable also to all with whom they come in contact. We may be evil reported of and slandered, but all who know us, who have dealings with us, should find from experience our loyalty to principle, our endeavor that the words of our mouths as well as the meditations of our hearts and the conduct of life should be pleasing to the Lord and an honor to his name and cause, that God may be glorified through Christ, to whom belongs the glory and the Kingdom forever. His Church alone, in the present time, recognizes fully and properly the right and dominion of the Lord as the King. We alone have the

R3248 : page 366

blessing that comes from this recognition and relationship, but we look forward with joy to the time when his Kingdom shall be established amongst men; when the time shall come for which we are praying, "Thy Kingdom come"; when the knowledge of the Lord shall be made to reach every creature, and when many shall come to know and to love and to obey him whom now we rejoice to honor as our Redeemer and King.

As is indicated by the Golden Text, this lesson was designed by those who selected it to be a Temperance Lesson. We have not dealt with it after the manner they intended, but according to the Apostle's meaning. It certainly is a total abstinence lesson in one sense of the word, viz., in the sense that the class who have become dead to sin and alive toward God will desire to abstain from "every appearance of evil," which certainly will include intemperance, concerning which the

Lord's Word is very explicit, in declaring that "No drunkard shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven."--
1 Cor. 6:10.

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R3248 : page 366

"THE LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION."

--PSALM 27:1.--SEPT. 27.--

A REVIEW of the Quarter is appointed for this date, and our caption is the Golden Text. The four characters brought to our attention by the lessons of the past quarter have been Samuel the Prophet, Saul--Israel's first king,--Jonathan, his son, and David, successor to the kingdom. Three of these were grand characters, but one of them ignoble--Saul. The contrast before us has been chiefly as between Saul and David. Both were of good character in many respects; the differences between them we may safely credit to the fact that the one early gave his heart to the Lord, and the other kept his to himself. The secret of David's greatness is the Golden Text of this lesson. The Lord was his light and salvation--guiding his heart and overruling his affairs for good. But we should never forget that David was not only a great and good man of himself, because he chose the Lord for his portion and was always loyal at heart to him, but additionally because the Lord chose David, whose name signifies Beloved, to be a type of Christ, the well-beloved, --Head and body.

The grand lesson of this quarter to spiritual Israel is reverence for the Lord, faith in him, courage, the result of that faith, and patient endurance, another fruit of the same. The members of the body of Christ cannot fail to be profited by studying closely and deeply the character of the man after God's own heart, and learning from his experiences;--always remembering, nevertheless, that King David belonged to the house of servants, that he lived at too early a date to belong to the house of sons, of which our Lord Jesus was the first-born and fore-runner; that consequently David did not have the begetting of the holy Spirit, nor the privileges and advantages of the same; that he was not running in the race for the great prize, was not a member of the Royal Priesthood, consecrated to death.--
Heb. 3:2,5,6; 11:40; Luke 7:28.

For these reasons, although drawing valuable lessons from David's experiences, we of this Gospel age, members of the house of sons (John 1:12) are not to regard David as our sample or pattern in consecrated living or self-sacrificing service. While we draw lessons from the experiences of David and other noble characters of the past, our patterns are Jesus and his

apostles, whom we are to copy--walking in their footsteps in the narrow way of self-sacrifice even unto death.

We commend to all a careful reading of Psalm 27 entire. It is profitable, capable of an application to every member of the body of Christ, the Church, the house of sons.

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R3245 : page 366

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

Question.--In what condition will those be who have been justified by faith in this age, and who yet refuse to consecrate because they think restitution blessings good enough for them, who feel afraid that they could not carry out their consecration vows, and, therefore, hold back and do not make them? Is it possible for a person to be justified in this age and then be justified again in the next age? Or does justification count only when it is used as a stepping stone to consecration?

Answer.--We are to remember the meaning of the word justification; it signifies a righteous condition, acceptable to God. God's provision for the world through Christ is justification--that so many as desire may come back to righteousness,--to harmony with the Creator. The time for this return to divine favor, as respects the world in general, will be the Millennial age; and the way of return will be through restitution processes, physical, mental and moral, up to perfection. Meantime, before the Millennial age, God designs the selection of a Church to be associated with Jesus in the work of restitution; and wishing to deal with these before the restitution times, he grants them a faith-justification, or reckoned righteousness, a

R3245 : page 367

reckoned reconciliation and harmony with God, based upon their exercise of faith in him, and in his arrangements and promises. Thus we read in the New Testament that we who believe in Jesus are justified by faith--justified freely from all things--treated as though we were all right, in full accord with God, although really we are physically, mentally and morally unright, in that we are not absolutely perfect.

God's object in providing this reckoned, or faith-justification during this Gospel age is to permit the justified ones to present themselves living sacrifices, holy (justified) and acceptable. Whoever fails to take this step of consecration--sacrifice--fails to use his faith-justification in the manner and for the purpose intended. He receives that much of the grace of God in vain, as respects God's intention and the only

use for this justification in the present time. Failing to use this justification now within a reasonable time would, we understand, vitiate it, and the person would cease to maintain his justified standing before God;--but just at what juncture of his Christian experience he might be thus set aside, we will not always be able to judge. We would understand that those who thus receive God's favor in vain are not necessarily debarred from all opportunities for the future, though we may be sure that the failure to use privileges seen and enjoyed, will not work any special advantage to such, but rather probably the reverse.

Question.--Could Adam have developed a character without the knowledge of good and evil? What kind of character did he have prior to the disobedience and fall?

Answer.--A participation in sin is not essential to the development of character; otherwise God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy angels would have to be classed as amongst those destitute of character. Surely God himself is to be considered as possessing character of the very highest class, and hence, his creature Adam, made in his own likeness, must have possessed a good character. So must a faultless character belong to all the angelic sons of God, and to his first-begotten. Character may be tested and buttressed and supported by experience or by observation. The holy angels who kept their first estate have evidently strengthened their characters by observation. Seeing sin in others and noting its evil fruit, they have doubtless been made the more strong in their determination for that holiness in which they were created and which they have maintained. But had sin never been permitted, this buttressing of character by the holy angels through observation would have been impossible.

Adam, in the divine image, and, therefore, of excellent character, was subjected to a peculiar temptation, to which probably he would not have yielded had he been granted the same acquaintance with righteousness and with his Creator that the holy angels enjoyed. God left him in this condition, knowing in advance how it would result, and prepared for the rescue of the race in advance, in that feature of his plan which foresaw "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." God chose to give Adam and his race an experience in character-development through contact with sin and in overcoming it by the assistance he renders through the Redeemer. While, therefore, a certain degree of strong and good character may be created, the testing and proving and buttressing of that character and its everlasting insurance could not be accomplished without some lesson of either experience or observation. It pleased God to give man his lesson and testing

through experience, and the angels the same lesson and testing through observation, and all his ways are perfect.

Question.--Were the ancient worthies begotten to life by the heavenly Father or our Lord Jesus? and if by the latter, how could it be, since he had not yet come, in their day, and had not yet offered the sacrifice for sins, nor taken any of the steps seemingly necessary to his assuming to them the relationship of "the everlasting Father"?

Answer.--The words "beget" and "born," as used in the Scriptures, apply specially to the Gospel Church, to illustrate the small beginning of the new life, its gradual development and its final birth in the resurrection to the full perfection of the heavenly nature. This figure would not apply to the ancient worthies, for the reasons you have mentioned and for other reasons. They were inspired with hopes toward God respecting future life, but had no promises of, and, therefore, could not properly have any hopes respecting a change to spiritual nature in the resurrection, or at any time. They could not, therefore, be said to have been begotten to any such spiritual hopes, nor ultimately to such condition.

The fact that Christ had not yet paid the penalty for sin precluded not only the possibility of his being their life-giver, but likewise precluded the possibility of anyone being their life-giver up to that time. They are not, therefore, spoken of as having a new life begun in them, but merely as having discerned the new life in the distance, "having seen the promises afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them," by faith; but they had the new life neither actually nor reckonedly; they must wait for Messiah, because in him all the promises centered. They hoped for his birth of their lineage according to the flesh, and yet had they understood the divine Word and plan, they must have known that, instead of being the fathers of Messiah, they must in due time, in order to have life at all, become his children--receive life from him as the Everlasting Father.--Psa. 45:16.

Instead of its being said of them that they were begotten to the future life, it is said that they were justified to a future life through faith in the divine promises.

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