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#### SERMONS IN THE NEWSPAPERS.

Under God's providence a great work is being carried on through the newspapers; and the Gospel is being presented to millions who never attend meetings for Divine worship. Some of these are discouraged Christians who lost their faith in human creeds and systems of men and found no footing for their faith in the Bible because they did not understand it. How blessed that God has such an arrangement by which the good tidings may reach those otherwise outside any general opportunity for hearing it!

But alas, some Christians have a bitter and sectarian spirit! The fact that many of the Churches have smaller congregations as a result of loss of faith years ago makes their votaries angry that the Message should be heard outside the Churches. Some of these unreasonable zealots are doing all they know how to do to hinder the Message from going to the outsiders through the newspapers. Oh, why do they not rejoice that the Gospel is being preached to the poor, to the outsiders, to the publicans and sinners!

Under these circumstances it behooves all of us to encourage the editors of the newspapers publishing the sermons. They should know that their work is appreciated. Letters sent to them should be moderate and kind. They are not publishing the sermons because of any personal interest in them, but merely because the public are reading them. Let us hold up their hands, not only encouraging them with postcards, assuring them of appreciation of the sermons and of the good work they thereby assist in, but let us also give to such papers a financial encouragement through subscriptions.

The WATCH TOWER Office frequently has special agents' rates for newspapers. In any event it knows quite well which papers would most need a little encouragement in the way of new subscriptions. Subscriptions sent to us will be wisely used. Many of our readers doubtless can afford to take several papers, and, after reading these, to mark the sermons and to use them as tracts amongst their friends and neighbors. Do it now before you forget it!

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CHOICE MOTTO CARDS--1912-1913.

Orders for motto cards for Christmas time should be in our hands not later than December 1--preferably before. We have this season some very choice sorts. These cards are made in Europe, hence subject to heavy expenses for freight and duty. Nevertheless, we can supply them in the United States and Canada at less than retail European prices because we supply them at about cost price--that is to say, about one-half the usual American prices. Besides this we prepay postage or express charges. Our object is to encourage the embellishment of the homes of the Lord's people with faith-stimulating and courage-inspiring texts tastefully prepared. To facilitate the handling of these motto cards we assort them in packets, carefully packed, at the following prepaid rates:--

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Where a Class or several individuals choose to order together to one address we can save a little in the expressage, justifying the offer of five of the One Dollar packets and one of the Fifty-cent packets for Five Dollars, or more at the same rate, assorted, as you please.

Make your selections carefully, write out your order plainly, stating exactly what is wanted, have money order or check accompany order and be sure to clearly indicate the address to which you desire shipment to be made.

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EVIL SPEAKING AND EVIL SURMISING

MANY ARE THE peculiar subterfuges which the fallen nature uses in its attempt to stifle the voice of Conscience. We have known people who took cognizance of the Scriptural injunction against slander, evil speaking and evil surmising, and yet who were so confused on the subject and so unaccustomed to scrutinizing their own conduct that they would utter slander in the very breath in which they expressed their strong disapproval of evil speaking. In order to avoid such a condition of confusion it is well to have in mind a clear definition of these terms.

## SLANDER A FACTOR IN ANARCHY

A slander is anything uttered with the intention of injury to another, whether the statement be true or false. Both the Law of God and the laws of men agree that such injury is wrong. True, many slanderers are never prosecuted; true that even newspapers have times without number escaped heavy damages for libelous slander, on the plea that they published the defamation as news which properly belonged to the people. Public men consider it good policy to let ordinary slander go unnoticed, realizing that many of the false statements made by the opposition press will properly be credited as falsehood.

The effect of public slander is very injurious, and brings about a gradual growth of slander among the people. This condition is sure to work evil to themselves and to their institutions. Government officials and other men thus slandered lose their influence for good over the lower classes, who are thus being helped along day by day to greater lawlessness, and are being thus prepared for the period of anarchy which the Scriptures tell us is near.

## EVIL SPEAKING INDICATIVE OF UNGODLINESS

Evil speaking includes all defamatory or injurious remarks against others--words of hatred, malice, envy or strife--everything which would injure another to any degree. Even an uncomplimentary remark respecting another, injuring his reputation, is evil speaking, although the uncomplimentary statement be true.

All of our words are taken by the Lord as an index of the heart. If our words are flippant, frivolous, unkind, unthankful, rebellious or disloyal, He judges the heart accordingly, on the principle that "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. 12:34.) Thus in all the varied circumstances of daily life, our words are continually bearing testimony before God of the condition of our hearts.

Godlikeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let all such things be put far away from those who name the name of Christ in sincerity and in truth.

The tongue is the most powerful member of the human body. As the Scriptures say, with it we may praise God or injure men. Not only may we injure those within reach of our tongue, but our words might extend their influence throughout the world and from generation to generation. Our tongues are the most wonderful power that God has given us. It has been said that all of life's experiences deepen when presented in language. When uttered, thoughts impress themselves deeply upon the mind. We should certainly take heed to our tongues.--

James 3:9,10.

#### EVIL SURMISING INDICATIVE OF AN IMPURE HEART

Evil surmising consists in imagining evil motives to be behind the words and the acts of others. Proceeding out of the heart not fully consecrated, evil surmising will attribute some selfish or evil motive to every good deed. This form of sin is ranked by the Apostle Paul as contrary to the words of our Lord Jesus, opposed to godliness, and of the same spirit as envy and strife--works of the flesh and of the Devil.--I Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21.

Those who have cultivated that spirit of love which "thinketh no evil" have developed their characters and have become of "quick understanding in the fear of the

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Lord." (Isa. 11:3.) They will be cautious where there is even the appearance of evil, while at the same time they will avoid the imputation of evil intentions until forced to concede them by indisputable evidence. It is far better to take some slight risks and to suffer some trifling losses than to accuse even one innocent person. The Lord, who has directed our course in matters of this kind, is abundantly able to compensate us for any losses experienced in following His counsel.

#### TO IMPUTE GOOD MOTIVES IS CHARITABLE

The true Christian will cultivate the disposition to think charitably of the words and actions of others, and to suppose that their intentions are good, until he has positive evidence to the contrary. Even then he will go to the offender alone, according to Matt. 18:15, and if occasion require, will take the subsequent steps, as directed by the Lord.--Matt. 18:15-17.

From their high standard of the appreciation of the

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Divine Law, advanced Christians see that in the Lord's sight hatred is murder, slander is assassination, and the destruction of a neighbor's good name is robbery. Any of these things done in the Church among the professed people of God is doubly evil--the robbery or the murder of a brother.--I John 3:15.

Verily, with force do the Scriptures declare that the natural heart is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." (Jer. 17:9.) Those who practice evil speaking and evil surmising and who attempt to justify their conduct have either never entered the School of Christ or else are only in the infant class, for they seem not to know that theirs is not the spirit of brotherly love.

#### DIFFERENT WAYS OF MISREPRESENTING OTHERS

False witness applies not only to the utterance of falsehood, but also to any form of misrepresentation, whether by direct statement or by such indirect statement that a wrong inference may be drawn. One may bear false witness by a nod of the head, by a shrug of the shoulder or even by silence when he should speak.

One of the hardest lessons, apparently, for Christians to learn thoroughly is the Master's command that if they have anything unpleasant to say respecting a brother or a sister, any criticism to offer concerning the private life of another, they should go to the person alone. (Matt. 18:15-17.) Perhaps in no other way does the Adversary succeed so well in planting roots of bitterness, producing misunderstandings, anger, malice, hatred, strife, and other works of the flesh and the Devil, as in deterring the Lord's people from obedience to this command. Let us permit love to do her perfect work in our relationship to others.

#### LOVE A PREVENTIVE OF EVIL THOUGHTS

The Law of Love forbids the Lord's people to follow the pernicious example of the world. That Law commands silence to all who acknowledge the great Law-Giver, saying, "Speak evil of no man." (Titus 3:2.) Further than this, it declares against evil thoughts, evil suspicions and evil surmisings: Love "thinketh no evil." (1 Cor. 13:5.) Love filling our hearts will not only hinder evil conduct and injurious words, but will prevent evil thoughts.

Indeed, to impress the importance of this subject, the Great Teacher declares to the pupils in His School, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." (Matt. 7:2.) Again He instructs them to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." (Matt. 6:12,14,15.) Again He declares, "If ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses, so likewise shall My Heavenly Father do also unto you." (Matt. 18:35.) If at heart we treasure up resentment against others, the Heavenly Father will not forgive us.

#### PURITY OF HEART AN ADVANCED STAGE OF DISCIPLESHIP

Those Christians who are Elders in the School of Christ and who are therefore qualified to teach others, are not only outwardly clean, but inwardly also. They are washed by the water of the Word from the meanness, the filthiness of the flesh. No longer the slaves of sin, they are not controlled by the desires and the weaknesses of the fallen flesh and the spirit of the world. They do not bear the fruits of unrighteousness--anger, malice, hatred, strife, slander, evil speaking, evil surmising.-- 2 Cor. 7:1.

A pure heart signifies purity of will, of intention, or

purpose, which like the needle to the pole, always turns toward righteousness. Though some sudden or strong temptation may for an instant, through the weakness of the flesh, draw it to the right or to the left, yet it quickly recovers its normal position, which is loyalty to truth and righteousness. A pure heart loves righteousness and hates iniquity. It loves purity and despises impurity and unrighteousness. It loves cleanliness of person, of clothing, of language and of habits. It delights in the society of the pure and shuns all others, knowing that "Evil communications corrupt good manners."--I Cor. 15:33.

We should distinguish sharply between purity of heart, will, intention, and absolute purity of every act, word and thought; for while the former is possible, the latter is impossible so long as we have our mortal bodies and are surrounded by our present unfavorable conditions. The standard set before us is, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) By this standard we are to measure ourselves continually, and not by one another; and to this standard we are to seek to bring all the conduct of our lives as well as the meditations of our hearts.--2 Cor. 10:12; Psa. 19:14.

But only our wills (hearts) have yet been transformed and renewed. Our imperfect earthen vessels in which we have this treasure will not be "changed" until our resurrection. Not until then shall we be perfected in the Divine likeness. But now, nothing short of purity of heart, will, intention, can be acceptable to God and bring us a blessing.--2 Cor. 4:7; I Cor. 15:52.

#### HOW TO MAINTAIN PURITY OF HEART

Those who have made a full consecration of heart to the Lord constitute the pure in heart under the Law of Love. But notwithstanding the purity of their hearts, their intentions, their wills, to fulfil the royal Law of Love, these have a battle to wage. The law of their members, depraved through inherited sin, is the strong law of selfishness, in opposition to the new Law to which they have pledged themselves--the Law of Love.--Rom. 13:10; James 2:8.

Yet their inability to live up to the requirements of that new Law must be through no lack of will, no lack of intention of the pure, loyal heart. Whatever failure they make, however short they may come at times of obtaining the victory, it must be solely because of weakness of the flesh and the besetments of the Adversary, which their pure hearts failed to resist.

Here the Lord's promises are helpful, assuring them that He knows their weaknesses and frailties, as well as the wiles of the Devil and the influence of the spirit of the world, which are contrary to the spirit of Love. He tells them that they may go freely to the Throne of Heavenly grace, there to obtain mercy in respect to their failures to live up to the high standard which their hearts

acknowledge and to which they strive to conform. He also assures them that they may find grace to help in every time of need.--Heb. 4:16; Eph. 6:12.

Availing themselves of these mercies and privileges provided through our Great High Priest they are enabled to fight a good fight against sin, to repulse its attacks upon their hearts, and to drive it off, if it has succeeded in invading their flesh.

Thus, and only thus, may the Christian keep himself pure in heart and maintain his stand as a fighter of the good fight, one of the overcomers of the world and its spirit.

#### SELF-DECEPTION OF AN IMPURE HEART

The mind of the flesh will seek to enter into partnership with the new mind, and will be very ready to accept

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love as the rule of life, under certain conditions. The mind of the flesh would prefer to recognize love in words, in profession, in manners only--a form of godliness without its power.--2 Tim. 3:5.

Gentle manners, such as love would manifest, may be exercised by a selfish heart, deceiving itself and seeking to deceive others. On the lip may be the smile, the word of praise, of kindness, of gentleness, while in the heart may be feelings of selfishness, of grudge, of bitterness, of animosity. Under favorable conditions these hidden motions of sin in the flesh may manifest themselves in more or less carefully worded slander or backbiting or reproach. Or these, continuing to rankle in the heart, may when opportunity affords bring forth anger, hatred, malice, strife and other wicked works of the flesh and the Devil, wholly contrary to the course of a pure heart and at variance with the commandment of the Law of the New Creation--Love.--2 Tim. 3:13; Rom. 7:5; Gal. 5:19-21.

We are to have clearly before our minds the fact that the ultimate object of all the Divine dealings with us and for us, and the ultimate signification of all the Divine promises made to us, is the development of love, which is godlikeness, for God is love. That this love may be developed in us in the sense and to the degree intended by the Lord, it must come from a pure heart, in full accord with the Lord and His Law of Love, but wholly antagonistic to the Adversary and his law of unholy pride, jealousy and selfishness.--I Tim. 1:5.

#### LOVE DEVELOPED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

To have this kind of love in its proper development there must be a good conscience, well regulated by the Scriptures; therefore the study of God's Word is very important. Meditation upon God's Law is also necessary.



We must recognize the fact that there are Divine commands with principles behind them and that these principles

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are to be incorporated into our characters. In other words, we are to have the mind of Christ. (I Cor. 2:16.) As the Apostle says, "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."--Gal. 5:16.

This admonition means that we should guard all the actions of life, as well as all our words; for these are a source of either blessing or ill to others and to ourselves. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

(Prov. 23:7.) Some may deceive others for a time, but the Lord knows whether we are seeking to please Him.

We are to endeavor to please the Lord in all things and to watch the outward conduct so that our walk in life may be circumspect. Even though we know that the world will take our very best thoughts and endeavors for hypocrisy, nevertheless, our way is clearly marked out--the way of the Lord--the way of Wisdom.

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#### THE KINDNESS, HUMILITY AND PATIENCE OF LOVE

"God is Love."--1 John 4:8.

IN THE SCRIPTURES the word love is used to express the complete whole of the grand and glorious qualities which make up the perfection of Jehovah. God is the personification of Love. To whatever extent any one possesses this quality of Love to that extent he has character-likeness to God. Whoever is fully in God's likeness may be said to be Love; for Love is the great principle which represents most fully the Divine character.

"God is Love," our Lord Jesus is Love; and when the Church is perfect, each member of the Body will also be Love. This great principle will have full control of all that we do and say, even as now it has control in the hearts of the Lord's people, despite the weaknesses of the flesh, which prevent its full expression. When all the imperfection is taken away, those who attain the prize of our glorious high calling will have the image of God, the image of the Lord. The hope of attaining the likeness of the Divine character is the great ambition which inspires us to faithfulness of endeavor.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that faith, hope and love are fruits of the Holy Spirit. Although every good and perfect gift comes from the Father (James 1:17), nevertheless, there is a difference between a "gift" and

a "fruit." Possession of a gift may be acquired immediately, but a fruit requires time in which to develop. So with the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Here we see displayed the Wisdom of God. Development is a gradual work. With those who have that earnest desire and determined zeal for righteousness which God wishes them to have, every word and every act has something to do with the development of this quality of Love. Our Heavenly Father does not expect us to acquire perfection of love in the flesh, for its weaknesses and imperfections will not permit us to do so; but He expects to find in those who will be members of the Body of Christ that earnestness of spirit and faithful endeavor which demonstrate that if they had perfect bodies they would always manifest love.

In order to reach this degree of development of character, we must not live after the flesh, the old creature, but must train our minds to desire only those things which are true, pure, loving and good. In this sense of the word we are to be copies of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### KINDNESS NOT ALWAYS LOVE

The followers of Christ have consecrated their own wills and have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Love; for it is the Spirit of God, who is Love. Therefore their sentiment toward one another must be one of loving interest. Perhaps they are not always wise in knowing how to exercise loving-kindness; sometimes their fallen nature may lead them to think that a certain course of action would be the loving one, when it is the very reverse--the wrong course. Hence we need to be on the alert to perceive to what extent we are using the spirit of a sound mind in our conduct and in our dealings with one another.

A person might manifest kindness in word and act without having the right motive. Sometimes kindness is prompted by motives other than love. It might be for selfish reasons, or for the purpose of entrapping another to his disadvantage. This form of fraud has become so common as to cause no particular comment.

The Christian's experience is a continual schooling. Daily we are learning more and more about ourselves and about the Wisdom and Justice of God. As we learn these lessons day by day, we are learning more to reprobate and correct in ourselves. In thus discovering our own imperfections, we should learn, as a matter of course, not to expect perfection in others; and we should give them credit for doing their best to exemplify the highest ideals

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which they have in respect to the unity and perfection required for membership in the Body of Christ.

Love is always kind; Love cannot wilfully injure another. The parent who loves his child will not do anything

to harm that child. He might sometimes make a mistake and punish the child unjustly, but the motive behind a loving parent's action will always be kind and true.

Love might sometimes be regarded as unkind, for the principles governing the actions of the individual might be misunderstood. When our Heavenly Father forbade Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, He had a wise reason for so doing. No doubt He would have eventually permitted them to partake of that fruit; but it was kindness on His part to keep them in ignorance of that fact. Thinking God to be unkind, ungenerous toward them, Eve thought to obtain her rights. So with us. If our Heavenly Father's kindness is not always understood, we may not be surprised if we have a similar experience. Although our spirit, or motive, may be right, yet we may not always have the ability to manifest it; and so we must make due allowance when others misunderstand us.

#### THE POWER OF INDWELLING LOVE

Man was originally made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26,27); but by reason of the fall of Adam, his balance of mind has been destroyed. Those who have the mind, or will of Christ are able to overcome some of the inequalities of their natural disposition and to think soberly of their own knowledge and ignorance and of that of others. This ability to appreciate the true state of affairs is the secret of much of our blessing in the Lord.

When we see others who have a smaller appreciation of justice than we have and who do things contrary to the principles of righteousness, we rejoice that we know better and are able to do better than they. The spirit of a sound mind shows us that we have more ability along some lines than have some others, and that others have more ability along some lines than we. Because of the fall of man, all are weak in one direction or another. The knowledge of the imperfect condition of humanity should humble us rather than puff us up.

Humility of mind comes only after the attainment of considerable knowledge of Christ. Knowledge puffs up because of selfishness of heart, because we are more likely to be conscious of our own good qualities than of those of others. Hence those born with less selfishness have less to contend with, and those born with more of it have more to contend with; and in proportion as we have the Spirit of Christ, we are able to overcome the tendency to be puffed up with what little knowledge we possess. Indwelling love has the power to build up, to strengthen character, and to counteract the wrong effect of the fallen human nature.

#### PROPER AND IMPROPER CAUSES OF PROVOCATION

The whole world has a tendency to recognize the principles of Justice. Even those whose conduct toward others is far from just, seem to crave an opportunity to fight against injustice, provided that the case is not one with which they are identified. This inclination often manifests itself in acts of violence, as when mobs vent their anger against some poor sinner who has done something to provoke their wrath. The least virulent amongst them have perhaps done wrong also, yet they seize the opportunity to show their indignation against wrongdoing and seem to take delight in punishing the offender.

The Lord's people should not possess this spirit of intolerance. We should have patience, sympathy and endurance when things go wrong, and should make due allowance for those who are transgressors. The more we possess of the spirit of patience, the more we have of the spirit of forbearance and the more difficult it is to arouse us to anger. Wherever the spirit of love prevails, its possessor is not easily moved to do or say anything unkind or unjust. Love makes us very patient with those with whom we are associated; it is anxious to throw the mantle of charity over everything that seems to be wrong.

Love would have us remember that while another may be in error, it does not follow that he is at fault. He may not have understood a matter correctly or his judgment may not have been the best, owing to inherited weakness over which he has no control. Before condemning any one we should make sure that he is at fault. Justice demands that we do no less than investigate before we condemn. Love urges us to be as merciful in the case as is possible.

God is the very personification of Love, yet the Scriptures tell us that He has been provoked at different

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times. While passing through the wilderness, the children of Israel aroused His indignation repeatedly. (Psa. 78:40,56; 95:7-11.) The idolatrous tendencies of that nation brought Divine wrath upon them and sent them into captivity to Babylon. (Jer. 7:17-20.) Finally, their rejection and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ brought upon them "wrath to the uttermost" and caused their dispersion into all parts of the earth.

#### RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION A PROPER FEELING

The Lord's people are not to be of that immovable kind that cannot feel any resentment of injustice. Lack of ability to have just indignation would imply lack of morals and of harmony with God. Of our Lord Jesus it is written that when He beheld the unrighteous condition of the rulers of His people, and saw the injustice of their conduct, He "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." (Mark 3:5.) Like Him, we should be wholly out of

sympathy with everything not in harmony with God.

We are to love righteousness and hate iniquity. This word iniquity, which means the very opposite of Love, is a strong expression. A person who is indifferent to matters of right and wrong is indifferent to the character of God, who is in opposition to all forms of iniquity. Of our Lord, the Scriptures say, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Psa. 45:7.) All who are cultivating character pleasing to God, all who are endeavoring to become exact copies of His dear Son, should put away every impurity, everything not right. Whatever is wrong should always be opposed by our new minds.

On the other hand, if we have Love as the Lord has it, we shall hate the wrong, but not the individual who does wrong. In proportion as love controls our minds and hearts, we shall feel sympathy for those who are in iniquity, for we remember that the race of mankind are fallen from their original perfection. We should think that to do evil is not their intention, their will, but that they are suffering from an iniquitous disease. Love is patient and tries to find extenuating circumstances and conditions. It seeks to help the evil-doer and is not easily provoked to anger.

But the word "provoke" signifies to incite to; in another place the Apostle says, "Provoke one another to Love and good works." (Heb. 10:24.) Love should say and do those things that will incite to loving words rather

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than stir up bitterness, which leads to anger, wrath, malice, strife and evil-speaking." (Eph. 4:31,32.) In other words, it is much better to be a peacemaker than a strife-maker. Yet we are not to have peace at any price; rather we should have peace, if possible, where principle is not involved. We should stir up strife only where some good is sure to result.

The degree of love, the strength of love, may be determined by the ease with which it may be swerved and aroused to opposition or to impatience and anger. We have already seen that there may be times when patience might stand in the way of the real interests of the case and where Love would take steps to correct what seemed to be an apparent evil; but we must remember that balance of mind, or judgment, is not ours by nature. Perfection of decision is a quality belonging only to our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Let patience have her perfect work." (James 1:4.) The Father would not be provoked to anger with anything trivial. With us, however, our balance of judgment is so poor that generally we are too hasty. Very few of us take in the full circumstances surrounding ourselves and those with whom we have to do; therefore growth in grace and growth in knowledge will have to do with the

degree of love exhibited by each one.

#### GENEROSITY AND SYMPATHY TO BE CULTIVATED

We are in the School of Christ, the Great Teacher. We have the words of the Heavenly Father, of our Lord Jesus and of the Apostles recorded in the Bible; therefore we should know the difference between right and wrong. On the other hand, we see that sin exists in the world. Mankind are imperfect in mind and morals. This condition is hereditary--the result of Adam's transgression, more than six thousand years ago. Yet with all our advantages of knowledge, we "cannot do the things that we would"; consequently, we feel a measure of sympathy for ourselves, and we should extend the same measure to others. Indeed, we should be more critical of ourselves than of others, although the Lord's Word says that we are not to judge either ourselves or others. We cannot read the hearts of those around us and therefore are not competent to decide what motives prompt their actions nor what degree of punishment should be meted out to them.

Nevertheless, we are to observe right and wrong conduct among our neighbors. We may know that they have, figuratively speaking, a bad tree and therefore bring forth bad fruit; and we should consider why they have a tree that produces such fruitage. Perhaps they were less favorably born than we. Perhaps they have never been in the School of Christ and have never heard the Great Teacher or the Apostles. If so, our sympathy should go out to them and our attitude of mind toward them should be such that we will not be provoked by their shortcomings, but should manifest generosity of heart toward them.

To attain this sympathy and generosity is a part of our instruction in the School of Christ, but we do not learn all pertaining to the subject in a day or a week. We get "here a little, there a little" (Isa. 28:10); and if we are following on to know the Lord, our mental discernment will become clearer and our minds will broaden in sympathy for others. Thus we shall become more like our Father in Heaven, for He is kind to the unthankful and just to the unjust, as our Lord pointed out.--Matt. 5:44-48.

#### PRIDE A CAUSE OF MUCH IRRITABILITY

Undoubtedly the causes for irritability and for being provoked vary in different persons. With some, it is because of a nervous condition of health, which renders them less easily able to control themselves according to the standards which they themselves recognize. With others, the cause of irritability is pride. In fact, pride is connected with nearly everything that is injurious to the people of God. Wherever pride exists, the person is susceptible to evil influences from every quarter.

Pride manifests itself in various ways. Sometimes it

exhibits itself as self-esteem, leading one to think too highly of himself and too lightly of others, even to the extent of imagining himself to be their superior. At other times, pride manifests itself as approbateness: anything that conflicts with the desire to appear well before others touches a tender spot.

We are not to be indifferent to these things. If we have pride or approbateness, we are to seek to control it with the spirit of love and sympathy for others, instead of letting the wrong spirit control us. The best way to do this is to practise generosity and to provoke others to love and good works instead of to anger. Let us remember that humility is one of the great lessons to be learned in the School of Christ; obedience to the instructions of the Teacher along this line has very much to do with our ever getting into the Kingdom.

One of the best aids to the learning of this important lesson is to learn to judge ourselves--to scrutinize our own motives. If we find that we have acted unjustly toward another, we should go and make amends to the best of our ability; we should properly scourge our own minds, and seek to make matters right with the one we have wronged. For a person who is proud or who is sensitive to the good opinion of others, it is very difficult to apologize; but the best thing to do is to set the matter right as speedily as possible, and repeatedly, if necessary. Thus we may have help along the line where we should have it, by overcoming our pride and vanity.

The members of the Body of Christ are all to be copies of God's dear Son. This does not mean that God's dear people will be able always to control their looks and actions and words, but that the heart must recognize this standard and strive to attain to it. Every time a person who has some weakness along this line of pride or vanity will apologize for a wrong done he will by that act show both God and man that his heart recognizes the right principle. A great blessing will come to him because of his following very strictly the Divine Word; thus he will gradually overcome his weakness and strengthen his character.

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#### CALMNESS OF TRUTH

All Truth is calm,  
Refuge and Rock and Tower;  
The more of Truth the more of calm,  
Its calmness is its power.  
Truth is not strife,  
Nor is to strife allied;  
It is the error that is bred  
Of storm, by rage and pride.  
Calmness is Truth,

And Truth is calmness still;  
Truth lifts its forehead to the storm,  
Like some eternal hill.  
--H. Bonar.

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#### GOD'S WILL CONCERNING THE CHURCH

"This is the will of God [concerning you],  
even your sanctification."--1 Thess. 4:3.

IN OUR TEXT the expression, "This is the will of God," is in the nature of advice rather than command. Considering the class to whom this advice is given, we find them to be those who desire to draw near to God and to have Him draw near to them. God has promised a great reward for submission to His will in every particular; and the Apostle Paul is stating what the will of God is concerning those who desire to live in nearness to Him. He tells them that it is God's will that they be fully set apart to His service; that they lay down their lives in His work; that in all the affairs of life their hearts should be set to know and to do His will.

In words of loving entreaty the Apostle elsewhere addresses this class, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) The phrase, "Present your bodies," includes not only the primary presentation, but the continuation of the living sacrifice to the completion of the work. In other words, the Gospel Age is the acceptable time when God is willing to receive those who come unto Him through Christ. It is the time for His drawing, calling, those who are to become members of the Elect Church.

God's will for His believing people, justified by faith in the Ransom and consecrated to His service, has always been the same as the Apostle stated, namely, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." To produce this sanctification in believers God has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises," and declares that the truth of His Word will produce the sanctification of character acceptable to Him--conformity to the image of His dear Son, our Redeemer.

Sanctification does not mean human perfection. It is the consecration, or devotion of the will, which through Christ is accepted of the Father as perfect; it is a consecration of the body to sacrifice--even unto death. As we have seen, that body is not made actually perfect through justification by faith, but merely reckonedly perfect, according to our will, our heart, our intention. The



new will should seek to bring every power, every talent, every endowment of its body, into full accord with the Lord, and should seek to exercise an influence in the same direction upon all with whom it comes in contact.

This does not mean, however, that in the few short years of the present life it will be able to bring its poor, imperfect body to perfection. On the contrary, the Apostle assures us in connection with the Church, that in death it is sown in corruption, sown in weakness, sown in dishonor, sown a [an imperfect] natural body (I Cor. 15:42-44); and that not until in the Resurrection we are given new bodies, strong, perfect, glorious, immortal, shall we have attained the perfection which we seek and which the Lord promises shall be ours eventually, if in the present time of weakness and imperfection we manifest to Him the loyalty of our hearts.

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Our text, as well as many other portions of the Scriptures, teaches us that the great work which God asks of us is not for others, but is a work in ourselves, subduing, conquering, ruling self. Everything else, therefore, our doing service to the household of faith, our doing good unto all men, by home or foreign missions, etc., is subservient to this most important work within. For, as the Apostle by inspiration declares, though we should preach the Gospel eloquently to others, and though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for a good cause, we should be nothing from the Divine viewpoint, without love--the Spirit of Christ and of the Father--developed in us as the ruling principle of life. (I Cor. 13:3.) But before we can "put on love--the bond of perfectness"--and have its rule established, we have many enemies to put out.

#### OUR THREE GREAT FOES

The heart is the battleground on which the Holy Spirit helps us to wage warfare against the enemies which since the Adamic fall have taken possession of the human mind. Our battle is to be against Sin, the great taskmaster, which captured our race more than six thousand years ago. Satan, the great master or general of Sin, is our enemy, and has largely to do with the various influences against which we must contend. We are not, however, to battle directly with Satan, though we are to "resist" him; that is, we are to resist his influence, his deceptions, and his endeavors to lead us into error and into sin. We should be powerless against this great enemy were it not that our Lord Jesus has conquered Sin, and that He is on our part, so that we can confidently say, Greater is He that is on our part than all they that be against us.

Again, our battle is with the world. By this we do not mean with our fellow-creatures; for, blinded by the

Adversary, they are little, if at all, accountable for their course. We are to do battle with "the spirit of the world" and its influences. The disposition of the world, the mind of the world, the motives which actuate the world, the ambitions of the world, the pride of life and the deceitfulness of riches--the wrong views of matters as seen from the worldly standpoint--we are to resist, to fight against. And it is a daily battle.

Finally, our battle is with the flesh--our own flesh. Ever since Sin captured our race, its slavery has been conducive to mental, moral and physical degradation. Its every tendency has been toward evil, and that continually; and although our Lord Jesus had compassion on us and redeemed us from slavery to Sin, with His own precious blood, yet we have in our bodies the motions, the tendencies toward sin.

So, although we are now free, and are with the mind serving the Law of Christ, and although we have covenanted to battle for righteousness, truth, goodness and purity, we find our new selves harassed by the old, perverted tastes and inclinations of our own flesh toward the service of the old taskmaster. Not the least of our battles, therefore, is against these perverted tendencies of our flesh; and the battle with these is also a daily battle. With the great Apostle Paul we should be able to say, "I keep my body [my flesh and its desires] under"--in subjection to my new will, the New Creature.

From the moment we make a full consecration of ourselves unto death in the service of the Lord, He reckons our flesh as dead, and begets us as New Creatures. Our new minds are alive toward God with a newness of life. Hence those motions of sin which we are seeking to bring into absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ are not recognized by the Lord as the will or the motions of the New Creature enlisted in His service, but merely as a part of the general enemy, Sin, pursuing after and battling with us. These we are pledged to resist, and to war against; and to overcome these He promises sufficient grace and help.

#### OUR DAILY BATTLE WITH SELF

These enemies in our own flesh cause us the greatest difficulties. To these Satan appeals; these he seeks to encourage in the warfare against the new spirit of our

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minds; through these the spirit of the world gains closest approach to us, and seeks to capture us and lead us back as captives to Sin. So to speak, the "New Creature in Christ" is beset, surrounded on every hand with enemies seeking its disaster and re-enslavement. We must battle for ourselves, for our own liberty, for victory over our own weaknesses; we must battle against the spirit of the world, against delusions and snares of the Adversary by

which he would make evil things appear good, and right to appear undesirable. No wonder that the child of God is urged to be continually watchful; that he is urged to "put on the whole armor of God"; that he is cautioned in respect to his various wily foes and especially against those of his own flesh; that he is urged to faithfulness and loyalty of heart!

Heart-loyalty to the Lord means continual effort to bring all the conduct of our lives, yea, the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, into subjection to the Divine will. (2 Cor. 10:4,5.) This is our first duty, our continual duty, and will be the end of our duty; for "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy."--I Peter 1:16.

Absolute holiness is to be the standard which our minds can gladly and fully indorse and live up to, but to which we can never attain actually and physically so long as we are subject to the frailties of our fallen natures and the besetments of the world and the Adversary. But day by day we are taught of God; and as we come to a fuller knowledge of His glorious character, and as the appreciation of it more and more fills our hearts, the new mind will more and more gain influence, strength, power, over the weaknesses of the flesh, whatever they may be--and these weaknesses vary with the different members of the Body.

If we be sanctified to God by the Truth, if our wills be dead and the Lord's will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word and deed, then we have attained the will of God, and shall win the prize as "overcomers" even if we have never had opportunity to preach, to give to the poor, or to suffer as martyrs for the Truth's sake. Let us all note well this point: "This is the Lord's will [concerning you], even your sanctification." Let nothing becloud or obscure this truth; but let it dominate our course in life. Then if God's will is really our will, we have a clearly marked pathway before us.

But without doubt, before all such God will open opportunities to serve the Truth to others, to let their light shine to the glory of the Father and the blessing of fellow-creatures; for this is His command to us, and we may be sure He gives us no commands impossible to be obeyed. If you have been seeking opportunities of service and have found none, there must be something wrong; you may have been seeking some special service of your own preference (your old will meddling with your newly adopted will--the Lord's).

Possibly the great Teacher sees in you pride, which you would have been prompt to crush had you recognized it, but which hid itself from you under the cloak of "self-respect." Possibly the great Teacher by His providence and His Word is saying to you, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." (Eccl. 9:10.) Possibly He sees that you would be spoiled were He to give you a more important service for others, before you have learned the lesson of humility--all important in God's

sight. Act quickly, therefore; the time is short. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God [to do whatever service His providence has made possible to you], that He may exalt you in due time."--I Peter 5:6.

#### SANCTIFICATION THE RESULT OF LOVE OF GOD

True sanctification of the heart to the Lord means diligence in His service; a declaration of the good tidings to others; the building up of one another in the most holy faith. It also means that we do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith; that in these various ways our lives, consecrated to the Lord, shall be laid down for the brethren day by day, opportunity by opportunity, as they shall come to us; that our love for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families and sympathetically for the world of mankind, will increasingly fill our hearts as we grow in grace, knowledge and obedience to the Divine Word and example. --Gal. 6:10; I John 3:16.

Nevertheless, all this exercising of our energies for others is merely one of the many ways in which by the Lord's providence our own sanctification may be accomplished. As iron sharpeneth iron, so our energies in behalf of others bring blessings to ourselves. Additionally, while we should more and more come to the condition of loving our neighbors as ourselves--especially the household of faith--yet the mainspring back of all this should be our supreme love for our Creator and Redeemer, and our desire to be and to do what would please Him. Our sanctification, therefore, must be primarily toward God and first affect our own hearts and wills and, as a result of such devotion to God, find its exercise in the interest of the brethren and of all men.

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#### ST. PAUL'S GREAT MISSION

"For Christ sent me...to preach the Gospel."--I Cor. 1:17.

LEARNING HAS always been very properly held in high esteem, and those who have it usually appreciate this fact as well as do those who have it not. There is, therefore, on the part of the learned, or those who appear to be so, a tendency to do or say things or to discuss subjects that would make them shine before others.

St. Paul had a good education. He had much advantage every way; consequently he had the greater temptation to display his knowledge. In his Epistle to the Corinthians, he was addressing a people who were familiar with Greek philosophy and who

knew that the world valued this philosophy so highly that a person who did not manifest acquaintance with Greek learning was considered an ignoramus.

The Apostle realized that his great mission was not that of making himself shine, but of preaching the Gospel --the "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." (Luke 2:10.) As an ambassador of Christ, he had been given the privilege of becoming a sharer in His sufferings in the present Age and in the glories to follow in Christ's Kingdom. He saw clearly that his commission transcended anything and everything else in the world, and that from the Divine point of view all other philosophies are foolishness. He had wisely concluded that he would neither detract from his own mission to discuss these theories of man, nor would he quarrel with those who accepted them.

Since those who would be blessed by hearing the Gospel would be those whom the Lord wished to gather, St. Paul determined to preach nothing but Christ. He would not mix the doctrines of Christ with those of Plato, although he knew that if he were to mention Plato and then

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to present Christ as a great philosopher, he would win the attention of the Greeks, who would say, "Here is another teacher of immortality and kindred themes," and then listen to St. Paul's discourse.

St. Paul was well aware that the teaching of Christ is the very reverse of Plato's theory--that man has inherent immortality, that when he seems to die, he then really begins to live. Man has nothing that will commend him to God or give him everlasting life. But if he can come to a condition of harmony with God, he will have the blessing of everlasting life and happiness. The Apostle knew that while no fallen man can obtain this for himself, God has made provision for all, both through the redemption price laid down at Calvary and also through the restoration of all things by the Redeemer.-- Acts 3:19-21.

How wise St. Paul was! How sad that the early Church did not profit by his course! Long years after the Apostles fell asleep, the mixture of the Platonic philosophy and the Gospel of Christ wrought havoc in Christian faith, and built up the great anti-Christian system Scripturally called "Babylon." St. Paul was wise in that he would not discuss the topics usually taught by the Greek philosophers, but gave his whole time to the presentation of the philosophy of the Plan of the Ages. He preached Christ, able now to save "to the uttermost" all who come to the Father by Him (Heb. 7:25), all who have the appreciative ear, and able in His Kingdom to bring all mankind to a knowledge of God's goodness by opening their deaf ears to receive the Truth. He showed that the whole work of sin and of devastation through death, as it has been accomplished in

the human family, will ultimately be undone.

#### THE WEAK POINT IN MODERN PREACHING

Many of St. Paul's hearers would have been glad to learn about Christ as the great Jewish Teacher and to admit that His philosophy was good. They would have been willing to hear that Christ will some day reign and uplift humanity. A great obstacle, however, stood in the way. This One who was being preached had not borne a good reputation. According to the testimony of His own nation, He had been crucified as a malefactor.

A weaker man than St. Paul might have followed the policy of covering up the fact of the crucifixion of Christ. He might have said that the Jews did not appreciate what Christ was doing, that Christ was the Son of God, the mighty Logos; and then he might have glossed over the death of Christ on the cross. Thus the Gentiles might have regarded our Lord as a great Teacher and never have learned of the manner of His death until some Jew should tell them that their great Teacher had been a malefactor so wicked that He was not fit to live. Should they then have asked St. Paul whether this was true, he could have explained that it was a fact, but that the great mass of the Jewish people had not consented to this act of their rulers and therefore were not a party to it.

This glossing over of truth is what is done today in all of the great pulpits of Christendom. If our Lord's death is mentioned at all, it is done in an apologetic manner. But St. Paul preached that Christ's death was necessary to redeem the human race, and that under the terms of the Law Covenant, He must die on the cross in order to redeem Israel from the curse of the Law.--Gal. 3:13.

Thus the Apostle did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God in the strongest form. (Acts 20:27.) Crucifixion was the only way in which our Lord's death would be of full value and accomplish the purpose intended. Had He not died, the "Just for the unjust," He could not have been the Redeemer of the whole world. This Message was so great, so different from anything else in the world, that the Apostle concluded that he had no time for the discussion of any other topic.

There might have been occasions when St. Paul could have discussed something else. Although he might have had the opportunity to say that he did not believe in the Platonic philosophy at all, yet he did not intend to display what he knew about worldly philosophies. So it is with us. We are to discuss the Truth rather than the error. If we should have occasion to mention the error, it should be only as a side-light to illuminate the Truth by contrast.

There are many subjects in which there is a measure of truth--geology, astronomy, etc.--but to preach these would be to neglect, not only to set forth the great central Message that man is a sinner and can have no reconciliation with God except through the death of Christ, but to show what constitutes discipleship, what is to be its reward

and what the result of the glorification of the Church with Christ. This Message of the Gospel is not preached today. On the contrary, much foolishness is set forth in the name of Christ and in churches dedicated to the service of the Lord. We are not to imitate this course and to strive for popularity in preaching. We are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and His disciples.

Observation has taught us that those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than "this Gospel" to engross time and attention are in great danger of being led astray. We advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel. Let us leave all other subjects, no matter how interesting, to others. In the future, when all knowledge shall be ours, we can discuss them. Those who from any avoidable cause turn aside from the ministry of the true and only Gospel are quickly turned out of the way, or else are greatly hindered in their course toward "the prize of the high calling."--Phil. 3:14.

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#### THE TWO PARTS OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

THE STATEMENT of the Law is very positive--

"The man that doeth these things shall live by them." Whoever keeps God's commands will live in them and will receive everlasting life as a reward for keeping them. (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) In making the promise of life to the Jews, God did not tell them in what manner He would arrange for its fulfilment. As a matter of fact, although the Jews did not understand the types of the Law Covenant, God had showed how the keeping of that Covenant would give everlasting life; namely, through sacrifice.

In His great Plan of the Ages God had already provided a Redeemer. (Eph. 1:4.) It was therefore in view of this provision of Divine grace that the promise of life through keeping the Law could be made. But in giving the Law Covenant, God did not omit the great Atonement sacrifice, which was the type of the work of Redemption.

That our Lord had some understanding with the Heavenly Father before He was made flesh is self-evident; for His change of nature is represented as a voluntary act on His part. (Phil. 2:8.) He took not upon Himself the nature of angels, but that of the seed of Abraham. (Heb. 2:16.) He had an object in taking upon

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Himself the nature of Abraham's descendants. He did so

"for the joy that was set before Him." (Heb. 12:2.)

This expression implies that He had some knowledge of the nature of the work which He had come to accomplish.

This knowledge which our Lord possessed in His pre-human condition did not include the understanding of all the various types of which He was to be the Antitype, but evidently He knew that this stooping from the heavenly to the earthly nature was a means to an end, which was to be accomplished when He became a man. In order to take this great step, it was necessary for Him to have absolute confidence that the Father would not wish Him to do anything which would be to His injury, but to the contrary, something which would do Him good. So great was His faith in the Father that He wished to do the Father's will at any cost.

The first step toward the achievement of the Father's will was the taking of a nature lower than any on the spirit plane--the human. Then, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:8.) He did not humble Himself before He became a man, but afterwards. As a boy He inquired of the Doctors of the Law what time would be appropriate for Him to enter upon His ministry. Evidently satisfied by His investigation that there was nothing to be done at that time, He returned to His home with His mother and her husband, and was subject to them until He was thirty years old.--Luke 2:51.

At thirty years of age, Jesus offered Himself at Jordan, where He went for no other purpose than to make His consecration. He knew that He had come into the world to be man's Redeemer; that God's will concerning His work of redemption was written in the types and shadows of the Scriptures, and that this will was altogether outside of the moral part of the Law, for it was not obligatory on one who would keep the Law. He also knew that to do this work of redemption He must present Himself in sacrifice. (Psa. 50:5.) Gladly He offered Himself, saying, "Lo, I come...to do Thy will, O My God."

#### ONLY ONE PART OF THE REDEMPTION WORK YET ACCOMPLISHED

In the Atonement Day offering, our Lord's consecration is pictured by the High Priest when he smote the bullock and killed it. Here we have in the type a picture of our Lord, who was represented by both bullock and priest. The new mind, the new will, the New Creature, offered up the flesh. It was not that He offered up Himself as man's Redeemer; He presented Himself a sacrifice --not to mankind, not to Satan, not to the world, but unto God. He was so loyal that He was ready to sacrifice to the Father everything which He possessed; He was permitted to prove His loyalty and faithfulness even unto death.

As a result of His obedience unto death, even the shameful death of the cross, our Lord was raised from the dead and given the very highest nature--the Divine.



In due time He will be permitted to offer the merit of His sacrifice as a Ransom-price for the sins of the whole world, and thus He will become the world's Redeemer.

This word Redeemer is quite broad. It signifies one who obtains control of something and brings it back to a former condition in a legal and satisfactory manner. Our Lord began to do this work. He has accomplished the first part, which in due time will become a satisfactory price for the sins of the world. He has already been highly exalted and thus qualified for the great office of Mediator between God and men. He is waiting merely until the members of His Body be joined to Him and made participators of His glory, and then the work of Restitution for mankind will begin.

Our Lord will be a thousand years in doing the second part of this work of redeeming. At the close of the thousand years the work will have been finished. Now He is the Redeemer, the Restorer, not because He has done the work, but because He has the power and authority to do it. At the close of the thousand years He will be the One who will have accomplished this work of Restitution, and the name Redeemer will be His forever, even though the work of redeeming will be in the past.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates how clearly our Lord understood the terms and conditions upon which He would please the Father after coming into the world. We are, therefore, not to dogmatize on the subject. But it is probable that He did not know all the experiences through which He would pass while in the flesh, and that some of these were afterwards revealed to Him, as we read that when after His baptism He came up out of the water, the heavens--the higher things, the spiritual--were opened to Him. (Matt. 3:16.) Thenceforth He was able to appreciate the deeper features of God's Plan.

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"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT"

--I THESS. 5:19.--

IN THE SCRIPTURES light is used as a symbol of the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is symbolized, not only by the oil with which the priests were anointed and which represented the indwelling power of the Spirit, but also by the light of the golden candlestick which stood in the Holy. After we had been favored with the knowledge of the Truth and had consecrated ourselves, the Lord accepted our consecration and gave us the Holy Spirit, which became the illuminating power of our hearts. All down the Gospel Age the Church has been the

light of the world. This our Lord intimated would be true when He said to His disciples on one occasion, "Ye are the light of the world."--Matt. 5:14.

As there are various ways by which a light may be extinguished, so there are different means by which this light of the Holy Spirit may be quenched in us. A light will go out if the supply of oil or gas which feeds it be cut off, or if the oxygen of the air be shut off from it, whether because the supply is exhausted or because something is placed over the light to extinguish it. So it is with us. The light of the Spirit may be permitted to die out for want of replenishing, or it may be quenched by contact with some outside force.

In order to have the Holy Spirit in large measure, we must keep near to the Lord; for if we get away from Him, the light will go out. If we neglect the privilege of prayer or of study of the Scriptures or of fellowship with the Lord through failure to think of Him, the illumination of the Spirit will grow dim. On the other hand, it will become brighter in proportion to our realization of our own imperfections and to the degree of our consecration to the Lord. This we manifest by the zeal with which we study His will as expressed in His Word, and with which we practice that will in the affairs of life. These are the means by which we may supply the oil to keep our light burning brightly. But while we are endeavoring to do this, we must see to it that we do not

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come into contact with anything which will tend to extinguish the flame of sacred love in our hearts.

The world, the flesh and the Devil are all in opposition to the light of the Holy Spirit. To whatever extent they are brought into contact with the light, to that extent they smother it. If the spirit of worldliness come into our hearts, it will extinguish the light of the Holy Spirit. If the spirit of selfishness or of thoughtlessness enter our hearts, it will cause the light to grow dim and finally to die out. Weariness in well-doing will produce the same result. If we indulge in pleasures of the flesh, these will tend to quench the Spirit. Sinful pleasures should, of course, be shunned by everybody. But there are pleasures which are not sinful and which are proper enough for the natural man. Yet to whatever extent the consecrated indulge in these and thus gratify the longings of the flesh, proportionately the new nature will suffer.

Christian fellowship is thought to be one of the very best aids to maintaining the light of the Spirit. Yet even in this there is a danger-line which is not always recognized and which, if crossed, will produce the opposite effect. A visit to the seashore and a bath in the ocean may in some cases be very profitable; but in others it may be carried to such an extent that it becomes dangerous to the new nature. Those who become weary in

well-doing are usually those who have found something attractive in another direction to take their attention away from the things of the Spirit.

#### ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN MOST ESSENTIAL

Amongst the various arrangements which God has made for the New Creatures in Christ is the assembling of themselves together in order to maintain their light and to let it shine. The Apostle Paul exhorts the Church not to forget the assembling together wherever it is possible to do so. (Heb. 10:25.) Where the assembling is not possible, the Lord makes up for the lack in some other way; and so we sometimes find a dear brother or sister who has not had the opportunity to meet with others in the Truth, but who seems to be very clear and to have a deep appreciation of the Lord's Plan. Not having the privilege of fellowship with others, such a one has done so much the more reading and studying.

Those who have this opportunity for fellowship and who do not appreciate it, seem to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. In such cases, the oil is not burning brightly, else that one would delight to be with fellow-pilgrims in the same way, marching toward the same goal.

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We should be as careful of our spiritual condition as of our physical. If we have a bad taste in our mouth and no appetite, we conclude that we are not well; and if we do not care to go to meetings, we may know that we are not in good spiritual health. When we find that we have not the desire to meet with others of "like precious faith," it is an indication that we should go to the Great Physician, that He may help us.

In some cases, however, the individual would do better not to go to meeting at first, but to read and study for awhile. Many have been hindered in their spiritual growth by getting a smattering of the Truth and then attending meetings. Such become stumbling-stones to themselves and to others. If they have not the time to read as well as to attend meetings, it would be better to read until they have become established, and then to assemble with others of like precious faith.

Many, even of those who are leading classes, are not so clear in the Truth as would be desirable. Some of these seem not to know what they are talking about, although they think that they do. There are various means by which one may redeem the time for study. One may take a book with him and read while on the car, going to and from his daily task. We know a dear brother who read the entire six volumes in this way.

The right course is to exercise the spirit of a sound mind on this subject, as well as on others. Our first thought should be for the glory of God; our second, for our own profit; our third, for the benefit of others. In

this matter we owe it to ourselves to put ourselves first; for if we fit ourselves for service, we then have larger opportunity for helping others. Here self comes first, by Divine command--"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification."--Matt. 6:33; I Thess. 4:3.

As each one comes to know for himself after receiving the Holy Spirit, He is authorized to teach what he has learned for himself. So we may all be taught of God and be used in teaching others, in proportion as we learn the lessons and apply them to our own hearts. Each one's conscience should decide for him what is to the glory of God in respect to attending meetings.

A flame might be revived, even after having been wholly extinguished. Many of us have seen a candle extinguished, and yet there was a bright, warm core which a quick breath of air might rekindle. So with us. There might be something in our lives to extinguish the flame, but the light would not go entirely out; the breath of the Lord might rekindle it. We have seen people who apparently had been zealous for the Lord, but who seemed to lose their love and zeal; but later it has been rekindled. In other cases, the light has seemed to die out altogether. We should ever be on guard lest we allow anything to dim or to extinguish our love for the Lord, for the Truth or for holiness and Christ-likeness.

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#### ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

--DECEMBER 1.--MARK 9:14-29.--

"And Jesus said unto Him, "If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth."--Mark 9:23.

WHEN JESUS and the three favored Apostles came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, where they had been enjoying the vision of coming glory, they found the other nine Apostles at the foot of the mountain surrounded by a multitude. They had made several inefficacious attempts to cast out a demon from a boy whose father had brought him for the purpose.

So it is with some of the Lord's people; occasionally by faith they go up into the mountain, into the Kingdom; by faith they see the glory of the Lord revealed, and hear afresh that they must suffer with the Lord if they would enter into His glory. Then, coming down from the exalted heights of contemplation of things glorious, they face the realities of the present time--the Adversary is in possession of the world still;

many are his slaves and dupes; no earthly power seems sufficient to cast him out; they are back with the remainder of the Church. But if the Master be with them, victory will ultimately be achieved.

This case was one of occasional obsession by an evil

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spirit, whereas many of the others were continuous. The evil spirit came into this boy at times, causing him to have a fit, to froth at the mouth, to wallow in the mire, sometimes striving to throw him into the fire or into the water, or otherwise destroy him. The parents had brought the child to Jesus for a cure; in His absence they sought the nine Apostles remaining, but their endeavors were fruitless; they could not cast out this spirit.

The unsuccessful disciples were perplexed; never before had the Master's name failed to be respected by the demons. The Scribes also were harassing them with questions, when Jesus and the other three appeared coming down the mountain. The multitude hailed Jesus and flocked to Him, but He came promptly to the relief of the Apostles and inquired the nature of their trouble. The father interposed and explained: "I have brought my son, who is possessed of a dumb spirit; and whenever it takes hold upon him it dashes him down and he foameth and grindeth his teeth and pineth away; and I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast it out, and they were not able."

And Jesus answered, "O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring the boy to me." And they brought him, and immediately the spirit caused him to fall to the ground, wallowing and foaming. Jesus questioned how long he had been thus. The father answered, "From a child," and that often the spirit attempted to cast the boy into the fire or into the water to destroy him; "But if Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

#### "TO HIM THAT BELIEVETH"

Jesus replied, "If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth." How great stress the Lord lays everywhere upon the exercise of faith in the Divine Power! "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Those who cannot exercise the faith cannot have the blessing which others may have who do exercise faith; and our blessings increase in proportion as we will exercise our faith. Thus the Lord puts a premium upon this element of character, and makes it essential to His favor.

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This does not imply that people who cannot now exercise faith will never get any blessing. On the contrary,

while the Lord has given certain exceeding great and precious promises to those who can believe and who do believe, and who follow their belief with obedience to the extent of their ability, He has also promised that by and by, during Messiah's Kingdom, the way of faith and obedience will be made so plain, so simple, that all will be able to follow it and to gain a reward--but a lesser reward than that now extended to those who can and do exercise faith and obedience.

The reason for this is manifest. God is now seeking a special class of specially faithful and obedient children, to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus in His glorious Messianic Kingdom. He is now selecting the class which by and by He will use in bestowing His blessing world-wide; and He desires that in this class shall be only such as can exercise absolute faith in Him. Hence, now, God's rule for dealing with the Church is, "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

And in this and other miracles the Lord required faith seemingly as the condition of the healing. He thus manifested forth His coming glory and the power of His Kingdom. During the Kingdom reign there will be such manifestations of Divine Power, and such assistance given to those willing to exercise faith, that all may profit thereby and experience the healings of their flesh and the casting out of every power of Satan and sin.

The poor father realized from Jesus' words that the difficulty rested with him, that he must exercise faith else his son could not be recovered. With tears he cried out, "Lord, I do believe; Help Thou mine unbelief!" His faith got its reward. Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the boy, and enter no more into him. This last was the special point of this cure. The evil spirit had frequently left the boy, but only to return. The Lord's command was that he should leave and never return.

It may be wondered why the Master permitted the evil spirit to tear the boy and cause him pain, etc., in leaving him. If He had power to cast him out, He also undoubtedly had power to control the manner of his coming out. We can only surmise therefore that Jesus, on this and other occasions, allowed the evil spirit a measure of liberty in the method of leaving the victims, and that this was for the very purpose of demonstrating how malicious and evil the spirit was which had control; and thus the miracle was the more clearly seen, and thus the more would the Lord be praised by those interested.

"MANY SAID, 'HE IS DEAD'"

The boy was left in an apparently dead condition, but Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up. The lesson for us in this is that it is not only that the Adversary and his power be cast out of humanity and from control, which the poor world needs, but they need Divine aid, the hand of Divine Power, for their uplift out of the

mire of sin and death. According to the Scriptures, we are near the time when Satan will be bound, when all the influences of evil amongst humanity will be restrained. According to the Scriptures, also, this binding of Satan will be accomplished in a great "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," and humanity will be left in an almost dead condition. The pride, the hopes, the ambition of men will perish in that awful trouble time, but the Master will be present in Kingdom power to uplift them.

Messiah's Kingdom will not only bind the Adversary and forbid him to re-enter humanity and interfere with their affairs, but the power of the Kingdom will for a thousand years do an uplifting work amongst the fallen and degraded members of our race, lifting them up, up, up, until they will be fully up to the Divine standard, as represented in Father Adam--from which condition he originally fell through disobedience, and return to which condition has been secured for all through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice accomplished at Calvary.

The disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out this demon. And so God's people many a time have asked themselves, Why cannot we do more than we are doing in the way of opposing Satan and Sin, and their reign of evil? The answer of Jesus is applicable here as well as there: "This kind cometh not out save by fasting and prayer." Undoubtedly God's people could accomplish much more in their own conflicts with Sin and Satan, and in helping others to get free from the power of Sin, if we would always exercise full faith in the Lord, and if we would continually live more in the spirit and less according to the flesh. This would mean fasting, or self-denial, and prayer, or fellowship with God. To him who believeth, every blessing belongs which God has promised to His faithful ones, but we have the conditions expressed elsewhere by Jesus: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

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#### GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM

--DECEMBER 8.--MATTHEW 18:1-14.--

"In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father."--V. 10.

PERHAPS IT WAS the fact that Peter, James and John had been favored more than the others on several occasions that led to the query which opens today's study: "Who, then, is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" They knew, of course, as St.

Paul declares, that the Heavenly Father is above all, and that next to Him is our Lord Jesus Christ. "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." What the disciples wished to know was, which of them would be greatest, most influential, in Messiah's Kingdom, next to Himself.

Jesus, calling to Him a little child, set him in the midst of them and said, "Verily I say unto you, except ye turn [from this spirit of self-seeking which your question implies] and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven"--you will have no part in it, you will not be fit. Whoever would be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven should therefore become as humble as this little child.

A little child, unsophisticated, is ready to acknowledge its lack of wisdom. It asks questions, a thousand a day, perhaps as many as that in an hour; it seeks instruction; it does not profess and boast wisdom or knowledge--it is candid, it is truthful. It is in later years that it learns from its parents and others, untruthfulness, pride, bombast and various qualities which it did not possess at first. It may have possessed the disposition to pride and arrogance and haughtiness, etc., by heredity, but at first it was guileless, and "as a little child."

The Master's lesson is that whoever would become a child of God and be taught of God, and be eventually developed as a child of God, for the glorious position in the Kingdom to which we were called, must become childlike--must turn away from all pride, from selfish ambitions and hypocrisies and pretensions. They must confess their littleness and ignorance, and go humbly to the Lord for the necessary instruction.

Any who refuse to adopt this proper, childlike spirit will thus be refused the opportunities of the Kingdom, for God will have none others--none others can be taught of God, they will not learn the lessons necessary, under the arrangements of this present time. Here then is the standard of simplicity and artlessness which the Lord's people should adopt and should continue to allow to control them, regardless of their years and experiences. "Now we know in part"; we are dependent upon our Father and His instructions. We have entered the School of Christ, our Elder Brother; He is our Instructor; we must learn of Him, and to learn we must be in this proper, childlike attitude of mind.

#### "ONE SUCH LITTLE CHILD"

We are not to understand that little children, however guileless, are members of Christ's Kingdom class, nor that the dear little ones dying in infancy will be members thereof. The Lord is seeking for mature men and women, who have a childlikeness of mind, a readiness to receive the Heavenly Father's Message, and who in gladness



and simplicity of heart accept it. "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me"; whoever are My disciples are privileged to be God's little children, and thus to be My younger brothers; whoever will receive one such will be receiving Me. "Whosoever shall offend," or injure, "one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were sunk in the depths of the sea."

If some one were thus drowned in the sea, it would indeed terminate his present life, but it would not at all endanger or influence his future life. A future life, by a Restitution awakening, is assured to Adam and every member of his race. Neither drowning nor any other form of death could possibly interfere with it. But he who would injure one of the Lord's little ones would thereby come under such a measure of Divine displeasure that it would affect his future interests beyond the grave, beyond his awakening. He would be held responsible for his deeds, even in the next life, in proportion as he realized what he was doing when he injured the Lord's saints.

The Lord declares that His faithful ones are as precious to Him as the apple of His eye, and that all their interests are subject to Divine supervision. He will allow nothing to happen to these; troubles permitted to come upon them will be only such as the Lord has foreseen and is able to make work out some blessing in connection with their preparation for the Kingdom. But even this fact will not excuse wilfulness on the part of those who do evil to the members of the Body of Jesus.

We remember the persecution of the saints by Saul of Tarsus. We remember Jesus said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" He answered, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And Jesus replied, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." In persecuting the saints Saul of Tarsus had been persecuting Jesus, but because he did it ignorantly God had mercy upon him. Doubtless many saints from Jesus' day down have been persecuted ignorantly, and the Lord will have mercy upon those persecutors; but some of the persecutors have had such light, such knowledge, as to make them responsible; and it is of this class that our lesson speaks. Our Lord added a warning: "Woe unto the world because of offenses! It must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh."

#### CUT OFF HAND OR FOOT

Here the Master brought in a saying which has perplexed many. "If thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee; it is better to enter life maimed, or halt, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; it is better to enter into life with one eye, than that having two eyes thou be cast

into Gehenna fire."

Those who fail to remember that Jesus spake to the people in parables, and never without a parable, will be liable to stumble over these words of His. His teaching is this: If you have anything in your make-up dear to you as a right hand or a foot or an eye, that is likely to cause you to stumble and fail to enter the Kingdom, you would better cut off that tendency, no matter what it costs, no matter how precious, no matter how great a hold it may have upon the very tendrils of your life. Would it not be better to enter into life than to go into Gehenna fire, that is, destruction, the Second Death? Surely this is true. Having put our hands to the plow, having even become followers of Jesus, we must either go on and be accepted as conquerors, or must perish.

There will, of course, be none in the Kingdom with but one eye, but the illustration is the same. If it should cost us the cutting off of some of our members, it would surely pay us to gain the eternal life in glory, even thus maimed, rather than to take the consequences of the

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Second Death, utter extinction. The lesson is that having begun as followers of Christ, and entered upon the contract and received a part of the reward, the Holy Spirit, the Divine favor, we cannot back out of the contract; we must go on to everlasting life or to everlasting death.

How careful the Lord's people should be not to stumble one another, even one of the least of the little ones who has accepted of Jesus and become His follower! --is the lesson. To illustrate it, Jesus suggested that any shepherd losing one of his sheep would leave all the others to go and seek that one; and he rejoices specially at its recovery. So we, the followers of Jesus, should be careful not to stumble each other, but rather to remember that we are all sheep under the great Shepherd, our Heavenly Father, and the great Under Shepherd, our Heavenly Lord, and that He has the spirit of loving interest and care which would go after the straying sheep, and that we should have this same spirit; and possessing this spirit, we would be very careful indeed not to stumble or hinder even the least of the Lord's followers.

All the Lord's true followers are God's "little ones," and are subject to special Divine supervision, represented in our text as angel care. The messengers who have guarded over the lives of God's saintly few always have access to the Heavenly Father's presence, to make known the necessities of those whom they represent, for Divine Power is ever on the alert for the protection of these. Oh, how blessed the privilege of being children of God. Oh, how wise to continue so little, so humble, so childlike, as to abide in His love, and to be enabled to learn the necessary lessons, and be ultimately received with Messiah in His Kingdom honor and glory!

### MORE ELDERS--MORE WORK

Some of the Bible Students' Classes are doing excellent service in the Class Extension work and, as a matter of course, report regularly. Often the attendance at the Extension meetings is good. Frequently the first three meetings lead up to the succeeding three, and are then followed by the establishment of new Classes. We recommend that wherever possible these new Classes have their local meetings on some week night, and that they endeavor to congregate with the Central Class at least Sundays.

We have been surprised that some large Classes containing numerous brethren well qualified for the work are doing little or nothing in Class Extension. We have been trying to think out the cause of this apparent lack of zeal in the Harvest work. Knowing the dear friends to be zealous, knowing that talent in their midst is lying dormant, we have been forced to the conclusion which we are about to present: that is, that the brethren who are capable of Class Extension work in such classes are too modest to suggest the work, lest it should seem that they are trying to have the Class elect them to the Eldership and authorize them to proceed with the Extension work. Modesty is always an excellent quality; but it must be especially hard for dear brethren of some ability to abstain from proclaiming the good tidings--to abstain from going out and starting little meetings themselves.

There surely are Classes deficient in material for Class Extension--Classes which need all the brethren of any ability in their midst. But there are other Classes which need to wake up, to take note of brethren having some ability, and to encourage them to use their time and strength in the Class Extension work. We urge, therefore, that the Classes regard as valuable assets the material which they possess, and seek to glorify the Lord in the use of these assets.

In cases where brethren possessed of ability to give Chart Talks see opportunities for Class Extension, and are financially able to manage the matter themselves, we advise that they proceed to hold meetings. We recommend, however, that they first mention the matter to the Class, so that, if possible, co-operation on the part of all may be secured, and that all may join in a good work and in the resultant joys and blessings.

### BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

Series VI., Study XII.--Marital and Other Privileges and Obligations of the New Creation.

## DECEMBER 1

(1) What are the various obligations laid upon the New Creature by the Law of Love, and through what medium alone can it find expression? P. 239, par. 1.

(2) Even if the human body were perfect, what limitations would the New Creature find in fulfilling his Covenant of sacrifice? P. 485, par. 2.

(3) How may our imperfect human bodies become acceptable sacrifices? P. 486, par. 1.

(4) At what time and under what circumstances did the New Creature begin to exist? P. 486, par. 2.

(5) Under what conditions may our mortal bodies be considered as temporary substitutes for our future spiritual bodies? P. 487, par. 1.

## DECEMBER 8

(6) Why does this reckoning of matters, as respects the New Creation appear foolish and unreal to the world? P. 487, par. 2.

(7) May the New Creature ignore the obligations of his mortal flesh toward other human beings? P. 488, par. 1.

(8) Explain the three phases of the arduous task set before the New Will? P. 488, par. 2, first half.

(9) How is the flesh apt to take advantage of any allowance on our part, and how should we seek to keep our bodies "under"? P. 488, last part, and P. 489, par. 1.

### PROMISCUOUS ASSOCIATION NOT IMPLIED.

(10) Are we not all one in Christ Jesus? Does God show any respect of persons according to sex, color, race, etc.? While we esteem all New Creatures as brethren, does this imply an ignoring of race and sex distinctions? P. 489, par. 2; P. 490, par. 1, 2.

## DECEMBER 15

### MAN AND WOMAN IN THE DIVINE ORDER.

(11) What is the teaching of the Apostle in 1 Cor. 11:3 with respect to headship? P. 491, par. 1.

(12) Is this argument of general or specific application as respects the relationship of the sexes? P. 491, par. 2.

### MAN'S HEADSHIP NOT A TYRANNY.

(13) What are the Scriptural proofs that headship does not imply tyranny? and what responsibilities does this office impose upon the man? P. 491, par. 3.

(14) How has the curse of Mother Eve (Gen. 3:16, last clause) been visited upon her daughters? P. 492, par. 1.

(15) How has the misuse of physical and mental strength on the part of the man reacted to his own unhappiness and the general degradation of the race? P. 492, par. 2; P. 493, par. 1.

DECEMBER 22

(16) Show how the Apostle points out the marriage relationship to be a figure of the relationship between Christ and the Church? P. 494, par. 2, 3.

(17) How should the marriage relation in type be considered by New Creatures in Christ Jesus, husband and wife respectively? P. 495, par. 1.

(18) In the case of the wife's possessing superior qualities to those of her husband, should this order of headship be reversed? What general rules should never be disregarded in marrying? P. 495, par. 2.

MARRIAGE OF NEW CREATURES.

(19) How should a true Christian husband provide for his wife's temporal and spiritual interests? P. 496, par. 1.

(20) Does the exercise of headship imply the ignoring of the wife's counsel, suggestions, co-operation? P. 497, par. 1, 2.

DECEMBER 29

(21) How should a true Christian wife recognize her duties and privileges? And what is the Apostle Paul's special injunction in this connection? P. 497, par. 3.

(22) What is the Apostle Peter's advice? P. 498, par. 1.

(23) How should the wife exercise proper reverence toward her husband in the management of all household affairs? P. 498, par. 2.

(24) In the case of two New Creatures not well mated, where the wife is the superior, what difficulties will be encountered by husband and wife? P. 499, par. 1, 2.

(25) In such case, what course should be pursued by the husband? P. 500, par. 1.

(26) How should the wife conduct herself under these circumstances? P. 500, par. 2.

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INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

AT WHICH BROTHER RUSSELL WILL BE PRINCIPAL SPEAKER

-----

FRIENDS FROM NEARBY PLACES ARE CORDIALLY INVITED.

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ALBANY, N. Y., NOVEMBER 17

Morning Rally for Praise and Testimony at 10 o'clock, discourse to the interested at 7:30 p.m., in VanVechten Hall, 119 State Street.

Discourse to the Public at 3 p.m. in Harmanus Bleecker Hall, Washington Avenue.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., NOVEMBER 24

Morning meeting for Praise and Testimony, and discourse to the interested at 10:30 o'clock, Musicians' Hall, 95 Main Street, East.

Public service at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in the Temple Theatre, 35 Clinton Avenue, S.

DENVER, COLO., DECEMBER 1

Morning Rally for Praise, Prayer and Testimony, and discourse to the interested in Normal Hall, 1545 Glenarm Street, at 10:30 o'clock.

Public meetings at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. in The Auditorium, corner 14th and Curtis Streets.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, DECEMBER 8

Testimony meeting and discourse to the friends at 10:30 a.m. in The Odeon, Elm Street near Twelfth Street.

The afternoon service for the Public will be held in the Emery Auditorium, corner Canal and Walnut Streets.

BUFFALO, N. Y., DECEMBER 15

DETROIT, MICH., DECEMBER 22

LOUISVILLE, KY., DECEMBER 29

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ARMAGEDDON SERMON IN NEWSPAPERS

We learn that Brother Russell's Armageddon sermon preached at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, November 3, has been published in a great many newspapers which do not publish the sermons regularly. We trust that such publishers will be encouraged to continue the service. We will be glad to receive sample copies of all such papers. Mark these "Special" on the wrapper.

When your newspaper fails to print the sermons, the proper place to write your protest is to its Editor or Publisher or both.

Brother Russell supplies the sermon regularly, and if they

are not printed the Editor and Publishers are responsible.

The only way the publishers have of certainly knowing whether a sufficient proportion of their readers really appreciate the sermons, is from letters of approval when the sermons are published; or prompt letters of regret when they are discontinued.

The Fourth Volume of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES will hereafter be entitled The Battle of Armageddon. The Armageddon sermon will constitute an additional feature. The price is uniform with the other volumes, 35c. delivered.

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#### ADDRESS LETTERS, ETC., TO THE SOCIETY

Money orders, drafts, checks, letters, should all be addressed to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY (and bequests should all be made in that name), 17 Hicks Street, Brooklyn, New York.

On the envelope you may say "In care of" any certain department or individual likely to handle your matter most speedily. Make each letter complete in itself.

#### PRIZE PUZZLES

We still have Prize Puzzles for judicious use. Order only so many as you can use, free. Lay a few each week on hotel writing tables and in other conspicuous places, where they will come under the eye of intelligent and good people.

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#### BETHEL HYMNS FOR DECEMBER

After the close of the hymn the Bethel Family listens to the reading of "My Vow Unto the Lord," then joins in prayer. At the breakfast table the MANNA text is considered. Hymns for December follow: (1) 273; (2) 109; (3) 332; (4) 14; (5) 259; (6) 12; (7) 120; (8) 170; (9) 167; (10) 152; (11) 208; (12) 105; (13) 305; (14) 288; (15) 67; (16) 101; (17) 93; (18) 43; (19) 7; (20) 144; (21) 53; (22) 145; (23) 4; (24) 273; (25) 16; (26) 243; (27) 195; (28) 255; (29) 176; (30) 85; (31) 249.

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#### MEAN CHRISTIANS AND NOBLE UNBELIEVERS

"Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."--1 Cor. 1:26.

SURELY NONE will dispute the statement that there are noble characters amongst



unbelievers as well as amongst Christians; neither will any one of experience dispute that there are mean people amongst Christians as well as amongst the worldly. But how shall we account for this? Should we not reasonably expect that the noble principles of true Christianity would attract all of the best minds of the world, and rather repel the meaner disposition? Should we not expect that the doctrines of Christ, the spirit of His teachings--meekness, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love--would attract all who have sympathy with these qualities, hence all of the noble-minded of the world? And should we not likewise expect that since the Scriptures and the Spirit of the Lord condemn all anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, backbitings, evil speakings, impurities, etc., all those who have sympathy with such works of the flesh and of the Devil would be repelled by the Gospel of Christ?

Whatever the tendency of our mental philosophy on the subject, the facts of the case prove to us that proportionately a larger number of the world's noble-minded children reject the Lord and His Gospel, and that a larger proportion of the world's ignoble children accept the Gospel of Christ. The still more interesting and perplexing question therefore is, How shall we account for this very peculiar condition which seems contrary to all and every expectation?

We account for it along the lines of our Lord's statement, that He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Matt. 9:13.) True, "There is none righteous, no, not one...All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:10,23); the fall of Father Adam involved every one of his posterity; hence all are sinners and all need the grace of God in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. But those who find themselves morally and intellectually less fallen than some of their neighbors are inclined to a self-righteous feeling, even though they would disclaim perfection. They are, therefore, less inclined to acknowledge themselves to be nothing, unworthy of Divine favor, to bow themselves in the dust at the foot of the cross, and to receive, as an unmerited gift of God, the boon of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### THE NEED OF THE GOOD PHYSICIAN NOT REALIZED

This class feel that some of the more degraded of the race need Divine pity and forgiveness, and are glad that God has compassion for these, and will help them; but somehow they feel that they do not need the imputed Robe of Christ's Righteousness to cover them; that they are so respectable that if God accepts any one to a future life, He will surely not exclude them. They look about them and compare themselves with Christians, and often with a large degree of complacency assure themselves

that their ideas of right and wrong and of moral responsibility, and of benevolence, etc., are higher, nobler, better than those of professed Christians. They say to themselves, "God is just; and while I am not perfect, I am a great deal better than the majority of Christians, and I am sure, therefore, that God in justice will take as much care of me as He will of others, who I see are inferior to me in some of the good qualities of heart and mind." Like the Pharisee of old, they thank God that they are not as other men; and they neglect the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."--Acts 4:12.

The class which we are describing is a numerous class, more numerous than many persons would suppose until they reflect upon the subject; and it includes many, far from hypocritical, who have never understood the Gospel. Several of the Presidents of the United States have been men of this class--reverent toward religion, moral in their course of life, just in their dealings; for instance, Lincoln and Grant, whom we mention merely as examples of a class. Besides, many properly of this class are either Church attendants or Church members. They appreciate the fact that directly or indirectly the moral uplift of civilization is associated with Christianity, and are pleased to take their stand on the moral and popular side, though they have never accepted, at the hands of Divine grace, the forgiveness of sins through faith in the precious blood of Christ.

We see their difficulty; it is that they do not recognize that the Lord is dealing upon principles of strict justice and law. Divine Law and Justice declare that all imperfection is contrary to God, that God's work was perfect originally in Adam, and that He can never accept to harmony with Himself anything that is imperfect. They fail to see that under this Law, whoever is guilty in that which is least, is nevertheless, guilty; and comes under

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the same death penalty with him who is guilty of many and more serious offenses.

Since, then, all men are imperfect--none absolutely righteous--the one sentence of death includes every member of the human family; and there is no door of escape from death, no door of entrance into life, except the one which God has provided--Christ Jesus, the Righteous, who became man's Redeemer by the sacrifice of Himself. He who fails to go through this door never attains to life, however much he may strive against sin, and however closely he may approach the door. Only passage through the door can gain an entrance into eternal life. "I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God [the sentence of death] abideth on him."--John 10:9; 3:36.

The same philosophy of the subject shows to us why

it is that a proportionately larger number of the world's ignoble than of its noble children come to Christ. Only those who feel that they are sinners, who feel that they need relief from sin, appreciate the offer of forgiveness. Only the sick, who realize that they are sick, feel the need of the Great Physician. Many indeed seek the Lord's grace because they realize to some extent their own fallen, degraded condition, and that they are meaner people than others; only this seems to awaken them to a realization of their position; only this leads them to cry out, "Have mercy upon me, Thou Son of David." And this realization of personal unworthiness of the Divine favor is necessary to all who would accept the grace of God on the only conditions upon which it is offered.

#### CONTINUANCE IN THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST CONDITIONAL

Having thus found the philosophical basis of our subject, we proceed to inquire concerning the result. What is the legitimate result of acceptance of Christ? We answer, The inevitable result of a proper acceptance of Christ must be moral uplifting; for the condition upon which Christ receives any one is, that he desires not only to be forgiven the sins that are past, but also to forsake sin for the future.

The lower one may be in the scale of morality, the more radical will the change eventually be; but the less proportionately will he realize at the beginning of his conversion all the steps of purification of word and thought and act, which lie before him in the Christian pathway. He will at first think of the reform of merely the grosser manifestations of sin; but step by step and lesson by lesson he will be instructed by the Great Teacher, and brought onward in knowledge and in appreciation and in character upbuilding, if he continue in the School of Christ.

The requirement of the Great Teacher, through the Apostle, is that those who come unto Him, in full consecration, after being accepted on the ground of faith, must at once begin to "put away all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord." (2 Cor. 7:1.) Whoever will not make the attempt to do this will not be continued in the School of Christ; for he has not Christ's Spirit, and not having His Spirit he is "none of His." "Whosoever practices sin [knowingly, willingly] is of the devil." (1 John 3:8.) Nevertheless, it may require years of schooling and discipline under the Great Teacher before some of those who were deeply sunken in the mire of sin and selfishness, and many consequent meannesses of disposition, become even moderately or passably good, noble characters.

Character is more like the oak than like the mushroom; it requires time for its development. Yet as the oak might be quickly killed with an axe, so even a strong character might be quickly undermined, prostrated, overthrown

by sin. In other words, upward development is slow, but downward tendencies may take effect rapidly, if permitted. Consequently, many Christians can see that while the religion of Christ has done much to help them and their friends out of the miry clay of sin, and to put them on the Rock, Christ Jesus, and has cleansed them of many of the defilements of the flesh, and of its meannesses of disposition, yet perhaps after ten, twenty or forty years of such discipline and perseverance, they may with surprise behold some unbeliever whom they must acknowledge to be their equal in moral probity, uprightness or generosity.

#### THE LAW OF HEREDITY INVOLVED

The question arises, How is this? We answer, that as moral deflection affects the children to the third and fourth generation, so moral attainments may affect the children to several generations. Hence not only do parents who have been upright and God-fearing, who have endeavored to cultivate in themselves the graces of the Spirit, benefit themselves, and approach more nearly than at first to the grand standard of perfection, but their children will be born with better natural qualifications, as well as under conditions more favorable to righteousness and nobility of soul. For the heart attainments of the parents are reflected in the physical condition of their children.

And this, by the way, proves conclusively that many professedly pious parents are less noble at heart than we could have hoped; for, if during the period of conception and gestation, parental thoughts, feelings, sentiments had been cultivated along the lines of nobility, purity, holiness, reverence, benevolence, justice and love, their children would show it; and results would be blessed both to the children and the parents. The natural qualities of the child were willed to it before its birth, chiefly by the mother; and the mother's ideals were considerably those of the father, if they were well mated.

Christian parents should awake to their responsibilities in the exercise of their procreative powers entrusted to them by the Almighty. It is a disgrace to our civilization that so many in civilized lands are low-born, even amongst those who recognize the laws of heredity and who carefully guard the breeding of their cattle and sheep and dogs and horses. It must be that the influence of the parental mind upon posterity is not recognized. Let these thoughts not only guard parents in respect to future offspring, but also make them very patient and painstaking with young children, when attempting to train out of them blemishes of character which they helped to implant. The first duty of a parent to his child is to give him the most favorable start in life within his power.

If children of Christian parents, favorably bred, also become Christians, and begin a warfare in their own

hearts against moral uncleanness and sin, and against all the mean and selfish propensities of the fallen nature, they may, by the grace of God, attain to a moral position higher than that attained by their parents, through putting into practise the instructions of the Great Teacher.

But here comes in another side of the question. God does not accept the children of believers on account of parental faith, beyond the period of their minority. As soon as years of accountability have been reached, a personal covenant with the Lord is required, if they would be His in any special sense; otherwise they are recognized

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as being of the world and under its condemnation, and not under the justification which extends only to believers and their minor children. (I Cor. 7:14.) God makes the entrance into His family and School an individual matter.

And here we find the secret of how it comes that some of the noblest men of the world are not the Lord's people. They are the children of those whose feet have been lifted out of the miry clay of sin. They have inherited through their parents a share in the uplifting which the teaching of Christ brought into the world, amongst those who follow His teaching. Thus we see that Infidelity has nothing to boast of in its noblest sons, for what they have that is noble and great came generally through the belief, the faith, of their ancestors.

On the contrary, the tendency of unbelief is toward sin and degradation. It may not come in one generation, or it may. The son of noble Christian parents, who has inherited a more noble mind than the masses, may maintain that mind to some extent through life; and if he take pride in his morality he may, at least on the surface, keep up a good appearance, and may transmit some of it to his posterity. But eventually selfishness will undermine and destroy nobility; and we may as surely expect a degradation in the posterity of such who do not receive Christ, as we may expect an advancement on the part of all who accept the Savior.

#### ILLUSTRATED IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

The general operation of this law can be appreciated only as we look out over a grand scope of territory and over centuries of time. As we look back to the days of our Lord and the Apostles, we find that the Gospel was laid hold upon by the very class that we have here described --the publicans and sinners, the lower classes-- while it was rejected by the worldly-wise, the hypocritical and the pharisaical, who were morally and intellectually the superior class, and who on this very account rejected Christ--not feeling their need of a Savior. Looking intently at the Gospel Church, with its lowly beginning, in the poorest class, we find that whoever entered the

School of Christ and was taught of Him was uplifted by obedience to that Teacher.

This higher teaching of the Master became the standard among His followers. They learned that, as the Lord's people, they should not only love one another, but should sympathetically love even those who hated them, who maligned them and who persecuted them, saying all manner of evil against them falsely for Christ's sake; and that Divine blessing rested upon the meek, the patient, the humble, the peacemakers; and that the sum of all the graces is love. We find the very same teaching coming from the humble fishermen and publicans who accepted Him, and whom He sent forth as the Apostles of His grace.

For instance, we find the Apostle Peter saying, "Add to your faith knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love." (2 Pet. 1:5-8.) We find the Apostle John saying, "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20.) We find the Apostle James saying that all who are taught of the Lord should "show out of a good conversation [life, conduct] his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not." "Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up. Speak not evil one of another, brethren." "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?"-- James 3:13,14; 4:7,10,11; 2:5.

We hear the Apostle Paul, who once was of the nobler, the Pharisee class, giving utterance to the same truth, and in all humility acknowledging that "there is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10.) He explains that only as we accept Christ have we the forgiveness of sins or reconciliation with the Father; that, having put on Christ, we should be New Creatures in Him; that old things should be past and gone forever, and that we should walk henceforth in newness of life, not according to the will of the flesh, but according to the purpose of the Lord. Hear him exhorting those who have taken the name of Christ, assuring them that they must also take His Spirit, or disposition, and have the same mind [disposition] which was also in Christ Jesus, our Lord-- a mind in opposition to sin and meanness and selfishness, but in harmony with truth, goodness, purity, benevolence and love.

And the Apostle explains this, saying: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; love is the fulfilling of the Law"; "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly." "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." "Recompense no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of

all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."-- Rom. 13:10,12-14; 12:17-20.

St. Paul explained in particular the love which is the essence of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and which all followers of the Lord must have if they would continue to be His, saying: "Love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth."--I Cor. 13:4-8.

#### "THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD IS SURE, MAKING WISE THE SIMPLE"

It would be impossible for any class of people, however mentally and morally degraded they might be, to receive such instructions into good and honest hearts, without being uplifted by them, made more noble, more Christlike, more Godlike. It does not surprise us, therefore, to find that even in the first century, the Lord's people became noted for their high principles and morality, insomuch that the masses of the people "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him."--Acts 4:13.

Then we see how the Adversary corrupted the Truth from the simplicity in which it was presented by the Lord and the Apostles. We see forms and ceremonies, genuflections and masses, bondage to creeds and theories of men, taking the place of the pure Gospel of Christ; and we note the result, that in proportion as the teachings of Christ were ignored, in the same proportion superstition came in, and the Spirit of Christ was lacking.

Nevertheless, with all the corruption which came into the world with the second century, there was a sufficiency of the true spirit intermixed with the error to work a vast reformation in the savages of Europe, and to bring

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them into a condition of civilization higher than that of the rest of the world. And when in the Divine providence the Reformation movement was inaugurated, it lifted the same class of people immeasurably higher in moral tone. It restored much of the primitive purity of Christianity and of the Spirit of Christ; and in proportion as the Word of God has been free amongst the people, and in proportion as they have received it gladly and have permitted its ennobling sentiments to germinate in their hearts and bring forth its fruitage, in this proportion we have seen the peoples which came under the

direct influence of the Reformation lifted still higher than the remainder of the world.

#### THE WASHED SOW STILL CRAVES THE MIRE

In all of this we observe the principle at first set forth; namely, that the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of Truth, the spirit of righteousness from the Word of the Lord, is the civilizing, enlightening and ennobling influence which has wrought the marvelous changes of this Christian Era and especially of this last century. Papacy and sectarianism hindered, but could not thwart, its influence. It still continues to take hold on the lower classes of society, and lifts them up; and the tendency is still observable, that those who are already lifted up are the less likely to be appreciative of the Divine goodness. Thus it is that not many great, not many learned, not many wise, according to the course of this world, hath God chosen; but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom.

The broader and clearer our view of the situation, the more shall we be able to sympathize with those of our brethren in Christ who by nature are mean, ignoble, selfish, lacking in benevolence of thought, word and conduct. When we realize that God has accepted them--not because of their good and noble character, but because they admit its deficiencies and because they desire to become reformed--transformed, by the renewing of their minds--then all who have the Lord's mind or Spirit will likewise receive them.

In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, the holy mind, we shall view others from the Divine standpoint of sympathy for their weaknesses and ignoble qualities; and instead of condemning them, spurning them, and cutting their acquaintance because they do not come up to the noblest standards, we shall desire all the more to help them up, and shall seek kindly to point out to them the matters which they do not clearly see. We shall be patient with them as we see them striving to overcome. We shall realize that they contend against a mental disease which they have to some extent inherited, and which can only gradually be eradicated.

From this standpoint we shall learn to view them and to think of them, not according to their flesh, not according to their natural tendencies and dispositions, but according to the spirit, according to the intentions of their minds, according to their covenant with the Lord. Thus, as the Apostle declares, we know each other no longer after the flesh, but after the spirit.--2 Cor. 5:16.

Each one who has accepted God's grace, and become a partaker of the spirit of holiness, and is striving against sin in all its forms--in thought and word and conduct--all such are striving for the grand perfection of character of which our dear Redeemer is the only perfect illustration. All such profess themselves imperfect copies of God's dear Son and seek to grow in His



likeness. All such are seeking to put away all the works of the flesh and the devil--not only the grosser evils (murder, theft, etc.), but also the more common elements of an ignoble, perverted nature--anger, malice, hatred, strife, etc. And all these are seeking to put on more and more the complete armor of God, to resist sin, and to cultivate in themselves the same mind which was also in Christ Jesus--meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

"SEE THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER"

Let us (Christians), then, take a broader view of matters, and especially of all who have named the name of Christ, and who give any evidence of seeking to walk in His footsteps. Let our love for them cover, not only the little, trifling blemishes and differences from ourselves, but let it also cover a multitude of imperfections in the flesh, so long as we see that their hearts are loyal to the Lord, and that they are seeking to walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; so long as they profess to be seeking to get rid of the meanness and selfishness and littleness of the fallen nature, and to cultivate in themselves the nobility of character which belongs to perfect manhood, the image of the Divine nature.

And let each one who has taken the name of Christ be on the lookout to apprehend and eradicate every trace of the meanness, selfishness, rudeness, dishonesty, which still cling to us as members of the fallen race, and are become so much a part of us that we are often disposed to call them natural traits. Let us remember that, even if our Lord and our brethren in Christ overlook these blemishes (rightly distinguishing between the "New Creature in Christ" and these contrary elements of our old nature reckoned dead), yet the world cannot so distinguish and will charge to the cause of Christ all the faults and imperfections they see in His professed followers. Thus that Holy Name is profaned among the Gentiles, daily, by many.

Let us remember too, that ill nature cannot be transformed into good nature in a day. Transformation of mind, speech and conduct requires patience and perseverance; but it can be accomplished by those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit and who are obedient to the commands of the Great Teacher. "See that ye refuse not [obedience to] Him that speaketh" from Heaven. (Heb. 12:25.) Whoever neglects His teachings, neglects the great salvation offered during this Gospel Age; for none will be among the Elect except those who in their hearts at least are noble, true and good--conformed to the image of God's dear Son.--Rom. 8:29.

If all could fully realize the influence of our minds over our own bodies, as well as their less direct influence over the minds and bodies of others, a great Thought Reform Movement would speedily begin in the world; and especially amongst God's consecrated people. Surely

such should co-operate with the inspired prayer--"Create in me a clean heart [will], O God; and renew a right spirit [disposition] within me...Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee."--Psa. 51:10,13.

May the love of God be more and more shed abroad in our hearts, and our consciences be always tender, and may we ever abstain from the appearance of evil. May we be enabled at all times to be circumspect in our conversation, and to scrutinize our thoughts and words and doings, to the intent that we may ever be ready and able to serve our Heavenly Father and His dear flock, the "Feet" members of the Body of Christ!

Grudge no loving word, my brother,  
As along through life you go,  
To the ones who journey with you;  
If you love them, tell them so.

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#### IN DREAMLESS SLEEP DEAD AWAIT CHRIST'S RETURN

"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also."--John 14:3.

THE ERROR OF supposing that men are alive when they are dead lies close to the foundation of every theological error the world over. We have all erred in taking the guess of Plato instead of the Word of God, and we can get rid of our difficulties and theological entanglements only by retracing our steps. Notwithstanding all that we have said and written, calling attention to the words of the Scriptures, the question frequently arises, Do you mean to tell us that our friends do not go to Heaven immediately when they die?

That is exactly what we are endeavoring to demonstrate to be the teaching of the Bible. The Bible alone, of all religious books, teaches that a dead man is dead, and knows nothing, and that his only hope is in the Divine arrangement through Christ, by a resurrection of the dead--"both of the just and of the unjust."--Acts 24:15.

When we remember that, according to nearly all the religious creeds and theories of the world, 999 out of every thousand pass immediately at death into most horrible sufferings, one would think that all would be glad to promptly accept the Bible testimony, that death is a dreamless sleep until the resurrection awakening. Why anyone should prefer to think of his friends and neighbors and the heathen millions as suffering torture, rather

than to think of them as being asleep, is beyond our comprehension.

The fact probably is that selfishness has such a hold upon the masses that they care and think little respecting others than their near relatives and friends; and the same selfishness inclines them, with infatuation, to believe that they and their relatives, though no better than the rest of mankind, are special favorites of Heaven, and will be granted the reward of the saints, however unsaintly their lives may have been. Some one has suggested that the ideal prayer for such is:

"God bless me and my wife,  
My son John and his wife;  
Us four, and no more."

In harmony with this we find that when death invades a family circle this selfish egotism assumes that the deceased is acceptable to God as a saint, and wafted immediately to heavenly bliss--regardless of how unsaintly had been the life and how little of the spirit of Christ was ever manifested. The deception is reinforced by the Christian minister called to conduct the funeral service. Whatever he may read from the Bible to the effect that, if there be no resurrection, they that have fallen asleep have perished, his sermon is sure to give the inference that the deceased needs no resurrection, because he has not died, but has merely been transferred from a lower plane of life to a higher one.

Proof of this is not given and not asked. The proof is not given because there is no Scriptural proof to give. It is not asked because the people are not sufficiently intelligent on religious subjects to demand a reason and a proof for what is presented to them. The remedy for all this will come when we become more intelligent, more reasoning. No minister of Christ should be abashed to be asked the reason for his faith. St. Peter exhorted that every Christian should be so thoroughly informed respecting the Divine Message as to be able to give a reason to whoever would ask concerning his own faith and his presentations to others.

Here note our text. In it the Master says not a word about our going to Him, but quite the contrary--that he will come again and receive us unto Himself. This is in full accord with the teachings of the Apostles. Do they not tell that at the second coming of Christ the resurrection of the Church will be the first item in order; that then that which was sown in weakness will be raised in power; that sown in dishonor will be raised in glory; that sown an animal body will be raised a spirit body; and that so we shall ever be with the Lord? Do they not tell us that this will be an instantaneous change? Is it not styled an awakening from the sleep of death?

Hearken to St. Paul: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump

(seventh trumpet); for the trumpet shall sound," "and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught away together to a meeting with the Lord in the air." (I Cor. 15:51,52; I Thess. 4:16,17.)

How plain, how simple! That will be the first meeting of the Church with her Lord. All of her members dying before that time will "sleep," while those dying since that time will not need to sleep and wait for the glorious change. But, says one, does not the second coming of Christ take place whenever His holy ones die? Does He not immediately come to receive them unto Himself?

Surely only a very lame theory could seek to bolster itself up by such a perversion of the Scriptures. If Christ were to come every time one of His saintly ones dies, would it not mean many comings instead of merely a second coming? And even if His faithful were very few indeed, does it not seem that this would keep the Redeemer busy coming and departing every few minutes?

Only crass ignorance of the Bible could excuse any such misapplication of its teachings. Not merely one statement of the Scriptures bears upon this subject, but hundreds of statements of Scripture, by Jesus and the Apostles; and all these contradict any such thought.

#### "NO MAN HATH ASCENDED TO HEAVEN"

Hearken to Jesus' words, "No man hath ascended up to Heaven." (John 3:13.) Only the Son of Man has ever been in heaven. He has ascended up where He was before, with additional glory and honor. He is now preparing a place for His Bride class and preparing the Bride class for the place--the place of honor at His own right hand. He is overseeing her experiences and causing all things to work together for her good, that she at His Second Coming may be prepared and be accepted as His Bride and granted a share in His glory, honor and immortality.

It is in full harmony with this that a little later on the Great Teacher declared that all the dead are in the grave, and that at His second advent He will first call forth His faithful ones to the perfection of life; and later will call forth the remainder of mankind, not as yet found worthy of life, that they may have an opportunity, a testing as respects their worthiness or unworthiness of everlasting life on the human plane.

Hear His assurance again respecting His faithful ones--that they shall share in His resurrection, the Chief Resurrection, to glory, honor, immortality, on the spirit plane. He said, "Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the First Resurrection; they shall be priests unto God and Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."--Rev. 20:6.

Be it noted that in all these assurances the Church is spoken of as a class, all of whom will enter into glory

together, at Christ's second coming, and not separately, as each may die. True, each has an individual trial or testing to determine whether or not he or she will be accounted worthy, or fitted for a place in the glorious Body of Christ, in the glorious Bride company, but the statement is repeatedly made that we shall be glorified together, that we shall have part in the one resurrection.

#### "DAVID NOT ASCENDED TO HEAVEN"

In full accord with all the foregoing is St. Peter's statement on the Day of Pentecost: "For David is not ascended into the heavens"; "his sepulchre is with us unto this day." (Acts 2:34,29.) St. Peter's words imply that if King David had ascended to Heaven he would have no sepulchre on earth. Similarly, we might say of all of the Prophets, and of all other persons that, if once they ascended to the heavenly plane, they could not be said to have any sepulchre on earth, for the very thought connected with the word sepulchre is that of a personality awaiting a resurrection, awaiting deliverance from the state and condition of death. So the Scriptures always refer, not to a resurrection of the living, which would be an absurdity, but to a resurrection of the dead.

Note the connection in which the Apostle Peter uses this expression: "David is not ascended into the heavens." He had just called attention to the fact that David prophesied of the resurrection of Jesus. In the prophecy he personated Jesus, and said, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Sheol (Hades), nor suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." (V. 27.) St. Peter argues that this was not true of David, that he did see corruption, that his soul was left in Sheol, and is still left there, and will not be reclaimed until Messiah, in the resurrection morning, shall call him forth.

#### "BE WITH ME IN PARADISE"

But, says some one, did not the dying thief go with Jesus to Paradise the very day in which they both died? And if so, does not this prove that all in harmony with God go to heaven when they die, whatever may be the condition of others in death?

No, we have made a stupid blunder and misinterpretation of our Redeemer's dying words to the thief. The wrong thought being in our minds we misinterpreted in harmony therewith. And our interpretation has done an immense amount of harm. Thousands of people have been encouraged to continue a life of sin, trusting that with their dying breath they may have the opportunity of saying, "God be merciful to me," and then be immediately ushered into glory, honor and immortality, as joint-heirs with the Savior, and in as honorable a station as those who "have fought to win the prize, and sailed through

bloody seas" of trial and persecution and self-denial.

What a travesty of Justice to suppose such an application of this principle! For instance, two ungodly persons quarrel. Both draw revolvers and fire; one dies instantly; the other, the worse of the two, lives a moment, in which he says, "God, be merciful to me." Then, theoretically, he passes into glory, while his victim, not having the opportunity for a cry for mercy, we are told by the same theory, is doomed to endless torture.

Note the circumstance. (Luke 23:39-43.) Jesus hung between two thieves, one of whom joined with the multitude in railing at Him as an imposter, crying out, "Yes, if you be the Christ, save yourself and us from death." The other, of better heart, honestly admitted his own guilt and the guilt of his comrade, but defended Jesus, declaring that He was innocent. Following this, he addresses Jesus. We paraphrase his words: "Lord, I have defended you against an unjust attack; remember this poor thief if you ever have an opportunity to do a kindness to me in return. I heard you before Pilate say that you have a Kingdom, but not of this Age; some heavenly Kingdom, I therefore presume. I know little about such matters, but from what I have seen of you I can well surmise you King of such a Kingdom. My request is, 'Remember me, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.'"

To this Jesus replied, "Verily, verily (so be it, so be it, as you have asked)--verily, I say unto thee this day (this dark day, in which it would appear that I have not a friend in Heaven or on earth--this dark day in which

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I am crucified as a malefactor, a falsifier and a blasphemer --I say unto thee this day), thou shalt be with Me in Paradise."

On the day of their dying all three went to Hades, to Sheol, to the tomb, to the state of the dead. The two thieves still remain there, and are amongst those mentioned by the Prophet Daniel when he refers to those "who sleep in the dust of the earth," who will come forth in the resurrection morning. (Daniel 12:2.) But Jesus arose from Sheol, from Hades, from the tomb, from the state of death, on the third day. He had not been to Paradise, for Paradise is not even yet in existence. He had not been to Heaven, for He had been dead. Let us hear His own words to Mary on the morning of His resurrection: "I have not yet ascended\*\*\*to My Father, and your Father, to My God, and your God." (John 20:17.) Could anything be plainer, simpler, more harmonious?

"DEPART AND BE WITH CHRIST"

Ah, says one, I have great faith in St. Paul, and I remember his words: "I am in a strait between two things: having a desire to depart and to be with Christ,

which is far better." (Phil. 1:23.) If St. Paul expected to depart and be with Christ, why is it not reasonable to suppose that he did so, and that all others, at least of the saintly, at death so depart and pass at once into the presence and fellowship of Jesus?

Yet such a misunderstanding of St. Paul's words and thoughts are excusable in view of the general trend of Christian thought on this subject for centuries, and in view of the error made in this case by the translators. We are not faulting the translators, because they had the erroneous thought firmly embedded in their minds and presumably were trying to make the Apostle here say what they conscientiously thought he ought to say.

But what we are interested in knowing is, What did he say on the subject?

Let us read the Apostle's words critically. He was in a strait between two things--whether he would prefer to live and suffer further for the Truth's sake, and assist the brethren, or whether he would prefer to die and rest from his labors. Between these two positions he had no choice. But there was a third thing--and if this had been a possibility he would have had no difficulty in deciding --he had a real, positive desire respecting it; neither of the things which were possible to him would have stood in comparison at all, this third thing would have been so desirable.

Now what was this third thing? It was not to live and suffer and help the brethren, nor was it to die and be at rest from his labors. The third thing, according to a literal translation, is expressed thus: "I have a desire for the returning, and being with Christ, which is far better" --far better than either living under the present trying conditions or dying, sleeping, resting and waiting for the Kingdom.

But, says one, by what authority do you render the

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word depart by a word of very opposite meaning, namely return. We answer that we give this rendering on the authority of the Greek text. The Greek word is *analuai*; it is found in one other place in the Bible, and there it is rendered return. In this other case there can be no question as to the proper translation.--See Luke 12:36.

Let us, then, dear fellow-Christians, turn from the follies of the Dark Ages and take the inspired words of Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets, and have, indeed, "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness," in respect to the understanding of the Heavenly Father's Program. Thus we will find fulfilled in us more and more the Master's prayer: "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth."

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## CONSECRATION THE NORMAL ATTITUDE FOR GOD'S INTELLIGENT CREATURES

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."--1 Cor. 2:14.

BY THE EXPRESSION "natural man" we understand the Scriptures to mean all who have not experienced a change of nature in the begetting of the Holy Spirit. All mankind, including Adam himself, are natural men. Even a perfect human being cannot receive the deep spiritual truths which God reveals to His consecrated children through the Holy Spirit.

Whoever is desirous of being in harmony with God and is endeavoring to become so, even though he be not justified, is looking forward to full justification. If he continue in this course, he will eventually become justified--if not at the present time, then during Messiah's reign. But in this Age, none can attain to full justification except by faith in the blood of Christ, which leads its possessor to make a complete consecration of himself to God, by the intervention of our Lord Jesus as Advocate, who imputes to him a sufficiency of His merit to make up for his deficiency.

Since our Lord imputes His merit only to those who make a full consecration of themselves, one who merely believes in the Savior and wishes to do right, cannot at this time enter into full peace with God. He receives only a measure of peace and justification; for those alone who are fully absolved from sin and presented by the Advocate can be accepted by the Father--these alone are fully justified in the Father's sight.

Some speak of the sanctified as if these were no longer justified. The fact is that only the sanctified can be said to be fully justified; and they must maintain their justification with God, else they could never make their calling and election sure.

It is very important to observe the sharp outlines and distinctions which the Scriptures establish. According to these outlines, the Holy Spirit is given only in a very special manner, during a very special Age, for a very special purpose. The distinction is absolute and positive in every sense of the word. Only those begotten of the Father have His Spirit, which is the Spirit of the Son; and those alone who have that Spirit are begotten to the new nature.

## GOOD TRAITS OF CHARACTER NOT A PROOF OF CONSECRATION

In times past we did not clearly distinguish the Lord's people from the world. Whenever we met a man with kind, gentle manners, whether an infidel, a Brahman, a



Mohammedan, a Presbyterian, a Methodist or merely one of the world, we said to ourself, "Here is a man who has the Spirit of the Lord." Then, we did not know what we were talking about; now, we can recognize the difference. We are certainly glad to acknowledge good traits of character in heathen as well as Christians, but we are not to accept gentleness and kindness of manner as evidence that their possessor has the Holy Spirit.

We have all seen people who have very proper sentiments of justice on some subjects, who are yet manifestly not God's people, begotten of the Holy Spirit. Such persons are usually fine characters. Nevertheless, their conscientiousness causes them to admit that they are sinners and have need of Divine forgiveness. We are glad that there are such people, and we should encourage rather than discourage them.

The explanation of this condition of affairs is that these fine characters are not so fallen as some others. God made man in His own image and likeness. With the fall of man came the impairment of that godlike disposition, but the image of God is not altogether lost. For our part, we wish to show that our Redeemer is the only channel for that forgiveness, the need of which they recognize, and that the only condition of their full acceptance with God is the entire consecration of all that they possess to the service of the Lord.

On one occasion our Lord said, "No man can come unto Me, except the Father which sent Me draw him." (John 6:44.) No one will receive the Holy Spirit without having been drawn to Christ, but some may be drawn without receiving the Holy Spirit. Possibly in these persons that endowment which God gave to Adam and pronounced "very good" has been less impaired by the fall than it has been in others. Such naturally desire to have God's approval and the blessings which He is willing to give to those who seek Him.

Having this disposition, such persons are said to be drawn of God. But the Father points them to the Son, through the knowledge of simple truths. For instance, they may be influenced through hearing a hymn sung; such as,

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains."

These words contain the truth of God to any one who is in a right condition of heart, and are a very valuable hint as to the way to approach God. If those who are seeking to know God desire to inquire further on the subject, they will probably be led to consult with some of the children of God.

Upon the inquiry of those under the conviction of sin as to what must be done to be saved, we tell them, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31.) Make a full consecration of your life unto God, and thus you may become a son of God. If any one

is obedient to the drawing, the next step for him to take is to say, "I give myself to the Lord and trust Him fully, for I realize how unworthy I am."

The course which we are describing is that which one must follow in order to be acceptable to God. But first of all, he must desire to approach the Lord. If we should find any one who is totally depraved, there would be no use to attempt to draw such a one toward righteousness,

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Truth and God. Even those who have the right attitude of mind may not be equally impressed at all times. It may be that some circumstance must awaken them to the need of consecration before they will take the step which will enable them to become sons of God.--Rom. 12:1,2.

#### THE HIGH CALLING NOT FOR ALL

No man, however, takes this step of consecration unless he is called of God. There must be the call, or invitation, as there was with Aaron and with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Heb. 5:4,5.) This call comes through the proclamation of the Gospel. Each must hear for himself before he can accept. "And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14.) So then, it is for God to begin the work with the unjustified by drawing them to Christ for justification; and it is for our Lord Jesus Christ to continue this work with the consecrated. Furthermore, it is the privilege of all who come into God's family to proclaim these truths to others, to set forth the terms by which those who receive the call may accept it, while still "it is called today," before this Age of sacrifice ends.--Heb. 4:7; 2 Cor. 6:2.

None come to God in this Gospel Age except those who make a sacrifice. Others may turn toward God; they may look toward God; they may be converted from a wicked life to a better one. But none except the class who are adopted into God's family are begotten of the Holy Spirit. The invitation of this Age is NOT an invitation to do the best one can; we are all called in the one hope of our calling. (Eph. 4:4.) "Gather My saints together unto Me, saith the Lord, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice."--Psa. 50:5.

It is good not to do wrong. But more than a righteous life is required of those who would be sons of God. Consecration has always been proper; it is the normal attitude for all of God's intelligent creatures. The Creator is the One to whom all are properly under obligations for every blessing which they enjoy; and heart, mind, tongue and hand should be ready for consecration to do the Father's will. Whether angels or men or New Creatures in Christ --all should be in this attitude.

Since consecration is the only reasonable attitude, then, when the one hundred and forty-four thousand of the Elect Church shall have passed their testing it will still

be appropriate for God to permit people to consecrate, and to be pleased with their consecration. Therefore, we may expect that, in the end of the reign of Christ, all the worthy ones shall have made consecration to God. It was thus in the Jewish Age, although there was no "high calling" then, nor privilege to understand the deep things of God.

The privilege of becoming joint-heirs with Christ will end as soon as the Elect number is completed. During the thousand years of Christ's reign, those who consecrate will come to understand all human things; but not being begotten of the Holy Spirit, they cannot understand the things of the Spirit.

#### KNOWLEDGE OF DEEP THINGS A GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT

We believe that there are some now living, perhaps a good many, who are consecrated to God and whose consecration has been accepted, but who are not in the light of Present Truth. This number may include some who are what the Scriptures term "babes" in Christ, and others to whom the Scriptures refer as the "great multitude." (Heb. 5:12-14; I Pet. 2:2; Rev. 7:9.) The "foolish virgin" class are probably in very large number all around us. The fact that there are some of these in Babylon seems to be indicated by the command, "Come out of her, My people." (Rev. 18:4.) If they are in Babylon, their presence there shows that they are not yet well developed; and if they are God's people, they are not enjoying the full strength of Present Truth, although Spirit-begotten.

This fact does not signify that they may not receive Present Truth. On the contrary, we think it quite likely that some may be helped out of Babylon and into a better understanding of the Divine Plan; for some of the babes may be strengthened, built up, to a full appreciation of the things of the Spirit. We are to have in mind the fact that God has so arranged that "the deep things of God" cannot be known instantaneously; this knowledge comes gradually as an evidence of faithfulness to God.

Those who have not yet learned fully to reverence God and who have not yet made progress in the development of the graces and fruits of the Spirit cannot expect to understand the deep things of God. It is our duty and privilege, not only to assist these brethren, but to build one another up and to strengthen one another. Let us see that we do these things.

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FORGIVE SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

--DECEMBER 15.--MATTHEW 18:15-35.--

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each

other, even as God, for Christ's sake, forgave you."--Eph. 4:32.

TO LEARN TODAY'S lesson well means a blessing for life to every true Christian, and might be said to ensure him eternal life--so fully would he be in accord with the Divine requirements. The lesson relates specially to the consecrated, to the members of the Body of Christ, the Church, of which He is the Head, although application, of course, may be made by others with profit.

The Master's rule for His followers is, If a brother injure you, go to him alone with the matter, striving to reach an agreement, an understanding. The probability is that misunderstanding is all that there is of it. But if this does not suffice and you consider the matter serious enough, ask two others to accompany you to the offender, without explaining to them the mission--leave their minds free to hear the case and to advise yourself and the person injuring.

The agreement of these brethren and their advice should be followed by both. If they disagree with you, you should acknowledge that you have erred and that the matter is evidently susceptible of this construction. If they agree with you, and your opponent refuses to heed their counsel and persists in doing you injury, and you still think it of sufficient importance to trouble the Church with the matter, you are then at liberty so to do. The Church's decision of the question is to be final, binding upon both. The one refusing to hear the Church is to be treated as an outsider, not in the sense of doing him injury, but abstaining from appointing him to any position, or honor in the Church, until his course shall be changed. How simple the Divine direction; what a blessing would come from following it!

#### FORGIVE "SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN"

St. Peter put a hypothetical question, of how many times a brother might trespass and ask forgiveness and

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yet be forgiven--would seven times be the limit? The Master practically declared that there could be no limit, that any brother confessing his fault and asking forgiveness must be forgiven, if it should recur four hundred and ninety times. There is no other position left; forgiveness is obligatory when asked for. We must not be too much afraid of the consequences of following the Master's direction; we must put the responsibility of the matter with Him, assured that His wisdom has not misdirected us.

Then our Lord gave a parable, to illustrate this matter, in respect to the Kingdom of Heaven class--the

Church in the present embryotic condition. A certain king had a reckoning with his servants, and squared up all accounts. Amongst the others, one owed him ten thousand talents. His master commanded him to be sold, and his wife and all that he had, until the payment should be made. But the servant fell down at his master's feet and besought him to have compassion on him and he would pay the debt. And the master had compassion on him and discontinued further prosecution on account of the debt.

#### "OWED HIM A HUNDRED PENCE"

The servant thus released went out and began to look up some of those who were indebted to him, and found a fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence, a very insignificant sum in comparison to the one which he had owed the master. He took his fellow-servant by the throat, saying, "Pay me the hundred pence thou owest." His fellow-servant fell at his feet and besought mercy, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." But he would not delay, and cast him into prison till the debt should be paid. The matter finally reached the ears of the master, who called him and said, "Thou wicked servant! I released thee from the penalty of thy debt because thou didst entreat me! thou shouldst also have had mercy upon thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity upon thee." And he was angry, and delivered him to punishment till he should pay all that was due.

#### AN IMPORTANT LESSON HERE

What is the lesson? It is that we should have compassion upon one another, even as we desire that God for Christ's sake should have compassion upon us. The lesson

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is well expressed in our text. We should be kind one to another, tender-hearted--even as God also in Christ forgave us--and continues to forgive our trespasses day by day. The trespasses of others against us are trifling indeed in comparison to our obligations to the Lord. We should therefore be very willing to forgive all who ask us--"until seventy times seven." In thus exercising mercy we will be copying the Divine character. The influence upon our hearts and lives will be ennobling. Our Lord Jesus is the express image of the Father's person, and we in copying the qualities of generosity and Love become more Christlike, and therefore more Godlike.

#### SO ALSO DID GOD DO UNTO YOU

Our Lord Jesus explains that His parable teaches the principles along which the Heavenly Father deals with the members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. If they are harsh and unsympathetic, if they hold their

brethren to a strict account along lines of justice, then the Heavenly Father will so deal with them, and will hold them to account for all their shortcomings. It would seem that if God's people would realize the force of this lesson, the practice of forgiving the brethren of their trespasses and shortcomings would very generously and very generally be brought into play, for who of us could afford to have the Heavenly Father exact of us a full penalty for every imperfection, and refuse to remit any of the same?

We show our appreciation of God's mercy toward us by schooling ourselves in His character and becoming more and more merciful and generous toward all the Household of Faith. And if merciful toward the brethren, naturally we would be generous also toward all men. In other words, as we remember and appreciate our own weaknesses and blemishes, it will make us sympathetic with the brethren and with all mankind. And mercy, generosity, sympathy, God delights in. Such as cultivate these graces of the Spirit will be pleasing in the Lord's sight, and they will thereby be fitted and prepared to have a share with Jesus in His Throne of Glory; for that great Messianic Kingdom will be established for the very purpose of showing mercy unto thousands of mankind who will return to Divine favor and blessing, under clearer knowledge and with the assistance that will then be afforded.

#### ADAM'S SIN IS NOT MEANT

We are not to understand this parable to refer to Divine forgiveness of original sin. The sin of Adam is not forgiven simply because we cry for mercy. Adam and the entire race might have called for mercy, and would have received none, except in the Divine way--through Jesus--through faith in His blood. Nor could this forgiveness be granted until Jesus had finished His sacrifice and ascended up on high, and there appeared in the presence of God on behalf of those coming to the Father through His merit.

This parable refers entirely to subsequent sins--sins referred to in our Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

This is shown also by the fact that the parable speaks of these as servants, whereas the world, as sinners, are not God's servants, but aliens, strangers, foreigners. The only ones whom God will recognize as servants are such as have come back into relationship with Him through Jesus--through faith and consecration. It is these who are servants of God and who are required to have mercy upon their fellow-servants--upon other brethren.

Each and every one of the New Creatures, sons of God, accepted through the merit of Jesus, is held responsible for his own weaknesses; but Divine Power has provided for the cancellation of these freely for Christ's sake, upon their acknowledgment and request for

forgiveness. But the forgiving of these trespasses of God's children is made dependent upon their having a spirit of forgiveness toward the brethren, for "if ye do not from the heart forgive one another's trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure" of benevolence ye mete out to others, the same shall be meted out to you. How wonderful are the Divine arrangements! How blessed, how profitable to us, how helpful to us in our preparation for the Kingdom!

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#### TRULY BEAUTIFUL

Beautiful hands are they that do  
The work of the noble, good and true,  
Busy for them the long day through;  
Beautiful faces--they that wear  
The light of a pleasing spirit there,  
It matters little if dark or fair;  
And truly beautiful in God's sight,  
Are the precious souls who love the right.

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"UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN"

--DECEMBER 22.--ISAIAH 9:1-7.--

"Unto us a Child is born; unto  
us a Son is given."--Verse 6.

TODAY'S STUDY relates to a subject which has thrilled the civilized world for centuries --a subject which will never grow old-- a subject which, on the contrary, shall to all eternity be a theme of angels and of men. The birth of Jesus, to be rightly understood and esteemed, must be considered from the standpoint of a Gift of Love Divine. Any other view of the matter is merely the casket without the jewel. The Scriptures give us the key to the thought: "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."--John 3:16.

The world was under sentence of death; mankind had been dying for more than four thousand years. God had pitied humanity from the first. Yea, before sin entered, Divine Wisdom saw the end, and would not have created man, or would not have permitted the condition

which led to sin and the sentence of death, had Divine Wisdom not foreseen and arranged in advance for human Redemption.

God had purposely arranged the matter so that it would require the death of a perfect man to redeem Adam and the race which lost life in and through him. God knew from the beginning that no such perfect man could be found, because all men were of Adamic stock and had a share in Adamic weakness, imperfection and condemnation. From the beginning God in the Divine Plan contemplated that the Only Begotten of the Father, the Logos, the active Agent of Divinity in the work of Creation, should be granted the great privilege of being man's Redeemer, and thereby securing a great reward--"Glory, honor and immortality," the Divine nature, through a resurrection from the dead.

#### THE FIRST STEP OF REDEMPTION

The primary step in man's recovery necessarily was that the Logos should be made flesh and dwell amongst us and taste death, by the grace of God, for every man. (John 1:14; Heb. 2:9.) It is this first step that we celebrate at this season of the year--the birth of Jesus. He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be reclaimed.

Today's study points out that the ministry of Jesus would be in Galilee; that those people of the Jews who at the time were supposed to be in greatest darkness would see the great Light of Divine Truth, as represented in Jesus and His ministry. This had a primary fulfilment in Galilee, where the major portion of the mighty works of Jesus were performed. But its real fulfilment lies in the future, when the great light of the Millennial Kingdom, "the Sun of Righteousness, shall arise with healing in its beams." Before that glorious Sun, sorrow and sighing will flee away; ignorance and superstition will vanish; sin and darkness will be no more; every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. Jesus is the great Center of that Sun of Righteousness, but, as He points out, the Bride class, in process of selection during this Age, is to be with Him in the Morning, shining forth His glory. They shall sit with Him in His Throne. After the "Wheat" of this Age is gathered into the "garner" by the power of the First Resurrection, the Bride of Christ will shine forth with the Bridegroom, to heal earth's sorrows and to scatter earth's night. (Matt. 13:43.) All this will come to us because "unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given;" because "the Government shall rest upon His shoulders"; because "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty, Mighty One, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

#### THE FALL OF BABYLON

We are to understand verses 3 to 5 as referring, not



to Natural Israel, but to Spiritual Israel--nominal. The holy nation has phenomenally increased without increasing the joy. There are many false children in the nominal family of God; there are many "tares" in the wheatfield. But in the Harvest time of this Age there will be a joy; the faithful "will rejoice as they that divide the spoil." The burdensome yoke of the creedal superstitions will be broken, and the rod of the oppressor, Satan, will be broken as in the day of Midian, when Gideon with his little band put to flight the army of the Midianites and set the people free. Verse 5 intimates that the fall of Babylon and the breaking of the yoke and the rod will be in the great "time of trouble." "For all the armor of the armed men and the turmoil and the garments rolled in blood shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire."

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#### MESSIAH'S MANY TITLES

Our great Redeemer, highly exalted, is eventually to bear many titles in commemoration of the many wonderful Offices He will fill and services He will accomplish. But these are yet future. His great work in the past, the Redemption work, was the foundation of all His future work. On account of His faithfulness He will have a right to assume these various Offices and use these various powers; and as each comes into exercise it will be used by Jesus. The right to govern the world is His since He died on our behalf, but He awaits the Father's time for taking to Himself His glorious power to reign; and the Government must come to Him before He can begin to fulfil the various titles.

First of all, His revelation to the world will be as the Wonderful One, the embodiment, the Expression, of Divine Justice, Divine Love, Divine Wisdom and Divine Power. As yet the world knoweth Him not. He will be revealed to mankind "in flaming fire" in the time of trouble, and subsequently, in the rescue work of His Millennial Kingdom.

He will be the world's Counselor, to give assistance, guidance, direction, whereby they may return through Restitution into harmony with Jehovah and to the enjoyment of the blessings provided through Redemption. As the Head of the Church He has been her Counselor, but our text refers to Him as the Great King or Governor of the world, and as the world's Instructor, the Great Prophet, or Teacher, whom God promised through Moses.

His title, The Mighty God, or Mighty, Mighty One, will be recognized then, on earth, as well as in Heaven-- "that Him hath God set forth to be a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance and remission of sins to Israel," and "to all that are afar off."--Acts 5:31; 2:39.

The title, The Everlasting Father, will apply to Him as the Life-Giver of the world, during the thousand years of His reign. In all that time He will be giving "life

more abundant" to mankind--everlasting life to all who will obey Him--therefore His title, The Everlasting Father, or the Father who will give everlasting life to humanity. All the world of mankind, regenerated on the human plane, will obtain their right to everlasting life as human beings in an earthly Paradise from their Redeemer, who will then be their King. Not so the Church, for Jesus is not the Church's Everlasting Father. On the contrary, St. Peter declares "The God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ hath begotten us again to a hope of life."

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His title, The Prince of Peace, will not apply to Him at the beginning of His reign, when He will be breaking in pieces as a potter's vessel every human system out of accord with the Divine standards (Rev. 2:27; Psa. 2:9), but true peace shall speedily be established, and He shall be known as The Prince of Peace, and One whose reign will be undisputed and unmolested. "Of the increase of His Government and of peace there shall be no end"; there will be no rebellion; His Kingdom will not pass away. When His reign shall terminate finally, at the close of the thousand years, it will be because "He will deliver the Kingdom over to God, even the Father," that He may be the Great All in All.

"UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID"

Messiah's Kingdom is styled "the Throne of David" for two reasons: first, the name David signifies Beloved, and the Messiah, as the Beloved of God, of the Father, is the Antitype of David, even as Messiah's Kingdom will be the Antitype of David's kingdom. David merely "sat upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord"; it was not his. So the Greater than David will sit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of Jehovah, to order it and to establish it to completion, during the thousand years of His reign. Then He will deliver it up. "The zeal (love) of Jehovah of Hosts will perform this," operating through Messiah.

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KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE

--DECEMBER 29.--JOHN 7:17.--

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself."--John 7:17.

WE are living in a day when the very word doctrine seems to be offensive to the majority

of Christian people. Each denomination realizes that its own system of doctrines is imperfect, unsatisfactory, undefendable. And the same is believed in respect to all other doctrines. Hence by mutual consent Christian people seem disposed to henceforth and forever ignore doctrines; for they believe that, if after nineteen centuries they are thus confused, the matter never was clear and never will be clear to anybody.

All this is a great mistake; the doctrines of Christ, as presented by the Great Teacher and His Apostles, was a great message, of which none of them were ashamed. The difficulty with the Lord's people today is that we gradually fell away from those doctrines--we gradually put darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus gradually got into the spirit of Babylon, and into the spirit of bondage to human traditions and creeds. Instead of shunning doctrines, we should realize that they are the very things needed to cause the scattering of our darkness and superstitions, and to draw all of God's people nearer together.

The doctrines of Christ and the Apostles is what we need to inspire us to break down all our creed fences, which so long have separated us as God's people, the one from the other, in various denominational folds, all of which are contrary to the Divine arrangement; for

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God has but the one fold for all His "sheep" of this Age, as He will have another fold for the Restitution "sheep" of the next Age--the Messianic Kingdom Age.

"ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM"

Can we doubt that if as God's people we put away sectarianism and the creed spectacles of our forefathers, and if we go with pure, sincere hearts to the Lord and His Word, we will there find again the "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father over all, and one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," and "one Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven"? (Eph. 4:5,6; Heb. 12:23.) Let us hearken to the words: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward," "But remember the former days, in which, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and by afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." (Heb. 10:35,32,33,36.)

The time seems long to all of us, even though we remember that "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years." When we think of the fact that it is thirty-nine hundred years since God's promise to Abraham, that his Seed

should bless all the families of the earth--when we think of the fact that Israel did not receive that great privilege of being the spiritual Seed from which primarily that blessing should go forth, and that the "elect" are receiving it; when we think of the fact that God has been nearly nineteen centuries in selecting the "elect" from Israel and from all nations, it is enough to stagger our faith unless we hold firmly to the Divine promise and remember that God confirmed it with an Oath. By these two immutable, unchangeable things, the Divine Word and the Divine Oath, we know that the Seed of Abraham is to be developed, and that eventually it is to bless all the families of the earth. It is the Divine will that we allow our faith in this great promise of God to be "an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil."--Heb. 6:19.

#### THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST

What we all need as God's people is to put away human theories and other gospels and take hold afresh on the Gospel of Christ. These other gospels are other messages of hope, aside from the one which the Bible presents. For instance, Theosophy is one of these; Evolution is another; New Theology is another. These all hold out a different gospel from that which Jesus and the Apostles presented; the one that was given to us for our sanctification, and through the holding fast of which, and the obedience to The Faith, we are to be saved and given a share with Messiah in His glorious Empire of the world.

The doctrines of Christ mean those doctrines presented in the Bible by Jesus and His mouthpieces, the Apostles. These doctrines relate to the Church and to the world, and God's blessing for each; these doctrines relate to sin and its forgiveness; the terms of that forgiveness, the basis of that forgiveness--the death of Jesus--and the hope of that forgiveness, release from Divine condemnation, fellowship with God, and everlasting life obtained through resurrection of the dead.

#### A PREREQUISITE TO KNOWLEDGE

But some one will inquire, Why is it so difficult to understand the doctrines of Christ? Why are there six hundred different denominations of Christians? Why do they all so misunderstand the matter--that these different denominations have resulted from the differences of

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theory respecting the teachings of the Bible? The simple explanation is that, shortly after the death of the Apostles when the Church began to be in a measure of prosperity, the Adversary came in and sowed the seeds of false doctrines, using human lips and human pens in

his service, through pride and ambition. The darkness became so great that, looking back today, we speak of the period as the "Dark Ages."

The various denominations of Christendom are evidences of honesty, perseverance and love of the Truth, because our forefathers, who made these creeds, were each trying to get more and more out of the dark and back to the "True Light." They all made the mistake, however, of holding too much to the creeds and theories of the past. Let us not make the same mistake; let us cut loose entirely from every authority outside the Word of God. Whoever can help us understand God's Word --we should be glad to have his assistance; but we cannot acknowledge as inspired or authoritative the teachings of the "Fathers" of the early times, however conscientious they may have been, because we cannot recognize that there were any such authorized successors to the Apostles.

God, who foretold through the Prophets this long period of darkness, and who has blessed and guided His saintly children throughout it, without removing all of their blindness, has promised that with the end of this Age will come a great blessing and enlightenment upon His people, when the "wise virgins" will find their lamps burning brightly, and be able to understand and appreciate the deep things of God: "The wise shall understand, but none of the wicked shall understand." In the end of this Age the curtain was to be drawn, and the "true light" was to shine forth, scattering all the darkness. We are in the dawning of this New Age today, and therefore may see much more clearly than did our forefathers, the Divine character and Plan for human salvation.

#### WILLETH TO DO HIS WILL

Today's study is a message from the Master's own lips. He gives us the key to a clear knowledge of His doctrines, namely, that the student must be fully consecrated to God and fully desirous of knowing His Will and His Plan. In order to see light in God's light--to see the Truth, from the Divine standpoint of the Divine revelation, we must draw near to God in the spirit of our minds, consecrated in our heart. We must will to do His will.

But what does this mean? What is it to will to do His will? God's will represents actual perfection of thought and word and deed, toward God, toward our fellows in the Body of Christ, and toward all mankind. This is the Divine Standard set up, but we are no more able to fulfil its demands than were the Jews. As St. Paul declares, "We cannot do the things that we would." Weakness of the flesh, frailty and imperfection, we all have with the world; the best that we can do is to will to do right, and to the best of our ability carry out that covenant with the Lord to do His will. At the very best

all will come short of perfection.

But for those who have come into harmony with God, through Christ--for those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice--for those who have Jesus for their Advocate, a provision has been made, whereby the willing, all desiring to do the Divine will, and manifesting endeavors so to do, are counted as righteous--as though they did the Divine will perfectly. This class, in the Scriptures, is known as the "saints"; they are the prospective members of the Body of Christ. It is to these that the promises of our text apply, that they shall know to do the Divine will, shall know whether Jesus merely made up these teachings of Himself, or whether He was the active agent of Jehovah in what He did and in what He taught.

At the close of the year, and on the threshold of another, shall we not determine to give our hearts, our wills, fully to the Lord--determine in our wills to do God's will? If so, following the instructions of the Word of God during the coming year, we shall doubtless be blessed and enabled fully to know, to appreciate, to understand, the doctrines of Christ--the deep things of God, which are revealed to this class by the Spirit of God.

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#### TWO YEARS MORE

Two years more, and I shall see Him, whom not having  
seen I love,  
This grand prospect, daily, hourly, holds my heart on things  
above;  
Now by faith, I'm pressing onward in the footsteps of my  
Lord,  
Rough the pathway, steep and narrow, 'tis the path my Master  
trode.

Oh, the rapture of that meeting, Oh, what ecstasy 'twill  
bring,  
When with open, perfect vision I shall gaze upon my King!  
I shall feast upon the beauty of the One I love so well,  
And with tongue no longer stammering, all my love for Him  
I'll tell.

Two years, and I'll see the Father, when the Son with loving  
pride,  
Shall conduct me to His presence, with the rest of His dear  
Bride.  
What a sense of awe will fill me, as with unveiled face I  
gaze  
On that grand and mighty Being, whom all Heaven unites to  
praise!

Shall I know myself, I wonder, when He takes me to His

heart,  
And of all that heavenly glory I shall find myself a part?  
Heaven not complete without me, mine, eternities of bliss?  
Oh, my soul, thou must not stagger, for thy God hath  
promised this!

Oft a secret fear assails me, that I may be left behind;  
Then I bid my soul take courage, 'tis that Enemy of mine!  
He would use to cause my downfall censure sharp, or  
flattering breath,  
For he hates God's holy children with a hatred strong as  
death.

But my Father will not leave me to his mercy, but prepare  
Heavenly armor to protect me, which, if I will always wear,  
Every fight will prove me victor, as I wield the two-edged  
Sword,  
World and flesh and powers of evil, all must fall before His  
Word!

Oh, my soul, thy life dependeth on thy faithfulness alone;  
While the days and hours are passing, art thou holding fast  
thy crown?  
Keep this thought before thee always, let it daily strengthen  
thee,  
"Two years more decides forever thine eternal destiny!"

Then the thought, Oh! how it thrills me, any day He may  
send word--  
"Child, thy work on earth is finished, enter into thy reward."  
But, if I need further testings, crosses heavy, trial sore,  
I can wait, for at the longest, it is only two years more!  
--Unknown.

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#### INTERESTING QUESTIONS

##### CAN ANY OF THE GREAT COMPANY BE OF THE RESTITUTION CLASS?

Question.--Can any of the Great Company become  
members of the Restitution class?

Answer.--We understand that the terms under which  
any are begotten of the Holy Spirit are that they renounce,  
give up, the human nature. When God accepts  
their consecration and takes such into Covenant relationship  
with Himself, He indicates that relationship by  
begetting them of the Holy Spirit. The only class into  
which these can come for future life is that of spirit or  
heavenly beings. If they live up to all the terms and  
conditions of their sacrifice, then they will have the very  
fullest blessing which God has provided for the loyal  
and to which He has called them. But for those who

fail to live up to the highest standard--that of walking in the footsteps of Jesus--the arrangement seems to be that they shall at least prove themselves loyal, even if not to the same degree as their brethren.

This loyalty will be tested in the great time of trouble through which the Great Company will go. Then if they fail to prove their loyalty, apparently they will lose that life in the Second Death. But if they give up the earthly life and manifest loyalty to the Lord, even though they may never give it up willingly, but merely when brought to straits, then they will have life on the spirit plane.

The merit of Christ, which has been under embargo, as it were, must all be released before the Restitution work can begin. In other words, the Little Flock must have been "changed" and the Great Company must have suffered destruction of the flesh, before the merit can again be free in the hands of Justice, ready to be given to the world in Restitution.

Therefore, our answer would be, We cannot expect the Spirit-begotten ones to pass through the time of trouble in the end of this Age and to live on during the Millennial Age; for they belong to the Church of the First-borns, all of whom must be born before the after-borns can be brought forth. The after-borns will be the world in the Restitution.

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#### FIFTH SUNDAY CONVENTIONS

Question.--Are Fifth Sunday Conventions advantageous?

Answer.--We are perplexed how to answer this question, and must leave the answering of it to each Class for itself, without any particular advice even. From some we have heard good reports with blessings secured. From others we have had reports to the contrary. Those who have had practical experience with these Conventions should decide for themselves. We have had no experience in this direction.

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#### HOW TREAT "THE MENACE"

Question.--How should the WATCH TOWER readers treat "The Menace?"

Answer.--This is a free country and everyone has a right to follow that course which he believes will be most to the Lord's glory and most to the advancement and the good of his fellow-men. The Editor of "The Menace" is merely exercising his rights. As for the WATCH TOWER, it pursues a different course without criticizing others. Perhaps the Lord may have a work for "The Menace" for all we know. Our judgment is that His work for us is in a different direction and we exhort all the WATCH TOWER readers to reserve all their might and



physical strength for the promulgation of the Truth as the Lord has been granting us to see it within the last forty years in the WATCH TOWER. It is our mission to preach the Word--the Gospel of the Kingdom. We cannot do all that we would in this direction, and hence have no time to devote to other matters, political, social, etc.

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#### INTERESTING LETTERS

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER AND PASTOR:--

I have read for the second time the article in the October 1, 1912, TOWER, "Fight the Good Fight," and how it thrills my heart to renewed zeal and determination to fight the good fight, realizing more than ever that I fight for myself, through the power of Jesus. I shall keep the TOWER in my desk ready for re-reading at spare moments.

My heart goes out in gratitude to our dear Father, and to our Savior and Advocate for these wonderful helps that come as refreshing and energizing dew drops upon our thirsting souls. The Truth is new and fresh every morning and evening. It is even more precious to me now than when I first saw it, nineteen years ago.

How sweet the words of the poet sound in my heart: "There's no place where earthly sorrows are more felt than up in heaven; There's no place where earthly failings have such kindly judgment given. Search the Scriptures, search and see, God in mercy judgeth thee."

I had occasion to speak to a vessel captain today, who to a certain extent is interested in the harvest work, telling him about the many blessings we received at the Washington Convention, and the profitable and pleasant visit to the Tabernacle and Bethel. He said: "You certainly are at peace with all mankind, if I can judge by your face."

Our earnest prayers go up for you daily, that the God of all grace may be your strength till the work is finished, come what may.

Sweetest Christian greetings and remembrances from the writer and family, in which, I am sure, every member of our dear Ecclesia joins.

Yours, by His grace, N. A. LINDERBERG.--Minn.

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DEAR BRETHREN:--

I am enclosing two clippings from prominent church papers which will be self-explanatory. I wish to say that I think one of the best features about the WATCH TOWER is its indifference to the ranting of other publications. I feel almost to rejoice in this fact every time I receive the TOWER; I can sit down and really read the explanation of the Holy Scriptures and the discussion of topics without having to read every few lines some one's personal slashing of another

person's belief; or by turning a page run on to a \$3.00 watch advertisement guaranteeing a watch for twenty years; or a minister's boosting of the last Holiness meeting at which he and John Doe were the prominent speakers, and Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ the singer, that so many "prayed through, many were gloriously blessed, and that he, the writer, had a few open dates, and if any of the dear brethren wanted him, to write at once."

Yet I do believe that some of these articles should be answered, not by retorting, but by telling your readers some of the things accomplished: for instance, in one article which you will find underscored, the writer says, "But Russell's teachings have not produced even reformations." Why would it not be well to reprint both these articles with such comment as is your custom to make in a religious way, with only the one thought in view, that of shedding light on these benighted souls, that their vision may be gloriously enlarged, so they may be able to see beyond the confines of the small circle in which their thoughts have been accustomed to move, and realize the truth of the fact that they are servants of a dogma, the charms of which have so veiled their vision, that nothing but an almost divine interference can accomplish the feat of awakening their soul to the more lovable nature of the God of Love, who could not possibly be a God of Love were He a God of the Hell Fire punishment which they have been standing for.

May God add His blessing.

S. R. G \_\_\_\_\_.--Dakota.

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Brother Russell's replies to Mr. Ellis he thinks best to incorporate in his discourses, which appear in many newspapers and reach many people.

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