

Those present not improperly began to inquire, Who is this that even forgives sins? The only satisfactory answer is that he is the one he professes to be, the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world. He was then in process of rendering up his

sacrifice according to his covenant, and on the strength of that covenant and sacrifice he had authority to tell the woman that her sins were forgiven, because he was making the Atonement which would be applicable to her.

"ARE YE ABLE?"

Are ye able to walk in the narrow, strait way,
With no friend by your side, and no arm for your stay?
Can ye bravely go on through the darkening night?
Can ye patiently wait till the Lord sends the light?

Are ye able to crush your soul's longing for love,
Will ye seek for no friendship save that from above?
Can ye pass through this world, lone, unnoticed, unknown,
While your faith faintly whispers, "He knoweth his own?"

Where the feet of the Blessed One stood, can ye stand?
Can ye follow his steps to a wilderness land?
Are ye able to cast aside pleasure and fame?
Can ye live but to glorify his precious name?

Can ye smile as his dear voice says tenderly, "No,"
When "the field is so white," and your heart yearns to go?
Can ye rest then in silence, contented and still,
Till your Lord, the Chief Reaper, revealeth his will?

Are ye able to lay on the altar's pure flame
That most treasured possession, your priceless good name?
Can ye ask of your Father a blessing for those,
Who see naught in your life but to scorn and oppose?
When the conflict twixt error and truth fiercer grows,
Can ye wield the strong "Sword" against unnumbered foes?
Can ye lift up the "standard" e'en higher and higher,
While his praises ye sing in the midst of the fire?
When ye see the Lord's cause going down to defeat,
Will your courage endure in the seven-fold heat?
Will your faith keep you steadfast, though heart and flesh fail,
As the new creature passes beneath the last "veil"?

Ah, if thus ye can drink of the cup he shall pour,
And if never the banner of truth ye would lower,
His beloved ye are, and his crown ye shall wear,
In his throne ye shall sit, and his glory shall share!
GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I have just finished reading your sermon in the *Manilla Times*, and it has given me much peace and happiness. I want to learn more of the Bible, but find it obscure so much of the time. In the past I can truthfully say it has been a sealed book to me. But from now on I am going to diligently search the Scriptures for truth and spiritual guidance.

Any reading matter you can send me to help me toward enlightenment will be most gratefully received. If you will tell me where to secure all of your writings on the Bible I shall gladly send the required amount to get them.

We will leave here in June for San Francisco, Cal., where we expect to remain nine or ten months. While there I desire greatly to take up the systematic study of the Bible. Could you recommend to me some school (or person) there under which I could place myself as a Bible student?

May God bless abundantly your great work is my prayer. Faithfully yours, MRS. J. DUCKWORTH-FORD, *Philippines*.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

You will be interested to know a little circumstance which illustrates how the HEAVENLY MANNA can be used of the Lord to draw attention to the truth.

A brother and sister staying at a strange house left their MANNA on the dresser during the day, so that it might be seen. The help looked at it and liked it very much. This led to the sale of several first volumes and the arousing of considerable interest in the truth.

Lovingly your brother, WALTER H. BUNDY.

DEAR BROTHER:—

If you will pardon me for taking a little of your valuable time I would be pleased if you will answer the following question:—

In DAWN, Vol. 1, page 232, ¶ 1, we read as follows: "Our sins he consented to have imputed to him, that he might bear our penalty for us, and he died on our behalf, as though he were the sinner." In Vol. 5, page 109, line 23, we also read:

"Not imputed to them, but imputed to him, who bore our sins in his body on the tree." In Vol. 5, page 444, ¶2, we also read: "That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but imputing them unto him."

Please be kind enough to inform me at your earliest convenience if you have changed your mind as to these teachings, or do you still hold the same views? With earnest prayers that God will be with you and keep you unto the end, I am,
Yours in his dear name, P. L. DERRING,—Va.

IN REPLY

Your favor of March 25 is before me I am pleased to answer its question as follows:

The work of Christ is presented from a variety of standpoints, some showing modifications of one kind and some of another; some stating the matter from the human standpoint and some from the divine. What we need in all Scriptural matters is to get at the real import.

From God's standpoint human sin is imputed to Jesus; that is to say, he was provided to be the sinner's representative—to pay the price for the release of man from the death sentence; thus God pictures Christ as the serpent raised upon the pole. Thus the Apostle says he was made sin for us, although he knew no sin—he was a sin-offering.

Viewing the matter from the other standpoint, from the human standpoint, we see our own weaknesses and shortcomings, realizing the necessity of our Master's imputing to us the merit of his sacrifice to make up for our deficiency. Thus the facts agree, whether we state them from one standpoint or another. Our sins were reckoned against Jesus when he died for sin. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us when we offer ourselves to God and our Great Redeemer and High Priest makes good our deficiency.

With much Christian love,

YOUR BROTHER AND SERVANT IN THE LORD.

SAUL OF TARSUS AND WHAT HE SAW

Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born before the due time.—1 Cor. 15:8.

St. Paul was discussing the resurrection of the dead. He realized that on that great fact rested the weight of the Gospel message. It was easy enough to prove that Jesus had died, but to an incredulous world it was difficult to prove that he had risen from the dead; and whoever could not believe that great fact could not believe the other great facts which stand or fall with it.

For instance, the Apostle presented that Jesus had left the heavenly glory and had become a man for the purpose of meeting the demands of the divine law against Adam and his race, involved by him. He could show the reasonableness of this logic. He has proven that as the whole world was condemned to death through Father Adam's disobedience it

was absolutely necessary for an untainted life to be sacrificed in order to meet the penalty and to secure the release of the condemned race.

GOD WOULD NOT LEAVE HIS SON IN DEATH

The Apostle had declared that Jesus had been faithful in his ministry in fully laying down his life and that the entire matter was pleasing and acceptable to the Heavenly Father. If so, surely God would not leave his Son in death, but would raise him from the dead. This fact the Apostle had repeatedly enunciated, showing that our Lord entered into his glory and reward and ascended up where he was before—to perfection on the spirit plane.

But all these claims fell lightly upon some of his hearers,

who claimed that it was much more easy to believe that Jesus never died at all, but merely transmuted, than to believe that he died for our sins and rose again for our justification; hence the Apostle's frequent reference to Christ's resurrection and his insistence upon it as absolutely necessary to Christian faith, for not only would the Heavenly Father's favor toward the Lord Jesus thus be shown, but the bulk of all the holy prophecies would remain unfulfilled unless Jesus arose from the dead.

In other words, a dead Redeemer would be of no advantage; matters would be just as unfavorable for the sinners as though Jesus had never come at all. Additionally, if the resurrection of Jesus was a questionable matter, how could those who disputed that great fact acknowledge the resurrection of the church and of the world? St. Paul emphasizes this also, declaring that "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust," as a result of the redemptive work of Jesus—his dying for man's sins and his resurrection to glory to carry out the blessings secured by his death.

"LAST OF ALL HE WAS SEEN BY ME"

Prosecuting his argument, the Apostle marshaled the whole chain of witnesses except the women who first saw the Lord on the morning of His resurrection. He says, "He was seen of Cephas (Peter); then by the remainder of the twelve; then of above five hundred brethren at once; later, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles," when he ascended. Then comes the text: "Last of all he was seen of me also."

There is something pathetic in this reference to his own glimpse of Jesus. It called up the period of his own bigoted persecution of the church. It reminded him of his own responsibility in connection with the death of St. Stephen, and of the blind hatred which led him to persecute inoffensive fellow-creatures, simply because they believed that Jesus died and rose again, the very thing which he was now trying to testify to all having the hearing ear.

His memory went back to the madness which he had manifested in pursuing Christians even to Damascus, haling them to prison. Again he saw the great, blinding light from heaven, above the brightness of the noonday sun, his fall to the earth, and heard the voice speaking to him, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecute thou me?" (Acts 9:1-9; 26:12-19) Again he remembered his astonishment at learning that those whom he had persecuted were not renegade and deceived Jews, but highly esteemed and acknowledged by this Great One, a glimpse of whom felled him to the earth. Ah, that was a wonderful sight! If Messiah was so great, so glorious, so powerful, he could believe in him, he could reverence him.

The objection which all Jews had to Jesus, and what they considered absolute proof that he was not the Messiah, was his apparent weakness, his apparent inability to accomplish the things foretold by the prophets. They said, It is foolish to think of a man without an army and without wealth claiming to be a king. It is still more foolish for him to claim that he is the Messianic king, who is to be above all kings, and before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. They said, therefore, that Jesus must either be beside himself, crazy, or else he was seeking to deceive the people and temporarily create a little commotion of popularity.

To them it seemed that when he was crucified a demonstration had been given that he was not the Messiah. Was not the Messiah to live forever, and was he not to reign successfully as King of kings and Lord of lords? Was it not, therefore, proven that any man whom the Jews or the Romans could crucify, could put to death, must have been an impostor? They considered the matter proven to a demonstration. The persecution of the followers of Jesus was merely with a view to stamping out a new religion, which, it was feared, would do harm to Israel in that it would call in question the hopes of Israel respecting a coming King and his kingdom. Thus Saul of Tarsus had felt himself fully justified in persecuting all of that way of thinking—for "the good of the cause," as so many persecutors have said.

A NEW VIEW OF MATTERS

The honesty of Saul of Tarsus led him to be just as honest after he got his eyes of understanding open as he had previously been with them closed. It took him a little while to get the proper focus; then he saw and could explain to others the necessity for the death of Jesus and how it was typified in the sacrifices of the law and how the divinely arranged plan had made this great sacrifice in order thereby to more fully show forth the divine justice, wisdom, love and power.

Now he saw, not only the need for Jesus to come in the flesh and to give himself a ransom-price for all, but he saw equally the necessity for his resurrection, not in the flesh,

but in the spirit, that he might be a fully qualified Ruler and Savior—not only to save his people from the Romans, the Assyrians, and from all other human enemies, but also to save them from Satan, from sin, from sickness, from sorrow, from death. Ah, now he saw how great Messiah must be in order to meet the necessities of the case!

The matter changed immediately in his mind; instead of a human Savior and Messiah and an earthly king, God had prepared a Heavenly One, partaker of the divine nature, glorious, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. Now he saw that the sufferings of Jesus had a twofold value. First, they were necessary for man's release from the death sentence, and, secondly, they were necessary as a demonstration of the loyalty of Jesus. Now he saw that God, in preparing to bring many sons to glory, determined first to prove the loyalty of him whom he had invited to become the Captain of our Salvation, and that this was done by the arrangement which necessitated Jesus' death.

The climax of the argument was reached when he found that God not only had raised up Jesus from the dead, but that additionally he had bestowed upon him the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature, of which Saul had a demonstration or proof in the blinding flash of light which felled him to the earth, and in the voice which said to him alone, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."

CROWN HIM LORD OF ALL

We like to think that, as we were once blinded to many of the precious truths of God's Word, so it is with many others whose eyes of understanding have not yet opened. We like to think of St. Paul's experiences, his sincerity, even to hatred and persecution, and then his loyalty, even to stripes and imprisonment and death. We like to think of him as exemplifying possibly a large class of the opposers of the truth.

We like to hope that all they will need to bring them into line with God's arrangements and to make them loyal servants of righteousness will be the great light which will shine forth resplendently very soon, when the due time shall come for Messiah to take to himself his great power and reign—when his elect bride shall have been completed and glorified with him. We like to remember the words of the Lord through the Prophet respecting that glorious Epoch: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing"—in that day.

Where would Saul of Tarsus have ended his career if the great Redeemer had not interposed for his help? And how poorly we would have fared and how little of the Light divine would we have seen if divine providence had not helped us in various ways? And so with the world. It is beyond our power to give the hearing ear or the seeing eye. This is the work of the Great Physician, and his day for healing and blessing and uplifting the world we perceive to be nigh, even at the door.

Ah, yes! Now we can see that the little opening of the eyes and unstopping of the ears and healing of the lame accomplished at our Lord's first advent merely foreshadowed his coming glory and much greater work. Now we can see a reason why so many of his mighty works were done on the Sabbath days—because they were all prophetic, as the Sabbath days themselves were prophecies of the great thousand-year Sabbath of Messiah's glorious reign, during which all of humanity who will may enter into his rest—rest from sin and from Satan and from everything that would hinder them from a full return to the Heavenly Father's love and favor and to everlasting life.

Now we see that the great work of that thousand-year Sabbath will be the healing of the morally lame and the giving of sight and hearing to the minds now blinded and deaf under the evil influences of the great adversary—"the god of this world [who] hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

ONE BORN BEFORE THE TIME

Many have remarked at the peculiarity of St. Paul's statement that he saw the Lord as one prematurely born. But, if at first the statement was dark and puzzling, now it is luminous and enlightening. His thought is this: the time for giving ocular demonstrations of the Lord's resurrection had gone by; the next manifestation of Him is to be to his saints, and after that to the world. Thus we read: "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is"—made like him by our resurrection change from the human conditions to the spirit conditions; yea, to the divine plane.

Strictly speaking, then, the experiences of Saul of Tarsus were out of the ordinary. No one else than he alone, not

even the saintly, were to see the Lord before their resurrection change, in the end of this age. When, therefore, he saw Jesus, he saw him before the time—more than eighteen centuries before the time. Moreover, he saw him as one born before the time—as one resurrected before the time. We are to have in mind the Scriptural use of this word born—that the church must all be begotten of the holy Spirit in order to experience the resurrection birth.

Thus, concerning our Redeemer's resurrection, we read: "He was the first-born from the dead"; and again, "He was the first-born of many brethren." So the hope of all of God's people is that the begetting of the holy Spirit in the present time will be followed by the resurrection birth, which St. Paul describes in this same chapter, saying, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spirit body."—1 Cor. 15:43.

With these things before our mental eye we see the meaning of the Apostle in the words: "He was seen of me, also, as one born before the time." He was not thus seen by the other apostles. They saw him merely as he appeared—sometimes in one form of body and with appropriate clothing, at other times in another form, and with diverse clothing. He appeared and disappeared, but they did not see him, the new creature; they saw merely the various forms in which he appeared. But St. Paul saw the Lord more nearly as all the saints shall see him when they shall be born from the dead by the glorious resurrection change.

CHURCH'S GLORY TO BE GREATER THAN THAT OF THE ANGELS

One great difference between the effect of what Saul saw and what the entire glorious church will see in the resurrection is that Saul's eyesight was injured by the sight; besides, he saw nothing very distinctly—merely a blinding light, which the voice explained to be the appearance or manifestation of Jesus. Far more precious will be the experiences of the church. Before beholding him who is declared to be "the express image of the Father's person," "whom no man hath

seen nor can see, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto"—before this, we shall have been changed, glorified. This will enable us to see him as he is, for the glory of the church will be like to the glory of her Lord, and superior to the glory of the angels.

While heavenly glory does not consist exclusively of brightness, nevertheless the Scriptures everywhere seem to associate bright-shining with the heavenly ones, and would imply that the higher the station and rank the brighter will be the sheen, the glory. Thus the glory of the Heavenly Father is represented as being so great that few could endure it; and angels and seraphim are represented as veiling their faces before the divine glory, which so greatly transcends their own.

It should not, therefore, surprise us that the Scriptures everywhere represent that our Lord Jesus and the church, "made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), will have a great honor and brightness, far above that of angels and all others except that of the Heavenly Father. As the Lord Jesus was able to veil the glories of his person and to appear as a man after his resurrection, so undoubtedly he could do as respects the world, during the thousand years of his Messianic reign.

And, similarly, it would be possible for the church to appear as men with the glory veiled. It might appear at first as though this was what was signified through the Mosaic type when Moses, representing Messiah in glory, came down from the mountain, his face radiant, but veiled for the sake of the people. Our thought, however, is that Jesus and the church will never thus appear in the flesh as angels have done in the past, but that on the contrary the ancient worthies, perfected on the human plane, will be their agents and representatives in all communications with mankind. Thus, "the law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the spirit kingdom), and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (the earthly kingdom), to every nation, people, kindred and tongue, that all may be blest if they will and attain everlasting life.

QUICKENING OF THE MORTAL BODY

"If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. 8:11.

Every text should be considered in the light of its context. In the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle's argument is that by nature we are all sinners; and that God's proposition is that he will accept us as sons on a new plane if our lives be offered in consecration: "I beseech you, therefore, 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.

After an individual has made this presentation of his body for sacrifice, and he has been begotten of the holy Spirit, the mortal body is counted as being dead, and his mind, his will, is reckoned as the new creature adopted into the family of God and seeking to serve him and to grow into his likeness, by being conformed to the likeness of his dear Son. Therefore, in all such expressions as we find in our text and its context, the Apostle refers exclusively to the new creature, and ignores entirely, as dead, the mortal body. It is from this standpoint that we can say of the new creature that he is holy; that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, and that the wicked one toucheth him not.—Rom. 8:4; 1 John 5:18.

Those things which he formerly did he is to do no more. The Apostle says, moreover, that he would not be content merely to be dead in the flesh—in the sense of simply abstaining from sin—but that he should seek to become energetic in the service of righteousness. If we ask how this is to be done, the answer is, "by the Spirit of God." If the Spirit of God was powerful enough to raise our Lord Jesus from the dead, it will quicken, or energize, our mortal bodies. When our bodies have been reckoned as alive, quickened, they are energized in opposition to sin and in harmony with righteousness. This, then, is the Apostle's thought in our text.

It is well that we should have in mind the thought that the consecration of our bodies to the Lord may permit us to do more in his service than we could have done if we had not been begotten of the holy Spirit. We are not to expect that this energizing will work a miracle, such as the restoration of a person in the last stage of consumption, etc. The Lord does not work in this way. But the Lord's people would do well to cultivate the thought that if it be the Lord's will they shall be able to do something in his service. If we have this confidence, every one of us can do much more than

if we do not have it, for it gives new energy of mind and body.

A great deal of harm is done in the world by people who not only have a wrong opinion themselves, but who spread contagion of thoughts to others. We see to what a large extent this is carried on by Christian Scientists, who deny that there is either pain or death.

While we do not advocate this course, yet we should not, on the other hand, imagine that our bodies are in worse condition than they really are, but in a wise and judicious manner should seek to use them in the Lord's service. Instead of discouraging others we would do well to encourage them to realize that it is largely according to their faith that they shall be able to do anything. If we have no strong desire to accomplish something we shall become weak, sickly.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE POWER OF MIND OVER BODY

To some extent the world recognizes the power of the mind over the body. An account in the newspapers recently told of two great, strong men who were sick in bed as the result of the coddling of their mother, who should have encouraged them to get up and take a little air and exercise. Another case reported was that of a woman who imagined that she was glass. At first she used to get up while the attendant put the room in order; but later she would not sit up. After she had been in bed for a year or two, the doctor told her that there was nothing the matter with her body, but with her mind. One day her relatives got her up in the middle of the room and left her there, telling her that there was nothing wrong except her attitude of mind. At first she declared that she would go to pieces. She did not, however. With proper encouragement she lost her fear of breaking and began to improve; in due time she was quite well.

You have heard of the professor upon whom some college boys played a trick. They planned to meet the professor on his way to school and to test the power of the mind over the body. The first boy met him, as they had agreed, when he was going out of his house, and told him that he was not looking well. He replied, "I am feeling quite well." Another met him a block away, then another a little further on, telling him that he looked pale and sick. Yet another met him and said, "You are a sick man." Still another greeted him with, "Professor A, you should be in bed." The next one

exclaimed, "I must help you home, for you are in no condition to be at school!" The professor went home sick. All this occurred within fifteen minutes. The story is said to be true.

All through life we are either helping or hindering others. Tell people something good; seek to cheer them, and when yourself ailing, follow the good suggestions you make to others. If you have a headache, moaning will not mend matters. Do not think so much about it; and by forgetting it, help nature to get rid of it. Nobody knows just how the power of the mind over the body is effected. The claim is that certain attitudes of mind favor certain microbes in the body. Medical journals state that children have died in spasms after having been suckled by mothers who have gotten into a rage a short time before nursing the children. It is well for all to have meek and quiet spirits, for faith, love, hope and kindness make for health.

It is very reasonable and logical that the Lord should have given us the most wonderful power in our minds to make people feel better, to control muscle and nerve. One's conduct in the sick room has an influence upon the patient. One should speak kindly and cheerfully. If nothing that will be helpful can be said truthfully, it is far better to be quiet or to remain outside of the sick room.

A sister supposed to be dying once sent for us. Upon entering the room we said, "Well, Sister, you are looking better than we had expected to see you. You are better!" "I am feeling better," she answered. "When did you begin to feel better?" we inquired. "When I heard you in the hall," she said. She is living today and married, and has a child. Yet we might have helped her to die, and might have had a funeral service instead of a marriage ceremony.

It is well for us to consider the question: If the natural mind has such an effect upon the body, how should it be with those who can claim, "We have the mind of Christ"? What effect should this mind, or disposition, which is loving, generous, kind, forgiving toward our fellows, and reverential, loyal and obedient toward God, have upon the body? Does not the Apostle declare that if the spirit, or mind, of God dwell in them their mortal bodies shall be quickened?

He does; but do not misunderstand the Apostle's teaching. In the preceding verse (Rom. 8:10) he states, "If Christ be in you the body is dead"—not literally dead, but reckoned dead, in that the human will has died and that the will of God in Christ has been accepted instead. The will is dead to sinful things; it does not love nor practise them as once it did. His argument is that such a deadness to sin, although desirable, should not stop at that point; we should by God's grace seek to get alive to righteousness and to be as active in its service as once we were alive to sin and active in its service. He proceeds to show that this, although a great change, is possible to us; and he tells us how it is to be accomplished.

He says that the mighty Spirit of God, which could and did raise our Lord from literal death, is able to quicken (make alive) to the service of righteousness these very bodies once alive to sin, but now, by God's grace, mortified, killed, "dead to sin." He therefore urges all who have the spirit, or mind of Christ, not only to be dead to sin, but to permit the Spirit of Christ in them to make them alive to holiness and to God's service in general. He shows them further that the new mind of Christ which they have received is a spirit of adoption into God's family as sons, and that if they are sons they are not only "free," but must bear fruit unto holiness, and that their joint-heirship with Christ as sons depends upon this quickening of their mortal bodies—"if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

All who catch the real sense of this passage will see that it has no reference to physical quickening and immunity from pain and sickness, but to a quickening, or energizing by the Lord's Spirit so as to be, not only willing, but glad, to "suffer with him." Hence those who see their high calling should not expect exemption from sufferings and trials and difficulties; and the usual aches and pains which come to the Lord's people, as well as to the world, in a natural way, should be treated as the world treats them, but borne with greater patience and cheerfulness.

St. Paul clearly marks the distinction between our new mind, which, consecrated in Christ, is accepted as the new creature, holy and acceptable to God, and our mortal body, which he calls "this dead body"—originally dead, under divine sentence, because of sin, but redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and justified, and then included in our sacrifice when we gave our little all in consecration to the Lord, as a living sacrifice, to be dead with Christ, to suffer with him

even unto death. He declares that those who are walking after the Spirit, seeking to serve the Lord in Spirit and in truth, from the heart, are freed from condemnation, and that they do not now walk after the flesh, wishing to fulfil its desires.—Rom. 8:1, 4.

And here we are to distinguish closely between walking after the Spirit and walking up to the Spirit. We should, of course, follow as closely as possible to the spirit of truth and righteousness, and yet we cannot hope to walk up to the spirit of the divine requirements so long as we are in the imperfect flesh, though we may strive in this direction continually. One thing is positive, however—we must not walk after the flesh. To do so would imply that we had lost the new mind, the new disposition, the new will; that we had become dead to those hopes which had led to our consecration.

The Apostle urges that all remember that one who is "in the flesh," who lives in harmony with the sinful propensities of his fallen, fleshly nature, is not pleasing to God; and that such yielding to the flesh, of course, if persisted in, will end in death. He proceeds to reason that if the spirit, or mind, or disposition of God (the spirit of holiness) dwells in one, he cannot be in sympathetic accord with the fallen human nature, its appetites and ambitions. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is not of the body of Christ. Christ's Spirit is not a Spirit of harmony with sin, but of opposition to sin; He laid down his life to vanquish sin and to deliver mankind from its power and dominion. Therefore, whoever claims to have the Spirit of Christ, but who loves and willfully practises sin, and with his mind serves sin, deceives himself; for he has neither part nor lot in Christ.

St. Paul proceeds further along this same line, arguing that our adoption into God's family, our begetting to newness of heart and mind, and our acceptance thus as members of the body of Christ, while it means, first of all, that the body is ignored and reckoned as dead because of sin and that only our spirits, or minds, are reckoned as righteous and alive—the beginning of our eternal existence—nevertheless, this good condition is not to be considered the limit of our ambition and attainment in Christ-likeness.

On the contrary, we are to remember that the Spirit of God is powerful; that in the case of our Lord Jesus it was powerful enough to raise him from the dead. And as we become more imbued with and controlled by the holy Spirit of God in our hearts, in our minds, divine power will come to us gradually through this channel of the holy Spirit, which will permit a figurative raising of our mortal bodies from their death-state into activities of spiritual life in the service of the Lord, for the assurance given us through the Apostle is that if God's Spirit dwells in us in sufficient measure—abundantly—He will energize our mortal bodies—not our immortal, resurrection bodies.

It is our hope that in due time the Lord by his Spirit will give us new bodies in the resurrection; and that those bodies will be immortal, perfect in every respect; and that then, not only our minds, but our bodies also will be in fullest harmony with God and his every law and work of righteousness. That condition will be glorious; it is already a glorious prospect. But the Apostle holds before us that even our present, mortal bodies, sentenced, then justified, reckoned dead because of sin and consecrated, may be so quickened or energized that, instead of being any longer servants of sin, or even merely dead to it, they may, under the careful watchfulness of the new mind, be used as servants of righteousness, of truth.

This means, of course, a High Christian development, a large attainment toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." The measure of the fullness of Christ, the maturity and growth necessary to its attainment, involves the "putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ," and is not the work of a moment, nor of an hour, nor of a month, nor of a year. It is the work of a life time. But unless it is begun, it will never be completed. And, indeed, we may be sure that we can never fully put on Christ's characteristics. However, this is the standard for which every one of the Lord's people must continually strive.

The Lord will see our endeavor, our strenuous fighting to put off the old nature, to put off "the works of the flesh" and to be clothed with the garments of righteousness suitable to our relationship to him, and our success will be proportionate to our attainment of the mind, or disposition of Christ—holy conformity to the will of the Father in all things. How comforting in this connection is the promise of our Lord, that our "Heavenly Father is more willing to give his holy Spirit (the spirit of holiness, the spirit of wisdom) to them that ask him than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children!"—Luke 11:13.

SINS NEVER TO BE FORGIVEN

MARK 3:20-35.—JULY 7.

TEXT:—"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—John 3:19.

John the Baptist declared of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease"; and so it was. After John was put into prison Jesus' ministry became more and more public, especially through the numerous works performed by him. The multitudes followed the Great Teacher, and his friends became solicitous for him, for even they feared and said, "He is beside himself"—so quickly had his course changed from one of privacy to one of publicity.

The scribes and Pharisees considered themselves the representatives of the Jewish orthodoxy and qualified to pass upon everything theological; and indeed the public waited for their message, saying, "Have any of the scribes and Pharisees believed on him?" Hence Jesus declared that these representatives of divine things were doubly responsible, for they would neither enter into discipleship themselves, to be members of the kingdom which Jesus preached, nor would they permit the public to become his followers if they could help it.

Jesus was at the time in Galilee, in the vicinity of Capernaum. Certain of the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem felt it their duty to warn the public against becoming too interested in this Man and his teachings, and thus ignoring the long-established theories for which they and the Pharisees stood.

That Jesus did many miracles they could not dispute, and that he specially and on many occasions cast out demons they could not deny. They explained this, however, by saying that Jesus had collusion with Beelzebub (Satan), and that by the power of that prince of darkness he was able to cast out demons. But Jesus answered that if it was true that Satan had turned reformer and was breaking down his own power and opposing his own minions, the demons, then it proved that his kingdom would soon fall entirely.

The fact that today many religious systems practice one kind or another of faith-healing is claimed to be a mark of divine approval, on the strength of our Lord's words. Yet we have, in opposition to this, to remember that those who claim to exercise this power very generally deny the very existence of the Gospel of Christ. Some of them deny that man is a sinner at all, and declare that there is no such thing as sin. Practically all of them deny the redemptive value of Christ's death. Practically all of them deny that he will come again and establish his kingdom and through it bring to mankind the promised blessings of restitution to human perfection and to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.—Acts 3:19-21.

There is only one answer to make to the claim that these faith-healings prove the truth of these various antagonistic doctrines, and that answer is the one which Jesus here states. If their faith-healing power be not of God it must be of the adversary; and if it be of the adversary, it proves that he is upholding false and contradictory doctrines, and that his house or dominion is more or less divided and in straits; and this implies that the collapse of the dominion of this prince of darkness is nigh. This view is more and more impressing itself upon Bible students.

BLASPHEMING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Addressing the Pharisees, who charged him with being Satan's prime minister and agent, Jesus declared that all manner of sin and blasphemy which men commit are forgivable, except one kind, and this kind can never be forgiven—it is blasphemy against the holy Spirit. The Savior did not mean that the Scribes had said something against the holy Spirit of God in an abstract way, but apparently they had perceived that our Lord's teachings were pure, holy, helpful, elevating to his hearers, honoring to God, and that he spake as never man spake; but after all these evidences of Jesus' holiness and relationship to God they called him a relative and representative of Satan.

Jesus did not say that the scribes and Pharisees had committed the sin of blasphemy against the holy Spirit. Some of them may have done so, and others of them may have been partially in ignorance of what they did; and the sin against the holy Spirit could not be committed in ignorance.

It would be a wilful attributing of holy things to an unholy power or source. Jesus did not judge or condemn the scribes, for he declared that he had not come to judge the world, to condemn it, but quite to the contrary, to die for it, to redeem it, to purchase it at the cost of his life.

Our Lord did, however, give the warning reproof that those who could thus see the righteousness of his teachings, and how he glorified God in his words and actions, and who could then impute all of this to Satan, must be to a considerable extent perverse in their hearts, and if so, they would be in great danger of eternal condemnation, the sentence of the second death; they would be like "natural brute beasts," made to be taken and destroyed. (2 Pet. 2:12; Acts 3:23) Jesus made this statement because they said that the spirit that was in him was an unclean spirit—that he was actuated by one of the fallen angels and not by the divine Spirit.

"HATH NEVER FORGIVENESS"

The Bible teaches that the penalty of Adam's sin was death—cutting off from life—but that under divine providence the work of Jesus is to release all mankind from that death sentence, and give to all an opportunity of returning to harmony with God by bringing all to a clearer knowledge of the truth. To some this knowledge comes now, with the privilege of becoming members of the bride class, joint-heirs with Jesus. To such as accept this privilege and receive the begetting of the holy Spirit, the test of life or death everlasting begins.

But with the world this is not the time of testing respecting life or death everlasting. For them the next age, the period of Messiah's kingdom, will be the testing time, and their privilege will be to attain human perfection, otherwise to be cut off in the second death. Meantime, whatever light they may be enjoying will be either helpful or injurious, as they shall deal with it. If they allow it to have an uplifting influence in their lives they will be that much more advantaged when they shall come under the kingdom influences and tests; they will not need to have so many stripes.

On the contrary, those who violate their consciences and ignore the light which they enjoy and sin against it, will find themselves proportionately degraded when they shall come under the kingdom influences and tests. The scribes of this lesson had so misused their education and opportunities as to be in great danger of becoming so degraded that even the kingdom influences would not bring them to a condition worthy of everlasting life.

BROTHERS, SISTERS AND MOTHER

Today's study closes with the Master's explanation of the class to which he acknowledged relationship. The multitudes who flocked to his miracles, and to hear him speak as never man spake, were chiefly the poor and the publicans and sinners, and such as were not great nor very religious according to the standards of their time. Their degradation, their realization that they were sinners, made the Master's "wonderful words of life" especially attractive to them. No one else offered them hope. All others declared that God would not notice them. The religionists of that day reproved Jesus because of his recognition of the lower classes, but none were so low, so degraded, that he would not lend them his helping hand if they had a disposition to return to the Father's house. He was indeed the Friend of all willing to come to the Father by him.

An opportunity of showing the multitudes the basis for his sympathy came when Jesus' mother and brethren on the outside of the throng sent him word that they desired to see him. How beautiful the lesson of the Great Teacher's breadth of spirit, regardless of caste and class, when he said, "Who is my mother and my brethren?" And then, looking toward his disciples who were sitting near him and taking in his teachings, he said, "Behold, my mother and my brethren! for whosoever will do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister and my mother."—Matt. 12:46-50.

GOULD FREE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

555 EAST SIXTH ST., SO. BOSTON, MASS.

Probably many of our readers are acquainted with those who are blind. They may do them a large amount of good by informing them that by postal card request they can obtain free reading matter by addressing as above. This literature for the blind is printed in raised characters which the blind

can read. In writing state which system the person has learned to use, as the Library contains a variety. It is a Truth Library. Many of the blind are deeply appreciative of the message that a glorious day of blessing is coming to the world.

REPROVE WORKS OF DARKNESS

EPHESIANS 5:11-21.—JUNE 30.

TEXT:—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging."—Prov. 20:1.

Light and darkness are used as figures and as synonyms for truth and untruth, righteousness and sin. Thus, "God is Light and in him is no darkness at all." Thus also Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world." Thus also he said of his followers when he was leaving them, "Ye are the light of the world"; "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

On the contrary, Satan is styled the "prince of darkness"; and his rule of unrighteousness is styled "the kingdom of darkness"; and those subject to his influence are styled "the children of darkness." Evil works contrary to the Lord and righteousness are styled "works of darkness."

When our first parents sinned they forfeited fellowship with God, and because of disobedience became children of the adversary; and Jesus said to such in his day, "Ye are of your father, the devil, because his works ye do." (John 8:44) Thus our entire race came under the influence of the darkness of sin. A night of sin, sorrow and death has followed for now six thousand years. We have the promise of a glorious morning when Messiah shall reign, when "Satan shall be bound for a thousand years," and when "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams."

But this morning has not yet come; we have it merely by faith, by hope. God's promises respecting that glorious morning are figuratively called "light," and these constitute the Bible. So the Scriptures, after telling us that darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen, tell us also that the Bible is a light to the path of God's people in the midst of this darkness. "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a lantern to my footsteps." (Psa. 119:105) St. Peter said, "We have a more sure Word of prophecy, to which we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn."—2 Pet. 1:19.

LIGHT REPROVES DARKNESS

In the present time, therefore, the masses of the world—deluded, enslaved and intoxicated by ignorance, superstition and the wiles of the adversary—are generally sympathetic with the darkness wherein they are. They were born in it and are so accustomed to it that if brought immediately into the presence of the light they would be in distress. There are not many light-bearers in the world anyway. True, the census reports four hundred millions of Christians, but alas! the vast majority give no sign of ever having seen the true light, and many of those who did receive the light put it under a bushel, until it was extinguished.

Surely it is as true today as it was in Jesus' day that a very small number of humanity, comparatively, have the true light of the Gospel of God, the holy Spirit illuminating their minds and hearts, and who set this light upon a candlestick that it might give light in the midst of darkness.

But although these are few in number, they are very precious to the Lord. He calls them his saints, his jewels, and tells us that at his second coming, prior to the setting up of his kingdom to rule the world, these, as his jewel class, shall be gathered to himself beyond the veil—changed by the power of the first resurrection from human to the divine nature. These he tells us he will gather as his true "wheat," in the harvest of this age, into his heavenly garner—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:43.

It is this latter class that the Apostle addresses in this lesson—the same class which the Savior addressed saying, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) When the Father shall give these the kingdom, as joint-heirs with their Redeemer, everything will be changed. The prince of darkness will be bound for a thousand years. The Prince of Light will shine forth to scatter all the darkness and miasma of sin, sorrow, ignorance and superstition.

THE LIGHT-BEARERS' RESPONSIBILITY

In today's lesson the Apostle is explaining the responsibility of these light-bearers. They represent God in this dark, benighted world; they represent the justice, wisdom, love and power of God. They are not able to let all of this glorious light so shine before men as to scatter the gross darkness of the present time, but they can do much to glorify their Father and can measurably scatter the thick darkness and bring in a sort of twilight at least to some. Obligation to do this is laid upon all of them.

These are not expected to convert the world, but merely to find a sufficient number of similar characters to themselves to complete the foreordained membership in the church, the bride class, the joint-heirs. Faithfulness and zeal in this service will determine whether or not they will be worthy of having a place in the bride class, and, if worthy, how high a station of honor they may occupy. Let us give heed gladly to the divine Word respecting our obligation.

We must "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." How searching, how positive—absolutely no fellowship with them! More than this, we must not be content with a negative opposition, but must reprove them. However wisely we may seek to fulfil these requirements, they are sure to bring to us the enmity, the disfavor and the disappointment of many whom we love, and whose good opinion we strongly desire. But as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ we must be loyal, we must be faithful. He that is ashamed of the Master and his Word and the principles of righteousness for which he stands, of him will the Savior be ashamed when he comes to establish his kingdom, when he comes to reckon with his servants.

Evidently the Apostle does not mean that we shall undertake to reprove everything that is out of accord with our high ideals of the divine law and the divine will, because he here mentions the things to be reproved, saying, "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret"—uncleanness, impure practices, the Apostle evidently had in mind. We must manifest our disapproval when we are in close contact with such things.

This does not mean that we shall leave the preaching of the Gospel to go "slumming," to do "muck-raking." It may not mean that we shall even publicly denounce the evil, but it surely does mean that our lives shall be so contrary to all sinful and impure practices that all may take knowledge that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of him. This is evidently the Apostle's thought in verse 13. It is not necessary for us to suppose that the world is in full sympathy with all the darkness and sin prevalent. On the contrary, as the Apostle suggests (verse 14), some are asleep and do not, therefore, realize the distinction between light and darkness. Some of these, if thoroughly awake, might be glad to know of Christ and the true light.

WALK YE CIRCUMSPECTLY

In view of these things, said the Apostle, the followers of Jesus should be careful, circumspect in the walk of life, not foolish, but wise, not squanderers of time, but redeeming the time, purchasing it back from worldly cares and pleasures, to have the more to use in the Master's service, realizing that the days are evil and that all our energies are needful if we would "fight a good fight" for the light as against the darkness of sin. To do this will require that we study and understand the will of the Lord.

If others are drunk with excessive use of wine, let us be filled with a different kind of wine—with the holy Spirit. If others seek to find joy and solace in intoxicants, let us find ours in being filled with the mind of Christ. This spiritual refreshment will lead us to psalms and hymns, and to make merry in our hearts to the Lord, and to be thankful for God's favor in Christ.

THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM

MARK 4:1-20.—JULY 14.

TEXT:—"Receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls."—James 1:21.

The salvation open at the present time has been obtainable only through faith, and faith is dependent upon a measure of knowledge, or revelation, and this knowledge, or revelation, came to us from God, for said St. Peter, "Holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy Spirit." God in this age is calling a class possessed of ears of appreciation for his message. These are mainly the weary and

heavy laden and sin-sick, chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith.

It is not enough that they hear the message, not enough that additionally they accept it, turn from sin and consecrate their lives to God and his service and be accepted of him, through the merit of Jesus, and be begotten of the holy Spirit. From that moment they may be said to be saved

and to have everlasting life, if they follow a certain course. That course includes a continual study of the divine instructions and promises and the exercise of faith and prayer, and obedience and trust, even unto the end.

The point of this lesson is to show the importance of having the right kind of spiritual food, and of using it and not allowing the new nature to become choked by earthly hopes, aims or ambitions. Such as thus overcome will be inheritors with Jesus of his glorious Messianic kingdom of a thousand years, which is to bless Israel and, through Israel, all the families of the earth.

Jesus gave the parable of the Sower of the "good seed," some of which fell by the wayside, and was devoured by the fowls; some fell on rocky ground where it had no depth of earth, and brought forth no fruitage; some amongst thorns, which choked it; some into the good ground, which yielded thirty fold, sixty fold and one hundred fold. The disciples were perplexed and unable to understand it and inquired of the Great Teacher its meaning.

His answer was that he was quite willing that they should understand the parable, and that it related to the kingdom of God, but it was not to be understood by outsiders. He explained that it was for this reason that He always spoke in parables, so that the general public might see and hear and not understand, because the masses even of the Jews were not in a heart condition to understand and be profited by these lessons respecting the kingdom. Only such persons as desired to become members of the kingdom class and were willing to undertake the stringent conditions of the "narrow way"—only such were to fully and clearly understand the parables of the kingdom. This is in harmony with all of God's dealings in the present time. We read again, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise (toward God) shall understand." And again we read, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant."

In Verse 13 the Master indicates that this parable would serve as a general key to his followers for their interpretation of all his parables. "Seed" does not mean literal seed, "birds" do not mean birds, "thorns" do not mean thorns, etc. Proceeding, the Great Teacher expounded the parable as follows: (1) The seed that was sown represents the Word of God. More than this, it represents that particular element or feature of God's Word which relates to the kingdom.

This is shown by St. Matthew's account of the same parable (Matt. 13:19): "When anyone heareth the Word (message of the kingdom), and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he that receiveth the seed by the wayside." Our lesson says that the wicked one meant is Satan. Satan and his evil agents are therefore represented in the parable by "birds," and the lesson is that however much of the Gospel of the kingdom we may read or hear preached, we lose the benefit of that which we do not understand.

Evidently, then, much of the Bible study and much of the religious reading is lost, because not understood. The secondary lesson is that one reason why the "good seed" does not enter into the understanding is that the heart is not in a receptive attitude. Like the wayside path, it is hard. Such hard hearts, selfish hearts, proud hearts, are of the kind which the Savior does not wish to have understand his parables nor understand the glorious kingdom plan which they expound.

(2) The seed sown in the stony place represents those who, when they hear the message of the kingdom, are delighted. They say, How good that sounds! What a grand time there will be when Messiah rules in righteousness to bless the world and lift up the poor, degraded members of Adam's family! And how great is the privilege of becoming members of the bride of Christ, to be associated with him in his glorious kingdom work! But the class represented by the stony ground have little depth of character; they are merely emotional.

The "seed," or message of the kingdom, which these heard with such delight at first, never matures in their hearts, because they are too shallow, too superficial in their love of righteousness. Below the surface those are hard hearts and selfish, and so, when they find that the good seed of the kingdom is unpopular and that it will bring them a certain amount of reproach and contempt and perhaps persecution—then all their ardor oozes out, their zeal is at an end. The kingdom message fails to produce in them the fruitage desired. The trouble was not with the seed nor with the sower, nor with the sun of persecution necessary for the ripening—the fault lay in the fact that their hearts were not right; they were hard, stony.

(3) The seed sown in the thorny ground represents those who have good hearts and have heard the message of the kingdom and appreciate it and rejoice in it, but their hearts are divided. They allow the cares of this life and the love of riches to have such a share of their heart's affections that the kingdom message does not have the opportunity to bring forth such fruitage as will be pleasing to the Lord.

Let us note carefully that these thorns do not, as some suggest, represent gambling devices, card parties, saloons and other places of ill-repute, nor secret sins and vices. None of those things should appeal to Christians at all. The Master distinctly tells us that the thorns represent "the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches." Thus every Christian man or woman who has received the message of the kingdom and has allowed the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to choke and frustrate his prospects as respects the kingdom is represented in this parable. Very nice people, hospitable, educated, etc., belong to this class of the parable represented by the thorny ground.

(4) According to the parable there will be three classes of believers who will attain the kingdom—or we may say, they will all be one class in the sense that they will bring forth the one kind of fruitage and be acceptable to the Lord as joint-heirs in his kingdom, but the differences between them will be in the amount of fruitage such yield—some thirty fold, some sixty fold and some a hundred fold.

The Lord does not explain the differences between these fruitages, but we may well understand that the amount of fruitage will be measured by the amount of love and zeal in the heart. The fully appreciative and the fully loving will be the most energetic to know and to do the Master's will, and they will bring forth the largest fruitage—a hundred fold—and they, too, will have the chief places in the kingdom.

St. Paul declares that as star differs from star in glory, so it will be with those who attain unto the first resurrection—all will come forth glorious, but some will blaze with a more resplendent brilliancy, because of their great zeal, and therefore their great likeness to their Redeemer and Lord. Jesus likewise mentions the distinctions amongst those who will sit with him in his throne, he assured James and John that, if they were willing to drink of his cup and be baptized into his death, they should surely sit with him in his throne; but as to whether or not they would have the chief places of honor and distinction was not for him to say. Those places will be given according to the Father's determination; that is to say, according to principles of justice.

Those will have the places of honor next to the Redeemer, who, in this life, will manifest to God the greatest harmony with his character, in their zeal, their love for God, the truth and the brethren.

We are not to understand that those people represented by the thorny ground and the wayside will suffer eternal torments because of their unfaithfulness in respect to the kingdom, nor are we to understand that others, who do not hear about the kingdom in the present life at all, will on this account suffer eternal torment. They will all, however, lose the grand privilege and glorious blessing of participating in the kingdom, whatever they may obtain under the restitution blessings which that kingdom will inaugurate for the blessing of mankind in general.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY CARDS

Brother L. W. Jones, M. D., when studying medicine found great help from the use of memory-cards. Applying the principle to the study of God's Word, he has gotten out Scripture memory-cards. On the one side of the card is printed a text of Scripture. On the other side is the reference. Different colors of card classify different Bible topics. The pack consists of fifty cards. They can be used individually or in a company. The text can be cited and the quotation called for; or, the quotation can be read and the citation called for. Thus the most prominent texts of the Scriptures can be memorized and, at the same time, the memory will be generally strength-

ened along these lines. It is particularly convenient to have the desired Scripture at your tongue's end.

Brother Jones sold a considerable number of these sets, but now has turned over to the Society his entire stock. The fifty cards, neatly boxed, postpaid, sell for twenty-five cents. There are two series of them. Some who have learned the first series desire more and the second series was prepared for them.

These cards in good quantity are now in stock and subject to your order. Have a look at them at the convention book stall, where your orders can be placed, if you desire.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S EPISTLE TO PILGRIMS

In April the letter below was sent to the pilgrim brethren. Now we publish it for the benefit of all our readers, at the suggestion of some of the pilgrims. One of these expresses his reasons for suggesting the publication of the letter, as follows:—

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—The sweet, holy Spirit of the Master's love and the tender care for the sacred interests of the Lord's flock shines out so beautifully in your letter to the pilgrim brethren that my heart responds in the same spirit to assure you that every item of your counsel is carefully noted.

The spirit of your letter is so overflowing with the love of the Master that it would seem to me that its publication in **THE WATCH TOWER** would serve the cause most effectively.

(1) It would help all the friends of the truth to see the beautiful relationship that exists between yourself and the pilgrim brethren and give a true expression of the animus prompting the service. Some of the friends quite overlook this and fail completely to grasp the loving relationship between yourself and the brethren in the field.

(2) It would enable all the friends to see that the pilgrims are faithfully following the instructions of the Office when they call attention to the colporteur service, the privileges of the extension work, the blessing of the family Manna at breakfast, and the interests of family worship. The endeavor thus to look after the interests of the dear "flock" is not a desire to make a record, or to show a spirit of officiousness, but is the humble love of the Master for his true "sheep," manifested unobtrusively in those who in his providence he entrusts with this service.

TO THE PILGRIM BROTHERS OF THE I. B. S. A.:—

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Redeemer! I often wish that I could meet you personally and say a few words and hear from you. I will take this opportunity of giving you my little message inaudibly and without the expense of a regular journey. I want to refresh your memories respecting some things which I have already said, but which, it appears, will slip from the memories of some of your number. My experience in the work and knowledge of conditions are the basis for the following counsels:

(1) Avoid as much as possible all unkind references to Christian ministers or others who differ from us in Bible interpretation. Preach the Gospel! Let its mighty power do the work. In referring to others, speak as sympathetically as possible, endeavoring to make apologies and allowances rather than to condemn, which is not our province. Avoid so far as possible all discussion of the immortality of the soul, the Trinity and our Lord's presence. The time may yet come for wrangling over these things, but we believe it has not yet arrived. Take your cue, please, from the **DAWNS**, **TOWERS** and sermons, and be sure to make your statements less rather than more pungent and specific. The people are prejudiced along these lines. Experience shows that they can be much better reached otherwise, and after they come to understand other matters of the truth—when these matters so difficult for them become easy.

(2) By precept, as well as by example, you can help all the dear friends along the lines mentioned and help the cause much. The truth has suffered more from the unwisdom of its friends than from anything its enemies have said.

(3) Continue to give my love to all the dear classes and individuals in the truth as you meet them. I love to think of you all as in a measure representatives of myself as well as of the Lord, and I believe that the friends get most good from the Pilgrim visits when they view them from this standpoint. Usually, except on Sundays, you will have plenty of time aside from the meetings to look after the lame, halt, blind and sick of the "sheep"—to carry them crumbs of comfort, to help bind up their wounds, or to encourage them in the good way. I trust that this opportunity for service is not neglected. It is one of the most important. Sometimes a dear "sheep" will become entangled and cease to attend the

meetings. It is a part of your shepherding work to look after just such cases—to hunt them up and to help them back to fellowship if possible, or, failing in this, to encourage them to be loyal to the Lord whatever their outward conditions.

(4) As representatives of the Society, the friends will naturally inquire of you respecting the colporteur work, the volunteer work, etc., or, if they fail to ask and you see no activity along these lines, it would be your duty and privilege to bring up the question and inquire to what extent the service of the Lord is going forward. Make inquiries about classes where they have a surplus of talent and encourage the class extension work. Keep in memory that you are not speaking for yourself merely nor especially, but that you are the Society's representative and, above all, along this line in our present work, the Lord's representative. Be careful, therefore, that your counsels shall be encouraging and helpful, being not carelessly given.

(5) As you go to the various homes please give the dear friends to understand that I have requested you to notice whether or not the **HEAVENLY MANNA** is used at breakfast, dinner, supper, or some time, and whether or not an opportunity is sought to have the family worship or giving of thanks at the table. Assure them that our interest is not prompted by any other motive than that of their good. So sure do we feel that prayer and consideration of spiritual things is essential to spiritual growth that we fear that all the dear friends who allow business, pleasure, or anything to come between themselves and the Lord are separating themselves from the spirit of divine fellowship which the Lord encourages. Remind them also at a convenient time of the great blessing that is being experienced by some in connection with the continuous reading of the Six Volumes of **SCRIPTURE STUDIES** every year—ten to twelve pages a day. We are leaky vessels, and the truth gradually ebbs away unless we replenish.

(6) It is our supposition that all who are deeply interested in the present truth and who see it from the viewpoint in **THE WATCH TOWER** are interested in the weekly sermons. We assume that they would be interested for their own sakes and interested additionally for the sake of millions of others who are being thus reached. All such will desire to have regularly some paper publishing the sermons. Generally we can supply them cheaper than they could otherwise obtain them.

But another matter should be borne in mind, namely, that their subscriptions should go to such paper or papers as need some encouragement—even though it should cost more—even though in some respects it should not be as pleasing to them as another. As it is, two or three papers have immense lists of our readers—far more than their share—while other papers get comparatively small encouragement and are always in danger of becoming discouraged and dropping the service. The best general rule for friends to follow is to send subscriptions to **THE WATCH TOWER** Office and to take the paper published nearest to their home, which carries the one or the three-column service—whichever they prefer. We make special mention of this because some of the dear friends have been unintentionally working at cross purposes in this matter, seeming not to recognize the wiser course.

This year we are planning for three general conventions, and I hope that we can arrange that each of you shall have a chance to attend one of them. I am expecting to be at all, and therefore hope to see all of you. The location for the first of these will be near Warrensburg, Mo. (Chautauqua), June 1-8; the second at Toronto, Can., June 30-July 7, and the third at Washington, D. C., July 6-14. The object in having the three conventions this year is to accommodate those who cannot travel so far as is necessary when there is only one convention. We shall expect about fifteen hundred at each of these conventions—perhaps two thousand.

With much Christian love, your brother and servant in the Lord,
C. T. RUSSELL.

IT IS NOT THE DEED WE DO

"It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.

"The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told."

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

APPLIES TO THE BEGOTTEN ONES

Question.—To whom do the words in Heb. 6:4-6 apply—"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world [age] to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance"?

Answer.—The conditions mentioned in the passage above quoted are all more or less intertwined. That is to say, the one who has been made partaker of the heavenly gift of justification is sanctified, begotten of the holy Spirit; for only in that way can he get God's evidence respecting his justification. No one is justified by merely believing that Jesus lived or that Jesus died. In order to come to the point of justification and have the merit of Christ imputed, he must previously have presented his body a living sacrifice; and faith in the Lord Jesus must accompany this presentation.

Anyone having done all in his power—having turned from sin, having believed in Jesus as the Redeemer, and having presented his body a living sacrifice—must next receive the imputation of Jesus' merit to make up his shortcomings, to cover his blemishes, in order that the Heavenly Father may be able to accept the sacrifice; for no imperfect thing can come upon the altar of the Lord. It requires the merit of Christ to make good what is lacking in the one who presents himself in sacrifice; and only those who thus believe and present their bodies in sacrifice are the recipients of Christ's merit by imputation; and only such are begotten of the holy Spirit. God's arrangement is that no one can be justified unless he has made a full consecration, after having already turned from sin. Christ would not impute his merit to any except such as make this full consecration; and the Father would not accept by begetting with the holy Spirit any others than those who have done so.

Those who have received justification have at the same time received the begetting of the holy Spirit, which is "the power of the age to come." The falling away of such, the Apostle says, would mean that they could never be renewed again. Why? Because they have had their share of the blessing of Christ. Christ's death was to bring a blessing—and only one—to every member of Adam's race—one full blessing, a complete blessing, such a blessing as will enable every member of the race—if he will, when he understands it—to come fully and completely into harmony with God and thus to have eternal life. But after he has received his full blessing and then has rejected it, there is no hope in his case. He can never justify himself. He has had the merit of Christ and has repudiated it. There is no hope of renewing such a one, says the Apostle. The fate of such would not, of course, be eternal torment, but destruction—the second death.

THE DICTIONARY DEFINITION

Question.—Is there any difference between "death" and "annihilation"?

Answer.—The *Standard Dictionary*, our best authority on such matters, gives the following definition of annihilate: (1) *To put out of existence; destroy absolutely; reduce to nothing.* (2) *To destroy the identity of.* Its synonym is, *Exterminate, i. e., destroy entirely.* Words are only vehicles for conveying thought, and much depends upon the vehicle which best expresses your meaning in the question. The spark of animal energy which God supplied to Adam and which he, in turn, dispensed to his offspring, but which was forfeited for him and for his posterity by his act of disobedience, passes at death from the individual as absolutely as it does from a brute beast. The word "life," however, as used in a large number of instances, does not stand merely for the spark of animal energy, but is a synonym for soul or being.

In God's purpose or arrangement this being has not in death become extinct, exterminated, annihilated; for he has provided for it a future. There is, however, no sentient being in the sense of consciousness, or knowledge, or appreciation of pain or of joy, or any other experience. But the divine Creator, who first gave being, has declared that in the case of Adam and his children it is his purpose to provide a Redeemer, through whom all may be restored as completely as before they came under the death sentence.

The world, who do not recognize God or his power, and who have no knowledge of the promise of resurrection through the merit of Christ's redemptive work, might properly enough speak of one in death as being extinct, as a dead animal. This is the standpoint of the agnostic. But by believers, instructed of God respecting his purpose in Christ and in the resurrection of the dead eventually, and in the opportunity

of eternal life to every one, this matter is to be viewed from the same standpoint from which our Lord viewed it when he said, "He is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live [or are alive] unto him" (Luke 20:38); or as the Apostle Paul stated when he spoke of "God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17); that is, God purposes their awakening, and speaks of the present condition of Adamic death as merely a suspension of life, and not as annihilation, extermination, extinction.

You probably have already in your library a little volume entitled *THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES*—fourth million now on the press. This will give you a much fuller answer to your question than our limited space will allow in this column.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO LIVE WITHOUT SIN?

Question.—When the Apostle wrote (1 John 2:1) "These things I write unto you that ye sin not," was it his thought that it is possible for us to live without sin?

Answer.—In reading this text and many other Scriptures we need continually to keep in mind the fact that those who are accepted of God as his children, as members of the body of Christ, begotten of the holy Spirit, are all classed as new creatures and not as men. The new creature, therefore, in this text, would be the *ye*—"that ye sin not," as though the Apostle said, "The object of my writing is that you might realize the responsibility of abstaining from sin and continuing in God's love." Then he informs us how this is to be accomplished. In this as in other respects he shows that the new creature is responsible for the body. Anyone who would say that he was perfect and without flaw, would be deceiving himself. Nevertheless, these flaws are not of the new creature, but chargeable to the flesh. If the new creature should sin wilfully it would cease to be a new creature, because the new creature is begotten of the Spirit, has joined in the warfare against sin, and is facing in the very opposite direction of sin.

But if any man sin, let him not cast away his confidence in God, but let him remember that the Father, foreknowing that the new creature could not control every thought and work and act of the flesh, has made provision for these, and has provided for us an Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Our Lord has already become our Advocate. He has appeared on our behalf—appeared before the Father and made satisfaction for us.—Heb. 9:24.

Remembering this, if we find that through lack of faith, or weakness of the flesh, a step has been taken which is contrary to the Lord's will and our best spiritual interests, no time should be lost in retracing the step and calling upon the Lord. We have an altar consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, far superior in every way to that altar which Abraham consecrated with the blood of typical animals, and the Apostle exhorts us, "Let us, therefore, come boldly [courageously—full of faith] unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need."—Heb. 4:16.

APPLIES TO THOSE NOT SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

Question.—"Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." (Isa. 24:6.) Who are these few men? And how were the others burned?

Answer.—In the great burning day the "heavens" will be on fire, and "the earth and the works therein shall be burned up." This time of trouble will involve the whole world, practically everybody. The Lord speaks of some who will be preserved in the midst of this trouble. Just as the three Hebrews were preserved in the fiery furnace, so we expect that some will be spared in the time of trouble.

"Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) This invitation seems to be to others than the spirit-begotten. It would not apply to the church, for her deliverance will be over before the culmination of the trouble. It would not apply to the "great company" class, for it is incidental to their deliverance that they shall suffer in this time of trouble the destruction of the flesh, and come up to honor out of "great tribulation." This, therefore, would seem to apply to a class of the world who are not spirit-begotten.

PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS MESSENGERS

Question.—"For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared. He hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." (Isa. 30:33.) Who is the king for whom Tophet is prepared?

Answer.—Tophet was a name given to the Valley of Hinnom, which is symbolically a representation of the second

death, and the Lord is intimating that he has plenty of fire and fuel to accomplish all this destruction and that the Spirit of the Lord will set it afire and cause it to burn to the complete destruction. The king for whom it is prepared is the devil, with his messengers. He is the instigator of evil, whose destruction is already ordained. First, however, in the divine providence, before he shall be destroyed, the glorious reign of Messiah is arranged for, during which all of mankind shall be brought to a full knowledge of the truth, and to a full opportunity of coming into harmony with God, and of demonstrating whether they have the disposition of God or the disposition of the adversary, Satan. When the choice of each shall have been fully determined, the second death shall swallow up all for whom it has been prepared. Such as demonstrate their sympathy with evil will be counted as the messengers of Satan, and will have a share with him in the second death.

NOTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT URIM AND THUMMIM

Question.—Is there any revelation as to what the Urim and Thummim consisted of, or how the priests were answered?

Answer.—There is nothing specific known on this subject. In some manner or other, it is supposed, the breastplate that was worn by the High Priest was used as the Urim and Thummim—that is, to give definite answer, Yes or No, to the questions that were propounded. For instance, if the question were asked, Shall Israel go out to war with this nation? or, Shall Israel enter into alliance with that nation? the Lord's answer was indicated by the breastplate. How these questions were answered, we are not informed. Nothing in the Scriptures tells us, and we have no tradition even that gives any very clear answer. We know that they had the Urim and Thummim and that the answer was indicated in some way with the precious stones of the breastplate, but just how, nobody knows.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR FRIENDS:—

Enclosed find report for the year's work in literature for the blind. Previous to March 1, 1911, the work of transcribing the SCRIPTURE STUDIES into type for the blind was in its inceptive stage and no systematic record was kept.

However, at this time, having secured financial aid from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and from others who had become interested in the work, it becomes expedient to adopt a business method.

Itemized, the work at present is as follows:

Books in circulation since March 1.....	103
Sold, complete copies, Vol. 1, in 7 parts.....	2
Sold, parts of Vol. 1.....	2
Books on hand.....	700
50 copies Vol. 1 in New York Point, in.....	7 parts
26 copies Vol. 1, English Braille.....	3 parts
25 copies TABERNACLE SHADOWS.....	2 parts
Balance in tracts, sermons, TOWER articles, etc.	
Copies sent to British office, Eng. Braille, Vol. 1.....	9
Copies TABERNACLE SHADOWS.....	3
Copies to South Africa, Vol. 1 and TABERNACLE SHADOWS, each.....	1
Received	\$267.41
Expended for supplies, etc.....	91.49

Balance\$175.92

The labor has been the free-will offering of the Lords' people, confining expenses to the purchase of necessary supplies.

Sincerely yours in the Lord's service,

F. B. GOULD,

Librarian Gould Free Library for the Blind.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Our three elders are doing good work, and we are all striving to grow in grace and knowledge and love. I pray constantly that daughter and I may be helps and not hindrances to the class. The hardest trial that has come to me during the years has been the spirit of disapproval among certain classes of truth-people against any kind of prosperity—temporal and spiritual.

After all the talk we hear, I have often seen the poor treat the rich in much meaner way than I have ever seen the rich treat the poor. It seems that many people hate everybody who has more of anything than they have. I simply cannot comprehend such a spirit, and surely the Kingdom class cannot have any such spirit—regardless of professions along other lines!

Just as I desire the Master's patience when I am ignorant and out of the way, I pray for patience toward all. I already love these—sincerely—but our own children, whom we love dearly, sometimes try our patience. "Cast not away your

confidence, . . . for ye have need of patience," is often in my mind, with the testimony that Enoch had, that he pleased God.

So long as this peace of pleasing God is mine I can endure the contradiction of sinners, remembering how the Lord "endured the cross, despising the shame." Ours is a wonderful hope—not a floating, but an anchored one.

Now, a question please: Is it the part of wisdom for a pilgrim to begin a public lecture by declaring that we do not believe in the divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, eternal torment and the Trinity, and not explain clearly what we do believe?

The impression gathered is that we do not believe in the prehuman existence of our Lord, future life for mankind, penalty for sin, nor the holy Spirit!

The statement in January 15 TOWER satisfies me perfectly; but many did not seem to fully grasp it. The humanity of Jesus, the Deity of Christ; the personality of the holy Spirit in Father and Son; immortality for Jesus and the church—The Christ; everlasting life for many others, etc.—all this is a clear, comprehensive statement.

After a pilgrim had made the first-mentioned declaration in an Illinois town recently, the men who had attended the meeting, on invitation of a merchant-brother, went to him next day and said, "You need never talk to us again, for we will not listen." I shall be so glad when the "pure language" is turned to the poor, bewildered people—for how can they understand the now often misstated facts? Some of the friends of the truth have been its greatest enemies!

Once I heard a pilgrim (now out of the truth) say that all modern conveniences were of the devil; all moral reforms were of the devil, and all education was of the devil—in fact, that everything but ignorance (and himself, perhaps) was of the devil!

I thought he was a child of darkness, fit for the "dark ages," and I was relieved when he was no longer a pilgrim, and not surprised when he was entirely out of the truth and an opposer of the truth.

I have heard testimonials in which friends "rejoiced" because ignorant, "glorying in their shame"—because "not many wise are called"—apparently determined to remain as ignorant and unreasonable as possible—counting it a virtue! Surely we are "called" to be educated in the school of Christ!

Often I find it is not so much the truth that people oppose as misapprehensions gathered from misstatements of the friends. The real truth is beautiful and satisfying, and acceptable when understood.

Your Easter sermon was lucid enough to be easily understood by any of average intelligence. I rejoiced in this as I read it.

Yours in Blessed Hope,

BEREAN LESSON QUESTION BOOKS

FOR TABERNACLE SHADOWS and for SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vols. I., II. and V., are now in stock. Price five cents each—fifty cents per dozen, postpaid.

Many of the Classes find these questions very helpful. The difficulty with many Classes in the past has been that not every one has the teaching ability of drawing the information of the lessons from the Class. The successful class leader has

little to say except as he sums up the answer to each question after it has been discussed by the Class; or, if the question be not understood by the Class, he may often render assistance by paraphrasing it and, if possible, simplifying it.

Excellent as public preaching is we believe that the Lord's people learn more in Berean Classes than by listening to any sermon. Thought is stimulated, quickened.