

also will exclude me from their circle. Still, knowing that I am not the servant of man, I am confident that if the Lord wants me to go to India again, he can and will prepare the way for me.

I regret having returned the MILLENNIAL DAWN, and am now ordering a few books.

With grateful thanks, yours in the patience of Jesus Christ,
(Miss) M. A. McBRIDE, Ireland.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:—

It has been a long time since I have written you, and so I thought to drop you a few lines, just to let you know that I am still in the "race," striving to reach the "mark." Glory to God!

Acting upon suggestions received from you previously, I have now for the second time refused to sign petitions for dram-shop license. I wish to state first, that I know you instructed me rightly and Scripturally, for which I thank you. Added to this, the churches here organized quite a temperance movement, with which I also would have no connection, but have endeavored to occupy neutral ground; and the same in regard to politics; seeing that I am an "alien," I would not vote. In consequence there is a disposition to persecute me—from all sides, seemingly; because formerly I was interested in church work, took part in politics and signed petitions for dram-shop license. But do not think, dear brother, that I am complaining. Nay, "I rejoice in the Lord always!" Formerly I was a member of a fraternal organization, and because I refused to accept suggestions from any of the Masonic fraternity (which includes all men of any prominence in our town) to become a member, they likewise have transferred their patronage, generally, to a competitor.

I am realizing how, by taking part in a political campaign, or other movement, it would be possible that I might be found fighting against the Lord, "who maketh even the wrath of men to praise him." I am realizing more and more the import of our dear Savior's words, while praying to the Father, "They are in the world, but not of it." Ah, yes! This means much to any consecrated believer. While we are in the world, yet we should keep separate from the world—not have our robe "spotted" by contact. If we would not be worldly minded, it is necessary that we have great care how we act in regard to those things which at this present time engage the attention of the world generally,—reform movements, matters of finance, etc. For inasmuch as we give our time to such things (no, not our time, seeing that we have consecrated our all unto the Lord) in so much the world has a claim upon us, so that while we are in the world, we would also be of the world, seeing that which interest the world would also interest us. "The natural (worldly minded) man perceiveth not the things that are

spiritual," and consequently is not interested in them; how much more, then, we that do see should not mind the things natural or worldly. All such movements which are the absorbing topics of the day, merely engender "strife, malice, anger, hatred," etc., causing all who have connection therewith to foster and cultivate an evil disposition, wholly contrary to the law of love.

Praying the Lord's continued blessings upon you and all with you, Yours in the one blessed hope,

A. W. KRUEGER,—Missouri.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—

The many spiritual blessings we have enjoyed throughout the year increases our gratitude to and love for ZION'S WATCH TOWER. We will not be able to comprehend, dear brother, how much we owe the Lord this side of the "golden city." Until that glorious day when we reach the glad home-land,—the fruition of all our hopes,—we take much pleasure in manifesting the appreciation of which we are now capable.

The Society's Annual Report filled my heart with thanksgiving. There was only one sad note for which I am grieved, and that was the reference to the fact that some of the letters received at the TOWER office were filled with acrimony. Truly, this must be very painful to you.

Looking back over the old year I can truthfully state it has been a blessed year for me. Enclosed find money order for \$—; please credit \$1.00 on TOWER subscription, and balance in Good Hopes for 1902. You will also find herewith my Good Hopes filled out for 1903.

Wishing you a very merry Christmas and a happy, profitable New Year, with much Christian love, I remain, yours in the service of our King,

CARRIE CROWLEY,—Missouri.

The eight-year old daughter of a sister in the truth writes the following herself:—

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I had my choice to go to Eden Musee or have the 50 cents and I want to consecrate it to the Lord. Mamma has told me all about how many different ways I could give it to the Lord, and I would rather have a part in sending the truth to some one; so you will please put it in the Tract Fund. I will send it with mamma's.

I sent my love to you and hope I shall see you some day. God bless and keep you all.

Your loving friend, RUTH SNOW,—New Jersey.

From another of the little ones:—

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

As we children have sold our pony, enclosed please find eight dollars, which is my share, to be used in the spreading of the truth.

Your sister in Christ, HATTIE E. HUYCK,—Iowa.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ABOUT MISSIONS IN CHINA

Francis H. Nichols, an American traveler, writes in the *Atlantic Monthly*:

"Perhaps in the higher sense, that 'no power is lost that ever wrought for God,' it is not wholly correct to say that efforts to introduce Christianity into China have failed. But humanly speaking, in proportion to the amount of money, lives and effort expended, they have apparently not met with great success. The small number of converts after one century of Protestant and three centuries of Roman Catholic endeavor is the least part of the failure of missions in China. All over the empire today there prevails a spirit of hatred and antagonism to Christianity so intense and so peculiar that a certain brilliant missionary in describing it had to coin a new word. He has called the feeling of the provincial authorities of Shantung toward Christianity 'Christophobia.' Usually it is specially stipulated when foreign teachers are engaged for recently organized government schools that they shall make no reference even in the remotest way to the Bible or to anything connected with it. In the gradual subsiding of the Boxer storm the one kind of foreigners warned to keep away from a troubled district are always missionaries. Except in the few places where they are numerous enough to form a community by themselves, Christian converts are ostracized, boycotted, and sometimes persecuted."

ENGLAND'S POOR LESS PROSPEROUS

"It is estimated that 500,000 persons are idle in the United Kingdom, and the board of trade returns show the largest percentage for ten years past of unskilled persons out of work, while the proportion of skilled men without employment is constantly growing. The Woolwich arsenal authorities have

discharged 2,000 mechanics since the winter set in and are preparing to let out 4,000 more.

"To the army of people out of work must be added 56,000 members of the army reserve who have been released from service with the colors. The worst distress naturally is visible in the east end, where thousands of unemployed persons daily congregate at the dockyard gates, literally fighting for a chance to do a day's work. Unskilled laborers are there in strong force, and the police find it necessary to escort the foremen who distribute the work tickets each morning.

"A number of newspapers have started subscription columns, and daily print harrowing stories of half-clad school children, many of whom are without food except scanty lunches furnished by sympathetic teachers. A number of the London suburban councils are starting public works in order to employ a portion of the idle persons. The Canning Town suburb, where the distress is keenest, has appropriated \$50,000 for relief work."

FINANCIAL PROSPERITY OF U. S. CHURCHES

The Boston *Transcript*, reviewing the progress of religious matters in the United States during 1902, gives the following summary—the many millions of which cast quite into the shade our report of last December. But the Lord knows how much prosperity the truth can bear advantageously and we bow to his wisdom. Ere long the change will come—truth will be prospered and error will be put to flight. The clipping reads: "Church interests, maintenance and betterments, are now costing the people of the United States \$260,000,000 a year. And this vast sum does not include \$70,000,000 which is given in benevolence, outside of government charity, and in sums above \$5,000 each gift. Of this benevolence \$3 in every \$4

comes from members of churches. It cost to maintain all Baptist churches in the United States last year \$14,138,195, all Episcopal churches \$15,184,926, and all Congregational churches \$10,276,105. Figures for Reformed churches (Dutch) last year are \$1,622,696, and for Presbyterian (North) \$17,080,191. To maintain all Methodist churches, South and North, cost last year \$24,552,800. These figures in every case include betterments. They also include contributions to missions, both home and foreign. Financial figures for Roman Catholic churches are unobtainable, in great part because Catholic officials do not themselves collect them."

HIGHER CRITICISM GAINING GROUND

The following dispatch shows the progress being made by skepticism—infidelity:

"London, Jan. 14.—The *Times*' Berlin correspondent says

NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR GOD'S SERVICE

"If there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame or blind, or have any ill-blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the Lord thy God."—Deut. 15:21.

Such an injunction to the house of servants under Moses is, perhaps, more necessary to the house of sons under Christ (Heb. 3:5, 6), than many are apt to suppose. Inborn selfishness generally suggests that it would be a pity to sacrifice the best things, which could be used to advantage in so many other ways. And it is because this is generally done unconsciously that we now discuss this subject, with a view of helping the true-hearted out of the difficulty. Truly our hearts are exceedingly deceitful and require constant watching as respects their real motives, which they sometimes hide even from the loyal-hearted sons of God.

How often we have seen Christian parents, lovers of the Lord and his cause, who at times would bemoan their own inability to be actively engaged in the Lord's service, and who loved and admired the sacrifices of brethren and sisters in the colporteur service, who, to their injury, held back their own sons and daughters. Their reasoning seems to be that the work of the evangelist, as a colporteur, is good enough for those who have no education, or for such as are untalented; but they would have their children aim *higher* in life;—they would accept the Lord's bounty and expend it upon their children to give them an education, and then point them to medicine or law or literature or school-teaching as honorable and remunerative fields for their talents and education.

What a great mistake! what a sad mistake! How ashamed they will feel, if they ever get into the kingdom, when looking back they will see how lightly they esteemed the wonderful privilege of being co-workers with God in this present time! How vastly different will be their views then, respecting the importance of medicine and law and schools and literature and marriage! How ashamed they will be that they ever thought that the lean and the lame and the ill-favored were good enough to sacrifice to the Lord!—that none should think of colporteur but those who had no capacity for "worldly prosperity!"

On the contrary the consecrated parent should consecrate to the Lord not only his first-born, but all of his children; and from infancy should be instilling into their minds and hearts that the proper course for all of God's people is to devote themselves in largest possible measure to the divine service. They should be taught to regard all of life's affairs with a view to rendering their all to his service in any possible capacity; and to pray that the Lord would accept and use their time, talent, influence—all—in his service, the most honorable service imaginable, and ultimately to be the most highly rewarded. The Apostle's teaching respecting marriage (1 Cor. 7:27-40) should be brought to their attention with the thought of the Apostle that it is not a condemnation of marriage in others, but one of the incidental sacrifices of those anxious to be most fully used in the Lord's service.

Not only so, but the Christian parent who discerns present truth should encourage his child not to strive for the higher education, but to be content with a common school education; because (1) to qualify himself for a profession would be to put before himself a temptation in that direction which would last through life; (2) because the higher education of the present day in all colleges is so impregnated with the evolution theory and higher criticism that the strong probability is that, like others, he would fall into skepticism, which will kill his devotion to the Lord, and he could only be induced to serve the Lord, even outwardly, by an honorable position and a good salary—if, indeed, it left him anything but morality as a substitute for religion!

On the contrary, every man and woman favored by the

that Emperor William appears to be taking a keen interest in what is called the higher Biblical criticism. He recently expressed publicly views which formerly he was understood to regard unfavorably, and spoke of the necessity of further development in religion.

"The Kaiser is on terms of personal friendship with Prof. Harnack, the leading exponent of the higher criticism, but appears to be influenced even more by Prof. Delitzsch, whose lecture, 'Babel und Bibel,' he recently caused to be re-delivered to a select audience at Potsdam palace.

"On Monday night the Emperor and Empress and other exalted personages listened to a lecture wherein Prof. Delitzsch expounded views denying the divine origin of the Bible, and finding a Babylonian source for much of the Old Testament doctrine of theology."

Lord with some knowledge of present truth should at once appreciate the true situation;—that the most talented and best educated have nothing worthy a place on the Lord's altar.—nothing worthy of acceptance in the Lord's service; and, forthwith, each should proceed to devote to it, daily and hourly, the *best* that he has and the *most* that he can, as being the greatest privilege that could ever be offered to angels or men—to be collaborators with God. Some, thus rightly appreciating the matter, are glad to leave medicine and business and schools to engage in the much grander and more important service of the gospel, as colporteur-evangelists;—to carry the printed message, of glad tidings of great joy, to all who have hearing ears. They rightly feel that they have not too much education or talent for so honorable a service as ambassadors for the King of kings, but that if they had more and yet more, it would be to the interest of the work.

Would you have a young man or a young woman dash all the prospects and ambitions of the present life, and enter the colporteur work,—simply because they have accepted present truth and because you urge them to this service? No, indeed: we hope that none so minded will enter the work. The Lord seeketh not such for his service and representatives, and, hence, we do not seek them in his name. He seeks such as "count it all joy" to serve him and his at any sacrifice. Those entering the work against their will would, undoubtedly, do poor work and soon fall away from the truth.

But would you recommend a man of means,—a business man, for instance,—to dispose of his own business and go about colporteurship? living on the interest of his money, or, perhaps, on the principal? Why not? Should we not all have the Master's spirit, expressed by his words: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The Lord's true saints have no business of their *own*, for they gave their all to the Lord at consecration. Their business they manage as trustees for the Lord—not to be turned over at their death, in prosperous condition, to their children or their friends, possibly to their injury. It is to be used by the trustee as wisely as he knows how before death: for then his trusteeship ends, and he must render his account. (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-26) If he can provide for the comfortable necessities of the present life for those dependent upon him, why should he do more for them, or for any cause longer delay to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light"—in the best manner open to him? Alas, how few of those who recognize their trusteeship are faithful to it and will be able to render their report with joy, and to hear the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Before "the harvest is past and the summer is ended," let us get awake, dear brothers and sisters, to our privileges and opportunities and use them thankfully. But let us not be misunderstood as commending anything impracticable. Only exceptional ones can do more than provide for their own personal comforts—even at the very liberal terms granted to colporteurs; and "he that provideth not for his own household is worse than an unbeliever" is the Apostle's argument. Those hampered by family encumbrances must show their love and devotion by some other form of sacrifice.

Let us give a concluding word to some of the humble and small-talented ones who have engaged in this service. They may, perhaps, be inclined to feel that they are of the *blemished* class of ill-favored ones represented in our text as unacceptable. But not so, dear brethren: the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord cleanseth us from all sin—covers all our natural blem-

ishes and makes us worthy and acceptable in the Beloved. A cipher alone has no value, but it is a power indeed, when it follows 1; and so it is with us when we follow Christ—his

merit gives us association and cooperation with him; gives us weight and influence and power for God and his cause. "Ye are complete in him;" "accepted in the Beloved."

THE APOSTLE PETER'S EXHORTATION

"Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy."—1 Pet. 1:13-16.

To appreciate the exhortations of the apostles, we need to become acquainted with their several characters; to note their circumstances; to mark their zeal and faithfulness; and to remember that every word of exhortation addressed to the church has the substantial backing of their worthy examples. They endured hardness as good soldiers, and suffered much for the privilege of declaring the truth. In their writings are blended a high degree of the power of logic, eloquence and pathos, combined with an inspiring enthusiasm which must awaken in every student of their teachings a measure, at least, of the same sacred flame.

Though written so long ago, the above words of exhortation lose none of their force to us. They were penned for the instruction of the whole church, down to the end of the age. The introductory, "Wherefore," refers us to the glorious hope of our high calling, and of the necessarily severe measures required to fit us for our exalted inheritance, as mentioned in the preceding verse. Peter would have us appreciate what it is to be called with such a high calling—to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith. (Verse 4) He would have us know that, if faithful, we are to be made even "partakers of the divine nature," and that we are to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, of all things.—2 Pet. 1:4.

As the spirit of God draws our hearts into closer fellowship and sympathy with the divine mind, the value of these "exceeding great and precious promises" is more and more fully realized, until there glows in our hearts the same holy enthusiasm that so filled the hearts of the apostles. And only when our hearts are thus warmed and our minds thus awakened, are we prepared to understand the Apostle's "Wherefore," upon the inspiring comprehension of which depends our ability to heed the earnest exhortation which follows.

If our hearts are not duly inspired with this hope—if we have begun to esteem it lightly, or to forget it, or to think of it as an idle tale—to heed the counsel of Peter, here given, will be impossible. If, therefore, we realize that a spiritual lethargy has to any extent been creeping over us, imperceptibly benumbing our spiritual senses, so that the truth is losing its inspiring power upon us, our first duty is to betake ourselves to prayer and to communion with God and his Word, that its sanctifying power may be realized.

"Wherefore," then, you that discern the prize of your high calling, and who are endeavoring to press along the line toward the mark, "gird up the loins of your mind"—as in illustration: strengthen and fortify your purposes and efforts; renew your determination; redouble your diligence; cast aside the weights of unnecessary worldly cares; increase your zeal; and, as the Apostle Paul also urges, run with patience the race set before you. Run, not like one who is merely beating the air, but like one who has a purpose in view, and who, in desperate earnest, is *determined* to make his calling and election sure.—Heb. 12:1; 1 Cor. 9:26.

Having thus "girded up the loins of your mind" for a long, steady and determined effort, he further counsels,—"Be sober:" do not allow yourself to become excited and, under the spur of excitement, to exhaust all your spiritual vitality in a very short time, and then to suffer a relapse into coldness or discouragement; but thoughtfully to consider and prepare for a long and patient endurance of all the discipline and trial of faith and patience necessary to prove an overcomer and worthy of the blessed reward promised "to him that overcometh." The race before us is not one to be run by fits and starts, but by *patient continuance* in well doing." Soberly, thoughtfully, we are to weigh and endeavor to realize the import of the exceeding great and precious promises and to gather from them their invigorating inspiration; earnestly we must apply our minds and hearts to the instruction of the inspired Word of God, availing ourselves also of such helps—of "pastors and teachers" and their literary productions—which prove harmonious with, and helpful to, the study of the Scriptures; diligently and patiently we must submit ourselves to all the transforming influence, of divine grace and truth; and then, loyally

and faithfully, we must devote our consecrated talents, however few or many, to the great work of preaching this gospel of the kingdom to all who will hear.

Such a sober view of the situation fortifies the mind against discouragement, and enables us, as the Apostle suggests, to "hope to the end for the grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Such a sober view keeps Reason on the throne of our minds. And Reason says, The divine call to joint-heirship with Christ clearly implies eligibility to the exalted office; the divine promise clearly insures divine grace to enable us to fulfil the conditions; the divine provision for my justification, by faith in the precious blood of Christ, releases me from the condemnation to death; and the righteousness of Christ, imputed to me by faith, fully supplements all my weaknesses, so that before God I stand approved in him. Sober Reason also says, The directions given in the Scriptures to those who would run the race are clear and explicit, and make plain every step of the way to those who are truly and fully consecrated to the Lord. The examples of the Lord and the Apostles shine on the pathway with a moral luster and glory that cannot lead us astray. If we walk in their footprints we will assuredly reach the same goal.

Therefore in this sober view of our high calling and its privileges, and the abundant resources of divine grace, let us not be discouraged or overcome in any way, but let us hope to the end for the grace (favor) that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ—at his second advent. The church has enjoyed much of the divine favor all through the age of her probation and trial; but the grace to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ—when he comes to reign in power and great glory—is her exaltation with him to sit with him in his throne. This glorious consummation, the church all through the age must steadily keep in view: but how glorious is the privilege of those of its members living in this end of the age, when already, even before our change into his glorious likeness—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—we begin to enter the joys of our Lord.

Those who are still sober and faithful, and who have not cast away their confidence, have been led into the secret of the Master's presence; and they have been made to sit down to meat, and the Master himself has come forth and served them. Yes, our hearts have been made to burn within us while he has opened up the Scriptures and made us understand, from the testimony of the law and the prophets and the apostles, that the time is fulfilled—that the end of the age is now here, and that the Lord of the harvest is present to direct and supervise the great work of reaping the fruit of precious seed long ago sown in tears, and now to be gathered with joy and singing: while he has opened up to us the treasures of divine wisdom and grace displayed in the plan of the ages, which God purposed before the foundation of the world, which he has been gradually working out in the ages past, and which is now nearing its glorious consummation.

Oh, what feasting, what rejoicing there has been around the table of the Lord, as one after another the treasures of divine grace have been opened to us, revealing the glories of the new heavens and the new earth, and the blessedness of all the obedient subjects of him who sitteth on the throne to reign in righteousness; how all tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and how the reproach of God's people is to be taken away! Well indeed did Daniel prophesy, saying, "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, thirty and five days!"—the days of the Lord's second presence, when all that is written to be accomplished by his glorious reign shall begin to come to pass.

Seeing, then, that such are our privileges and hopes, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and god-likeness" (2 Pet. 3:11) Being purified by this hope, ought we not, as the Apostle exhorts, to fashion ourselves, not according to the former lusts (desires and ambitions, which we had) in our ignorance, but as he who has called us is holy, should not we also be holy in all manner of conversation—in all our words and ways? Since it is written, "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15, 16), should not we who are

called to be partakers of his own nature and glory be holy also?

Some Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that his children are to be merely passive in his hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the divine instructions. There is a work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and

are giving the enemy great advantage over them, which he will certainly use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, while God, cooperating with their earnest efforts, works in them, to will and to do his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12-13) "Watch and pray," beloved, lest any of these snares of the enemy entrap you and beguile you of your reward.

"LOVE IS THE PRINCIPAL THING"

[See revision of this article published in issue of Nov. 15, 1911.]

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13.—FEB. 22.

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

In the preceding chapter the Apostle has recounted the various "gifts" of the holy spirit conferred upon the early church for its establishment and development. He closes the chapter with the exhortation that while esteeming all of these gifts, each member of the church should covet earnestly the superior ones; and then he adds: "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"—something still better than any of those gifts of the holy spirit. Our lesson pertains to this more excellent ambition which should actuate every child of God; viz., the acquisition and development of the spirit of love, the spirit of the Lord. In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, in proportion as the holy spirit dwells in us and abounds, in that same proportion our love abounds.

There are different kinds of love, however, and the Apostle is here not speaking of general love, but of one particular kind, which belongs to God, and to the New Creation begotten of him. There is an animal love, such as the brute creation exercises toward its young, a love which frequently leads to the sacrifices of life in its devotion. This same kind of love inheres in the natural man, even in his fallen condition. It is all more or less selfish love,—ready, perhaps, at times to rob others that it might lavish good things upon those it favors. This is not the love which the Apostle describes, nor is he addressing his language to the natural man. He addresses the new creation, informing them that the natural man will not be able to receive, to appreciate, to comply with, that which he presents. In order to a clear comprehension of this love, and a hearty acceptance of it as the rule of life, it is apparently necessary that we be "begotten" from above.

It seems impossible to describe love itself; the best we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it—it is of God, god-likeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts—supervising all the human attributes and seeking fully to control them.

Before describing the operation of love the Apostle impresses upon us its importance, assuring us that if we possess the very choicest of the "gifts" already explained, and do not have therewith love, we will still lack the evidence of our being new creatures in Christ Jesus. We should be merely "sounding brass or cymbal"—making a noise, but having no acceptable feeling or virtue in ourselves in connection with our words. He assures us thus that ability to speak fluently on gospel themes, even, might not be a proof of our relationship to the Lord as new creatures. The Apostle's declaration is introduced with an "if," which might be challenged, to a certain extent, by the assertion that no one could speak forth with power, with force, the gospel of God's dear Son unless he possessed the spirit of love. Although we have all met public speakers who could deliver very beautiful essays, we have generally perceived a hollowness in their teaching unless they spoke from the heart, prompted by love of the truth,—not by love of applause, nor for love of money.

Amongst the gifts, prophecy or oratory was one which the Apostle commended. Knowledge of mysteries of God is also commended, and large faith is reckoned amongst the chief of the Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and love were absent, he would be nothing,—a mere cipher—not a member of the New Creation at all, since love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature. What a wonderful test this is! let us each apply it to himself. Whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by *my love* for him, for his brethren, for his cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies,—rather than by my knowledge or fame or oratory. Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the holy spirit of love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought

him. In the measurement of character, therefore, we are to put love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness and acceptance to the Lord.

The Apostle next takes another line of argument: his hearers already understood benevolence, alms-giving to the needy, to be commendable; and to impress upon them the importance of having love as the controlling principle of their hearts, the Apostle declares that if he should give all of his goods to feed the poor—keeping nothing back—and yet do this without proper love as the mainspring to the conduct, it would profit him nothing. He goes still further and declares, that even if he should become a martyr, and be burned at the stake, it would not bring him the blessed reward sought, unless that martyrdom were prompted, impelled, by love.

But it may be inquired, How could anyone practise such self-denial, such sacrifice, such faith, etc., and yet be without love? It is not our thought that they could practise these and be devoid of love; that there must be some measure of love. We understand the Apostle to make this strong statement of the case in order to show us that our almsgiving, our sacrifices, our knowledge, our teaching, are acceptable to the Lord and appreciated by him, only to the extent that they have love behind them. If love enters slightly into them, then they are slightly appreciated; if love enters largely into them, then God appreciates them largely. If they are prompted wholly by love, then God accepts them fully. If love be only a part of the motive power behind our conduct as new creatures, it implies that other motives are active in us, tending to neutralize in the Lord's esteem even services and sacrifices performed in his name and upon worthy objects. Let us be on guard against these neutralizing influences, and earnestly seek to be whole-hearted, full of love;—that our every service of the Lord and of the brethren and of the truth be from a pure heart, free from personal ambition, pride, etc.

Having given us such a conception of the importance of love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not—how it operates, and how it does not operate or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself, and inquire within: Have I such love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to suffer considerable and for a long time, and yet to be kind? How quickly do I get offended? If very quickly it surely indicates that I have very little of the spirit of the Lord,—love. If I am disposed to resent the trifling wrongs of life,—if I have the spirit of resentment, am disposed to render evil for evil, and railing for railing,—it marks my deficiency in this greatest of all the graces, so essential to my ultimate passing, as an overcomer, the divine inspection.

Of our heavenly Father it is said that "he is kind to the unthankful." Have I this spirit of kindness—his spirit? Am I kind to my friends? gentle? courteous? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts—that I think of and am considerate of others? that I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle, in his home, in his place of business, in the church—everywhere. With the child of God this patience and kindness are not merely put on, as grapes might be tied to a thorn-bush, but, on the contrary, they are the *fruits* of the spirit—growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, learned of him, received of his spirit of holiness, spirit of love.

Have I the love that envieth not, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if for the time my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is generosity, the very opposite of jealousy and envy. The root of envy is selfishness: envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love envies not, but rejoices in the prosperity of all that is good.

Have I the love that vaunteth not itself?—the love that tends to humility, that is not boastful, nor puffed up? Some one has truly said, that "*love saves a man from making a fool*

of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence." Boastful—over self-esteem—has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins, in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is a spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate oneself, and not to be puffed up.

Have I the love which does not behave itself unseemly—discourteously, impolitely? Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The secret of politeness is either a surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the heart-love, which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the love that seeketh not her own merely?—that might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others?—or have I the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the convenience, comfort and rights of others? To have love in this particular, means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and to prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong,—to suffer an injustice than to do injustice.

Have I the love which is not easily provoked? Indeed, the original omits the word "easily," and gives rather the thought that love does not become irritated, roused to anger. Love enables its possessor to see both sides of a question; It makes of him a veritable philosopher; it gives him the spirit of a sound mind. He perceives that exasperation and violent anger are unbecoming and worse than that, injurious, not only toward those against whom they may be directed, but injurious in their effect also upon his own heart and body. There may be times when love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and this might come under the head of anger, using that word in a proper sense in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised *for a loving purpose*, for doing good—but then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not, even with our lips or in our hearts, in which at no time may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, to get worked up into a passion, where evil looks and evil words and angry sentiments are involved. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of love, and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard against this general besetment of our day. Those begotten of the holy spirit should all be good tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life.

Have I the spirit of love which thinketh no evil?—which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, or attributing to them evil motives? It is an old adage that "faults are thick where love is thin."

The Revised Version presents a slightly different thought here—"Taketh not account of evil"—does not charge up the wrong against the evil-doer, as if waiting for an apology or a restitution or an opportunity to "get even." But, while love passes over offenses and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this would not mean that love would necessarily treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or necessary, even, to take some notice of the offenses to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested—nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible; doing all that could be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrongs.

Have I the love which rejoices not in iniquity (inequity) but rejoices in the truth? Are the principles of right and

wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with the right and so opposed to the wrong that I would not encourage the wrong, but must condemn it, even if it brought advantages to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests? The love of God which the Apostle is here describing as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness, and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more and more distinctly discerned, and always firmly adhered to at any cost.

Have I the love that beareth all things?—that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything contrary to love? Have I the love that believeth all things? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced so to do, by indisputable evidences?—that would rather believe good than evil about everybody?—that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Have I the love that hopeth all things, that perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that endureth all things?—that is, that continues to hope for the best in regards to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance—not easily discouraged?

As disciples or pupils of Christ, we are in his school, and the great lesson which he is teaching us day by day, and the lesson which we must learn thoroughly if we would attain the mark of the prize of our high calling in all its various features and ramifications, is the lesson of Love. It takes hold upon and relates to all the words and thoughts and doings of our daily lives. As the poet has said,

"As every lovely hue is light,—so every grace is love."

Next the Apostle points out that as love is the most excellent thing, so is it the most enduring. The gift of prophecy would pass away; the value and necessity for speaking with other tongues would cease; and all knowledge of the present time, imperfect as it is, must surely cease to be valuable when the perfections of the new dispensation are fully ushered in. The very best informed now know only in part; but when perfection shall be attained in the kingdom, and under its ministration, all the partial and imperfect conditions of the present time will have been superseded, and only the one thing may surely be said to endure and be everlasting,—and that one thing is Love.

An illustration of the growth which we must expect as between the present knowledge and attainments and those of the future, is of the child and the growth to manhood. Another illustration is seeing obscurely in one of the old-time mirrors, which gave but imperfect reflections. With the perfections of the new condition we will see perfectly, know perfectly, understand perfectly. Just so the gifts which were in the early church were very suitable to it, as fitted to its infantile condition; but as it would develop to maturity the value of those "gifts" would diminish, and they would be no more; but higher developments of divine favor were to be expected, faith, hope and love. All three of these the church of God is to cultivate, and to esteem as *fruits* of the spirit, far above the *gifts* of the spirit,—and the greatest of these three is Love.

Love also is the most enduring; for will not faith practically come to an end when we shall see and know thoroughly? And will not hope practically be at an end when we shall reach the fruition of all our hopes and be possessors of the fulness of our heavenly Father's promises? Love, however, will never fail, even as it had no beginning. God is love, and since he was without beginning, so love was without beginning; because it is his character, his disposition; and as he endureth forever, so love will endure forever. Whoever, therefore, learns thoroughly the lessons of this present time in the school of Christ, and thus becomes well stocked with this wonderful grace of love, lays up treasures which may be his to all eternity—a great blessing to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact now; and a blessing to the world to which he will be permitted to minister during the Millennium;—a blessing everlasting, because it is a seal of divine approval.

A PILGRIM VISIT TO JAMAICA

Finding that the truth has been making good progress in Jamaica, so that at 14 places there are from 3 to 17 subscribers to ZION'S WATCH TOWER each, we are sending Brother J. A. Browne (colored), who is well educated and also well versed in the truth, to strengthen and encourage them. He will land at Port Antonio, and all the little groups desiring his

assistance should address him there *at once*. Mark letters, "*General Delivery—Hold until called for.*" He will then arrange dates and send out notifications.

His expenses will all be defrayed by our Society—except that those who can do so may have the pleasure and privilege of entertaining him en route. No collections.

BAPTISM UNTO REPENTANCE NOT BAPTISM INTO CHRIST

ACTS 18:23-19:7.—MARCH 1.

"If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?"—Luke 11:13.

After leaving Corinth the Apostle completed his second missionary tour, and returned to Antioch, stopping en route at Jerusalem, where he greeted the church and, no doubt, gave them an account of the Lord's blessing upon his recent ministries in Europe. Aquila and Priscilla went with the Apostle as far as Ephesus, and the vessel on which he traveled remaining over the Sabbath at the port, he improved the opportunity to speak for Christ in the synagogue of Ephesus. His discourse was no doubt in the nature of a preparation for a future work which he hoped to do there. He doubtless spoke only along the lines of first principles—respecting the glorious prophecies of Messiah, and the fulfilment which should now be expected. His discourse was well received, and he was urged to remain longer, and gave his promise of a later return.

We are not informed how long the Apostle remained at Antioch, but "after he had spent some time there he departed and went over all the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, establishing all the disciples." While the Apostle was energetic in the establishment of new companies of the Lord's people, he was not slack in looking out for the spiritual welfare and growth of those which he had already established, as is evidenced by this statement—this being his third visit to these churches.

When the Apostle returned to Ephesus he found that in his absence a Christian brother named Apollos had come and had preached eloquently in the synagogue, using very close, logical and convincing arguments, and securing twelve converts to Christianity. He was a Jew, born at Alexandria, one of the chief cities of that time, specially noted for its schools of learning and extensive libraries. The common version says that Apollos was "eloquent"; the revised version, that he was "learned," and the Greek word seems to be with equal propriety translatable either way: in all probability he was both learned and eloquent. However, he was not as thoroughly advanced in the knowledge of the Lord and of the truth as were Aquila and Priscilla who had for a time companied with the Apostle; and as soon as they heard Apollos in the synagogue they recognized him as a Christian brother, and took him to their own home, where they had good opportunity for communicating to him "the way of the Lord more perfectly."

We have here a beautiful illustration of how the Lord is pleased to use his consecrated people. He had use for the talents and education of Apollos; he had use also for the less talented Aquila and Priscilla who, though not qualified to speak in public in the synagogue, were, nevertheless, used of the Lord to bless his more eloquent disciple, and thus to be sharers with him in the fruits of his more public ministry. The same is true today, as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 12:12-26) No member of the body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the body. Under the guidance of our glorious head each member who is filled with his spirit, and desirous of serving him, may do so. When the time for rewards will come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the Lord's work. The Apostle mentions very tenderly some of this class who colabored with him, supporting his work by their influence and by their means. (Phil. 4:3) Similar opportunities are still open, and no child of the Lord should be content to let the days of the present harvest time go by with their golden opportunities for service and cooperation without seeking each day to lift the royal banner himself, and to publicly show forth the praises of him who hath called him out of darkness into light, or by assisting and cooperating with others whom the Lord in his providence has placed in more advantageous positions for public service.

Apollos, hearing from Aquila and Priscilla of the glorious work accomplished by the Apostle Paul at Corinth, went thither, taking with him a letter of introduction from his newly found friends at Ephesus, who had so recently left Corinth. Incidentally we are told that his going to Corinth proved a blessing to the church there, because of his thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures and his ability in expounding them, so that he could "forcefully confute the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." That the Corinthian brethren were greatly pleased with the masterful ability of Apollos as a teacher of the truth is implied by the fact that some of them were disposed to say that they were followers of Apollos, while others, also sectarian in spirit, claimed to be followers of Paul, and others of Peter—all of

which sectarianism the Apostle distinctly reproved subsequently in his epistle to them.—1 Cor. 3:3-7.

There is room for all the ability of all the brethren in the church, and such a thing as rivalry or partisanship is entirely out of place. We have one Lord, one Head: we all are brethren, and our highest aim should be to honor our Head and serve the fellow-members; and each one who so endeavors should be highly esteemed, whether his talents are greater or smaller than those of others. Another lesson here is the importance of being well versed in the Scriptures. The sword of the spirit is the Word of God, and he who would serve the cause best must know how to use this weapon which the Lord himself has provided—forcefully, convincingly and yet lovingly. The Scriptures with which Apollos was familiar were the Old Testament writings, since the New Testament was not yet compiled, though doubtless a few of its books had already been written. Whether Apollos had seen these or not, he had from some quarter "been instructed in the way of the Lord," before meeting Aquila and Priscilla, and was now, through them, still more thoroughly furnished for his ministry of the truth. Let us each resolve that by the Lord's grace we will put on the entire Christian armament, supplied us by the Lord, not neglecting the sword of the spirit—the Word. Let us learn, too, to be ready to accept further instructions as from the Lord, however humble may be the channels through which he may send it to us. Humility is one of the graces highly esteemed by the Lord, and one of the points upon which he frequently tests his followers: "Except ye become as little children [teachable, guileless], ye shall in nowise enter the kingdom of heaven."

It was while Apollos was at Corinth that the Apostle Paul came to Ephesus, according to promise, and began a ministry there which lasted two years (19:10). Aquila and Priscilla had seemingly left Ephesus by this time, as they are not again mentioned; but the Apostle speedily found those whom Apollos' ministry had reached, twelve in number. (Vs. 7) Our Common Version would seem to give the inference that the Apostle was surprised that these believers at Ephesus had not yet received gifts of the holy spirit. But not so; he merely wished to bring to their attention the fact that such gifts were possible to them, for only an apostle could convey the gifts of the holy spirit, as we have already seen. (Acts 8:14-17) The preaching of Apollos was merely along the lines of first principles of the doctrine of Christ, represented in the baptism of John to the Jews, while these believers were, evidently, by nature Gentiles.

Apollos had explained the Gospel merely to the extent of repentance from sin and faith in Christ as the Redeemer. He had no knowledge of the fuller meaning of baptism as explained by the Apostle (Rom. 6:3-5)—a baptism of consecration, to suffer with Christ—to be dead with him, to participate in his resurrection to the new nature and to be ultimate sharers with him in the heavenly kingdom. The Apostle explained to them this "mystery" of fellowship with the Messiah—participation in his sufferings, and by and by in his glory (Col. 1:26, 27): and when they heard this they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus—as members of his body, to fellowship in his sufferings, even unto death.

How many believers there are today who, like these described, are members of "the household of faith," but not members of "the body of Christ"—who have gone so far as a baptism of repentance and reformation, and faith in the Redeemer, but who have not been instructed respecting the great privileges which belong to this dispensation—that we may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together!" Wherever we go, let us each seek by the grace of God to explain the way of the Lord more perfectly to these already partially indoctrinated ones. So long as there are a plenty of such to labor with, it would be unwise, yea, contrary to our covenant and commission, to specially devote our lives and energies to the world; for although we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, it is to be chiefly to the household of faith. All around us, in the churches of the various denominations, are, we believe, hundreds, yea, thousands who are in the condition of these mentioned in the lesson, knowing only the *baptism of repentance*, knowing not the *baptism of Christ*—the baptism into his death, the baptism of full consecration. Let us be diligent in this highest department of the work of the ministry, feeding, instructing, the Lord's flock.

After instructing them thus respecting the true baptism, and after performing upon them its water symbol, the Apostle laid his hands on the believers and they received the holy spirit—that is to say, the “gifts of the spirit” were manifested in them—they spake with tongues, prophesied, etc., as described in 1 Corinthians 12. We have no power to communicate such gifts today, nor have others this power. It was an apostolic power, not transferable to others, as it was not the Lord’s intention that those gifts should remain with the church, but merely should be a witness in its infancy period;—until the New Testament writings should be within reach, and until the fruits of the spirit could be developed.

However, let none envy the primitive church this special blessing, so necessary to its progress and joy; but remember that under the Lord’s providence our conditions in some respects are still more favorable, in that we have the written Word for our admonition. Let us remember the testimony of the Apostle in our last lesson, too,—to the effect that faith, hope and love, *fruits* of the spirit, far excel the tongues and interpretations and miracles of the *gifts* of the spirit: so that

as he explained, if one had all these gifts, and lacked the one fruit of love, he would be “nothing”;—it would profit him nothing as respects a share in the body of Christ, and in the glorious blessings, present and future, which belong to it.

Our Golden Text evidently refers, not to the miraculous gifts of the spirit enjoyed by the primitive church, but to the holy spirit, or disposition, “the mind of Christ,” the common privilege of all who are baptized into Christ’s death, and who seek by faith to walk in newness of life. The miraculous gifts of the primitive church could come only through apostolic hands; but the spirit, in the sense that we still enjoy it, the mind of Christ, the mind of God, with all the fruits and graces thereof, is still the privilege of the Lord’s people, and dependent not upon apostolic or other hands, but upon our heavenly Father and upon the zeal with which we seek by prayer and every endeavor to have his mind, his disposition, controlling our thoughts, our words, our conduct. It is God’s good pleasure to give us this spirit of love; but he gives it only to those who desire and seek it with patient perseverance.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”—John 8:31, 32.

Our Lord’s preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard him. It attracted one class and repelled another. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil, and because they realized that if they admitted the light of truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it,—all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contributions of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or, at least, very fluctuating. On some occasions multitudes received his testimony, and later deserted him and walked no more with him, as he continued to enforce the lessons of divine truth. (Luke 4: 14, 15, 22, 28, 29) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon his words, wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; and again and again they forsook him, while only a mere handful remained. (John 6:60, 66-69) What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the Gospel should follow the Master’s example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God. How quickly they would become unpopular, and be charged with breaking up the church. Why, the great congregations that now throng the temples of fashion dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not stand it! They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who, presumably, know their tastes and ideas, and who will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for what they want, but they do not want the truth.

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook him, of course, ceased then to be his disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume longer to claim to be his disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when any man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great Teacher, he is no longer a disciple of Christ. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when his name was one of reproach among men: but later, when his presence was withdrawn, and when his doctrines were unscrupulously fixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of their reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be his disciples—long after they had utterly repudiated his doctrines.

The Lord’s expression—“disciples indeed”—implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be his real, sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: “If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed.” The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life—that of belief in and acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord; but the reward of this step depends entirely upon our *continuance* in his Word, in the attitude of true disciples. It is not difficult to do this, yet the disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of divine truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of other men, who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world’s estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, “Ye shall know the truth”—not that we shall be “ever seeking and never coming to a knowledge of the truth.” (2 Tim. 3:7) Here is the mis-

take that many make: failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. There is no promise, to those who seek for truth among these, that they shall ever find it. And they never do. Divine truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels: and those channels are the Lord and the apostles and prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their inspired writings, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord.

But the idea is entirely compatible with that of heeding all the helps which the Lord from time to time raises up from among our brethren in the body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Eph. 4:11-15; 1 Cor. 12:13, 14) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member to prove carefully their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord, as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed “know the truth,” be “established in the present truth” (the truth due, and be “rooted and grounded in the truth,” we shall be “firm in the faith,” and “able to give a reason for the hope that is in us,” to “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints,” to “war a good warfare,” to “witness a good confession,” and firmly to “endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ,” even unto the end of our course. We will not come into the knowledge of the truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we will be led into the truth. Every step will be one of sure and certain progress, and each one leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in its blessed fruits of established character.

The truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation will ripen to a glorious maturity.

And not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, “The truth shall make you free.” Those who have received the truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance and superstition, and of fear. It throws its health-restoring beams into the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorates the whole being. Sin cannot endure its light; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the light because they are unworthy of it.

Ignorance and superstition must vanish before the light of truth. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions are still under this galling yoke. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful tyrant consigning the vast majority of his creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God, we who have received the truth have escaped that terrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over is us broken!

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see com-

ing upon the whole world, as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror. And the alarm of all will increase as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more visible. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God of the terrors of the conflict through which the world will have to pass within a few years, the true disciples of Christ who abide in his Word are not afraid, but rejoice, because they know that God's object in permitting the storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that

after the storm, there shall come, by his providence, an abiding peace. Instructed in the truth, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise him.

Blessed promise!—"If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and with it bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of it by our loyalty and faithfulness to it.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

IMMORTALITY AND ETERNAL LIFE

Question.—We read in Rom. 2:7 that to those who by patient perseverance in well doing seek for glory, honor and immortality, God will render eternal life. Why this declaration, if immortality is a higher and more desirable reward than everlasting life?

Answer.—It is well that we should notice that the Scriptures treat matters from a broad standpoint; thus, although those known to us as the great company, who come through great tribulation (Rev. 7:14), are not called to such a position as they will attain, but merely get it as of the Lord's grace after they have failed in respect to their high calling: and none being called to this favor, it is not specifically mentioned in the Scriptures; nevertheless, provision has been made for them, and the holy spirit seems to have guided the utterances of the apostles in such manner that their language includes these as well as the overcomers. This class will seek the glory, honor and immortality; but through negligence to seek with sufficient diligence, and along the lines laid down in the Lord's Word, they will fail to attain these chiefest blessings, which will go to the little flock. Nevertheless, as the Scriptures declare, they and all who seek it in the appointed way, will gain eternal life, and that, after all, is the chiefest and greatest blessing and gift held out before us.

(2) **Question.**—Again in John 17:2 our Lord, in praying for his church, says, "As thou hast given him (Jesus) power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Why is nothing here said respecting immortality?

Answer.—For the same reason as given in the preceding answer. Furthermore, the context does not particularly state that the elect church only is referred to. Rather the fourth verse indicates the Sin-bearer's larger work in blessing all the families of the earth. By the Father's provision he, by his sacrifice, obtained eternal life "for all them that obey him"—not only for the little flock of the present time, but also for the larger flock of the coming age. Additionally, we notice that the eternal life granted to the Gospel church is only indirectly the gift of our Lord Jesus. As immortality was the Father's gift to his Son, so it will be the Father's gift, by and through the Son, to those who are members of his body—the true church. Indeed, the heavenly Father specially is declared to be the Father, or Life-giver, to all who attain to spiritual conditions, either as the Christ, the overcoming church, or as the great company who come through great tribulation. The eternal life which our Lord Jesus will give more particularly on his own account, will be eternal life to the world during the Millennial age—the eternal life which he gives to us of this Gospel age, reckonedly, in our justification by faith, the first step preparatory to our being begotten of the spirit by the Father.

WILFUL SIN IN THE "BODY"

Question.—In view of the statements in 1 John 3:6-9, may we not reason that if we have God's mind in us we, therefore, could not sin? and further, that it is impossible for us to sin in the body (of Christ)? or that if we commit sin it would imply that we were no longer members of his body?

Answer.—We understand the Apostle to teach that the holy Spirit of God is opposed to sin; that in proportion as we have the mind of Christ we will not only love righteousness but also hate iniquity. To our understanding the Apostle here refers to sin in its fullest sense; viz., wilful transgression of the divine law. Such a wilful transgression would imply that we loved

the sin and hated righteousness; and hence, that if we ever had spiritual life we had lost it, and become spiritually dead—"plucked up by the roots."

We are to remember, however, that there are other sins not of this kind—not unto death. There are sins in which wilfulness is not complete, since they are the results of temptation, and sins that are the results of our own weaknesses through the Adamic fall. Such weaknesses and such stumblings under temptation belong to the flesh which is already reckoned dead (in the consecrated Christian) and is not reckoned of God as belonging to the new creature. Hence, such lapses from rectitude are not here designated by the Apostle as sins, nor are they so reckoned of God who judges us not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

However, as we have heretofore shown, there are some partial sins—that is to say, they are not full sins in the sense of being thoroughly wilful and intentional transgressions of the divine law—they are weaknesses of the flesh, and yet perhaps in those weaknesses of the flesh the mind failed to be as strong and courageous as it should have been, and to some extent yielded to the wrong-doing. Since such wrong-doing is not approved by the Christian mind after the brunt of the trial has passed, it is not counted sin in the full sense of the word. It is, however, a misdemeanor, for which a measure of stripes may be exacted according to the degree of knowledge, and according to the opportunities for resisting the wrong course which were left unused. From this standpoint it is evident that a full, deliberate sin cannot be committed while we are in the body (of Christ), possessed of the holy Spirit and recognized by the Head. To commit such a wilful sin would involve our having left the head, abandoned his teachings and service and love, and hence it would involve our having left the body of which he is the head.

"THE EARTH ABIDETH"—"THE HEAVENS WAX OLD"

Question.—How are we to harmonize the statements of Eccl. 1:4, "The earth abideth forever," with Psa. 102:25, 26; Heb. 1:10; etc.?

Answer.—In both cases the word used indicates that the physical earth is meant. We harmonize them by understanding that the latter Scripture refers to the changes taking place as respects earthly conditions. This is signified by the illustration given, as a vesture (robe, coat). "Thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed;" as one would re-make or rearrange the drapery of a gown, so the Lord will change, rearrange, etc., the general matters pertaining to the earth. One such change took place at the flood, so far as we know, and we anticipate that some other change will take place in the near future, making the earth more fit than at present for the Millennial kingdom conditions. Additionally, we are to remember that the physical earth is used as the basis of a symbol, and that the symbolical earth refers not to the land, but to the people, the order of society, etc. In this view also we expect a great transformation, the turning upside down, or changing all round, by which the present social order will be transformed into a social order more acceptable to God during the Millennial age. The time of this change is near at hand, and when the present symbolical earth—society—shall melt like wax from the fervent heat of strife and anarchy, the symbolical heavens, or ecclesiastical powers, will also take fire, and pass away with a great noise, commotion, disturbance—both to be superseded by the new heavens and new earth condition (symbolical), the church, in glory, honor and power, and mankind under new social conditions.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

From north to south mankind will meet,
To pay their homage at his feet,
While all the world shall own the Lord,
And savage tribes attend his word.