

INTERESTING LETTER

A BAPTIST AND PRESENT TRUTH

Dear Brother Russell:—

Thinking that my experience in coming into the truth might be of interest to you, I am sending to you the following:

In 1886 my father saw your advertisement in the *Christian Herald*, that Volume I, MILLENNIAL DAWN, was in preparation. As soon as he saw the announcement that it was ready, he sent his \$1 and got its teachings, accepting it as rapidly as he saw that it harmonized the Scriptures.

At that time I had joined the Baptist church. After making sure that the book contained nothing but the truth, my father endeavored to give the same truth to me. He spoke to me about the unscripturalness of the doctrine of eternal torment, the immediate going to heaven or hell at death and the doctrine of the natural immortality of man. I was fearful of doctrines which were so different from my Baptist belief; but as he quoted Scriptures, I did not feel that I should oppose them. It seemed to me that there were other Scriptures which taught the opposite; and I felt sure that he must be mistaken, though I did not say so. I quietly determined to read the Bible through, noting all the passages I could which bore on these subjects, so that I would be sure of what the teaching of the whole Scripture is. I felt sure that if I prayed to the Lord for guidance that I might know the truth, he would not let me go astray. I realized that there was no use in quoting a text here and there. When I spoke to my father, I would give him quotations from every portion of the Bible, and thus show him that the general teachings of the Bible were opposed to his newly found ideas.

Reading during my spare time, it took me six months to read the Bible, marking down the texts I noticed. At the end I had some 725 Scriptures cited:

(a) The first column contained texts which seemed very clearly to teach the old doctrine of eternal torment, the immediate reward after death, and the immortality of the soul. This collection contained about twenty-five texts.

(b) The second column contained texts which clearly sup-

ported my father's side. In this column I had about one hundred and twenty-five texts. This somewhat disturbed me.

(c) The third column contained texts which did not exactly favor my belief, but which, while they seemed to favor my father's side, I did not feel like conceding to him until I had further examined them.

I then went over these texts and found that those in column two all remained in that column; and the texts in column three also went into column two. With this new fund of Bible knowledge, I went over column one, and found that over one half of my texts had to go into column two also, leaving me only about twelve or fifteen Scriptures, nearly all of which were in figurative language. I then saw clearly that the doctrines I had been taught from the creeds are wrong; and I at once accepted the truth. In the last twenty-six years, through the Lord's grace, I have never had occasion to doubt the truth on these matters.

While I was reading the Scriptures, my father frequently tried to persuade me to read THE WATCH TOWER publications; but I felt that I was seeking in the right place for truth, and that if I were to read something of which I was already fearful, I might be taking my case out of the Lord's hands, and thus go into darkness. He grieved considerably that I would not talk with him or read anything he offered to me. I did not tell him that I was studying the matter all the time. He was greatly surprised when six months later, I showed him the results of my study.

I now see how much labor and time I might have saved had I gone prayerfully at once to THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES. That book today seems more wonderful and satisfying and Scriptural than when I first read it. It has proven itself more impregnable to assaults from all parties than Gibraltar. I praise the Lord for the whole series of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and have never heard any Bible expositions worthy of comparison with them. With much Christian love,

Your brother in Christ,

A. I. RITCHIE.

PREPARED HEARTS

FRANCES DARDEN

Prepare our hearts to know thee, Lord,
And seek for wisdom in thy Word,
So, as our days, our strength may be,
To spread thy truth, o'er land and sea.
O'er all the earth this light must shine,
Restoring faith to all mankind.
Run swiftly, oh! ye angel "feet,"

Upon the mountains; tidings sweet
Send forth! Proclaim the Word,
So men shall know their reigning Lord.
Earnest watch, on Zion's wall,
Lift high his banner over all;
Loud sound the Seventh Trumpet call!
Let truth prevail, and error fall!

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THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

"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.

At his first Advent our Lord came to the Jewish nation, which was a house of servants in covenant relationship with God. To these was to be granted the first privilege of becoming sons of God, and their blessing would be in proportion as they were faithful to the light that would come to them. Before they could become sons of God, however, it was necessary that Jesus should be their Redeemer, should make reconciliation for iniquity, and thus open up the way. This he had come to do, but he had not done it as yet. Whoever would come to understand the divine purposes and arrangements, and act in harmony with them, should be made free, should be liberated from the condemnation resting upon them as Jews, from the results of the weaknesses of their flesh, and would be brought into full accord with God.

We can see that this great privilege also meant something more than all this. It meant something still higher—even joint-heirship with Messiah. But all these things were a hidden mystery as yet. They were known up to that time only by our Lord himself; they were made clear to him because he had been begotten of the holy Spirit. There were many things hard to be understood. Jesus spoke in parables, in dark sayings, for the very purpose of making the way of life then opened up a "narrow way." And so we read in the Scriptures that some said of the Master's words: "This is a hard saying! Who can hear it?" Who could believe it?

The particularly hard saying referred to was that his "flesh was meat indeed, and his blood was drink indeed," and that by eating and drinking of these they might gain eternal life. And so we read that after this many forsook him and aban-

doned the thought of being his disciples, so blinded were they to their own interests. Instead of following on patiently, they said, This is all foolishness! We do not understand it!

Jesus was anticipating this condition of things when he spoke these words to them. He would put them on their guard. It was as though he would say, You have declared that "never man spake like this man!" Already you have heard words very different from the words of the scribes and Pharisees. Now continue; hold on for a little while. If you will do this, you will grasp the situation in due time. Exercise faith—exercise patience. You have begun to have interest in these things, and as you fully become my disciples you will be granted a knowledge of the truth. And this truth will make you free; it will give you all the blessings and privileges that come to the children of God. Greatly blessed were the few who took heed to the Master's counsel!

BLESSINGS BEGUN AT PENTECOST

These words of Jesus were not addressed especially to the twelve apostles, but to the Jews in general who were sympathetically drawn. Nicodemus may have been one of these; he was inclined to stumble over the spiritual things; he could not see how one could be born again. The holy Spirit was not yet given, we read, "because Jesus was not yet glorified." St. Paul tells us that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Corinthians 2:14.

But some saw enough in Jesus to attract them to him. These, in honesty of heart, said, Surely his words are true,

and his criticisms of our nation are true. We do not see how he is going to fulfill these prophecies; but he says to us, Hold on and you will understand later. And some did hold on—"above five hundred brethren." As Jesus had promised, these were given the privilege of becoming disciples indeed.

When Pentecost came, the heavenly Father received all who had continued in Jesus' word, and they were begotten of the holy Spirit into the Lord's family. Then they began to see spiritual things—they were illuminated. All the light did not come at once, but they progressed as the days and years went by. They were indeed Christ's true disciples—such followers of Jesus as the Father was pleased to recognize. They were not only made free from the condemnation of the Law Covenant, but made free from sin and death. They received a new will, a new mind, and the holy Spirit showed "the deep things of God" unto them.

In his prayer to the Father, our Lord said, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." By the word truth Jesus was here referring to the Father's revelation of his divine plan through the holy Spirit; and the sanctifying influence would come through the knowledge of that truth, received into an honest heart. This sanctification, or setting apart, strictly speaking, began with the Pentecostal blessing, and still continues to operate. And this sanctification progresses as long as the individual allows the truth to have its designed influence in his life. We see a difference between our text and the one just quoted. In the latter case it is the Word of Jehovah, and in the former it is the word of Jesus. Jesus says, If you continue in my word, you will become more and more acquainted with the heavenly Father, and will know his will, his way, his method; thus you will know his Word. All things are working out his will—the will of the Father—and seeing and doing the will of the Father, the sanctifying process will follow. Jesus says to all, "I am the way; I am the truth; I am the life." I am the only one through whom you can come to the Father and become his sons; and abiding in me will bring you the grand consummation.

THE CHANNEL OF ALL OUR BLESSINGS

We perceive, then, that Christ is the sufficiency which God has provided for us in all respects. "He of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]." (1 Corinthians 1:30) We first received, through learning of his sacrificial work on our behalf, necessary wisdom, instruction and guidance, by which we may through his merit come to the Father. And he is our wisdom all along the way. The heavenly Father had a glorious plan before the foundation of the world; this was hinted in Eden, just after the fall. In due time he gave a further intimation of that plan through Enoch and through Abraham, and still later through Moses and the prophets. But how the world was to benefit from it was all hidden, all kept secret.

Not until Jesus came was the way of life opened up, made manifest. "He [Christ] hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." The essence of the Gospel was never even declared, much less known, before Jesus came. The Apostle Paul says that this salvation "at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Hebrews 2:3) Our Lord began to speak it; but the secret of the Gospel, its Mystery, was not fully revealed until after Pentecost. It was not until after Jesus was begotten of the holy Spirit that he himself began to comprehend it clearly—not until then did he begin to set before us the way of life and immortality. And even then his words were parabolic, and it was not until his followers were begotten of the holy Spirit that they were able to enter into "the deep things of God."

JESUS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

In addition to his being our wisdom, Jesus becomes our righteousness. He covers our sins. He imputes to us his own righteousness, the merit of his own sacrifice. And this imputation brings us to a condition of complete righteousness—not actual, but reckoned, which God is pleased to recognize in the way he has arranged.

Our Lord does not become the righteousness of everybody—not even of those who give some heed to his words—but to those alone who come to the point of full submission to the Father's will. And there is a good reason for this; for only those who offer themselves to become members of his body during this Gospel age, only the spirit-begotten, would be profited by a justification by faith. Others would be condemned to death by it now. In the next age, others will come to him. But only those who come to him now, to walk in his steps, have a faith-justification.

JESUS OUR SANCTIFICATION

The step of consecration on the part of those who become Jesus disciples is in the Scriptures called sanctification. But

it is not the same sanctification which comes to us through him. God says, "Sanctify yourselves, and I will sanctify you"—that is, Set yourselves apart, and then I will set you apart; I will put you into this place where you desire to come. So, to all of us who come to the Father through him, Jesus not only becomes our justification, but through him we also have sanctification—the complete setting apart. We are accepted in him, and his grace and advocacy enables us to attain complete and final sanctification.

God sets us apart by begetting us of the holy Spirit to the new nature and making us prospective members of the royal priesthood—prospective members of the body of the anointed One. This is Scripturally called a foretaste, or "earnest," of our inheritance, which will be experienced to the full when we are changed from the human to the spirit nature—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." But this "earnest of our inheritance" is given us with the intention of our growing in the process of sanctification already begun in us until its completion. We attain this through Christ.

JESUS OUR DELIVERANCE

Those who make satisfactory progress will have in the resurrection full deliverance from sin, from all imperfections of the flesh, and from the flesh itself—full deliverance through the power of the first resurrection. Christ thus becomes our deliverance. We shall then attain the full completion of sons of God on the divine plane.

In all these things Christ is the center; through him alone can we obtain these blessings. While the Father gives them, they are given through his Son, who is the Father's representative. Jesus received the Spirit of the Father and has shed it forth upon us. This is pictured in the type, in the anointing of the high priest. The holy anointing-oil was poured upon his head, and it ran down over his body. So we are anointed through our Head as members of the great High Priest.

"He who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Jesus"; that is to say, Jesus will be the active agent. But there are certain features of the divine plan which Jesus will accomplish in his own name; for instance, the world's blessing and uplifting. While the Father is the Author of the entire plan, yet this blessing comes to the world exclusively through the sacrifice of the Son. Christ will do the work of the Millennial age, and will then deliver mankind up to the Father.

But his work for the church is different: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3) It is not the Son who has begotten us, though it is through the Son that we receive this divine favor. The price, or cost, of obtaining this special divine favor is the sacrifice of our lives. The particular thing which the church receives more directly from the Son is justification. Yet this justification is of the Father, and it is not an actual justification, but an imputed justification. It is a special arrangement, on the Father's part for us that we may come into his favor now in advance of the world—the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Ours is a wonderful God, and his great plan of the ages is marvelous beyond expression! Our hearts rejoice that our eyes have been anointed to see these glorious things hidden to the many during this Gospel age, knowing that all the blind eyes shall yet be opened, and all the deaf ears be made to hear!

"THEY TURN THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH"

The Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard him: He attracted one class and repelled the other. 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, but later deserted him, walking no more with him as he continued to enforce the lessons of divine truth. (Luke 4:14-29) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon his teachings, "wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth"; yet again and again they forsook him, only the merest handful remaining.—John 6:60-69.

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 churches! The congregations of the great temples of fashion ostensibly 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 the tastes and ideas of the congregation, and 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 then ceased 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 a man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great teacher, he is no longer his disciple. 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 mixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be his disciples. This was long after his doctrines had been utterly repudiated.

THE REWARD OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

The Lord's expression, "Then are ye my disciples indeed," implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' 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 acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord and yielding ourselves fully to the Father through him. But the reward of this step depends entirely upon our continuance in his word, in the attitude of true disciples. 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 others 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, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Timothy 3:7) Here is the mistake 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. To those who seek for truth among these human theories, there is no promise that they shall ever find it, and they never do.

Divine truth is found only in the divinely appointed channel—our Lord, the apostles and the prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings of the prophets and the apostles, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our characters to them, is what is implied in "continuing in the Word" of the Lord. And this is entirely compatible with the heeding of all the helps which the Lord raises up from among our brethren in the body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14) 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 carefully to prove 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 to firmly "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict.

We do not come into the knowledge of the truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we are led into the truth. Every step is one of sure and certain progress leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in 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 ripen to a glorious maturity.

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, superstition and fear. Its health-restoring beams penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorate the whole being; it quickens our mortal bodies.

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT"

Sin cannot endure the light of truth; 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 this light. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions, however, are still under the blinding influence of error. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because these 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 awakened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken. The light has scattered our darkness.

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming 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; the alarm of all is increasing as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more apparent. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God as to the terrors of the conflict through which the world will soon have to pass, the true disciples of Christ who abide in his word are not afraid, but rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting this mighty 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, make all things work together for good.

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 wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

OUR GREAT BURDEN-BEARER

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."—1 Peter 5:7.

These comforting words of the Apostle Peter are addressed to the church of Christ; and all who are of the Lord's people surely realize that there are cares and difficulties of life which are our portion and which are perplexing. These cares of life come also to those who are of the world—to some more and to some less. But they surely come to all who are the Lord's children.

The word care is used in two different ways. Thinking of the word in the sense of exercising proper thought and giving proper attention to that which is entrusted to us, or concerning which we are responsible, we might be in danger of misunderstanding our text. The word care, however, very often has in it the thought of worry, trouble of mind; and this is its use by the Apostle in this place. The Apostle Paul also says, "Be careful for nothing"—be worried about nothing, have anxiety about nothing. So we might render the words of St. Peter, "Casting all your anxiety upon him; for he is taking thought for you."

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

The Apostle's advice is not that we shall throw off all sense of responsibility, and cease to exercise care in what we do and in respect to our duties and obligations. Surely we all agree that the man or the woman without care for anything, in this proper sense, would be totally unfit for any position in life. We often notice evidences of some one's not having been sufficiently careful. Perhaps the wall paper has been carelessly marred or the furniture scratched; doors are slammed or left swinging when they should be closed for warmth, etc. Some might say, Oh, these are very small matters! But one who is careless, thoughtless, and inattentive to these matters is very likely to be untrustworthy in larger matters.

Personally, it is painful to us to see these things; and undoubtedly it is so to all who exercise proper care. The children of God, his representatives before men, should not go blundering along through the world or needlessly annoying others, whether it be the brethren or people of the world. Our

influence for good may be greatly marred by inattention to what might be called little things, but what in reality are not so. There is a trite saying which is full of meaning: "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle." The Lord's people should be the most careful people in the world.

Our Lord said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much"; and the reverse of the statement would be equally true—that he that is unfaithful in that which is least is unfaithful also in much. (Luke 16:10) These little things of every-day life may prove to be more crucial tests of real character than will seemingly larger matters. Little courtesies, little acts of thoughtful consideration for others, how much they mean! How greatly they often affect the happiness of those around us and our own influence as ambassadors of Christ! So we need to exercise much care and thoughtfulness in regard to our words, our actions and everything with which we have to do. This is not the care that we are to cast upon the Lord for him to bear. This we are properly to bear ourselves.

OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED BY THE LORD

God is the most careful Being in the universe, we may be sure. He is not careful, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but he is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading his people to cast their care upon him, of bringing them closer to himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a test of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in his love, faith in his promises.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Each day that a Christian lives he should be more reliant upon the Lord. He should realize more fully than before that our heavenly Father, who has provided for the grass of the field and for the birds of the air, cares far more for his children than for the flowers or for many sparrows, and that he has a plan also for the world—an arrangement for their

blessing, in due time. But we have already entered into the blessing of the Lord; we have already become his children, and are his especial care. And "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him"—those that reverence him.

We cannot be faithful children of God if we are full of worry. Worry is one thing, but proper carefulness is another. We should be more careful every day, and thus be able to fulfil our obligations to the world in general, to our families, to ourselves, to the brethren, and to the Lord—to render our God more effective service.

We are not to be troubled and anxious as to where we are to get our next suit of clothes. We have a suit of clothing for the present, such as the Lord has seen fit to give; and we are to do our best to provide the things needed. If the Lord should never give us apparel as good as many others have, or as rich or dainty food, we should not worry, but be content with whatever his providence arranges for us, and accept it thankfully. He will give what is best—what is for our good as new creatures. We should not doubt, nor fear that he will not provide for our needs. He knows all about our affairs, and is not unmindful of our welfare. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

How needful this humility before God, and how consoling and precious this loving assurance! As we go on in this blessed way marked out by our Lord, let us learn more and more fully that we are not to ask anything according to our wills, but only that his will may be done in us and for us. His Wisdom is unerring. Let us tell the Lord all about our burdens, great and small, and let us appropriate to ourselves his love and sympathy, applying to our hearts the balm of his Word, of the precious promises which are the heritage of his own, trusting him that he is both able and willing to supply our every need—yea, that he delights thus to bless us, if we abide in his love.

"How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
"He cares for thee!"

"Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since thou with tenderness divine
Dost care for me!"

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S ENEMIES

"Be thou strong and very courageous."—Joshua 1:7.

These words of Jehovah to Joshua upon his succession of Moses, as the leader of Israel, were used on the occasion of the entrance of the children of Israel upon their new life after they, as the people of God, had crossed the Jordan. They would still have battles, more now than before, and perhaps more than they realized, they needed strength—they needed courage. The basis for their strength and courage was the promise of God. God had declared to Abraham that he would bring his seed into the land of Canaan, and would give it to them for a possession. Those who believed this promise would need a large measure of strength and courage.

God had sent Moses his servant to deliver them from Egypt, and to bring them as his people to the land which he swore unto their fathers should be theirs. It required a good deal of courage to come up out of the land of Egypt; and God had manifested his favor to them in the wilderness, by the blessings which came to them when they were faithful and obedient, and by chastisements when they failed and were disobedient and rebellious. Now they were entering upon the realization of the promises whose fulfilment had been anticipated. "Be strong, be courageous," they were admonished by Jehovah through Joshua. They had come into the promised land, and now they must war a good warfare against their enemies. God had not promised to give them amicable possession; they were to fight and conquer their foes.

As Israel was a typical people, so theirs was a typical warfare. It would have been terrible if they had thought that all those people whom they were commanded to destroy were thus to drop into a hell of torture unending! If the Israelites were told to be strong and of good courage in sending their enemies into such a hell, it would be a horrible thought! But when we perceive that the penalty of sin is death and not eternal torment and that "hell" is the condition of death, we view the matter in a different light. Whether men die by the sword or by pestilence or by consumption or by accident,

it is merely the fulfilment of the divine sentence upon the whole race, which will continue to be fulfilled in God's own time and way. This gives a different aspect to the whole matter.

HOPE FOR THE AMALEKITES, HITTITES, ETC.

The wickedness of the Amalekites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites, etc., had come to the full. They had had some opportunities, some light, and the sinful course they had pursued should now come to an end. They, and all others that have gone down to the grave in ignorance and sin will, when Messiah takes his kingdom, come forth to resurrection possibilities and better, more favorable conditions. And as they in the past have had an experience with sin, they will in the future have an experience with good, and an opportunity to decide then between right and wrong, good and evil. We hope that there will be some of those peoples who will have profited by their experiences in the past, and will choose the good when the contrast is before them and the blinding influences removed.

ISRAEL'S ENEMIES TYPICAL

The children of Israel represented spiritual Israel. The enemies which they destroyed represented the enemies of the church. In the case of the church, we have come from a state of sin and degradation into harmony with God. With some this may have been a very prolonged journey, and with others it may have been shorter, because of greater faith and obedience. We reached the place of special blessing when we made a full consecration to God—we there entered into rest. "We who have believed do enter into rest," says the Apostle Paul. And this rest which we enter seems to have been typified by this "promised land" of Canaan.

But when we enter into this rest of faith we find certain powerful enemies that must be conquered. These enemies we find entrenched in our own bodies. In the typical peoples who were the enemies of Israel, those who were entrenched in strong fastnesses the Israelites found it very difficult to dis-

lodge and destroy; it was much easier to destroy others. So far as we know, the Israelites were long, long years—centuries perhaps—in thoroughly conquering the land and their enemies. It was not until the time of King David that these enemies were thoroughly subjugated. And so it is with the enemies in our flesh—we should war a good warfare against them. We must make no concessions to the flesh; all these enemies are to be exterminated—fought to the death.

The result of this warfare is death; either the death of the new creature or the death of the old creature. If the new creature fail to overcome, he will be exterminated—he will die the second death. Jehovah, in using the words of our text, is speaking more to us—the spiritual Israelites—than to Joshua and the natural Israelites; that is to say, we may make a still deeper application of his words than could fleshly Israel. But we cannot conquer in this fight alone. The Apostle Paul exclaims, “When I am weak, then am I strong,” meaning, When I realize my own weakness and cannot successfully battle alone against the flesh and its infirmities, then am I strong in the Lord. I could not fight a good fight of mine own self. He realized the fulfilment of the promise of the Lord: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in [thy] weakness.”

Surely this is the experience of all of God’s “little ones.” And the realization of this leads us to look to the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord, in order to strengthen

our heart and to renew our endeavors, that we may be strong and of a good courage, and that finally by God’s grace we may come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loves us and bought us with his own precious blood.

TRUE COURAGE VS. SPIRIT OF BRAVADO

Let us be of a good courage! There are various kinds of courage: One kind is born of egotism and self-reliance, another kind results from a spirit of recklessness, which fails to take a proper estimate of the difficulties to be encountered. But true courage, the courage which the Lord’s Word enjoins upon his people, and which all spiritual Israelites are to seek to possess, is a courage which, while carefully noting and realizing the trials and difficulties before them, and recognizing their own insufficiency, looks to the Lord in faith for the needed assistance, trusting in his precious promises. This enables them to be strong and courageous in the presence of difficulties, dangers and obstacles which would appal those who are trusting merely in their own strength.

It will be noted that our Motto-text for this year—1914—is along this same line, and is a part of verse 9 of the chapter from which the text at the head of this article is taken. This will be a momentous year—a glorious year! Then let us all “be strong and very courageous”—strong in the Lord and in the power of his might! Greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us! Let us put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in this evil day.

THE WEDDING FEAST

AUGUST 23.—Matthew 22:1-14.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not!”—Luke 13:34.

Here we have another parable of the kingdom. Today’s lesson shows that the promises of God and his providences toward Israel under the Law Covenant were all designed to fit and prepare the Israelites to be God’s holy nation, and especially to provide at the coming of Christ a sufficient number to constitute the elect church, Messiah’s joint-heirs in the kingdom—his bride. The parable shows that only a few were “Israelites indeed,” in whom was no guile—not enough to constitute the kingdom class; hence the call of this Gospel age, selecting from the Gentiles a sufficient number of saintly characters to be joint-heirs with the Jewish remnant in the Messianic kingdom.

The kingdom of heaven, otherwise styled the kingdom of God, is not to be an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly one, whose ruler, the glorified Christ, will not be an earthly king, but a heavenly being of the highest rank—of the divine nature. This kingdom, representing God and the heavenly rule, or dominion, is to be established amongst men for the eradication of sin. Its first work will be the binding of Satan, the “Prince of this world.” Afterward all the works of darkness will be overthrown. The overthrow will at first cause a great time of trouble, following which, as the reign of righteousness progresses, the curse in its every form will give way before the blessings of Messiah’s kingdom—until there shall be no more curse, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying.

But before this heavenly kingdom can be established, it is a part of the divine decree and arrangement that there shall be a bride class selected from amongst men. These are begotten of the holy Spirit and are God’s workmanship, in whom he works by the exceeding great and precious promises of the Scriptures and by the providences of life. Thus they are being transformed in mind and made ready for the glorious birth-resurrection by which they will be “changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” from earthly nature to heavenly nature. Thus they will enter into the joys of their Lord by becoming his bride class, his joint-heirs in his kingdom.

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE

For the development of this kingdom class the world has now been waiting since the days of Jesus, when by his death he opened up a new way of life and became the Advocate before the Father for all those desirous of being his disciples, his joint-heirs, his bride.

Today’s lesson takes up the kingdom project at the time of our Lord’s earthly ministry. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power [liberty or privilege] to become sons of God.”—John 1:12.

Jehovah himself is the King who made a marriage for his son—arranging before the foundation of the world that there should be certain joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom. This marriage, of course, could not take place until the King’s Son

had come into the world and had made the way for his followers and for the kingdom of which he is to be king.

At the appropriate time God sent his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; but they would not come. John the Baptist and his disciples did this work of calling to the attention of the Jewish people the fact that the King’s Son was in their midst. He said, “There standeth one among you whom ye know not.” (John 1:26) Again he said, “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled.” (John 3:29) John rejoiced to hear the voice of the Bridegroom. Prophetically he foretold that the calling of the bride class had come, although he himself could not be a member of it.

MADE LIGHT OF THE MESSAGE

Again other servants were sent forth. Jesus sent his disciples to the Jews, saying, “Tell them that are bidden. Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage” feast.

But was the message of Jesus and his disciples received? Nay! The people, under the guidance of the scribes and the Pharisees, the theologians of that time, made light of the message and went their way—one to his farm, another to his merchandise, saying, We do not believe this Message respecting the kingdom. Some did even worse than this. They entreated these servants shamefully, spitefully, and slew them. Not only was Jesus slain by the unbelieving ones who had been invited to the feast, but his faithful disciples also were evilly treated and slain.

Then, as seen in another parable, Jehovah was wroth with that people Israel, and sent forth his armies, destroyed those murderers and burned up their city. The fact that it was the Roman army under Titus which destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70 did not make it any less the army of Jehovah, for he is able to make the wrath of man praise him and able to use whom he may please as his messengers, or servants.

GENTILES CALLED TO THE WEDDING

Meantime God said to his servants, the apostles, and to others through them, The wedding is provided, but the Jewish nation, which was especially invited, have not been found worthy of the honor. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage feast. So those servants went into the highways and gathered together as many as they found, and brought them in. Thus the wedding was provided with guests.

Highways represent public concourse, the world over. The Lord’s ambassadors were no longer to restrict themselves to Jews, but were to make known to every people, kindred and tongue, the fact that God is now calling out of the world a little company, lovers of righteousness, to be followers of the Lamb and eventually to become joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his

kingdom. Be it noted that these ambassadors were not to intercept all the people in the highways, but merely to urge upon all those whom they met in the concourse, the great privilege of the open door to the wedding feast.

These were not all saintly, good; some of them, on the contrary, were bad. The apostles explain this, saying that not many great, not many rich, not many noble, but chiefly the poor, the mean things of this world, hath God chosen. The apostles speak, along the lines of our lesson, of the class that God is selecting from the world. No matter how mean, no matter how degraded, no matter how ignoble by nature—all who are willing to receive the grace of God may be made suitable for the wedding by the covering of the wedding garment, the righteousness of Christ.

Indeed, however noble or worthy many are naturally, they are still not fit for the presence of the King. All who attend this wedding must have on the wedding garment—must be covered with the merit of Christ's righteousness. The wedding is thus furnished with guests—all that the King had intended—every place filled. Thus and otherwise does the Lord indicate that the number of the elect is a definitely fixed one; and that as soon as the special number has been found, the call will cease.

INSPECTING THE GUESTS

The custom of the Jews, arranged by divine providence doubtless, was that at every wedding feast each guest was to put on a white wedding garment, covering his own garments. Thus all at the wedding were on an equal footing as respects dignity, because they were the guests of the host. So all who come to God's great feast provided through Christ must come, not through any worthiness of their own in the flesh, but acknowledging that they have an insufficiency of merit to be acceptable to God, and must accept the merit of Christ as making them worthy of the honor to which they aspire in responding to this invitation.

Each guest entering the house was supplied with the robe, and was expected to put it on immediately. For any one to appear without that wedding garment would be a mark of disrespect to the host who had provided it. Indeed, for any one to appear at the wedding without the robe would imply that he had taken it off; for no one was admitted without the robe. This is the picture given us in the parable. A guest was found there who had not on the wedding garment—one, therefore, who in disregard of his host had removed his wedding garment, the wearing of which was the condition of his admission.

The words, "When the king came in," signify an inspection just prior to the feast. Since the King of the parable is Jehovah himself, this would seem to mean that God takes note through the exhibition of divine justice in some manner of any one professing loyalty, yet disregarding the merit of Christ's death. Or, Christ might properly be understood to be referred to as the King in this instance; for at his coming he is to be invested with kingly authority and power by the heavenly Father, as our Lord himself indicates in the parables of the Pounds and the Talents. At his second advent, therefore, he tells us, he will himself inspect all those who pose as being his faithful servants—all those who are desirous of enjoying the wedding festival.

The man found without a wedding garment in the presence of the king we should understand to represent a class, and not merely one individual. So we might find just such a class today, professing to be followers of Christ, professing to be waiting for the marriage of the Lamb, professing to hope to enter into the joys of their Lord, yet telling us that they

are no longer trusting in the merit of Christ's sacrifice for their standing with the Father. These have rejected Jesus as their Savior, their Redeemer, the Atoner for their sins. They merely retain him as their Teacher, and then, apparently, accept only a part of his teachings.

These are manifestly unfit to be members of the bride of Christ. Only the loyal, only the faithful, are to be of that class. The parable shows that all those who reject the merit of Christ's sacrifice will be rejected from the kingdom class. They are unable to say how they came in without a "wedding garment"; for they did not come in without it. No one was ever admitted into the fellowship of the spirit in the church which is the bride of Christ without first having on the wedding garment of Christ's merit, covering his imperfection. Those admitting thus that they have taken off the wedding garment are cast out summarily. The king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

THE OUTER DARKNESS

When our minds were filled with hallucinations of the dark ages, we read into this and into other Scriptures what they do not contain. We assumed that the class represented by the man without the wedding garment would be cast into eternal torment, and there suffer to all eternity. But now, examining the Scriptures more carefully, we have perceived that as all of these guests at the wedding came into the light of the wedding chamber from the darkness of the outside world, so the casting of one of them out of the light into the outer darkness would merely mean the taking from such a one the knowledge and the joys represented by the wedding-chamber light.

As for the outside world, we know that the Apostle John declares that the whole world lieth in darkness, "in the wicked one." We know also that as soon as the bride class shall have been completed, a great time of trouble will prepare the world for the blessings of Messiah's kingdom later on. During that trouble all those who are in the darkness will have weeping and gnashing of teeth—discontent, anguish, disappointment, etc., connected with the overthrow of many of their wrongly based human hopes and expectations.

Our Lord concluded the parable with the statement, "For many are called, but few are chosen." This does not mean, as we once supposed, that only an elect few will get any favor from God in the future, and that all the remainder of mankind will be eternally tortured. We must read it in harmony with the context. The Jewish nation was called, or invited, to the wedding—and failed, except the few "Israelites indeed." For eighteen hundred years the message has gone out into the highways, to one nation after another of the Gentiles, until many have more or less heard the call of the Gospel age. Yet only a few have accepted and have therefore come into the elect condition. And of those who come into this elect condition there will still be a class not properly appreciative which will be cast away, or rejected.

Again the Master drew attention to the matter, saying, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The little flock, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, will through their faithfulness become God's chosen people, his elect church, the bride of Christ. Then, later on, they with their Lord will be the heavenly Father's agency for blessing all the non-elect with the glorious opportunities of restitution to all the earthly blessings and good things lost through Father Adam's disobedience and fall. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GOD'S WORKMEN

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."
—2 Timothy 2:15.

God's approval should be the highest aim of every one who professes to believe in him as the Creator, and especially of those who accept him as their Father and who claim to hold the precious relationship to him of children. His will should be their highest law, and it should be a part of their daily and hourly pleasure, as it is their privilege, to seek to know his will and to do it. This implies study, consideration—not a mere formality of thoughtless reading, or perfunctory worship, but the diligent use of every available means to learn what is his will.

The Apostle Paul gives Timothy the advice contained in our text, and urges him to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." And the intimation is that the ability rightly to divide the Word

of God is to be gained by the study of his Word. The truth of astronomy might give us some knowledge; yet we see that some who have devoted their entire lives to astronomy have lost sight of God, and have become atheists. Guided by the Word of God, any study may be helpful. But it must be viewed, considered, received, from the standpoint of the revelation of God.

The word workman suggests the thought of being engaged in service. This injunction of the Apostle applies to all who belong to the church of Christ. We are God's servants. A great work is going on; this work is the calling out of the church class from the world. The church that is called out is said to be the temple of God, whose "living stones" are being chiseled and polished and made ready for their places

in the building. We are the workmen. We are seeking to prepare ourselves for God's presence, for God's kingdom. This preparation is our first duty; we are to prepare ourselves and to help to prepare others.

TRUE CAUSE OF MUCH FAILURE

The fashioning of these "living stones" is the development of their characters. Each one thus engaged is working out his own salvation. We are God's laborers in doing this work in ourselves. But if we would have divine approval, we must have the divine wisdom—"which cometh down from above," and which we learn from the Word of God.—James 3:17.

Apparently a great many professing Christians, after they have given much time to the cultivation of their brain—spending years in seminaries—will eventually find that they have failed both to have the Lord's ideal accomplished in themselves and to do much good to others. This seems to be the result of a failure rightly to divide the Word of truth. In that day many shall say, Lord, Lord, we have prayed and taught and done many marvelous things in thy name! Some of these the Lord says he will not recognize as his elect. He may have a place in which he will use some of them, some day, yet for this special place he wishes those who are anxious to know and to do his will rather than to know how they may please men, or how they may receive large emoluments or honor of men. Those who are anxious to know his will are most sure to have his will done in them.

MISAPPLICATION OF SCRIPTURES

The expression, "rightly dividing the Word of truth," implies that the Word of truth may be studied, may be handled. We see many ways of handling, or dividing, the Scriptures. Many Scriptures applicable long ago are quoted as appropriately due now, and vice versa; and those which belong to the future are quoted as applicable now, or in the past. There is a general liability to error in not discerning how to divide them aright.

Rightly to divide the Word of truth, then, is to make such a prayerful study of it as will enable us to place things where they belong. For instance, if we fail to distinguish between the begetting of the holy Spirit, and the quickening of the

holy Spirit, and our spirit birth, and get these all confused, we shall do harm. It is not merely the seeking to show a variety of doctrines, but the seeking to make clear what we give to others, that is the part of wisdom. The Apostle was showing Timothy that, as an elder of the church of Christ, he might present the different features of the truth in such a way as to confuse his hearers, who then would not know what they believed. Thus they would be in just the condition to accept whatever teaching any one brought them, especially if that one should happen to ridicule their belief.

This seems to be the condition of many today. Evidently there are many who have been serving or attempting to serve God, who have not been giving out "meat in due season," but who have been giving out truths in a very confused way. It is for us, then, to be on guard and seek carefully to follow the instruction of the Apostle, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." Do not mind so much what men may say or think, but seek the approval of God first.

It is proper for us to seek the approval of the holy, of the saintly; but God's approval should have the precedence. We must be workmen, not idlers and drones; for these will not have any place in the kingdom. God is calling to service now those who are willing to serve under disadvantageous conditions. We are, therefore, to remember that we are to be servants; and that unless we find the proper service, we cannot have a place in this company which God is training. If we wish his approval, as expressed in his Word, we are to see that the conditions as there outlined are fulfilled in our case. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." We are told to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." (1 John 2:15) We are not to set our hearts upon these things. Our hearts are to be set upon the doing of the Lord's will.

The Lord intimates that those who will be faithful to him will have the opposition of the world. "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Therefore, if we have no opposition, we lack this evidence of acceptability with him. We are to rightly divide the Word of truth, and to see that our lives are in harmony with it. At the same time we are to seek to present God's Word to others, that they may enjoy the same privileges and blessings.

A DAY OF QUESTIONS

AUGUST 30.—Matthew 22:15-22.

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."—Verse 21.

Today's study shows us that the wicked vine-dressers, the unready guests, were so enamored of their own methods and theories as to make them really blind to the beauty of the divine plan as expressed by Jesus. We are not speculating about this. St. Peter, explaining to the Pentecostal inquirers, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it [crucified Christ], as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) St. Paul declared, "For had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (1 Corinthians 2:8) Error, fostered by self-will and by plans and schemes not of God, always has a blinding effect, so much so that the Apostle declares that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not" the true message of God when it reaches them.

Even Christians, in proportion as they are influenced by error or selfishness and not filled with the holy Spirit, are blinded. Some see more, and some less, of the length, the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God, which passeth all understanding. No wonder St. Paul prayed for us the opening of the eyes of our understanding wider and wider!—Ephesians 1:18.

Perceiving that the teachings of Jesus were influencing the masses, the worldly-wise (and spirit-blind) scribes and Pharisees, who knew the inconsistencies of their own teachings, thought that they could show up as inconsistent the teachings of Jesus. To this end they sent amongst the multitude some of their followers, to ask questions and to seek to entrap Jesus, to show the inconsistency of the hopes which he was inspiring in the people, and thus to discredit him with the multitude. The first of these was to seek to entrap him into saying something that would prove his disloyalty to the government and thus lead to his arrest as a seditious person, teaching contrary to Caesar's law of taxation. On the other hand, if he advocated Caesar's law, they thought that thus he would antagonize the public sentiment.

Jesus had a wisdom from above. In answer to their query, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?" He replied, "Why do ye tempt me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money." And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They

say, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." No wonder they marveled at such an answer, and left him! Truly, "Never man spake like this man!"

THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR'S

Nor can we say that the Master merely dodged the question shrewdly. Some very rascally men are able to dodge questions and to have a laugh at the questioner's expense. But in this case the answer was complete—the truth, and the whole truth, in every sense of the word fully in harmony with all the teachings of the Master. His followers were instructed not to be seditious, not to be quarrelsome, faultfinding, but to be thankful, holy, happy, subject to "the powers that be." They were to recognize that the powers that be of the kingdoms of the present time are ordained of God, and not merely of men.

True, indeed, earthly kingdoms are not God's kingdoms, as they sometimes claim. True, indeed, they frequently are usurped empires and powers. True, indeed, they sometimes foster sin, iniquity, unrighteousness, and are largely, from outward appearances, the result of human scheming and wickedness. Nevertheless, the people of God are to recognize that Jehovah is the great Over-Lord; and that although it is a part of his program for the present to permit a reign of sin and death at the hands of sinful men, nevertheless he still exercises such a supervision—of hindering one or advancing the cause of another ruler—as justifies the statement that he ordains, authorizes or permits these kingdoms. Whatever, therefore, the heavenly Father has authorized or permitted, not one of his obedient children should for a moment think of resisting or overturning.

The Scriptures declare that God raiseth up and God casteth down; that he has at his disposal myriads who, filled with the spirit of anger, hatred, malice, strife, are ready, whenever an opportune moment comes, to exercise their power and to advance their own selfish interests. Whenever, therefore, the Lord wishes to make a change in earth's rulership and arrangements, he needs only to remove the restraining hand of

his providence, and forthwith evil influences will work the change. As for the people of God, they are all exhorted to be peace-makers, promoters of righteousness, living peaceably with all men, fully subject to "the powers that be," and recognizing them as of divine ordination, permission.

In the case of the Roman Empire, of which Cæsar was head, we note that God had prophetically foretold, centuries before, through the prophecy of Daniel, its rise to universal dominion. It was not, therefore, for Jesus or for any of his disciples to speak against representatives of that Roman power. If Rome ruled, Rome needed to be supported; and the method of support was, properly enough, through taxation. How just, then, were the words of Jesus, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's"! We remember that the Master himself paid tribute, instructing St. Peter, when they had no money, to catch a fish, from whose mouth he obtained the coin necessary for his taxation and that of Jesus.

RENDER UNTO GOD HIS DUE

Had the questioners been intent upon rendering to God their obligations due to him, they would have been in so different a frame of mind that, instead of seeking to entrap Jesus in his words, they would have been glad to be his disciples. What things, then, are God's? What do we owe to him? We answer that as his creatures we are his. Every talent and power we possess ought by right of justice to be used in the service of our Creator and for his praise.

Additionally, we who recognize the fact that we were sinners by nature, and that God's mercy has provided a redemption through Christ, should gladly present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, our reasonable service. This reasonable service is accentuated when we realize the goodness of God; namely, that he purposes to bless the whole world with the privilege of restitution to all that was lost by Adam and redeemed at Calvary. When we learn that the call of this Gospel age is with a view to permitting the followers of Jesus to be associated with him in his Messianic kingdom, we should be filled with reverence, as well as with astonishment. Realizing the possibilities of such a high calling, such a change of nature and attainment of glory, honor and immortality, we should render to God our little all, and realize that it is unworthy of divine acceptance, except as being worthy through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice. We are accepted only in the Beloved One.

PHOTO-DRAMA TRIALS AND BLESSINGS

The DRAMA is sweeping over the country at a wonderful rate, being shown every day in approximately sixty cities. The audiences vary from one hundred to three thousand and more—usually, perhaps, averaging five hundred. Surely a great witness in defense of the Bible is going forth! We are having some excellent responses from the public. Many are being turned back from coldness, indifference, infidelity, atheism, to a faith in God and in his Word superior to anything ever before enjoyed.

The opening of the DRAMA in seven new places each day necessitates our using the telegraph freely. We notify the friends at each place as to what days are available, and inquire whether or not the local friends are able and willing to present the DRAMA to the public in their city free. A noble response is met with everywhere. Those who cannot participate express regrets.

Thus will be seen the importance of having a DRAMA Committee in each class and of knowing just what the class is financially able and desirous of doing toward the presentation of the DRAMA. Then, when an offer of dates is received from the I.B.S.A. DRAMA Office the committee, having already looked into the matter of public auditoriums, is ready to make inquiry, and, if possible, to obtain the use free for the DRAMA as a public benefit, worth more than a year in college to each citizen. Not more than the cost of the light should be charged for any publicly-owned auditorium.

Theatre people properly approached see that the DRAMA will give their theatre wider publicity than anything else. It will draw a new audience of people of the better class, such as rarely attended the theatre. To secure this publicity, theatres will be glad, regardless of their regular rates, to give a very low price for a number of days, especially in the dull season, when there is no expense except for electric current and janitorage. Having determined your course, advise the I.B.S.A. DRAMA, Brooklyn, as quickly as possible, just what you wish to do.

We are no longer able to proffer assistance beyond the lectures, music, picture operator, superintendent, posters, window cards, publicity aids and free scenario. The immense ex-

RESISTING UNTO BLOOD

In full accord with all that has been said foregoing is the thought that we must not render unto Cæsar the things of God. Here lies the snare for many of God's people. They perceive that the friendship of the world can be bought only at the price of the sacrifice of truth. Increasingly they are convinced of the truth of the words of Scripture, "Marvel not if the world hate you"; "The darkness hateth the light"; etc. Even though they render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to every man his due—"honor to whom honor is due," etc.—nevertheless their standard is so different from that of the world, and their viewpoint of everything so different, that it breeds an antagonism, a conflict of interests.

So Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:18, 19) Increasingly they have impressed upon them the force of the Apostle John's words, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—1 John 2:15.

All this signifies that the world's standards, customs, ambitions, views, etc., are so different from those inculcated by the spirit of the truth that it is impossible for these to fully harmonize the one with the other. "No man can serve two masters." Hence to serve the Lord with all our mind, soul and strength, to render him his dues, means to put ourselves crosswise with the views and sentiments of the world. This is the real test of Christian character. Only such as stand this test of "God first," loyalty to the principles which he inculcates, can hope to be members of the kingdom class which is now being selected.

In other words, rendering to God the things that are God's, will eventually cost us every earthly interest and prospect. But to the loyal, the faithful, God provides compensation. Instead of the world's smile which they lose, they receive the smile of the heavenly Father and the favor of their Redeemer. They have also the Master's promise of a hundredfold more in this present life in compensation for everything which they sacrifice for his cause, the cause of God, the cause of truth divine! And with this abundant compensation in the present life comes the assurance of everlasting life in the coming age, under its favorable conditions.

USE THE SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND

However, we are learning that God's way is the wiser way—that God's people are more blessed by the DRAMA when the cost for its local presentation falls on them, and when they serve it as ushers and phonograph operators. The self-sacrifice incidental to all this brings a rich blessing. So we have nothing of which to complain.

Our enemies endeavor to hinder the work by falsely reporting that the Association is very rich—thus hindering charitably disposed people from proffering aid. The fact that we never solicit money seems so strange, even to our friends, that some have gotten the same impression. One dear sister when ushering was asked by a visitor to the DRAMA how he could best give some money to the I.B.S.A. for the forwarding of this great work. The usher answered him that there was no way, and that the money was not needed. If our friends are thus foolish or misinformed, how can we blame our enemies for saying the same things, which they would like to have others believe to be true, so that, all gifts being cut off, our work would stop? However, we are leaving the matter in the Lord's hands. If the funds cease, the work must cease proportionately. Realizing divine supervision, we shall be thoroughly content to have it so.

While the DRAMA brings great blessings and privileges in conjunction with opportunities for service and self-denial, it also brings severe trials to the dear brethren. All are so anxious to serve, and all so independent in their feelings, that it sometimes means as many different plans and arrangements as there are members in the class. Meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, forbearance, love, are qualities which seem to be greatly needed, and many opportunities for their cultivation may be found. So far as we know, friends are passing through these little ordeals with a blessing—an enlargement of the heart and a broadening of their sympathies. It is a

time for putting into operation the Apostle's words, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another."—1 Peter 5:5.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Before the opening of the DRAMA the superintendent must expect to look out for the newspaper publicity, to see that the class has gotten out in good localities the posters sent them, that the DRAMA volunteer matter has arrived, that they have distributed it early in the week preceding the opening, and that the window cards are put out freely in every part of the city—all of the class participating in this work. He will also see the ushers selected by the class, and if any of them are too old or too young or are unsuitable, he may make some kind suggestions as to what to do. The very best, wisest, most intelligent members of the class should be the ushering committee. The class will also look out, amongst their number, for a suitable floor manager, or chief usher, and suggest one or two names, either brother or sister, for this service, according to circumstances. Frequently brethren are unobtainable on account of business requirements.

The duty of the chief usher, or floor manager, will be to see that the other ushers are well placed and understand their duties, that perfect order is kept, and that the public is being, not only kindly, but graciously met. They are for the moment your guests. In the superintendent's absence the moving picture operator will be his and our representative in your city, having charge of the DRAMA to see that it is put on exactly as arranged for, with not a single alteration or deviation. Any inefficiency or anything you think unwise may be called to the attention of these brethren and reported to us. But meantime trust them as the Society's representatives, and co-operate. They in turn, are directed to show every consideration to the wishes of the class in anything that will not conflict with the positive rules governing the DRAMA.

In advance of the DRAMA expect a sister, whose stay will be only about one day. She will come to give instructions on the phonograph. Two, and only two, volunteer phonographers may learn; and they should be bright—not too nervous. The sister will remain long enough to show one performance and to see her pupils operate at one exhibition. This will be plenty of time, yet none too much. So have the pupils ready, and give them every opportunity to learn their work thoroughly.

So far as possible the ushering sisters will wear white dresses, to help distinguish them from the audience. Additionally they should make a little head-piece of uniform style.

One neat design consists of two connecting rosettes of white satin ribbon.

The ushers should, if possible, have little prayer meetings frequently, requesting divine blessings on their efforts to show forth, in their words, in their actions, in their looks, the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. They should co-operate thoroughly with the chief usher and with the whole spirit of the DRAMA.

Children under twelve years old should not be admitted, except when accompanied by parents, teachers or guardians. Even then they should be seated at the rear under surveillance of the ushers. Adults should have the less preference always. Children can get out for matinees; but some adults have evenings only. Babies in arms should never be admitted. If an exception to this rule were ever made, the mother should be asked to sit near the door and should be made to promise to take the child out immediately if it cries. Do everything to preserve quiet and order. Avoid frequent and excited calls for order. If any one is seen to be rude or boisterous, approach the person kindly and whisper a loving word in season respecting the Golden Rule and the rights of others.

RE THE FINALE

Following the fourth part of the DRAMA comes the finale sermon. On that occasion the speaker will call attention to the regular meetings of the I.B.S.A. in your city, giving the address; or, if you think worth while, cards bearing that address might be distributed to the people at the close of the service. It is not wise to discuss local meetings during the showing of the DRAMA.

No books are to be hawked, or sold, in the ordinary sense of the term. With the opening of each DRAMA a set of books is to be sent, merely for use as samples until the close of the DRAMA, when they may be sold and the money turned over to the chosen representative of the class, to whom they have been charged. Orders received meantime should be sent in promptly, directly to THE WATCH TOWER Office, through the representative of the class.

We avoid special effort to sell the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES lest any should get the impression that the sale of the books is the object of the DRAMA.

At the last, or finale meeting, the speaker will ask for

addresses. Afterward he will take charge of those addresses, distributing them amongst those whom he deems best qualified for the calls. The matter is left entirely in his hands, but give him the best advice you can of the capability of those who desire to participate. The good of the Lord's cause alone is sought. Let us all sink any personal feeling. The Editor would be glad if his own personality did not come so much into the DRAMA, but it has seemed absolutely necessary for two reasons:

(1) The public would take comparatively little interest in anything gotten out by a religious society which they did not know—they would esteem it something "cheap" and not "worth while."

(2) If the personality were not made prominent, we would be charged with hypocrisy—deceiving the people. We want the people to see the DRAMA unprejudiced, that they may judge for themselves where the hypocrisy and misrepresentation come from.

The class will please introduce to the superintendent, the person whom they nominate to be the floor manager, or head usher, and two sisters to learn phonograph operating to relieve each other if necessary.

PHOTO-DRAMA CLASS EXTENSION

We are not yet ready to give full particulars, but we are planning how the brethren who have been engaged in class extension work can prosecute the same in conjunction with the PHOTO-DRAMA. In our next issue we hope to be able to outline this work fully. To operate a DRAMA properly there should be at least three brethren with each of the three parts—nine for the DRAMA complete—one to operate the stereopticon; one to operate the phonographic lectures, oratorios, hymns, etc.; one to serve as usher and general order-keeper. More could be used, but three will do.

Part I. would be presented in a town on Sunday, either in the morning, afternoon or evening; or, if the interest and the population justified, it could be presented all three of these times. But after it has been shown, it should go to the next town, and then to another and another—keeping on continuously from town to town, village to village, schoolhouse to schoolhouse, court house to court house, public hall to public hall. Following it the next day or the next Sunday or the next session, as the case might be, Part II. would be going on and on. Following this would be Part III. As soon as the three presentations have been made, another set of brethren should be ready to take up a series of chart talks on the Bible, and, later on, to invite the interested to regular Dawn Circles.

These DRAMAS for the smaller villages and country places will not have the finest pictures now shown in the regular presentation of the DRAMA; but those used will be elegant, nevertheless. The story will be just the same, and the value to each individual, we doubt not, just as great. We may be sure that country folk will attend the DRAMA, and talk about it and read about it, as much or more than do their city cousins.

We are preparing a special stereopticon, which can be used by attachment of a cord to an ordinary electric light fixture, and can be, if necessary, transformed quickly so as to use acetylene gas—obtainable from the reservoir of an automobile.

We are giving all these particulars now so that you can think the matter over. Classes that have been carrying on class extension work and believe they are able to carry on this new work, financing the expenses connected with the small halls, schoolhouses, etc., will please discuss the matter, decide upon it and advise us at once. If not sure that you will be able to manage the matter, better wait awhile and make sure. Let those be served first who are sure that they are ready, willing, anxious to assist in this great work.

THE "EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFITS

Having perfected our arrangements, we stopped the printing in order to add the following:

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. X

Any of our readers desiring to purchase for his own use the full set of 96 DRAMA lectures (three Parts, two hours each) with nine choice introductory, intermission and closing hymns and a portable phonograph, with a carrying case, can have the entire outfit for \$38.50

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. Y

This outfit is the one especially intended for the DRAMA EXTENSION described foregoing. Its three Parts require only the same number of lecture and music records as foregoing; but, because of public use, each Part must have its own Phonograph, each Part its own Stereopticon, etc. We therefore show each Part complete in itself, as follows:

Part I. includes one Primo Stereopticon for electric current—Oneida Lens (three for varying distances); special price \$20.00

Variable Rheostat (five amp., ten amp., or fifteen amp.) may be effective for house current or for heavy current arc lights 6.00
 Attachment for Acetylene Gas or Presto Light (useful in places where there is no electric current, but where gas can be taken from an automobile tank)..... 4.00
 DRAMA stereopticon slides, beautifully tinted, with special carrying box and carrying case..... 38.00
 One portable Phonograph, one Operator's Book, Lecture and Hymn Records for Part I., and carrying case.. 19.50
 Total cost of Part I., "EUREKA DRAMA" No. Y.. \$87.50
 Additional would be the expressage from Brooklyn.
 The Society would furnish posters, window-cards and free Scenario, and would supply the bound Scenario for sale in any quantity at one-half retail prices.
 Parts II. and III. would cost exactly the same as the above, the entire three Parts amounting to.....\$262.50
 Needless to say, all the prices here quoted are extremely low.

Nevertheless it runs into a great deal of money to provide these "EUREKA DRAMAS" in quantities. For instance, we are preparing for orders from at least one hundred classes, which would run the cost into \$26,250, aside from packing, shipping, clerical work, free scenario, free PHOTO-DRAMA announcements, posters, etc. It would afford us great pleasure to announce this all free on demand, but expenses already depleting the treasury forbid such a course.

Those who desire to purchase the DRAMA outright may do so. Others may have the Parts on loan (subject to return to the Society on demand if not being used) if they will deposit \$30 for each Part, \$90 for the complete set of "EUREKA DRAMA" No. Y. On the return of the DRAMA this payment will be refunded, less a proper charge for broken slides, repairs, expressage, etc.

In writing to us on this subject of DRAMA EXTENSION, please address, I. B. S. A., "EUREKA DRAMA," 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N. Y.

INTERESTING LETTERS

RE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

Dear Brother Russell:—

I want to thank you; oh, I want to thank you so much, for the privilege of seeing the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION! I had never thought to live to see the everlasting Gospel preached to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people!

Yet so it is. Our Boston audience is cosmopolitan. Some are not able to understand English; some cannot read; yet all are reached. All have the Gospel preached unto them. Words cannot tell you how my heart rejoices! How near, how blessed, how real, these things are to me!

Last Sunday as I was making my way to a box, an usher said to me, "We have strict orders to allow no one in the boxes." I said, "Oh dear! what shall I do? I cannot take a seat while strangers are being turned away!" She said, "But you cannot see the pictures there." I answered, "I can see fairly well, and I can hear splendidly, and best of all I can see that great audience having the everlasting Gospel preached to them."

Surely they are being prepared for the manifestation of the sons of God and the blessing of all the families of the earth! The Drama is put so wisely, so kindly, that no one can take offense. When some great truth is brought out, then always the view from the other side is taken, as some pleasing picture is thrown across the screen. Thus much wisdom, much love is shown.

Our ushers must find their work quite a physical strain, but all, I am sure, wish to show the politeness that comes from a heart fully consecrated to follow in the Master's steps—laying down life for the world. I love to think that we are dealing with our children of the next age! What privileges, what joys, are ours!

I love to think of that audience as one day catching up the mighty song begun in heaven, and extending to every creature on the earth, praising him who is worthy of every adoration! And so, dear Brother, we thank God most heartily, and are glad to co-operate even in the smallest way.

Your sister in the most blessed Faith, F. E. RILEY.

TOWER A PARTICULAR MEANS OF GRACE

My Dear Brother Russell:—

For some time I have been thinking of writing to tell you how much I have been helped and stimulated by THE WATCH TOWER, but have refrained from doing so, partly because I did not want to take up your time. Like the two disciples of old, however, my heart so burns within me that I feel I must express my deep gratitude for the "meat in due season" that is so bountifully served to the Lord's people by you.

Many of the articles seem to have been like a message direct from the Lord himself to me; and, in consequence, my heart goes out to him in loving gratitude, and to you also, as his faithful messenger.

Often, the Lord has, in response to prayer for guidance in various matters connected with the "daily round," shown me, through one of your articles in a current TOWER, quite clearly and definitely the course he would have me pursue. This has been so marked that I am convinced that the Lord, knowing the needs of his people, has made THE WATCH TOWER a very particular means of grace and help.

This thought has been confirmed to me in another way: Some time ago, under an extra pressure of work—harvest work—I allowed my regular morning reading of the VOLUMES

and TOWERS to lapse, and I soon found, to my cost, that my rest of heart and trust in the Lord were being very easily disturbed, and for a little time I wondered why this should be. But a remark of yours to the effect that the first and most important work that every one of the Lord's people should engage in, is the making of his own calling and election sure, enabled me to view the matter of work for the Lord as he would have me see it. Since that time the regular, daily reading has brought me an ever-increasing peace and rest in the Lord and an ever-increasing joy, and, consequently, strength in his service.

Your untiring labor of love for the Lord and the brethren is a constant encouragement to me to serve in like manner; and I thank God upon every remembrance of you, and particularly as I remember you daily at the throne of grace. With much love, I am

Your brother by his grace, GEO. T. R. SWAIN.—Eng.

SURELY, USE EVERY OPPORTUNITY

Dear Brother Russell:—

I thought I would write you for information and advice. We had the pleasure of spending three days with our dear Brother T—— in our old haunts—Lima and Van Wert. There we met some of our old friends and they were surprised to see us. They all thought that I had long filled a drunkard's grave. But thanks be to our Lord for his mercy toward me!

While in Lima I called on a friend who is now one of the leading business men in that city. He had done all in his power to get me on the sober path, but he did no good. So we told him and his friends of our experience and how we had found the truth and how it had made me free from Satan's bondage.

Oh, how happy he was! Then he urged me to give a public talk to let them all know, in Mendon, Ohio, where we once lived. So this is what I would like to have some advice on. We thought that it would be good to use for our subject, "How I Became a Sober Man," telling all our experience, how we came to learn the truth, bringing in God's great plan of the ages, and after the meeting pass the literature.

This Lima man would go with us, also a former saloon keeper who is about to symbolize his consecration.

May the Lord bless and keep you! Pray for me.

In the service of our King,

C. B. H.

CREDULITY FEEDS UPON LITTLE

Dear Brother Russell:—

Since reading Brother Baker's letter in a recent WATCH TOWER, "I feel it borne in upon me," as our Quaker friends say, to write you. Had the brother stopped to think he might, like many of us, have recalled how he had seen a crowd of children frightened at the suggestion that the "school-killer" or some other goblin, terrible to the childish imagination, was coming. The children of believers do not hear about the "bogey-man" perhaps, but they hear and read about demons, and their imaginations are as susceptible as those of less favored little people, and it does not require more than a shadow to start a wave of hysteria. But were it proven that demons did appear, what would they have to do? Can they touch the "Lord's anointed"?

Regarding the case of the brother mentioned, who knows that he was not already insane when he went to the meetings of the society named? It is a point that has come under my observation, that often persons "change their religion," as well as become over-zealous in attendance upon church serv-