

and don't you talk to me of the love of God! If there is such a being—which I sometimes doubt entirely—he has shown anything but love for me! He took away my babies as soon as they had breathed a few times. He has robbed me of my hearing and thus taken away my greatest pleasure in life, my music, etc., and at the same time raised a barrier between me and the world which I can never overcome. He has isolated me from all the world while still leaving me in it, and he would have shown more love for me if he had taken me out of the world entirely; and all this he has done notwithstanding the fact that I have always been a worker in his church and cause, have always praised him with my voice, was ever ready and willing to serve him with hand and voice in any good cause, and this is the way he shows his love for me! Oh, to me he seems a good God to be hated, but not one who is worthy of my love and confidence or reverence."

My friend, with tears rolling down her face, clasped me in her arms and said, "Poor child! I am so sorry for you. It does seem hard, but still I can't help feeling that the time will come when you will feel differently and see things in a better light."

Was ever anyone so wickedly rebellious as I? I continued to feel the same for years, during which time, on the rare occasions that we met, my friend would drop some word, principally concerning events which were likely to soon take place in the world's history, and about three years ago she sent me some tracts which I was tempted to at once throw into the waste basket; but it occurred to me that after she had taken the trouble to send them to me, the least I could do was to read them before destroying them. I did read them, and one of them at least I kept, thinking it might come handy to refer to. So I put it where I saw it daily, and naturally read it over frequently. After a while I began to wonder what those DAWN books really contained. My curiosity very gradually increased until I sent to my friend for the first two volumes and began to read them.

But the "eyes and ears of my understanding" still refused to open and I was nearly through the first volume before my interest was fully aroused. As I now recall it, it seemed like awaking from a night's sleep: we begin to be conscious it is morning and soon will be time to get up; then we close our eyes for another nap, until we suddenly find it is broad daylight and we must be up and about our business. Then we get fully awake. So it was with my reading the DAWNS. At times in reading Vol. I, my interest would be aroused, but I soon relapsed into that dreamy, half-conscious state, until toward the last of the volume I found myself fully awake and was eager to begin the next volume. Before I was half through that I sent for the other four volumes to have them at hand as soon as needed.

The little tract that awakened my interest was "Do You Know?" and I intend to scatter that seed wherever I think there is a chance of its doing good. I wish I could express

in words my thankfulness for the blessing received through reading the DAWNS and the study of God's Word in connection therewith, and also the TOWER publications. Right here let me thank whoever is responsible for sending me recently a package of six of your discourses published in a Pittsburgh journal. I am so grateful for them, for I need all this "meat." So far as I know there are but two other people in town who believe in MILLENNIAL DAWN, and they, unlike myself, seem not to care to run for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus, and I have no one in full heart sympathy with me to talk with, so it is a real feast to me to get the TOWERS and all such reading upon the subject now so dear to my heart.

As for me, I feel that I am indeed a "new creature." I cannot recognize myself today as being the same person who once was so ready to "curse God and die," and to think that, after all my sinful rebellion against him, he should permit me to see this wonderful revelation of his plan and receive the blessing far beyond anything I should ever have dared to hope for, teaches me a lesson in humility that I shall never forget. Now in days of trials and perplexities I can say, "Be still! It is the Lord. Let him do what seemeth to him good." I can even thank him for bringing me through these devious paths of doubt and despair, sorrow and suffering—rejoicing in tribulation, since it has brought me to his feet, humbled and ashamed, but now ready and anxious to do his will wherever it may lead me.

Last spring I withdrew my membership from the Universalist church, although less than a year before my only child united with the church. Then was a trial for me. I felt if I was to belong to the one true church of the living God I should "come out of Babylon," yet I knew not what influence my doing so would have upon my child. But since I took that step in obedience to what I believed to be the Lord's will, I felt that no harm to my child should result.

My daughter has since come to see this "present truth," and wishes now that she had not joined the Universalist church, yet does not quite want to withdraw from it, and I do not urge it. The seeds of truth are sown in her heart, and she says she "can't believe anything else since she has seen this," so I am content to trust the outcome to the Lord. She is really but a child yet, and, living the pleasures of youth, does not seem to want to sacrifice much for the truth's sake. Later on she may, for she is a good girl, very bright and intelligent, and, with all her fondness for the good times usually enjoyed by young people, she has an undercurrent of sober, serious thought and a deep reverence for those things which so greatly interest me—and herself, too, only in less degree.

Pardon this lengthy letter, which I hope has not proved uninteresting to you, and now may the Lord's blessing be upon you and all co-workers in his cause.

In deepest gratitude, I am, your sister in Christ,

—, N. H.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

JEW'S FLOCKING INTO PALESTINE

London, England.—The correspondent of the *Daily Mail* at Jerusalem remarks that the influx of Jews into Palestine during the last few months has been remarkable. Five thousand of them from Russia landed at Jaffa a few weeks ago. They will settle on the plain of Sharon.

A few days ago some Jewish financiers made a trip east of the river Jordan. They were highly satisfied with the land there and are willing to establish colonies, but they are rather suspicious of the Bedouin tribes. It is believed, if the government will guarantee protection, the sale of large tracts of land will soon be completed.

The correspondent states that the Jews are regaining possession of the land by degrees, and that should the present quick rate continue the whole country in a few years will belong to them.

* * *

The above is a confirmation of the item we published recently to the effect that the Turkish government had removed the restriction on Jewish settlement in Palestine which had been in force since 1892. Undoubtedly there will soon be a general rush of Russian Jews to the Holy Land—the land of Abraham.

Thus is prophecy fulfilling before our eyes. The Zionist movement of recent years was caused largely by the refusal

to allow Jews to go to the land. The Zionists planned to buy Palestine, but did not succeed. Now, "in due time," God has opened the door to Palestine without their purchasing it. The next eight years will no doubt show wonders there as well as elsewhere throughout the world—all in line with the Word.

"PRIESTS ARE KNAVES"

A bricklayer named Loos was severely punished on February 15th at the Berlin Criminal Court for "dishonoring the institution of the Christian church."

In a speech delivered at a meeting of co-workers, Loos spoke of religion as being superfluous to workmen, and used the expression "Priests are arrant knaves, who keep the people stupid."

The Public Prosecutor argued that this expression contained an insult to the priesthood, and the Court sentenced Loos to three months' imprisonment.

YOUR LETTERS APPRECIATED

Since the issuance of the July 15th WATCH TOWER the Editor's mail has been greatly increased by letters expressive of sympathy and confidence. These are highly appreciated, dear friends. Each one would have had a personal reply had that been possible. Since Convention work, etc., etc., rendered personal replies impossible, we request that all accept this general acknowledgment.

The evidences are that our trials and difficulties will but draw all the Lord's true sheep nearer to him and to each other in the blessed tie of Christian love that binds our hearts as one.

"A little while, our trials will be over;
A little while, our tears be wiped away;
A little while, the power of Jehovah
Shall turn all darkness into gladsome day.
"A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—
The brighter dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Savior, make our spirit's vision clearer,
And guide, O guide us in the shining way."

A MOUNTAIN SWALLOWED BY THE SEA

The Prophet declared that the mountains shall be removed and carried into the midst of the sea (Psalm 46:2.) This we showed (DAWN, Vol. 1, p. 323) means that the kingdoms shall be swallowed up by anarchy.

Note how the Lord caused the same thought to come to worldly minds: The *Chicago Daily Tribune* on July 17 printed on its front page a sketch of a wide waste of waters with a mountain peak emerging from it, on which the Russian Czar and six of his advisers are clinging, waiting in horror for the waters to cover them entirely. The title is "Doomed—Russian Autocracy."

THE ASBURY PARK CONVENTION

From various directions the Truth people gathered at Asbury Park, N. J., for a General Convention, to the number of about 1,000—some staying throughout, and others a shorter period. Florida and Texas on the South, California on the West, Maine on the East and Canada on the North were represented, and many of the intermediate States, though the bulk of the attendance was from New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia. Besides, we were favored with the fellowship of three from Scotland. As you may surmise it was a family reunion, in which each was deeply interested in all others. As usual all faces were glad and bright because of the sunshine of the truth within. The continuance of the Convention for an entire week under the beautiful and peaceful conditions of this model sea-side resort seemed to be appreciated by all.

According to program, the Convention opened with an address of welcome at 10 a. m. Sunday, July 22, followed by a Praise and Testimony Meeting which all seemed to greatly enjoy. Brother A. E. Williamson preached at 3 p. m., subject, "The Saints Shall Judge the World." Brother M. L. McPhail discoursed at 7:30 p. m. on "Elect and Non-Select."

On Monday, the 23rd, another Praise and Testimony meeting was enjoyed from 9 to 10:30 a. m., followed by a discourse from Brother John Edgar, subject, "Time, and Its Relation to the Divine Plan." Brother R. E. Streeter discoursed at 7:30 p. m. on "Our Hope and Its Present Effects."

Tuesday, the 24th, opened with a Praise, Prayer and Testimony Meeting at 9 a. m. This was followed by a discourse by Brother Frank Draper on "Some Features of the Tabernacle's Teaching." At 7:30 p. m. Brother M. L. Herr preached on the subject, "Transformed."

Wednesday's program was a little different. A Sunrise Praise and Testimony service, 5 to 6:30 a. m., reminded the friends in general that we are all awake and on the outlook for the Sun of Righteousness to usher in the great antitypical Sabbath—the Millennium. At 10:45 Brother E. Bundy gave a discourse on "The Chief Corner Stone." Just as he concluded and a song of praise was being sung Brother C. T. Russell arrived and was conducted to the platform. The friends arose *en masse* and gave him their smiles of welcome with the "Chautauqua salute"—the waving of handkerchiefs. Brother Russell greeted the assemblage, assuring them of his joy in meeting them and of his hopes and prayers that the Convention would be a great success and blessing to all. He was assured of the Lord's willingness to bless us all and hence believed that the amount of blessing each would receive would depend very largely on his own attitude of heart—his receptiveness. He remarked that the Convention would cost the company, for railway fares and board, about \$25 each on the average—or about \$25,000 in all. Born with an economical streak he was accustomed to count the cost and compare it with the results. He had been learning of late that it is very difficult to estimate the value of spiritual blessings, and believed it quite possible for each one to get more than his money's worth of favor and spiritual uplift, but it behooved each one to seek for this result in himself as well as to assist others to the highest attainment in spiritual progress. Then the congregation filed past Brother Russell, greeting him and he them with hearty hand-shakes and words of comfort.

Later in the day Brother Russell introduced Brother W. E. Van Amburgh as the Permanent Chairman of the Convention and the speaker of the evening at 7:30 p. m.—subject, "The Honor of the Cross."

Thursday, July 26, opened with a Praise Service and at 10 o'clock was followed by a discourse by Brother Russell

on "Baptism and its Import." At 3 p. m. symbolic baptism was administered in the Congregational church's baptistry—65 symbolizing their burial and resurrection. At 7:30 p. m. Brother Smith Walker preached on "Making Our Calling and Election Sure."

Friday, the 27th, at 9 a. m. a Praise and Testimony Meeting held until 10:30 when Brother John Edgar delivered an address on "The Lessons Taught in the Great Pyramid." At 7:30 Brother Russell answered a large bunch of written "Questions on Biblical Topics."

July 28th, Saturday, Brother Russell addressed colporteurs and the friends of that work, showing its importance and how evidently the Lord intended that it should be a feature of the present "Harvest" work, and how great its possibilities of reaching the eyes, ears and hearts of the people. The afternoon continued the subject and gave opportunity for the assignment of territory to many beginners. About 60 colporteurs were in attendance. We hope for a still larger gathering of colporteurs at the St. Paul Convention. At 7:30 p. m. Brother M. L. McPhail gave a discourse on "Patience."

When Sunday, July 29, the last day of our convention feast, arrived, it found the friends well filled and disposed to say with the Prophet, "My cup runneth over." The 10:30 a. m. discourse by Brother Russell was from the text (Col. 3:1), "If Ye then be Risen with Christ, Seek Those Things which are Above." The 3 p. m. discourse by the same speaker was on the theme, "The Bible Vindicated—To Hell and Back: Who are There. Hope for the Return of Many of Them."

The "Love Feast," the concluding service of the Convention, was an occasion long to be remembered. It was conducted by Brother Van Amburgh. At 7 p. m. Brother Russell gave a few parting words, reminding the dear friends of the General Assembly or Convention soon to be enjoyed by some and urging each one present to do all in his power to make his own calling and election sure. He reminded all that our sufficiency is of God in Christ, who has assured us that the Father himself loveth us and is for us, willing to assist us; that the Lord Jesus has promised, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and assured us that all of life's experiences under his direction can and will be overruled in our favor—if we but obey his commands and abide in his love. He reminded the friends of his words of greeting on his arrival, and his exhortation that each get for himself and for dear ones at home the full value of the cost of the Convention. He had to tell them that many had told him they had been doubly repaid with interest, and that one brother remarked that he alone had gotten spiritual blessings of more value than the \$25,000, the entire cost of the Convention. He had every reason to believe that many of us could not estimate the value of the seasons of spiritual refreshment, and he proposed their continuance until the Lord's providence indicated to the contrary. There was no time for a more formal adieu, so Brother Russell waved his hand to the audience and they theirs to him and he was driven to the train, while the others wound up the Convention with the Love Feast of the program.

We have refrained from comments on the discourses, but we believe that all who heard were blessed and edified. Comments to this effect were general—not only among the friends of the truth but amongst visitors. None can tell the scope of the blessing resulting from these gatherings, which seem to become more popular every year. May the Lord add his blessing richly, not only to those who attended but also to the many more whose hearts and prayers were with us and who were frequently remembered in our prayers.

ONE-DAY CONVENTION REPORTS

At Jamestown, Ohio, we had a very interesting time on Sunday, July 15. Friends from surrounding parts were in good attendance, amongst them all of the Dayton class, about 40. The rally of the forenoon, led by Brother Martin, was refreshing and inspiring. The afternoon meeting for the public was well attended for the size of the city—about 400 were present. At the evening session there was a discourse for the interested, which many of you received the following day through the newspapers. The Lord's Spirit was with his people and they were blessed; and it is sincerely hoped that some of the public who came through curiosity got some food that will profit them everlastingly.

On July 22 the Elgin, Ill., convention, longed for by the dear friends for some time, came to pass. The Editor reached Chicago Sunday morning in time to join the dear friends there on an excursion train—three coaches of which were reserved for their use. About 107 of the Chicago church were

present, and good representations from other small cities nearby. In consequence the morning rally, led by Brother Jones, numbered over 200—the evening attendance being nearly 300.

The afternoon meeting for the public was not so well attended as had been hoped—not over 500. But the attention was excellent. Elgin is not a large city and the audience was well proportioned to the population and the auditorium. The evening discourse on the "Ministry of Reconciliation" committed to us, many of you already have in the secular papers of the day following the convention. We had a delightful visit with the Chicago friends both going and coming, and believe that all enjoyed the occasion thoroughly.

* * *

Any of the friends desirous of securing these discourses every Monday should subscribe through the WATCH TOWER office and get wholesale rates on the papers.

THE YOUNG MAN AND THE PULPIT

BY SENATOR ALFRED J. BEVERIDGE

The American people at heart are a religious people. They are practical and fearless, too. If you will listen to the chance conversations of the ordinary American you will find that the laymen of the nation have some very decided views upon the pulpit, the man who fills it and the work he ought to do. In the breast of the millions there is not only a great need, but a great yearning, for certain things of the soul which it is for the pulpit to supply. This paper is an attempt to talk as one of these millions to the young man who is about to mount to this sacred station.

"I have just come from church," said a friend one day, "and I am tired and disappointed. I went to hear a sermon and I listened to a lecture. I went to worship and I was merely entertained. The preacher was a brilliant man and his address was an intellectual treat, but I did not go to church to hear a professional lecturer. When I want merely to be entertained I will go to the theater. But I do not like to hear a preacher principally try to be either orator or play-actor. I am pleased if he is both; but before everything else I want him to bear to me the Master's message. I want the minister to preach Christ and him crucified."

The man who said this was a journalist of ripe years, highly educated, widely experienced, acquainted with men and life. . . .

First, then, young man aspiring to the pulpit, the world expects you to be above all other things a minister of the Gospel. It does not expect you to be primarily a brilliant man, or a learned man, or witty, or eloquent, or any other thing that would put your name on the tongues of men. The world will be glad if you are all of these, of course; but it wants you to be a preacher of the Word before anything else. It expects that all your talents will be consecrated to your sacred calling. It expects you to speak to the heart, as well as to the understanding, of men and women, of the high things of faith, of the deep things of life and death. The great world of worn and weary humanity wants from the pulpit that word of helpfulness and power and peace which is spoken only by him who has utterly forgotten all things except his holy mission. Therefore merge all of your striking qualities into the divine purpose of which you are the agent. Lose consciousness of yourself in the burning consciousness of your cause.

But if you do that you must be very sure of your own belief. Any man who assumes to teach the Christian faith and yet, in his own secret heart, questions that faith himself, commits a sacrilege every time he enters the pulpit. Can it be that the lack of living interest in certain church services is caused by a sort of subconscious knowledge of the people that the minister himself is speaking from the head rather than from the heart; that what he says comes from his intellect, and not as the "Spirit gives him utterance"; and, to put it bluntly, that he himself "no more than half believes what he says"?

"The man spoke as if he were bored with endless repetition of sermons," said a close observer of a weary parson. Certain it is that even in political speaking the man who believes what he says has power over his audience out of all comparison with a far more eloquent man whom his hearers know to be speaking perfunctorily. No matter how much the latter kind of speaker polishes his periods, no matter how fruitful in thought his address, no matter how perfect the art of his delivery, he fails of the ultimate effect wrought

by a much inferior speaker whose words are charged with conviction.

He is like the chemist's grain of wheat, perfect in all its constituent elements except the mysterious spark of life without which the wheat grain will not grow.

If, then, you do not believe what you say, and believe it with all your soul—believe it in your heart of hearts—do not try to get other men to believe it. You will not be honest if you do. The world expects you to be sure of yourself. How do you expect to make other people sure of themselves if you are not sure of yourself?

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

The world is hungry for faith. Do not doubt this for a moment. More men and women today would rather believe in the few fundamentals of the Christian religion than have any other gift that lavish fortune could bestow upon them. But these millions want to *believe*; they do not want to argue or be argued at. They want to believe so thoroughly that their faith may amount to knowledge. Doubtings are disquieting. We want certainties, we laymen.

For years I have made it a point to get the opinion of the ablest and most widely experienced men and women I met on the subject of immortality. In all cases I found that the subject in which they were more deeply interested than in all other subjects put together.

"I would rather be sure that when a man dies he will live again with his conscious identity than to have all the wealth of the United States, or to occupy any position of honor or power that the world could possibly give," said a man whose name is known to the railway world as one of the ablest transportation men in the United States.

"When I am by myself I think about a lot of strange things. Is the soul immortal, and what is the soul anyhow?" It is a politician who is talking now, and a ward politician at that, a man whom few would suspect of thinking upon these subjects at all.

So you see, young man, you who are being measured for the cloth, all manner and conditions of men are thinking about the great problems of which you are the expounder, and longing for the answer to those problems which it is your business to give them. That is the condition of the mind of the millions.

But what is the condition of the mind of the young minister? A few years ago a certain man, with good opportunities for investigation and a probability of sincere answers, asked every young preacher whom he met during a summer vacation these questions:

First: "Do you believe in God, the Father; God a person, God a definite intelligence—not a congeries of laws floating like a fog through the universe; but God a person in whose image you were made? Don't argue; don't explain; but is your mind in a condition where you can answer 'Yes' or 'No'?" Not a man answered "Yes." Each man wanted to explain that the Deity might be a definite intelligence or might not; that the "latest thought" was much confused upon the matter, and so forth and so on.

The second question was: "Do you believe that Christ was the son of the living God, sent by him to save the world? I am not asking whether you believe that he was inspired in the sense that the great moral teachers are inspired—nobody has any difficulty about that. But do you believe that Christ was God's very Son, with a divinely appointed and definite mission, dying on the cross and raised from the dead—"yes" or "no"? Again not a single answer with an unequivocal, earnest "Yes." But again explanations were offered, and in at least half the instances the sum of most of the answers was that Christ was the most perfect man that the world has seen, and humanity's greatest moral teacher.

Then came the third question: "Do you believe that, when you die, you will live again as a conscious intelligence, knowing who you are and who other people are?" Again, not one answer was unconditionally affirmative. Of course they did not know. Of course that could not be known positively. On the whole they were inclined to think so, but there were very stubborn objections. And so forth and so on.

The men to whom these questions were put were particularly high-grade ministers. One of them had already won a distinguished reputation in New York and the New England States for his eloquence and piety. Every one of them had had unusual successes with fashionable congregations. But every one of them had noted an absence of real influence upon the hearts of their hearers, and thought that this same condition is spreading throughout the modern pulpit. Yet not one of them suspected that the profound cause of what they called "the decay of faith" was, not in the world of men and women, but in themselves.

How could such priests of ice warm the souls of men? How could such Apostles of Interrogation convert a world?

These were not examples, however; they were exceptions. Most preachers believe that they actually know the truths they preach. . . .

Faith is infectious. James Whitcomb Riley, whose sweetness of character and nobility of soul equals his genius, gave me the best recipe for faith in God, Christ and immortality I have ever heard:

"Just believe," said he; "don't argue about it; don't question it; simply say, 'I believe.' Next day you will find yourself believing a little less feebly, and finally your faith will be absolute, certain and established."

And why not, you of the schools who split hairs and dispute, and whose knowledge, after all, as Savonarola so well said, comes to nothing—why not? For, if you cannot prove God and Christ and Immortality, it is very sure you cannot disprove them; and it is safe—yes, and splendid—to believe in these three marvellous realities—or conceptions, if you like that word better.

The doctrine of *noblesse oblige* was one of the most beautiful of human inventions. It was based upon the propositions that a man being noble and the son of a nobleman could not do a mean thing—it was not good form. But if a man gets it into his consciousness that he is the child of a nobleman, not of an earthly ruler, not of a great statesman, warrior, scientist or financier, but of the living God who presides over the universe, how large, how generous, how exalted and how fine his attitude toward life, and all his conduct, needs must be! . . .

Of course, everybody understands that preaching and faith and all that is not everything that the young minister must do for his fellow-men. "Faith without works is dead." Everybody who has read the Bible understands that. But this paper is on The Young Man and the Pulpit—an attempt to give him an idea of how the people to whom he is going to preach look at this matter, how they regard him and, above all else, what the people to whom his life work is devoted really need and really want above everything else in this world.

Don't preach woe, punishment and all mournfulness to the people all the time. Where you find sin, go ahead and denounce it mercilessly. But do your denouncing crisply, cuttingly, not dully, innocuously. Speak to kill. Do not forget that the Master told people of his day that they were "a generation of vipers."

But that was not the burden of his appeal. He knew that there were other things in the world and human nature besides sin. Mostly he spoke of "things lovely and of good report." Remember that his coming was announced as a bringing of "good tidings of great joy."

The Sermon on the Mount is the perfection of thought, feeling and expression. Make it your example. You will recall that it begins, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." It

is full of "blessed" and blessings, of consolations and encouragements and promises of certainties. It radiates sense and kindness and prayer.

The One understood that most glorious truth of all truths—that there is some good in each of us, and that if that good only could be recognized and encouraged it would overcome the bad in us. You will remember the saying, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

So don't be an orator of melancholy. There is enough sadness in the world without your adding to it by visage, conduct or sermon. Besides, it is not what you are directed to do. The people would be very glad if you could say with Isaiah that:

"The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me . . . to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, . . . to comfort all that mourn, . . . to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

That is the kind of talk that will cheer the people, and it is the kind of talk that will do the people good. There is nothing "blue" about that. And it is what the Book bids you tell the people. They want it, too, and need it—they need beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Ah, yes, indeed, that is worth while! Your pews will never be empty if such be the fruit of your lips and the ripeness of your spirit. The people want to hear about something better than they know or have known.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" Nobody likes a scold. Of course when it is necessary to scold, go ahead and scold. But don't make scolding a practice. Your congregation will not stand being abused; they will not stand it unless they actually need it. But they will then stand it. Unconsciously they will know that the stripes you lay upon them are medicine after all, and for their healing. Yet ordinarily we all have such a hard time that we all would like to hear about "a good time coming." Ordinarily we are all so tired that we would like to hear something like this: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The religion which you preach owes its vitality to the glorious hopefulness of it. The people want to know that, if they do well here, joy awaits them hereafter—and here, too, if possible. They want to hear about the "Father's house" that has "many mansions," and about him who has "gone to prepare a place" there for them.

They demand happiness in some form, if only in talk. If they do not get it in the assurances of religion, who can blame them if they say: "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die"? For sure enough, they do die tomorrow so far as their world goes.

If you do not believe that religion means happiness, quit the pulpit and raise potatoes. Potatoes feed the body at least. But unfaithful words and speech of needless despair feed nothing at all. Put beauty, hope, joy, into your preaching, therefore. Make your listeners thrill with gladness that they are Christians. Even the men of the world have wisdom enough to make things profane as attractive as possible.

Think of the intimate and personal subjects of Christ's teachings. He spoke of prayer and the fulfilment of the law, of master and servant and of practical charity, of marriage, divorce, and the relation of children to parents; of manners, serenity and battlings; of working and food and prophecy; of trade and usury, of sin and righteousness, of repentance and salvation. Yet by means of all this he made noble the daily living of our earthly lives and gloriously triumphant the ending of them.

I do not think the ordinary layman cares to hear you preach about some new thing. The common man prefers to hear the old truths retold. Indeed there can be nothing new in morals. "Our task," said a clear-headed minister, "is to state the old truths in terms of the present day." That is admirably put. In science progress means change; in morals progress means stability. No man can be said to have uttered the final word in science; but the Master uttered the final word in morals.

But, after all is said and done, what the millions want from the modern pulpit is the fruitful teaching of the Christian religion. They want the fundamentals. They want decisions and certainty. Their minds are to be convinced, yes, but even more their hearts are to be touched.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING, AND HUMBLY

Luke 18:1-14.—AUGUST 19.

"God be merciful to me a sinner."

Again we have a lesson on Prayer, from various standpoints. The disciples needed to learn certain lessons respecting prayers, and our Lord gave the instruction through two interesting parables. The first lesson was respecting persistence: that they should continue to pray and not faint, nor grow disheartened and discouraged because of the delay in the answer. They were to be assured of the real character of our God, of his willingness to hear their petitions and to give them all necessary good things in the proper manner and at the proper time. The delay of the answer was to work out for them a blessing of increasing faith and trust.

THE UNJUST JUDGE

The parable illustrating this represents a judge in an oriental country, void of reverence for either God or man—ready to defy divine commands and to violate public opinion in the attainment of his selfish ends. Judges in Christian lands we believe to be honorable and trustworthy: we recognize this as the rule and anything else as the exception; but in oriental lands it is often regarded as a matter of course that officials will indulge in graft of every kind, and that whoever is in office is there for personal benefit and profit. In olden times, indeed until within the last century, judges were to a large degree lawmakers as well as executives. Today in civilized lands these functions are separate, the lawmaking or legislative department of the government being entirely separate from the judicial and executive departments, much to the advantage of the public and to the forwarding of the ends of justice.

Before the unrighteous judge of the parable came a widow who was suffering from certain indignities and injustices from which she desired to be relieved by the judge. Since she was not wealthy and could not bribe him, since she had little influence, her demands for redress and justice were ignored. However, she was persistent until finally the judge, admitting to himself that it was not love of justice on his part but merely selfish desire to avoid further trouble, took up her case and granted her the necessary assistance and justice.

GOD NOT UNJUST THOUGH HE DELAY

The parable does not compare this unjust judge with our heavenly Father, and thus imply that the latter is an unjust judge. On the contrary it contrasts the two and gives us the thought, the lesson, that if an unjust judge would finally grant relief simply from selfish motives, surely our heavenly Father, who is neither unjust nor unloving nor careless of the interests of his people, will heed their prayers. If, therefore, a matter be one that in our judgment is very importune, demanding our earnest prayers, and if the answer to those prayers be not quickly forthcoming, we neither conclude that God is an unjust judge who cares not for us because we cannot bribe him nor otherwise advantage him, nor are we to think of him as selfishly careless of our interests except as we would bother him; but we are to think of him as our loving heavenly parent, whose arm is not shortened that he cannot assist us, whose love for us is not deficient but strong, who loveth us as a father pitieth his children, and, on the strength of our knowledge of God's character and trust in his faithfulness, we are to have patience, and to trust the fulfilment of our petitions to his wisdom, love and power, knowing that all things shall be made to work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.

Our Lord in applying the parable says, "And shall not God avenge his elect which cry to him day and night?" though he manifest no special haste in the matter. The lesson is that we are to have confidence in God and in his promise that eventually the right shall triumph. This confidence is to amount to an absolute faith which will grasp the promises, never doubting but merely waiting. Those who thus come to God in faith and trust may come repeatedly and be refreshed at every coming, because they come not with a hope of changing the Almighty, altering any of his plans and arrangements, which they recognize as righteous altogether: but, on the contrary, they come because they believe his promises and because they desire to rest and comfort their hearts by communion with him, by assuring their hearts in prayer that the Father himself loveth us and that he has a due time for the deliverance of those who are his from the bondage of the adversary, of sin and death. The time may seem long, but if the proper faith be exercised a blessing will come with every step of the delay that will more than compensate.

Our Lord concludes this parable by saying, "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." This may mean that

when the Lord's time shall come for the delivering of his people he will make a short work with the great adversary and all the machinery of unrighteousness which, under the prince of this world, has come to occupy so prominent a place in the affairs of life—in opposing truth, righteousness, etc. Or on the other hand it might be understood to mean that the Lord will really not long delay in bringing in his kingdom of righteousness. From the human standpoint the more than eighteen centuries from the time our Lord redeemed the world until now, the time for the setting up of his kingdom, seems a long time: How could it be spoken of as "speedily?" We reply that "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years:" hence from this standpoint the whole period would be less than two days. What we need today is to take the Lord's standpoint in viewing matters. Both views are Scriptural, and therefore we need not dispute as to which one the Lord intended. Possibly he meant that we should take both.

SHALL HE FIND THE FAITH

Separate and distinct from the parable the Lord interjects the statement, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" The intimation is that at the second coming of the Lord for the establishment of his kingdom the true faith would be seriously lacking, almost extinct—just as at the first advent we read, "He came unto his own [people] and his own received him not." So, in the end of this age, our Lord's second presence for the establishment of his kingdom will similarly try and test nominal spiritual Israel. Again he will come unto his own and his own will receive him not—he will not find the necessary faith in the earth. However, as respects the first advent we read, "But to as many as receive him to them gave he liberty," etc. So at the second advent, to as many as have faith and receive him, to these also similarly he will grant a special blessing.

Associating these words with the parable foregoing, the implication is that the church, the very elect, the little flock, throughout the Gospel age will be expected to look to the Lord continually for help and deliverance, but that they will not actually be helped or delivered until the first resurrection, at the Master's second advent, at the time he will set up his kingdom. It is in line with this that the Apostle exhorts us saying, "Brethren, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." (Rom. 12:19) Hence we find the Scriptures throughout indicating clearly that the second advent of our Lord will be a time of tribulation to the world in general, a day of vengeance, a day of rectifying the wrongs of the people. Thus through the Prophet the Lord declares, "The day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year [time] of my redeemed is come;" and again, "It is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion."—Isa. 63:4; 34:8:

Taken as a whole, the lesson to the Lord's people through this parable is that we are to have patience, not attempt to render vengeance upon our opposers, but to love our enemies and to do good to them that spitefully use us, and to look to the Lord for such relief as he sees proper to send; and though we find the full measure of relief long deferred, we are to have rest and refreshment through faith that the time is coming when all the gracious promises will be abundantly fulfilled, "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

Those who believe little of the Lord's promises, who trust him little, will pray to him little, will exercise little faith, and will have little joy and blessing in consequence. Those, on the contrary, who have faith, and who go continually to the throne of grace and appreciate the Lord and trust in the glorious outcome of their prayers and labors, will have joy now and fullness of joy by and by.

PRAYERS OF THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS NOT ACCEPTABLE

The Pharisees were a very moral class amongst the Jews, devout, at least outwardly, very exact, though inwardly, the Lord tells us, they were far from right. He alone was competent to make the terrible arraignment that they were like sepulchers, beautifully whitened on the outside but inwardly full of corruption. There is a similar class in Christendom today, who are outwardly moral, very particular, exact, scrupulous, and yet not pleasing to the Lord. They are proud of their righteousness, and seem to fail to realize that if they are naturally less depraved than some others they have nothing therein to boast of, because they are still far from being actually perfect. This parable is intended to show that God would look with more sympathy, more

compassion, upon the more depraved man if he were the more honest and more humble rather than on the morally better but less humble.

The parable pictures two men going up to the Temple according to the Jewish custom to pray: the one was a self-righteous Pharisee, a moral man, in many respects a good man, but very conscious of all his righteous deeds and perfunctory observances of divine rules; the other man was of a lower class and cast, who had more weaknesses and blemishes and who realized his condition. The Pharisee, we are told, stood and prayed with himself: apparently his prayers did not ascend to the Lord, and it would be strictly true, therefore, to say that he prayed with himself, heard himself pray, congratulated himself in the prayer, and rejoiced in his own self-consciousness generally. His prayer was not the kind which the Father invites, for he seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth; and it seems impossible for any one to come before the Lord in a proper manner who does not appreciate his own weaknesses, imperfections, blemishes, and acknowledges these and seeks the divinely arranged means for covering them.

PRAYER OF THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS

The Pharisee said, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." It is quite true that such a prayer uttered truthfully would imply a compassion of heart for which we might well give thanks to God. All Christians by virtue of their relation to God, the covering of their sins, the begetting of the Spirit, the transforming work progressing in their hearts, have every reason to give thanks to the Lord that they differ from the majority of their fellow-creatures. But they have nothing whereof to boast, for, as the Apostle remarks, What have we that we have not received from the Lord? Who hath made us to differ? (1 Cor. 4:7) If, therefore, the difference between ourselves and others be recognized as of the Lord and his work of grace in us and not of ourselves, this is the proper attitude of heart, and all who have this realization may properly enough give thanks to the Lord that in this respect they are different from others because he hath made us to differ, because by his grace we are what we are.

The difficulty with the Pharisee of the parable was that he prayed with himself, congratulated himself, and merely pretended to give thanks to the Lord for these differences. He did not thank the Lord that he had made him to differ, but thanked the Lord that he had made himself to differ—he was trusting in his own works of the flesh, which could never be acceptable to the Lord, and was, therefore, as a Pharisee, rejecting the imputed righteousness of the Atonement Day sacrifices. The condition would be similar today to us if we boasted in ourselves in any sense or degree. Such a man offering such a prayer should know that it does not go to God, that it was merely self-adulation and that he profiteth nothing by it. We are in the right attitude when we realize that our sufficiency is of God, who has made us to differ and who keeps us by his own power, covers us with the robe of Christ's righteousness and is preparing us for the glory, honor and immortality which he has promised us if we are faithful in obedience to his lessons and guidance.

All of the Lord's people should be able to assure themselves at the throne of grace that they are not extortioners, not unjust, not adulterers, nor like other men. This is all in harmony with our Lord's declaration, "If ye were of the world the world would live its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." We are to be glad if we find these evidences of our separateness from the world, but we are not to boast of them nor to consider that they are of our own institution nor attempt to take credit for them. As already shown, we are what we are by the Lord's grace.

The Pharisee as a part of his boast claimed that he fasted twice in the week, as well as gave tithes of everything that he acquired. In this fasting he was going beyond anything that the law required, and doubtless felt that he was to be especially commended therefor. But not so from the Lord's standpoint—works can never justify us. If we were to fast, starve ourselves to death, it would not be meritorious; no works can be of value except as based upon proper recognition of our own imperfections and proper acceptance of divine justification, which is granted to us now through faith in Jesus, and which in that day was typically imputed to all the members of the Jewish nation through the typical sacrifices of their Day of Atonement. As for fasting, the Lord's people today will find plenty of things from which they may well fast. Fasting simply sig-

nifies self-denial, and self-denials of food are not the greatest nor the most estimable in God's sight, we may be sure. There are other desires of the flesh which all who are the Lord's true followers are to strive to control and diminish and starve out, that they might proportionately flourish and be nourished spiritually and made strong.

BOASTING OF GIVING TITHES

The tithe-giving was proper. God had enjoined, as a mark of respect for him, that one-tenth (or tithe) of all increase of herd or flock or field should be set apart peculiarly to his service: and obedience to this arrangement was nothing to boast of, particularly when it is remembered that the Lord is the bountiful giver of all good. Where then was the room for pride and boasting in connection with such tithe-giving? It showed a self-satisfied condition of heart, unready to make the still greater consecration required of all who would be accepted as members of the house of sons, the followers of Jesus, who are expected to consecrate their all to the Lord, and thenceforth to act as stewards who will be prepared to give an account of the use of every dollar, every talent, every opportunity. Are the saints inclined to boast of their self-denials or service? Let them reckon the matter carefully and see how little the most energetic is able to accomplish, and then doubtless with shame many will confess how little of all they desired to accomplish they have been able to render unto the Lord.

"GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER"

The publican was a sample of those who made no profession of great piety. Humble-minded people, they realized that they did not live up to the grand requirements of God's perfect law, and, discouraged by the assertions of the Pharisees that they could obey and live up to those requirements, these more humble-minded ones were often in a discouraged attitude, and sometimes in consequence lapsed into carelessness and sinful ways. In the parable the publican stands afar off; he did not approach close to the holy precincts of the Temple; he stood at a goodly distance. He recognized the great difference between God's perfection and his own personal unworthiness, imperfection and sinfulness. He smote upon his breast, upon his heart, as though indicating that he accepted the divine sentence of death as well deserved, merited, yet he appealed for mercy—Lord have mercy upon me, I am a sinner! Although outwardly not as moral nor as good a man as the other, judged by any human standards, inwardly, from God's standpoint, his was the better heart of the two, the more hopeful. He was not trusting in himself, and was in a better condition, therefore, to receive the grace of God upon the only terms upon which it could be obtained, humble faith. Our Lord indicates that of the two this one—outwardly less noble, less moral—was inwardly more acceptable to the Father, justified rather than the Pharisee. And then, as a lesson based upon this, comes the word,

**"EVERYONE THAT EXALTETH HIMSELF SHALL BE ABASED;
AND HE THAT HUMBLETH HIMSELF SHALL BE
EXALTED"**

Is it not remarkable that so frequently throughout the Scriptures the Lord calls attention to the great necessity for humility, assuring us that without it, whatever may be our conditions, our qualifications, we could by no means enter the kingdom. In the parable just considered this quality of humility is illustrated in the publican, the lack of it is illustrated in the Pharisee. To reason the matter out we can see that only the humble minded could possibly be prepared to confess themselves sinners and unworthy of divine favor and love, needing justification, forgiveness, provided for us in Christ. Not only so, but even after exercising such humility and coming to the Lord and being accepted of him, if the humility be lost our gracious standing in Christ is forfeited. Pride signifies self-satisfaction, and the corresponding ignoring of the all-sufficiency of our glorious Head, who said to us, "Without me ye can do nothing."—John 15:5.

Alas, that so many of those who have some knowledge of God and of his plan of salvation are hindered from laying hold in a proper manner by lack of humility and readiness to see their own faults, confess them and to accept divine mercy and grace. Alas, also, that so many, after having exercised faith and been washed from their old sins, are through lack of humility led to haughtiness, high-mindedness, which in one way or another is sure to work injury to us as new creatures—sure to blast the prospect for a share in the kingdom in which only those who humble themselves shall be exalted.

THE NARROW WAY TO LIFE ETERNAL

Mark 10:17-31.—AUGUST 26.

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

The picture presented in this lesson is that of a young man, a Jew of a prominent family, a ruler, who, seeing Jesus going forth on a journey with his disciples, came to him running, fell on his knees before him, and said, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus did not immediately answer his question, but sought first to prepare the way, so that when the answer was given it would have the greater weight. He therefore inquired, "Why do you call me good?" Is this simply a mark of courtesy, or do you recognize the fact that there is only one standard of goodness which is represented by God the Father, and that in calling me good, therefore, you are not only recognizing this divine standard but recognizing me as a teacher whom God approves? Thus paraphrased our Lord's language would signify to the young ruler, This teacher claims to be of God: his claim is either true or false; he is therefore either a true or false prophet. I have called him Good Master or Good Teacher. If I have been sincere, if this is the result of my previous investigation of his teachings, I ought to be ready to accept whatever answer he will give me as divine direction, and should promptly obey.

Not waiting for a reply to his query, but content with leaving the suggestion before his mind, our Lord proceeded to answer the original query, saying, "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother." Matthew's account of the incident informs us that our Lord added the words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Matt. 19:19.

THE LAW COVENANT STILL IN FORCE

Some have queried why our Lord did not answer the young man as we today would answer him, saying, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, confess your inability to keep the divine law perfectly, believe on the Lord Jesus as the one who has redeemed you and whose robe of righteousness you may receive by faith and thus become acceptable to the Father, and then make a full consecration of your life to the Lord. We answer that such a full statement of the matter was not yet due to be promulgated, because our Lord Jesus had not yet finished his sacrifice, and it was not yet possible for anyone to have access to the Father through the merit of that sacrifice. Before any could thus come to God it was necessary that our Lord should finish his sacrifice and rise from the dead and ascend on high, "there to appear in the presence of God for us" as our representative, appropriating to us [believers] his merit, justifying us before the Father.

The Law Covenant which had been given to Israel sixteen centuries before was still in force, because our Lord Jesus had not yet "nailed it to the cross." (Col. 2:14) Hence it was necessary that our Lord's answer should be in line with the Law Covenant still in force. For this reason he directed the young man's attention to the Law, showing that the way to eternal life was by the keeping of the Law, as God had promised. But we see through the teaching of the New Testament what the Jews as a people had failed to discern, namely, that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in God's sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:20) In other words, the intention of the law was first of all to test our Lord Jesus, and to demonstrate his perfection in that he would be able to keep it; and secondly, it was to prove to the Jews and thus to all men the impossibility of any one but a perfect man fulfilling the terms of the Law Covenant. The value of thus proving to them their inability to meet the divine requirements was to show them the necessity for getting eternal life as a gift from God through Jesus Christ, and not as a reward of their own good works, which were short of the divine requirement and could never justify them.

When the young ruler replied, "All these things have I observed from my youth up," the Lord looked lovingly upon him. He was a model young man, such an one as all lovers of truth and righteousness delight in. Our Lord loved him, loved his endeavors to keep the law, and loved his manifestation of humility and earnestness in coming as he had done in a public manner to ask the way to life eternal. Evidently the young ruler had his misgivings as to whether or not he was up to the divine standard, even though outwardly observing the requirements of the law. Quite probably he felt fairly satisfied, but perceiving the deep spirituality of the teachings of Jesus he thought he would like to have the confirmation of this great Teacher, his assurance that the Law was all-sufficient, and that his obedience to it in the manner claimed guaranteed him life everlasting.

The conclusion of our Lord's recitation of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," was a part of the usual formula of statement amongst the Jews, and it had probably lost much of its intense and deep signification because so commonplace. The young ruler evidently neglected to attach to the words their only meaning; he was thinking of the more specific definitions of the Law, neglecting this more comprehensive statement, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Our Lord, always gentle toward those who manifested a right attitude of heart, those who were sincere inquirers after the way of eternal life, did not rudely call the young man's attention to his defects by saying, "You are a liar; you know very well that you do not love your neighbor as yourself, and your wealth indicates this, for there are many poor all about you, and if you love them as yourself you would be endeavoring to do for them." On the contrary, Jesus realized that selfishness had become ingrained in the fallen human nature, that this young man was really far above the average of men in his nobility of character, in his desire to be just toward his fellows.

The young man was blinded by the customs of his time, and Jesus proceeded to open the eyes of his understanding in a most gentle manner, saying, "One thing thou lackest: Go, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me."* Here was the crucial test; every Jew ready and willing to sacrifice his earthly belongings and to become a follower of Jesus would be accounted worthy of transfer from the house of servants under Moses to the house of sons under Christ. The actual transfer of all such took place at Pentecost, when the Father acknowledged them as no longer of the house of servants under the Law Covenant, but as members of the body of Christ, begotten of the holy Spirit to heavenly things and to life eternal.

The young man, so full of confidence a few moments before, found that the great Teacher had probed his heart in its one vulnerable spot—he had not sufficient love for God and for his fellows. During the past eighteen centuries the same test has proven many good, honorable, wise people to be unfit for the kingdom. In other words, the tests for joint-heirship in the kingdom are so high that the majority of mankind even amongst the most moral, the most enlightened, the most reverent, fail under the test and miss the kingdom.

It is proper enough for us to inquire if the test for membership in the kingdom is too severe. Has God fixed too high a standard—an impossible one—or one impossible at least to the majority of mankind? We reply that to the majority of Christians this whole matter is obeluded by the false doctrines received from the "dark ages," which tell us that this young ruler, because he did not become a follower of Christ, would go to an eternity of torment, notwithstanding his many admirable qualities of heart and life—because although willing to be just and honorable and upright in his dealings with his fellow men and reverential to his God, he was unwilling to sacrifice his earthly possessions and to become by all disesteemed, a follower of Jesus the Nazarene, despised of men. According to that standard would not almost the entire human family be properly considered as surely en route for eternal torment? How few there are who forsake all, consecrating life and time and every interest to the Lord and his service as followers of Jesus!

If these few who are to inherit the kingdom are the only ones who will get eternal life, then indeed there are few that will be saved. But when we take the Scriptural view of this matter, that the Lord at the present time is seeking out from amongst men a very elect, a very select, class to be joint-heirs with his Son in the Millennial kingdom as his "bride," and that the specific work of that kingdom will be the bringing of order and righteousness and restitution blessings and opportunities of eternal life to all the human family—then and then only can we understand this matter, and see not only the justice but also the wisdom and the love of the divine arrangement in the entire procedure. Then we are prepared to appreciate the privilege we now enjoy of becoming followers of Jesus, forsaking all that we may be his associates and joint-heirs in that glorious kingdom to come.

"HE WENT AWAY SORROWFUL"

The young ruler had no complaint to make. The one whom he had acknowledged to be the good Master, the great Teacher, had showed him in a few words from the Law just

* The words, "Take you up the cross," are not found in the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS.

where he stood—the utter futility of his endeavor to justify himself under the terms of the Law Covenant. What he needed to know, but what he did not stop to inquire, was How could he do this? What power or assistance could be rendered him by which he could overcome his innate selfishness, his greater love for himself, and hence his desire to keep the great possessions he already enjoyed and to add thereto? Had he said to the Lord, “Master, I perceive that I am not what I thought I was—you have found in my heart selfishness, contrary to the divine standard, which I did not know was there. Can you help me over my difficulty? It seems too great a sacrifice for me to make.”

In reply to such words the Master no doubt would have said, “What I propose is not so unreasonable as you surmise. If you give your heart completely to the doing of the will of the Lord in this matter I can point out to you step by step how you can accomplish it: but the consecration, the determination on your part to do this to the extent you are able to do it is necessary first. Then my grace, my assistance, will be sufficient for you and enable you to accomplish those good desires of your heart.” If the young man had then proceeded to say, “Lord, I do consecrate everything to be your disciple and to get the eternal life, hard as it may be. I accept your promised assistance in the matter. Now how can I begin?” Our Lord probably would not have told him to sell everything that he possessed immediately, but to begin with doing all the good that he could find to do, using time and judgment and intelligence to ascertain the best ways of using all that he possessed, not as his own, but as wealth which he had consecrated to the Lord and his service—the Lord’s wealth, the Lord’s property, the Lord’s time, the Lord’s influence.

Some of his money might have been expended at once for the Lord and his apostles, and thus he might at once have begun to have a share in the harvest work then in process. But, you say, were the Lord and the apostles in need? We answer, No. The Father saw to it that a sufficiency of means was provided for the work, and similarly he has always cared for the interests of his cause. He is not dependent upon the generosity of humanity. He is pleased to use human generosity and thus grant a blessing to those who seek to render a service to his cause; but his cause would not be left destitute if none appreciated the privilege, for the gold and silver and the cattle upon a thousand hills belong to him who has the supervision of his own work.—Psa. 50:10; Hag. 2:8.

It is the same today. That young man would have had a privilege in connection with the service of the truth. And it is still a privilege for any of us who possess this world’s goods to have our means used in the Lord’s service. We are not to think that we are carrying on the Lord’s work, and that he could not get along without us; but, reversely, are to consider that he has no need of either us or our means; that it is a great privilege we enjoy to have the opportunity of casting influence, time, money, everything we possess, into the Lord’s treasury, for use in his service. Whatever could not have been done for the Lord’s cause directly could have been done for the poor of the Jewish nation, who indirectly represented the Lord’s people, so that anything done for them because they were the Lord’s would be so much which the Lord would accept as being done unto himself, and would appreciate and ultimately acknowledge and reward.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE RICH

When the young man had gone away sorrowful—declining to have the eternal life which Jesus was offering on the only terms now attaching to the offer—Jesus looked around upon his disciples and followers and noted afresh that they were for the most part ignorant, unlearned men and the poor of this world, and he said to them, “How hardly [with what difficulty] shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.” We read that the disciples were amazed at this statement. As they looked about them they well knew that the most prominent in religious circles were the rich, either in mental, social or physical riches. If the great, the learned, the Doctors of the Law, the prominent Pharisees, the rulers in the synagogues, the members of the Sanhedrin, etc., who constituted the wealthiest portion of the nation—if these would not get into the kingdom of God, which the whole people had been waiting for for centuries—if these, whom they supposed to be the ones most ready for that kingdom, and who claimed to be the only ones ready, and that all others were unfit because unholy, what must they think of the kingdom—who would be in it anyway?

Noting their astonishment Jesus made the matter still more emphatic, saying, “Children [simple, unsophisticated ones], how difficult it is for them who trust in riches to enter the king-

dom of God!” Here our Lord defines the difficulty: it was not merely the fact that a man had been born wealthy or that by some peculiar means he had acquired great wealth—not these conditions would hinder him from getting into the kingdom; but it would be the fact that he would love these riches and trusted in them that would hinder his faith in God and his love for God and his dependence upon God and his learning the lessons of faith which the poorer would have many more opportunities for learning.

THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE

Our Lord emphasized the matter, saying, “It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” The thought is not that all of the Lord’s people should be penniless, dependent upon the charity of others, but that they must all be so fully consecrated to the Lord and to his service that they will not be their own—that their possessions, whatever they may consist of, riches of knowledge or wealth of money and houses and lands, or wealth of reputation and honor of men—all must be consecrated to the Lord to be used in his service, to be sacrificed as our belongings if we would have a share with him in the kingdom. We must not blind our eyes to these specific terms; if we do there will some day be an awakening to the fact that the opportunities which are ours have passed from us and are lost to us, and we will find that others have entered into the kingdom and we have failed.

Our Lord’s words indicate what is elsewhere set forth throughout the Scriptures most explicitly, namely, the necessity of sacrifice. The royal priesthood alone will constitute the kingdom class, and, as the Apostle declares, every priest is a sacrificer and must have something to offer. (Heb. 8:3) We have nothing of ourselves that would be fit to offer to God or that he would be willing to accept: every sacrifice upon his altar must be without blemish, and we by nature are blemished, children of wrath as are others. (Eph. 2:3). Hence first of all we must receive from the Lord Jesus, from our Redeemer, through faith, the robe of his righteousness to cover our blemishes, to make us fit and acceptable for the altar of the Lord, and then we must follow the Apostle’s directions, “I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1.

When we sacrifice ourselves wholly and unreservedly, it includes not merely our hearts, our wills, our intentions, but all they can control—our mortal bodies, with whatever are their belongings, health or strength, time or talent, influence or money. Whoever makes this consecration has the promise of divine assistance in carrying it out—whoever fails to make such a consecration can have neither part nor lot in the kingdom.

Our Lord’s words with respect to the camel and the needle’s eye are illustrated by the city gates of ancient times which had a small panel door therein. These small doors were called needle’s eyes. When the gate of the city was closed at sundown for fear of robbers, etc., the watchman guarded merely the needle’s eye and admission through it was designedly tedious to prevent the intrusion of enemies. We have never seen one of these gates, but have heard that it is possible for a camel to squeeze its way through on its knees provided the load be first removed from its back, but for the truthfulness of this we cannot vouch. In any event the Lord’s thought is evident; no rich man can enter the kingdom. The only way one can enter it is by becoming poor, nothing;—by sacrificing everything, and this would include riches, social, political and financial; and thus, whatever his previous condition, he must cease to be rich in his own name and title and possession ere he could be accepted by the Lord as fit for the kingdom. The spirit of the royal priesthood must be one of self-sacrifice and not one of selfishness. The great work of the future will be the blessing and uplifting and assisting of the world, and the Lord now seeketh for the “very elect,” such as will manifest a sympathy of heart-desires in accordance with the terms and conditions of the kingdom he is about to establish. All others will be excluded.

THE KINGDOM THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

Where then would be the hope for the rich young ruler and the many of our day who intellectually and socially and in a monetary way are wealthy, and who do not exercise faith nor make the consecration to the Lord, without which they could have no part in the kingdom? What provision has God made for these? We answer that “Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man,” that “he is the propitiation for our sins [the sins of the Church, who now accept him and forsake all and become his followers], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2). A benefit must come to all mankind through this great sacrifice for sins, which God himself has arranged for. The

rich young ruler and all the families of the earth are to be blessed, and the time for their blessing is specifically stated by the Lord to be under his established kingdom. Only a very elect, select class of faithful sacrificers will constitute that kingdom. These, with the dear Redeemer, on the spirit plane, will constitute the seed of Abraham, through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

Under the reign of that kingdom Satan and sin and selfishness will be dethroned. In various ways conditions amongst men will be so changed that wealth will not have the same strong bondage upon mankind that it now has; knowledge will be so increased that all may have it freely, fully; the good things of life will be made so common, so general, that all may enjoy them; name and fame will go only to those who merit them. Under those new conditions we may see the young ruler glad to have life eternal through acceptance of the divine arrangement. Sacrifice will not be possible then nor will it be required, even as the angels of heaven are not required to sacrifice. Only Christ Jesus, our Lord, and the church, his bride, are put under this severe ordeal of test, invited to become sacrificers of their interests; and to them is granted the exceeding great and precious promises of God, and to them will be given the great exaltation to glory, honor and immortality by which they shall not only be superior to mankind but also far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named—next to the Father.—Eph. 1:21.

This is what our Lord meant by his statement, With men it is impossible, but not with God. This was said in answer to the disciples' query, "Who then can be saved?" It was not then time to explain that in God's plan various salvations are provided for—that first comes the special salvation, and that finally will come the general salvation, which will make it possible for such as this rich ruler and others who love righteousness and hate iniquity to attain eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. According to the Law no such thing was possible, but God made possible this plan of salvation through Jesus, who not only fulfilled the requirements of the Law for himself but sacrificed himself for those who were condemned under the Law, so that God might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus—not only of those who are now called in the election to the high calling, the heavenly calling, but to those also who will have a share in the great work of restitution uplift which will follow the establishment of the kingdom.

"WHAT SHALL WE HAVE?"

A new idea respecting the exclusiveness of the kingdom offer was reaching the apostles, and Peter, the spokesman for them called attention to the fact that although they were not wealthy they had forsaken all that they did possess to become the Lord's followers, and therefore he desired an assurance that he and his associates would be in the kingdom. Our Lord's reply was surely amply satisfying to his dear followers: he assured them that no man that hath left either home or brethren or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for his sake and the Gospel's sake but would receive again an hundred fold now in this time, with persecutions, and ultimately in the world to come such will receive also eternal life. There was encouragement in this to the apostles, and there is encouragement also to all who are the Lord's people today. The suggestion is that the more we leave, the more we sacrifice, the greater our present loss for the kingdom's sake, the greater will be our reward both now and hereafter. O, if we could only have this thought well in mind continually how we would vie with one another in our endeavors to spend and be spent in the service of so gracious a Master and in so glorious a mission and with so grand prospects and rewards.

Our Lord's words being true it is very evident that some who receive little of the Lord in this present life and who have but faint prospects respecting a share in the kingdom in the future have themselves to blame. They should ask themselves, What have I sacrificed? What have I left, for the Lord's sake, for the brethren's sake, for the Father's sake? The stipulations are specific, hence those who have nothing to sacrifice can have no reward. But who has nothing to sacrifice? We know of none so poor that he could not sacrifice something, and the poorer we are the more diligently should we strive to find something to render unto the Lord our God.

In this connection we are to remember that the thing which the Lord most appreciates and the thing which is most difficult for us to sacrifice is self. Hence we read, "A broken and a contrite heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise." (Psa. 51:17) If we have given our hearts to the Lord we have given him all that we possess, and he will see to it that this shall cost us enough to test the loyalty and sincerity of our sacrifice; and as we see the test coming day by day we are not to be intimidated, but to remember that the Lord has promised that greater

is he who is on our part than all they that be against us, and again that his grace is sufficient for every time of need. Hence, as trials and difficulties, pain and sorrow and persecutions or slanders shall come upon us, we are to rejoice and be exceeding glad (1) That these indications of our being in the hand of the Lord as pupils in the school of Christ are evidences that we are of the elect who are being shaped and polished, fitted and prepared for places in the kingdom. (2) We are to remember that all these trials and difficulties rightly met, loyally responded to, are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We are, therefore, to take the spoiling of our goods with patience, with joy, knowing that in heaven we have enduring riches, enduring friendships, enduring knowledge and blessings of every kind.

But even in this present life how much the Lord grants us to enjoy: our enjoyment will be proportionate to our loyalty of spirit in the sacrificing. If we love much, and are prompt and liberal in our sacrificing, we will in turn be loved much by the Lord, be blessed and comforted, as he has stipulated, an hundred-fold more than all our distresses. Who are these who have an hundred-fold more than they give to the Lord? Who are these whose joys are more than an hundred-fold greater than their sorrows, trials and difficulties, pains and disappointments? They are the elect of God, whom Jesus is not ashamed to call his brethren.

MANY FIRST SHALL BE LAST

"Many that are first shall be last; and the last first," are the concluding words of our Lord in this lesson. What did he mean? His words stand related to the recorded discourse just preceding. The rich young ruler, the priests and Scribes and Pharisees and wealthy generally, appeared to the disciples to have much better opportunities for the kingdom than would the less learned, the less noble, the less influential and the less wealthy fishermen and tax gatherers, etc. Yet the latter, though seemingly less favored of God, seemingly handicapped by lack of influence, etc., were really advantaged. It was easier for them to humble themselves, to sacrifice earthly interests and ambitions, to make a complete consecration of themselves to the Lord than for those who had greater advantages everywhere. On the contrary, as we have seen, position, honor of men, wealth and education were all barriers to becoming disciples of Jesus. Thus those who were first or most prominent apparently in opportunity were really less favored, while those who had less opportunity were really first or most favored from the divine standpoint.

"FORSAKING ALL"

Let us guard against a mistaken view of our Lord's words respecting father, mother, houses, lands, etc. Our Lord certainly did not mean that we should sacrifice others in order to be his disciples. Our Golden Text expresses the thought we would enforce: it is ourselves that we are to deny, ourselves that we are to sacrifice. Hence in making our consecration and in our endeavor to carry it out we are to remember this, and to deal justly and lovingly with those who are dependent upon us and for whom we are responsible by ties of nature. For instance, the selling of houses and lands, the forsaking of these, would not mean that the Lord would have us deprive our families of necessary comforts and temporal provisions. Other Scriptures show this distinctly, that he that provides not for his own—for those for whom he is the responsible caretaker,—is worse than an unbeliever. It would be worse for any of the Lord's people to neglect the ties of duty than for an unbeliever to do so, because with his higher light and sounder spirit of mind he should appreciate the situation more clearly than do others, and therefore be more just in his dealings with those who are properly dependent upon him.

This does not mean, however, that we should yield to the whims and fancies of friends or neighbors or parents or children in respect to our course as the Lord's followers. We are not men pleasers—and the only one who has the right to command us and the only one we have a right to obey is the Lord Jesus. If, therefore, a man finds that he has made proper provision for his children or for his parents, so that they suffer not in respect to a reasonable share in life's necessities and comforts, it is for him and not them to decide how his time and energy and further means shall be spent. He is not to seek to amass wealth for them, he is not to consider that wealth already entrusted to him belongs to them. He is to understand that he has one responsibility toward them as a father or as a son and another responsibility toward the Lord, and that the Lord is not only willing but commands that the responsible duties of life shall be fulfilled by him. *Whatever* is more than this in his possession he holds merely as a steward, for use in the Master's service.

Let us then, dear friends, whatever our station, remember that there is only one narrow way to the kingdom, and that it