

EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO A FRIEND

Dear Brother:—

I arrived home safe Friday afternoon after a somewhat adventuresome journey.

At Yarmouth, I had an interesting experience. I was talking with two young women from Annapolis, when a young minister with whom they were acquainted came up, and they introduced me. Noticing my pin, he said in a rather challenging tone, "You are a Russellite?" "Yes," I said, "I am a Bible Student; and you are an Evolutionist." "Yes," he said. I then said, "I am glad to meet you. I have been wanting to hear the doctrine from a real Evolutionist."

He then proceeded to explain Evolution. I then asked him where people would evolve to after death. He said the soul kept on evolving. I asked him where men got their souls if these were the outcome of Evolution, and monkeys did not have any. He replied that surely God could impart to each

man a soul. He gave me a pamphlet on Evolution by Dr. Elliot, and I gave him my WATCH TOWER to read.

When I had finished, he asked what I thought of it. I said, "I think it is very good for a man's idea, but he has no proof that it is correct—nothing at all to back it up, no proof of any kind. Now, I can prove everything I believe by the Bible."

Then the minister said, "But the Bible is self-contradictory; and what proofs have you that it is correct?"

"No," I said, "the Bible is not contradictory when you understand it; but it is the most harmonious and logical book ever written. Any one merely reading it must admit that it could not be written by man."

He finally promised to read some of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, which he told me he had in his home.

May the Lord's blessing be with you and all the dear Bethel family.

Your sister in Christ,

STELLA H. WATERMAN.

VOL. XXXV

BROOKLYN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1914

No. 20

VIEW FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The Scriptures foretell that in the end of this age there will be a cry of "Peace! Peace!" but that there will be no peace. (Jeremiah 6:14) This prophecy has been fulfilled. When the First National Arbitration Board convened at Geneva, Switzerland, and gave its first reward, September 14, 1872, the cry of "Universal Peace" went up all over the world. There was to be no more war. All difficulties between nations were to be settled by arbitration. How sadly disappointed must those people be who, in spite of the many wars since that time, have continued to cry, "Peace! Peace!" Their theory has been that universal peace between the nations would speedily usher in the Messianic kingdom.

How few look to the Word of the Lord to see what he has to say on the subject or, looking, entirely disregard God's testimony through the prophets, to the effect that the present age would end and the Millennium be inaugurated, not by Peace Conventions and Peace Treaties, but by "A time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21) The peace cry has received an especially severe shock in the present momentous war, involving more than any other war on the earth ever! Instead of the present war being nearly over, we incline to expect much more serious complications in Europe—that other nations will be drawn into the war.

Notwithstanding the fact that the President and the Secretary of State of our own land are wise men, lovers and promoters of peace; and notwithstanding the fact that there is no apparent reason why our country should ever be involved in this war, nevertheless we are apprehensive. The great nations of the old world, impoverishing themselves and destroying their commercial interests, as well as being robbed of hundreds of thousands of valuable lives by this war, will not wish to see the United States towering high above them in every way by reason of its isolation. We may be sure that the crafty statesmen of Europe, while professing interest in our peace, will really do all in their power to embroil us in war by one device or another.

SHORTENING OF THE DAYS OF TROUBLE

While desiring peace at home and abroad, all who are children of the Highest must desire the Father's will to be done—rather than our own. Hence, should the war extend even to our own land, in spite of everything we can do to the contrary, let us not be discontented, but still pray, "Thy will be done!" Let us look beyond the present terrible war to the glorious things which God's Word assures us lie just beyond it; namely, Messiah's kingdom.

When we say that the kingdom lies just beyond the war, we should note the fact that, according to the Scriptures, it will not be set up immediately. Following the terrible storm of this war will come a great revolution, symbolically styled "a great earthquake." (Revelation 16:18) In conjunction with this social revolution, the Bible indicates that churchianity will for a time be greatly exalted as the hoped-for power by which the revolution may be offset and stopped. During that

brief time of Babylon's prosperity, the true church will be in hard lines, from the earthly viewpoint. Nevertheless, "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the end called according to his purpose."

Following the revolution and churchianity's exaltation quickly will come the anarchy, which the Bible everywhere symbolizes by fire, because of its destructive force and influence. That will be the time mentioned by our Savior, saying, "Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." (Matthew 24:22) The Master tells us, however, that those days of anarchy and general strife—"every man's hand against his brother, against his neighbor, and no peace to him that goeth out or to him that cometh in"—shall be shortened. The establishment of the church in glory, the bringing of the elect into control of the world, will shorten those days and inaugurate the reign of the Prince of Peace.

PRAYING FOR PEACE IN EUROPE

Our honorable President with praiseworthy intent requested all Christian people to make October 4 a day of prayer for peace in Europe. However, we cannot concur with our worthy President in this matter. Much as we appreciate peace—and we have all our life labored to be a peacemaker—we cannot pray the Almighty to change his plans to conform to those of our honored President.

For twenty-five hundred years God, through the Bible prophets, has been telling his people about this great war and concerning the more terrible Armageddon which will follow it; and can we expect him to reverse the program at our behest?

The prayers of those millions praying for the prosperity of the Germans and the extermination of the Allies, and the prayers of other millions for the success of the Allies and the annihilation of the Germans, and the prayers of the Pope and of our President and other good people that this awful war shall promptly cease will all go unanswered, if we read our Bible aright. The war will proceed and will eventuate in no glorious victory for any nation, but in the horrible mutilation and impoverishment of all. Next will follow the awful Armageddon of anarchy.

After that, peace, lasting peace, may be hoped for, because God has declared it! It will be brought in by Messiah's kingdom, for which so long we have prayed—"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as in heaven."

For forty years we have been proclaiming this very war and its glorious outcome, by sermons, oral and printed, and in our books on Bible Study in twenty languages. Now, when the very year has come and the prophecy is being fulfilled, could we consistently ask the Almighty to change his program? Nay! Rather, our discourse on October 4 was from the Master's words, respecting the present "Distress of nations with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear of those things about to come on the earth."—Luke 21:25, 26.

Our address was given in the New York City Temple—fifteen hundred heard for two hours, and many were turned away.

CATCHING FISH WITH THE GOSPEL NET

"Jesus saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."—Matthew 4:19.

Our Lord's parables, figures of speech, and more or less "dark sayings," such as this one, were usually based upon incidents connected with his ministry. We remember the context here—he had been preaching at the Sea of Galilee, and had put out in a boat because of the crowd of people. (Luke

5:1-11) The boat was one that was used in the fishing business, conducted by Peter, James and John. Following this discourse, Jesus invited these men to become his disciples, using the words, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

The expression, "fishers of men," suggests many good features illustrative of the work of the Gospel age. In fishing for fish there is a carefulness exercised that is very necessary to success. The skilful fisherman studies what kind of fish-hook to use and what kind of bait to put on the hook. Then he catches the fish individually. Likewise very much of the work of this age has been an individual work, accomplished by talking to people; those engaged in it should seek wisdom from on high to put the message into such form as would be most helpful to people—that they may be caught by the Gospel.

The Lord uses an illustration of a drag-net to represent the work of the Gospel age. During the past eighteen centuries the drag-net of the Gospel has been passing through the world. It has not caught all the fish; for it has been drawn only through certain parts of the earth which God chose especially to favor. Thus he has drawn a net full; and he says that at the end of this age there will be a sorting of these fish—a putting some back into the sea, as not worthy, and a retaining of others. Throughout this age there have been some drawn by the Gospel who have been unsuitable for God's work; they have not been the kind of people God has wished to choose. Therefore he did not make things so plain for such that they would stay; but rather has left some subjects obscure, in order that such would reject the truth and turn aside.

THE NATURE OF THE HARVEST WORK

However, aside from this parable of the drag-net, which represents the Lord's people as fishers of men, and which might in some respects seem applicable only to the close of the Gospel age, there is another commission. The general commission to all of the Lord's people applies today. It reads, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the good tidings to the meek; to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to the bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."—Isa. 61:1-3.

We read that when Jesus was speaking to the people he made some remarks, and gave some parables forth, which they could not understand. For instance, he said that unless they would eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the Son of Man there would be no life in them. They said, Who can understand that? Who can accept that teaching? So they walked no more with him—they got out of the net. Throughout this age the Lord has been gathering in the fish. But the great work of selecting is to be accomplished in the end of this age. To a certain extent in this age thousands of people have been caught in the Gospel net and have been more or less brought under the influence of the truth; and yet they are not fit for the kingdom. Without any unkindness towards them, the Lord now simply puts them out of the place not suitable to them.

We are not to think of this comparison as perfectly representing this matter—but it has an illustrative power to be made useful in this connection. We do not really catch men as a fisherman catches a fish. The fisherman does the fish more or less harm in taking it out of the water, whether with a hook and line or with a drag-net; and those fish which are brought up in the drag-net are not honored in any manner. Our Lord used this illustration merely to represent how the Gospel fishing was to be done. His followers were to fish for men for the kingdom—not to do them violence, but to do them good. Those who catch fish exercise a great deal of care. While catching the fish, they usually hide themselves, so that the fish will not see them, but the bait. So in drawing men to the truth we should hide ourselves and throw out as bait those features of God's Word which would apply to this one or that one with whom we might be dealing.

Coming down to the present time, the question might arise, Is this Gospel message still to be sent out, or have all the fish

been caught and the Gospel net drawn to the shore, and will there be no more received? We answer that we do not so understand. We believe that we are away down in the harvest of the age; if not fully at the end of the age, we believe that it must be very near.

OUR PRESENT ATTITUDE

Looking at the harvest of the Jewish age, we see that it was forty years long in one sense of the word; yet the beginning of that forty years was a very indefinite thing—and the closing seemed to extend over six months, perhaps. We remember that in the beginning of our Lord's ministry there came forty days of his temptation; and that then came the time during which his disciples were being gathered to him. For a year there was very little of importance accomplished. If we consider his experiences as typical, we might consider that the early part of the harvest was not very sharply marked. The harvest seemed to increase as it progressed, and did not culminate until after the destruction of Jerusalem. This fact leads us to wonder if there are not six months more of the harvest here.

The Lord evidently saw that it would be better for us that we should walk by faith, not by sight, and that we should have the experiences we are having. These experiences are excellent. We have been receiving things so good, so refreshing to us, that if they continue for six months longer, or six years longer, we shall be very glad that the Lord has given us this longer opportunity of testifying to his goodness. On the other hand, it may be that the work of the harvesting of the "wheat" has been fully accomplished, and that the work of the present time is for the great company class and for the world.

"So on we go, not knowing,
We would not if we might;
We'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
We'd rather walk by faith with him
Than go alone by sight."

The consummation of the Gospel age is now upon us. We are expecting wonderful things, glorious things. The thing especially looked for now is the ending of Gentile domination. The dissolution of the nations is at hand, and that disintegration precedes the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.

At what time the Lord's people will be taken beyond the veil the Lord has not fully indicated. But we have the assurance that when he shall appear, be manifested—when his epiphania shall occur—we shall be with him, we shall be like him and see him as he is. He will not begin his great work of establishing the kingdom until the church shall be with him. We may not understand all that this implies. Perhaps we may be with our Lord, in service on this side the veil for a while. We had not thought so; but we are simply willing that the Lord's will shall be done, whatever it may be, and we are waiting for the indications of his providence.

"We know not what awaits us,
God kindly veils our eyes,
And o'er each step of our onward way
He makes new scenes to rise;
And every joy he sends us comes
A sweet and glad surprise.

"One step we see before us,
'Tis all we need to see,
The light of heaven more brightly shines,
When earth's illusions flee;
And sweetly through the silence comes
His loving 'Follow me.'"

THE ROYAL LAW OF LOVE

"We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself."—Romans 15:1-3.

As children of God each one of us should use care that others are not injured by our liberty in Christ; for this would be condemned by the law of love. The Apostle clearly emphasizes this thought in this Epistle to the church at Rome. He points out that all the Lord's children are not alike "strong in the faith." Some, weak in the faith, can see that Jesus is our Redeemer, but cannot realize as yet the liberty which we as sons have in Christ. One realizes that he is at liberty to eat whatever agrees with him; while another, who is weak, eats vegetables only, lest he violate some law under which he

thinks himself. Some Christians condemn their brethren who eat meat, seeming to forget that our Lord ate flesh. We should learn to grant each other full liberty of conscience; the stronger should not despise the weaker, nor should the weaker judge others by himself. It should be sufficient for each of us to know that God accepts the others as well as ourselves, and manifests His acceptance by blessing them in His service.

It is the same with reference to observance of days. One esteems one day above another, as the Apostle says; while another esteems every day alike. Let each carry out fully the

conviction of his own mind—whatever he believes to be the will of God for himself. When St. Paul urges that each “be fully persuaded in his own mind,” he does not mean that each should make up his mind what is the will of God for all his children, and then stick to his opinion, whether right or wrong, and be unwilling to listen to or consider the thought of any others of the brethren on the subject. On the contrary, he urges growth into the full liberty of Christ, counseling patience and consideration on the part of the stronger for the weaker. He approves the stronger, and plainly states that the brother who thinks himself under bondage regarding the eating of meat, the observance of Sabbath, etc., is the weak brother.

LOVE AND CONSIDERATION FOR THE WEAKER

The Apostle, however, counsels that if the weak brother observes such a bondage, not as an attempt to “keep the law,” and to justify himself thus before God, ignoring Christ’s redemption-sacrifice, but because he thinks that our Redeemer wishes him to be bound by such ordinances and observances, then the stronger ones should not rail at his conscientious weakness, or make light of it, but should receive him as a brother, trusting that discipline, experience and growth in grace and knowledge will gradually bring him to the liberty which others of the brethren reach more quickly.

Those strong ones who enter fully into the spirit of the Apostle’s statement, “It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak,” and deny themselves what their consciences permit, have the greater blessing. They can realize in an additional degree that they are following in the Master’s steps; “for even Christ pleased not himself.” But if the stronger brethren by sarcasm and influence should try to force the weaker ones to use a liberty which they do not realize, it would be forcing them into sin. Therefore the weaker brethren should be left to the liberty of their own consciences. The influences of love and truth alone should be brought to bear upon them, in the hope of gradually educating them to an appreciation of their full privileges as free men in Christ.

Thus the body of Christ may be full of charity and unity, each member carrying out the convictions of his own mind as to the Lord’s will, and each seeking to grow in grace and in knowledge, out of childhood’s weakness into manhood’s strength, as rapidly as possible, being developed as he feeds upon God’s Word.

The Apostle refers especially to the observance of days as a lack of development, saying (Galatians 4:10, 11), “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am anxious on your behalf, lest my labor for you has been in vain.” He here addresses those who had once known the liberty of sons of God, but who were now going again into bondage through false teaching. He recognized in them an evidence that they were not growing into the liberty of sons of God, but going backward toward the servant condition; and he was fearful that this weakness and failure to maintain the liberty of sonship might lead them even to reject the Gospel—that Christ gave himself for our sins—and accept as a gospel a hopeless substitute—that Christ would save them if they kept the law.

But glorious is the liberty of the sons of God! Let us stand fast in it, as the Lord enables us to grasp it in its fulness, yet at the same time extending sympathy and love to those who have not yet reached the high vantage-ground where they can get a broad, comprehensive view of our blessed standing in Christ. Thus we bear the infirmities of the weak brethren, our companions in the way, and thus we are in harmony with the law of love.

THE BEAUTY OF SELF-ABNEGATION

The Apostle appears to be drawing to our attention the thought that selfishness is the predominating principle of the world. People are seeking generally to please themselves—often unjustly, sometimes justly, but simply ignoring others. He is pointing out that the Christian is to take a different course. We are enlisted under the banner of Christ, which is the banner of love. We are to look well to the rules which belong to this new order of things of which we have become members. The followers of Christ, instead of seeking their own selfish interests, are to consider the interests of others. Instead of seeking their own pleasure, they are to seek the pleasure of others, where this will not conflict with their vow of consecration.

This does not mean that the disciples of Christ are to seek their own misery. But they are to give their thought and time to pleasing others rather than themselves. The Apostle tells us that this is the example set before us by our Leader, our Pattern—“For even Christ pleased not himself.” He was not in the world to seek to do the things pleasing to his own flesh. Quite to the contrary, he renounced his own fleshly interests and gratification for the benefit of mankind. So we covenant

to do when we essay to walk in his steps. The denial of self, the taking up of the cross, means the renouncing of self-will and the leading of an unselfish life, in accord with the divine Pattern and the divine plan.

OUR BRETHREN OUR NEIGHBORS IN CLOSEST SENSE

With this light upon the Apostle’s words, our thought is that the primary meaning of the word neighbors as used by St. Paul is, those closest to us. That is to say, in the church of Christ, our brethren are our neighbors; they are the ones nearest, closest to our hearts. All the children of God are our brethren; they are particularly our neighbors because they are on our own plane. We should especially seek to please these to their edification. This does not mean that we should necessarily please them according to the flesh; for this would, in many cases be quite the reverse of their edification. If we please the brethren rightly, we shall rather “stir up their pure minds,” their spiritual minds, to love and faith and zeal, to good works. This implies that the word please is used here in a limited sense.

It is not possible for us to please all people. The direction of our energies should be for their good as we have opportunity. Even though they be not saints, we should “provoke” them—rouse them—“to love and good works” as far as possible, and not to anger or malice or sin or anything unworthy. We may not always be successful in pleasing people to their edification. There may be times when even the brethren will feel aggrieved rather than pleased at our efforts to serve them. We think, however, that if we seek to please them to edification, striving to exercise the spirit of a sound mind, our course will have the Lord’s approval and blessing, whether it has the approval of others—even the brethren—or not.

So let every one of us endeavor to “please his neighbor for his good to edification.” This matter of neighborhood, the condition of nearness, extends, next to the church, to our own families. Of course, as relates to earthly obligations and temporal needs our family would have the first claim, and would be our neighbors, very near, according to the flesh. We should seek to please them for their edification—should seek to do them good, as here suggested. The same principle would extend, as we can readily see, to the butcher, the baker, the ice-man, etc. We are not to please any of these to their injury, or in any way that would not be for their edification. We are not to descend to the world’s methods. If they wish to tell stories that are not good, not pure, we are not to join in with them. If we cannot please them by that which is good, we are to avoid unnecessary contact. We are to do good and to edify only.

THE WORLD RECOGNIZES THE GOOD

We should endeavor to be as pleasing as possible to all of our neighbors. If we rebuke in a rude way, it would not be pleasing to them, nor would it be likely to edify them. There is a way in which we can give proper reproof even to very worldly people. The world has a higher standard morally and religiously than they would be willing to acknowledge. Even if they sneer outwardly, in their hearts they recognize that which is good. We often find people who are impure in their own lives who like the society of the pure. They have some appreciation of the good, even though, being defiled themselves, they are likely to defile whatever they touch.

It would not be proper for us to expect that we can do a great deal of good to worldly people—at least that much fruitage will generally be manifested—at present. Our aim should always be to please as far as possible, as far as loyalty to God and the truth will permit. We should not be of that “grouchy” sort, always going through the world with a quarrel. Rather we should let our light shine, that they may see our good works, and thus “glorify God in the day of their visitation.” A sweet, kindly spirit is the very best recommendation we can give the world now of the power of the truth. The Lord’s people should be kindly disposed toward all men—in the church especially, but also toward all with whom we come in contact.

A WORD OF WARNING

Let us here say that we fear that some of the Lord’s children who have a husband or a wife not in harmony with the truth, or perhaps more or less in harmony, but not fully consecrated to the Lord, make a mistake and perhaps by their example prevent the development of further interest in the companion. If, for instance, a husband is fully consecrated and his wife is not, the husband should exercise great care that his zeal for the truth does not lead him to neglect his duty in helping to lift the burdens of household care, etc., which are pressing upon the wife. Volunteer work, meetings, etc., should not so fill his spare time as to cause him to overlook the fact that he owes a very special duty to his wife in ministering to her real needs or comforts.

We fear that some have been embittered and hindered from a full acceptance of the truth or led to opposition by such lack of loving, thoughtful consideration on the part of the companion who professes entire consecration to the Lord. If we really are fully the Lord's, our home is the first place where this should be demonstrated. No amount of zeal for the service of the truth outside of our homes will excuse us from the duties which we owe to our families and which they have a right to expect. To fulfil our obligations is a real service for the truth, and often a most effectual one. If there is water or coal or wood to carry, or other real services which a husband may and should render to his wife, these should not be neglected for any other service. If she is willing to attend some of the meetings, let him show an appreciation of her company and a pleasure to have her go.

The same rule applies to the consecrated wife. Some time and personal service are just requirements of the husband; and the wife should exercise the spirit of justice, love and of a sound mind along this line, and not give her companion just cause to feel that he is forgotten, unloved and uncared for because of the wife's new interests. The husband is the rightful head of the home. There are duties which are obligations to every child of God, and to neglect or ignore these may be the cause of incalculable harm. The real duties of a husband or wife or parent or child are never abrogated when we give ourselves to the Lord. Each consecrated saint should seek by prayer and by the study of the Word and of divine providences in our lives to discern the will of the Lord concerning us, that we may be "living epistles" which shall glorify our God, and not bring a reproach upon his cause or upon our own Christian profession.

SACRIFICE OUR SPECIAL MISSION

Each member of the royal priesthood is to remember that the special mission of our office, our vocation, our calling, in the present time is to sacrifice. One form of service frequently not discerned by the Lord's people is the opportunity of renouncing our own desires or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the desires, the preferences of others—where it is merely a matter of personal preference. Where we believe the Lord will be as well pleased to have the matter the one way or the other, a yielding of our own wishes often proves a blessing, both to the one yielding and to the one receiving the kindness and consideration. This is the spirit of love, the spirit of the Master.

In the body of Christ the different members have their various inherited weaknesses against which they must wage a

lifelong warfare; and these weaknesses are sometimes of such a nature as to interfere to some extent with the rights and comforts of others as well as of themselves. And just here the Apostle offers the word of counsel, "We, then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." This does not imply that we should not expostulate with such a one and endeavor to help him to get rid of his infirmity. This we should do, in the spirit of meekness and kindness, while we humbly endure the trial of our patience. It is his good that we are to seek, not chiefly our own greater enjoyment of physical or mental comfort. We are to please him for his edification, not by simply ignoring his fault, as though we considered it right, but, if there be suitable opportunity, by kindly urging him to strive against it, still humbly and patiently submitting to the discomfort it brings to us.

If this spirit prevails, the Apostle further shows (1 Corinthians 12:24-26), there need be no schism in the body; for the members all have a mutual care and a mutual love one for another—a care which seeks to encourage and strengthen all that is good and to discourage, by our example and sometimes by a kindly word, all that is unbecoming, and a love that throws its mantle over a deformity and endeavors to conceal a fault rather than to expose the weaker brother or sister to the reproach of the other brethren. Thus, in the true church of Christ, which is knit together in love, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with him; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with him, and to some degree share the honor, just as in an earthly family, when one member rises to an honorable distinction, all the members of the family partake of that honor and joy.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!

For such self-sacrificing love how necessary is the spirit of humility, gentleness, patience and faith! The Master's words along this line are very forceful—"Except ye be converted [from the spirit of the world to the Spirit of Christ] and become as little children [in meekness and teachableness], ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." This blessed law of Christ, the law of love, should rule in all who have taken by consecration the name of Christ. Its hallowed influence should radiate from us, not only among the brethren, but also out upon the world, as a powerful witness to the effect of the grace of God in the heart. Thus we shall demonstrate to them that the love of God received into a life brings peace and harmony and happiness; that it makes noble, devoted, faithful husbands; more kind, loyal and tender wives; more obedient, loving children; more kind, good neighbors; and that it pours "oil on the troubled waters" of all our experiences, bringing blessing wherever it reaches.

"TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS"

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."—Colossians 2:6, 7.

The context from which our text is taken seems to show that the Apostle is contrasting with the Gospel hope the various hopes which might go to establish one in some kind of faith, some kind of belief, some kind of course in life. But he is addressing those especially who have already accepted Jesus Christ as God's Representative—those who believe that God has sent his Son into the world to be the Redeemer of the race of Adam, and by and by to be the Deliverer of mankind from the power of sin and death. All those who are in Christ Jesus have received him with this understanding. This is the only message which God has sent; this is "the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

DIVINE VS. HUMAN MESSAGE

The Apostle Paul urged those to whom he wrote to continue in this faith, and not to try to combine earthly philosophy with this heavenly message. As they had received Christ as God's Anointed and their Sufficiency in all things—the One "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity bodily"—so they were to walk. As they had recognized him as the heavenly Teacher, so they were to continue to make progress in the same way—the path that leads to glory, honor and immortality. They were not to think for one moment that any human teaching could be mixed with the divine message; for any other doctrine would serve only to confuse the heavenly message in the minds of the hearers.

This would not mean, however, that the teachings of the apostles were to be ignored, for the Master especially informed the church that his twelve apostles would be his mouthpieces. It would, however, guard us against any supposition that there would be any other teaching or any other church to take the place of Jesus and his apostles. To these he declared that

whatsoever things they would bind on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatsoever things they would loose on earth would be loosed in heaven.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL PLANT

Having stated the matter in this way, the Apostle then uses a forceful illustration to show how we are to progress in Christ. Turning from the figure of a man walking in Christ as a member of his body, St. Paul gives us the picture of a tree, the root of which goes downward and the trunk of which reaches upward, to obtain that nourishment which will give it strength and stability. As the roots of a tree push themselves downward and imbibe the nutriment of the soil, while at the same time the trunk and the branches reach up into the atmosphere to obtain through the leaves the necessary elements of growth, so the mentality of the Christian takes hold of the great and precious promises of the Word of God, while at the same time he is building character through his heart appreciation of these promises, in connection with the experiences of life. The roots of faith push down deep into the knowledge of the divine plan, while the tree of character grows higher and higher, developing and maturing the rich fruits of the holy Spirit of God; for instruction is a form of construction.

While the Christian is thus growing up in character-likeness to our Redeemer, and his roots of faith are reaching deep down into the deep things of the Word of God, he is becoming established, settled. A tree that is well rooted in the earth is hard to uproot. It has a wonderful strength, a wonderful hold upon the earth, and requires years to die out. So it is with the Christian whose faith has been properly established; he should be so fixed, so established in the promises of God's Word, that no wind of doctrine could overturn his faith.

Whoever is continually looking around for something new

is thus demonstrating the fact that he is not established in the faith. Having once made sure that the divine plan is the plan of God, we should not permit ourselves to be moved away from that position. On all Christians who are thus rooted and grounded in the Scriptures the theories of our day—Evolution, Christian Science, New Thought, etc.—have no effect whatever. No Christian growth will be developed nor spiritual life retained unless the soul becomes fixed and settled in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

ONE CAUSE OF SPIRITUAL DECAY

When once we have seen the plan of God as revealed in Jesus, and have given ourselves to God and the study of his Word, the only way to retain our spiritual life is to continue in this doctrine, to root ourselves in this soil and remain there. We are not to seek other fields with the thought that we can receive additional nourishment there, and that an admixture of other elements with what we have will be advantageous. No theories will mix with the Lord's plan. It is complete; it needs no assistance from other systems of belief. Any attempt to incorporate with it theories and ideas of men will only destroy its value. We can never become rooted and built up in Christ by such a course; our spiritual decay, and finally our spiritual death, would be the result.

No child of God can be carried about by every wind of doctrine; nor can he indulge in a morbid curiosity as to what this or that new theory may teach. To do so is very dangerous to the spirituality of a Christian. For one who has never known the truth there might be some reason for such a course, but for one who has once thoroughly proven what is the truth in Christ to go hunting around for new pastures in which to feed, there is no excuse. Either he has never been established in Christ, or else he has fallen into a spiritual decline. There is an exhaustless field for thought and for mental and spiritual activity in the plan of God in all its varied features.

We believe that God purposed to have a seed of Abraham through whom a blessing would come to all the families of the earth. Those who look for the fulfilment of this promise realize that Christ is the seed of Abraham and that his work is to fulfil this promise. For this purpose he came into the world. Later on, the church learn that not only Christ Jesus, the Head, but also the church, his body, are sharing in the same faith, the same promise made to Abraham. Each individual called has the opportunity of coming in, of exercising his faith, and of being built up as a member of the body of Christ. By this time the body of Christ must be nearly complete. The hour is at hand when this glorious seed of Abraham is to take hold of the affairs of earth and bring in "the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

As a tree does not breathe the same element at all times, and as it is not always flooded with sunshine, but needs also the rains and storms for its development, so the child of God needs varied experiences and sometimes change of environment to best develop all the fruits of the holy Spirit. The great Husbandman knows just what experiences and surroundings each one of his "trees" needs—how much sunshine, how much rain, how much cold and how much heat, how much pruning—and he will supply just what is best adapted to each case. He knows how to vary these conditions, environments, etc., without disturbing the process of rooting and upbuilding, but developing it. This we do not know how to accomplish, but would bring upon ourselves spiritual disaster. So we need to keep ourselves continually under the care of the skilful Husbandman and earnestly co-operate with him, that we may grow and become strong and immovable—firmly established.

DEPTH OF ROOT SHOWN IN VIGOR AND FRUITAGE

The depth and the spread of the roots of a tree are shown by the vigor and fruitage of the tree. A tree that is not deeply and firmly grounded can neither bring forth rich, luscious fruit nor furnish cool, refreshing shade to man. Depth of root is absolutely essential. So the Christian's faith must be deeply grounded in Christ; and thus shall we also grow up into him, learning more and more what is the divine will as expressed in him. The rooting process is unseen, and can be judged only by its outward manifestations. When there is luxuriant foliage there is good rooting. But the growth must not stop there; fruit must be borne. And so the spiritual life of the child of God will manifest itself more and more in its likeness to Christ. To vary the figure, the Christian will not only be a branch in the vine, but will bear rich clusters of fruit which should become more choice in quality and size year by year.

We sometimes see Christians who have little knowledge of worldly things and yet have deep spirituality, very deep rooting and grounding in Christ, a clear insight into the deep things of God, and a rich Christian experience. Perhaps their knowl-

edge of the usages of polite society is less than that of many others of their brethren; they may have had fewer opportunities to learn all these details; and yet their ripe attainments in Christ may shame some who are more outwardly correct according to the social standards of the world. How careful we should be that our standards of judgment and our estimates of character are fashioned after the pattern of the Master; that we look beneath the surface; that we note rather the real, the essential traits, than any outward peculiarities of the flesh which in the sight of the Lord should have no weight in deciding the quality of the character or the place in the kingdom.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

If we are to be the judges of the world in the next age, how shall we be fitted for this position, if we do not learn now how to take the proper viewpoint, the Lord's viewpoint, in our estimates of our brethren? If our love and our esteem for them is gaged by trifles, yea, by matters even unworthy of notice in the eyes of the Lord, are we developing the qualities of character which will fit us to be the judges of the incoming age? How are we growing up into Christ in all things? Let us judge ourselves rigidly along these lines, that we may indeed become like the Master and win his final approval.

The Apostle urges that we become established in the faith. This term refers to "the faith which was once delivered to the saints"—the one faith. This is to hold at all costs. Satan will attempt to divert our minds into other channels, to draw our attention to some new thing. But the plan of God, the truth of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, is but one. It is given us for our instruction in righteousness, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." (2 Timothy 3:17) It is not the truth of Geometry or Trigonometry or Geology or Astronomy or any other science that we are to be diligent to study and be grounded and built up in, but God's Word. (John 17:17) These other truths are very well in their way, but we have little time to study these now. We shall have all eternity in which to learn all the wonders of creation, but now we are to apply ourselves especially to the mastery of spiritual truth, the deep things of the mystery of God, revealed to his saints for a specific purpose.

AN ESTABLISHED CHRISTIAN NOT A BIGOT

The truth embraces all the scriptural teachings relative to Christ and his work, to our relationship to him as members of his body, and to the brethren as fellow-members. We are to abide therein with thanksgiving. We should familiarize ourselves with the different features of this truth more and more. We should be clear in regard to what our Lord taught and why he taught it, and should know how to connect the different parts of the truth into a harmonious whole. We are to be thoroughly furnished. We are heartily to appreciate the loving kindness of our God in revealing to us these glorious things, and to realize that we did not originate them ourselves, nor was any man the originator of them, but the Lord himself. They are the gift of God to us, and we are to be most thankful for this great gift, to guard it jealously as a priceless treasure, and to let our light shine to the glory of God's name.

The general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrine, and even among the world in general, who do not believe in the necessity or the advisability of being established in faith, is that to be established is to be bigoted. Those who are so unfair in mind as to receive and tenaciously hold what they have never proven, either by sound logic or by the authority of the Word of God, are rightly called bigots. But one who in simple, childlike faith accepts and firmly holds to what God has inspired, what he has caused to be written in his Word for our instruction, is not a bigot, but a strong, established character, and will stand when all the structures built upon the numerous theories and imaginings of men shall have fallen. The great day now upon us is trying every man's character-structure, of what sort it is, and but very few, even among professed Christians, will stand the test.

The few who will pass safely through this crucial trial without loss are those only who have become established in the truth of God, "rooted and grounded and built up into Christ." The difference between a strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that one is established in truth, and the other is established in error. The "fire" of this day will continue to burn and to manifest the great difference between the two classes, until all have been tested and tried and found worthy or unworthy.

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-SCRUTINY

The Apostle's words in our text lead each child of God back to the time when he first made his own consecration. Under what conditions did we come into Christ? We recall that it required much humility on our part to acknowledge that

we were sinners, utterly unable to save ourselves. Some seem to forget the way in which they started. They started with faith and humility and meekness, and with the desire to be truly built up into the Master's likeness. But they seem by degrees to lose sight of this, and begin to grow in another direction than straight upward into the fulness of Christ. They like to make some show before the world. They come to neglect the first principles of Christian development, while still talking about the doctrines, or making up doctrines of their own.

Thus gradually these get away from the doctrines and the Spirit of Christ. The Apostle puts us on guard against these dangers: Are you sure that you ever really received Christ? Are you sure that you ever actually made a full consecration to God and became a new creature? You should know this. If you did, then make sure that you are progressing in his likeness. Without careful scrutiny, you might think you are progressing when you are not. The narrow way remains narrow unto the end of the journey; a mere profession of faith and a certain round of observances are not sufficient. Remember that we are to confess the Lord by our looks, by our manner, by all the acts and words of life.

Only by continual scrutiny of ourselves in the light of God's Word can we make real progress in the narrow way in which our Master walked. Truth is to become brighter and fuller and more luminous as we go onward. To this end, we must keep close to the Word and in line with his program. The Lord will not accept little, undeveloped sprouts for the kingdom, but he wants those that have grown and matured—strong, sturdy “trees of righteousness.”—Isaiah 61:3.

GOD'S WORD ALONE WILL UPBUILD

Delve into the promises of God more and more. As you do this, the roots of faith will draw up the nutriment and send it out into your life, and you will grow, just as a tree grows, because nourished, fed. Thus alone will you become established in The Faith, and not in your imaginings nor the imaginings of others. Our faith is to grow stronger and more vigorous day by day. It is not to be a faith in ourselves or in anything apart from the Lord. Faith is what we started with in the beginning, and we shall need it in increasing measure as we go on in our upward way—faith in God and in his sure Word. All that we know as children of the Lord has come to us through the channel of Jesus, his holy apostles, and the prophets of old, and we are to continue feeding at this same table with thanksgiving.

We are not to feel a spirit of bondage, and say to ourselves, “I would like to ramble outside; I do not like to confine myself merely to what the Bible teaches. I would like more liberty.” This disposition is not the spirit of a true son of God. Such sentiments encouraged would lead to utter spiritual disaster. All such temptations, if they come, must be promptly and positively resisted. Our spirit should be one of deepest gratitude and thankfulness that we have been granted this glorious divine revelation. Following thus in the Lord's way, we find the only true joy, and can make the only true progress. “If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”—2 Peter 1:10, 11.

SPECIAL FALL VOLUNTEERING

Already over ten million copies of the regular 1914 Volunteer matter have been distributed in the U. S. and Canada, although some places have not yet been supplied. We have a large quantity still on hand which, however, is being rapidly diminished. Further orders should be sent to us quickly.

As a follow-up to the regular 1914 (“End of the World”) edition, we have just issued another number of THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY (Vol. 6, No. 5) treating “The Distress of Nations” and the Cause of God's Anger—the prophetic aspect of the present European War, and its relation to the great Time of Trouble. We recommend the distribution of this new matter wherever the “End of the World” edition has gone.

As heretofore, the Society gladly supplies this literature gratis, all charges prepaid. Order promptly whatever you can judiciously use, stating exactly what localities you expect to serve, and the census report of the population of the district. Also mention any large proportion of population speaking any other language than English. We will have this new volunteer matter in the German and other languages later on.

The present is a favorable opportunity, while the eyes and ears of the masses are open. Let us labor “while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” “He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.”—John 9:4; 4:36.

THE RESURRECTION THE GREATEST OF MIRACLES

In his new creation God began to create something entirely distinct from anything that He had yet made. The new creature is not an earthly creature; and nothing that is of the earthly being will ever have a part, to our understanding, in that new creation, either now or at any time. Nothing will carry over from the human to the divine, the human to the spiritual.

The human being is more or less depraved. He hears something about God, about the divine nature, about what sin is and why it is undesirable, about the reconciliation which God has provided through Christ, and about the invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ in his heavenly kingdom. He becomes conscious of all this through his ears, through human power; for he has no other power. He must have a hearing ear, else he would not hear the message at the present time. Some have more of the hearing ear, others have less. The one who has more of the hearing ear would be more attentive, more pleased, when he learns that God has a provision for the assistance of repentant sinners. The more the depravity the less of the hearing ear. The depraved person lives on a natural plane; therefore he has less inclination to come to God and less of the hearing ear to hear anything that God would have to say. But the class who cannot hear more or less distinctly have had their ears dulled by the adversary with false doctrine.

HOW TO BECOME A NEW CREATURE

What we do see, then, is God's gracious invitation to become associates with Jesus; and this is good tidings to those who have the hearing ear. We say, “I am glad that God has invited me to come back into his family, and that he has provided for the covering of my imperfections. I am pleased to know that there is a special invitation now to those who have the mind of Christ and who desire to walk in his steps, and I gladly avail myself of the arrangement. In harmony with this invitation I offer myself a living sacrifice.”

When we have done this, we have been converted. In what way? We are turned around from the way of sin and from

our own will, turned to go in the way of righteousness. This is conversion.

The next step for us to take is that of making a consecration to become a living sacrifice to God. And that consecration of our all to God includes everything that belongs to us—all that we are—the human ego, personality—all of its hopes, aims, possessions, for the future in every shape and form. Everything is included in that consecration to God. Did this make us new creatures? No. But it puts us in the way that we are eligible to that position. What is the next step? The next step is the application of the merit of Jesus, put over us as the wedding garment, covering our imperfections. Of what use is this to us? It makes us acceptable to God. The Apostle tells us to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, and our reasonable service.—Romans 12:1.

The next thing in order is for God to indicate his acceptance of that which we offer and which is accepted. This he does by begetting us of the holy Spirit. Just what this means we are not wise enough to know. God foreknew Jesus Christ as the Head of the body and he foreknew us, the class predestined to be the members of that body. And now by coming under the required conditions we are accepted as members of this class. We are to show our devotion and our loyalty, to show that our surrender of our will is a genuine thing. This we do by being exercised by our contact with the truth. If we have been in error, our loyalty will be determined by the way in which we weigh the matter and decide it. If we decide the matter slowly, it means that we are a little obtuse. If we decide the matter quickly between the truth and the error, it means that we are loyal to God's will, his truth, and thus we are all the more pleasing to him, as a loyal child. If we decide the matter slowly he will not cut us off, but perhaps will give us some chastisements; for we are in the school of Christ.

HOW THE NEW CREATURE GROWS

In one picture we are represented as embryos, not yet born; in another picture as children, not yet having reached manhood,

but as growing in grace and knowledge and character. Either picture is very beautiful. But we cannot mix them. We cannot imagine the child not born as growing in knowledge, etc., nor can we imagine one developing toward manhood as an embryo. In the embryo picture we perceive that every human child must grow, and that in order to do so it is dependent on nourishment. If some accident happen, that embryo might die; if there were some miscarriage, the embryo might never be brought forth into life. We see that from the time we became new creatures in Christ, we began to develop the new mind. The brain is the same as before the new will developed, and the body the same; just as a mother is the same person that she was before the child was begotten.

Let us consider the subject from another viewpoint. This new creature is the governing power—the only thing that God recognizes, and that we recognize, as having control of this mortal body. Why does the new creature have the control? Because the will is transferred from human interest to God's will. God's will is now our will as new creatures. We have full rights and control in this body, whose earthly rights are given up. God has accepted the sacrifice, and the new creature must be loyal in controlling the body in accord with the divine will. Henceforth we are to see that the mortal body is kept under. Some people might say that we are treating it unkindly; but from God's standpoint we are treating it as wisely as possible, in order to do God's will. If it were God's will that we undertake some great work, we would certainly put the body through a course of training to fit it for the undertaking.

Practically, the new creature says to the mortal body, "You are my body only for the time being. I am the new creature, desiring to use you in God's service, in order that I may see how obedient I can be to God's cause." The old creature might say, "But I have some rights." The new creature replies, "You have no rights. I shall use my judgment as to what you shall do or not do." If the new creature yielded to the old creature, the latter would prosper in its own aims and projects, and the new creature would be puny and weak in courage, strength and everything else. The new creature is to assume control of all the interests of the old creature, to sacrifice all that is to be sacrificed to the will of God.

PERSONALITY MAKES SOUL

The more we do this, the stronger we become spiritually; and the stronger we become spiritually, the more ready we shall be for our change. What is our change? It is the spirit birth in the resurrection. Not one atom of this old body will go into the new condition. What, then, will go into the new condition? It is the new creature. What is the new creature? It is the ego which lives in the mortal body, which feeds not upon natural bread, but upon every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

If God has a work for the new creature to do in the present time, then we are to take reasonable care of this body. To misuse the body would not be in harmony with God's will. The body has become the new creature's property. The new creature will take the dominant control of that body. A spiritual body would not be a soul without the ego, the personality, the being, any more than would the earthly body. It is the ego, the personality, that makes the soul. Simply one hundred and fifty pounds or so of matter does not make soul.

The soul is the thing that comes down from the father to the child. Adam and Eve gave soul to their children, and so that spark of life which God gave originally continues to come down. In the resurrection that soul, or spark of life, is carried over and becomes the new soul. This spark of life which God recognizes all the while and preserves in all of its development, is to be transferred to a new body that will be fully in harmony with it. There will not be any discord, any inharmony, be-

tween the new mind and the new body. If the new mind grows very strong now, it will have all the more difficulty and conflict with the old body and will have all the more desire for the new body.

PROCESS OF TRANSFERENCE NOT KNOWN

Can you explain to us how this new life will be transferred to the new body? We cannot. In the case of our Lord Jesus, we have the explanation that the Logos, a spirit being, left the spirit condition, came to earthly conditions and became the personality, ego, man, in earthly conditions. And we have the account that this same one who came into the world, the same one who died and went away again to heaven, is coming again. It is the same ego. It has changed its character, its power, according to the different body. At first it had a spiritual body; afterward it had a human body; it now has a divine body, superior to all. But the ego, the personality, has persisted with all of these bodies.

Our ego, our personality, is to pass from this earthly body and be given a new body. The power by which this can be done is divine power. If anybody can explain what that is, of what the first man was made a soul, perhaps we could explain how it is with the new creature. Or if any one can explain what makes the germ of wheat grow, perhaps we can explain how the new creature has this germ and how it grows. We must trust in God's power for this whole matter of the resurrection, not only of the new creature, but also of the world in general.

Whoever doubts divine power cannot believe in a resurrection. We cannot imagine, for instance, how Moses or Abraham or any one else of the remote past can be raised to life so that he would know himself, read the story of his life in the Bible, and remember that the events therein recorded were true. How that can be God only knows. We believe it because God says it. If we knew how to do it, perhaps we could make a resurrection ourselves.

A HELPFUL ILLUSTRATION

But it is just as easy to understand about the resurrection of a man to the human plane and the bringing of him into a new human body as to understand how the new creature, the new soul, can be brought into its new body. It is the new creature that will get the new body. When we get our spirit bodies we shall know all about the process; for it is written that when we get the spiritual bodies we shall know even as we are known.—1 Corinthians 13:12.

Meantime, however, we might find illustrations to help us to understand. Take, for instance, the making of a record for the phonograph. Something went out of the mouth, and made little indentations on a cylinder of wax. Later on, from that very wax cylinder the voice of the speaker is reproduced. Now, then, if we know how to reproduce the human voice, it gives us a little illustration of how God, with his unlimited power, can preserve everything recorded by the convolutions of our brain, and of how these could be preserved in the future absolutely—everything by which we could know ourselves in the future. We do not know ourselves by the number of pounds weight we are or by the difference in our heard. We know ourselves by something in our mind. But if our reason be gone, then we would not know ourselves.

God has made us new creatures. He is the All-powerful One who knows how to do this. And the more we come to know about him and the length, the depth, the height and the breadth of his wisdom, the more we know how to appreciate all he has told us, and the more we have absolute confidence in him. It is wise foolishness that God should promise a resurrection. The world cannot understand—to them it is foolishness. They cannot believe in a resurrection; therefore they cannot have the joy we can have through the exercise of our faith.

MOCK TRIALS OF JESUS

NOVEMBER 1.—Matthew 26:57-68.

"As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."—Isaiah 53:7.

Justice is a quality of mind which naturally and properly commends itself to every rational being, civilized or heathen. Every nation strives, therefore, to have just laws upon its statute books; and it must be admitted that many of the laws of the world, including those of Lycurgus and those of Caesar, have manifested much wisdom and much justice.

But the Jewish law, given by God himself at Mount Sinai at the hand of Moses, properly claims the highest place; and the laws of all nations in any degree claiming to recognize Christianity properly seek to represent the principles of justice on the highest plane. Nevertheless, when it comes to the interpreting of these laws, and their application to individual cases, we find that everywhere there is a tendency to make ex-

cuse and depart from the laws and from the principles of justice under the claim that the circumstances and conditions of the case make necessary such a violation of law and of just principles.

The story of the conviction of Jesus unjustly, by a Jewish court and in violation of Jewish law, must not surprise us nor be thought different from what has occurred in numerous cases in other courts.

AN ILLEGAL ARREST

Jesus was arrested, neither by Pilate's orders nor by Herod's nor by their soldiers. His arrest was made at the instance of the high priest and his associates, who particularly had concluded that the life and ministry of Jesus were inimical

to their plans and projects and to what they considered to be the best interests of Judaism. The murder of Jesus was plotted in advance. But the murderers sought some excuse for their conduct, as all murderers do; and, being politicians, they sought also an outward form or semblance of justice, having regard for the opinions of others of tenderer consciences than themselves.

Under the charge of the priests were a number of men who served as policemen in the Temple and its precincts. These were the servants of the high priest; and, armed with maces, swords and lanterns, they followed Judas, who knew beforehand that on this particular night Jesus did not intend to go to Bethany as usual, but purposed to rendezvous with his disciples in the Gethsemane olive orchard, or garden.

They brought Jesus directly to the house of Annas, a superannuated high priest, whose son-in-law Caiaphas officiated in his stead. Annas attempted an examination of Jesus, but met with little success, and turned him over to Caiaphas, whose house adjoined, being in the same courtyard. There, at probably three o'clock in the morning, the Sanhedrin had gathered.

The plot for Jesus' death was deeply laid. The hours between the time when Judas left Jesus and the other apostles at the Passover Supper and the time of this trial were spent in gathering the Sanhedrin from their various homes throughout the city. Conditions were considered desperate enough to justify all this arrangement for the murder of him who "spake as never man spake"—because he taught the people—because his teaching of the people was weakening the power of the scribes and the Pharisees and of the traditions of the elders.—John 7:46; Matt. 26:55.

The theory of erroneous religious teachings is that ignorance and superstition are necessary for the preservation of sacerdotal power. Thus always has error hated the truth; thus always has darkness hated the light. The condemnation of Jesus was merely another triumph of darkness over the light. Yet it was a triumph only in appearance; for God's plan was thus being carried out. The great Atonement for sin was thus being arranged for, the result of which will be the ultimate overthrow of sin, Satan and death, and the establishment of righteousness and truth world-wide and everlastingly.

AN INIQUITOUS TRIAL

The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy of the most influential Jews, an ecclesiastical court, whose voice properly had great influence with the Roman Governor, in whose hands lay, at this time, the power of life or death.

Caiaphas not only filled the office of high priest, but in this particular case he acted as prosecuting attorney. While gathering the Sanhedrin, he had not been forgetful to collect witnesses, who are said to have been suborned, or bribed, to give their testimony. Of course, no attempt was made to bring before the Sanhedrin any of those whom Jesus had relieved from the power of evil spirits, nor any of those whose blind eyes he had opened or whose deaf ears he had unstopped, nor any of those whom he had awakened from the sleep of death. The high priest knew, for instance, particularly about the case of Lazarus, but they desired no such testimony. They were bent upon murder, to be accomplished in an apparently judicial form.

Caiaphas called the witnesses, but found that their testimonies were self-contradictory; and it was a part of the Jewish law that at least two witnesses must agree before any mat-

ter could be considered proven. Finally, two partly agreed that they had heard Jesus say something about the Temple—that he was able to destroy it and rebuild it in three days. They probably had misunderstood Jesus. However, their testimonies were too slight to make a basis for conviction.

As a last resort, Caiaphas attempted to get Jesus himself to say something which he could construe to be blasphemy. To the various questions Jesus answered nothing; but now Caiaphas exclaimed, "I adjure thee by the living God, tell us truly, Art thou the Messiah?" It would not do for Jesus to keep quiet and fail to answer this question. To have done so would have been to deny this great truth and to have failed to give proper witness to the Sanhedrin. He therefore avowed that Caiaphas had expressed the truth in what he had applied.

Caiaphas leaped to his feet, anxious to grasp the opportunity of calling this statement blasphemy; but Jesus proceeded to say, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Affecting great horror at this, Caiaphas dramatically tore his priestly garment, as implying to the Sanhedrin that as a representative of God amongst them he had heard something awful indeed. Turning to the Sanhedrin, he inquired, "What further need of witnesses have we? Ye yourselves have heard his blasphemy. What think ye?"—What is your verdict? Their answer was, "He is worthy of death."

Apparently only two refrained from this vote—Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both of whom had learned to have great respect for Jesus. But what power or influence could they have? As the very most, they could claim that the proceedings of the Sanhedrin were illegal, that the law forbade that they should sit as a court to condemn anybody to death in the night-time. Hence Jesus was remanded to an adjoining court-room while the Sanhedrin waited to take its official action after daybreak. Meantime, in that waiting-hall, Jesus, condemned by the high priest as a blasphemer and malefactor, was subjected to various indignities by the attaches of the high priest's palace, who ignorantly supposed that whatever was done by the high priest must be right.

SUBMISSIVE TO THE DIVINE WILL

The Scripture which declares, "Ye have killed the just one, and he doth not resist you," and the Golden Text of this lesson are in full agreement, and are both applicable to Jesus in these trials. Jesus opened not his mouth in the sense that he did not attempt to defend his life. Realizing that nothing was happening to him contrary to the Father's will, he gladly permitted matters to take their course, without attempting to hinder the results.

Who can doubt that his brilliant mind, and his tongue, which "spake as never man spake," could quickly have brought such an argument for his defense that Caiaphas and the entire Sanhedrin would have trembled and would not have dared to condemn him! He spoke only what was necessary to be said that the truth might be presented, and it was their own perversion of this truth which his enemies styled blasphemy.

The Scriptures intimate that the followers of Jesus must not expect full justice in the world, nor always to be rightly understood. They, too, are to remember that the cup of their experiences, like that of their Master, is supervised by heavenly wisdom; and that if they are obedient to the divine arrangement, they will find that all of their experiences will eventually work out to their highest welfare. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God."

SOWING AND REAPING

NOVEMBER 8.—Galatians 6:1-10.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Verse 7.

Today's study was intended, by those who mapped out these lessons, to be a temperance lesson. There is surely a sense in which it is true that those who yield to appetites which crave injurious stimulants and narcotics will certainly reap a slavery to those appetites, a corresponding weakening of their own characters. All good people—all who have at heart their own welfare and the welfare of humanity—must surely deplore the ravages of intemperance; and any word or example that would be helpful to fellow-creatures, that would assist them to become strong characters and useful members of society, should not be withheld.

We may, however, be fully sure that nothing will completely and thoroughly liberate mankind from the weaknesses of their fallen nature, except God's appointed remedy—Messiah's kingdom. But this conviction should not hinder us from taking our place publicly on the side of righteousness and of the best interests of humanity in respect to every question.

Let us not, on the other hand, go to the extreme which some would approve, but let us follow strictly on this, and on every

subject, the teachings of the Bible. Following this course now, in this lesson, it is our duty to call attention to the fact that the Apostle's words have no reference whatever to intemperance of one kind more than another. The Apostle is not addressing the world in general; much less is he addressing some poor inebriates. He is addressing the consecrated people of God, as he declares in the opening verses of the Epistle.

These consecrated Christians the Apostle speaks of as brethren, and instructs them how they should deal with any of their fellows who might be overtaken in a fault, who might become entangled with some form of sin, not by reason of sympathy with sin, but by reason of weakness of the flesh or by unfavorable environment. The most spiritual ones of the church should exercise themselves to bring about a restoration of the erring one to a condition of righteousness and fellowship with God. This they should do in a meek manner, remembering that they also are imperfect in the flesh, and that they also may at some time or other inadvertently fall into sin, contrary to their heart intentions.

In this manner they were to "bear one another's burdens"—assisting one another in battling against the weaknesses of the flesh and the besetments of sin. In this way they would be fulfilling the general law of Christ.

The law of Christ is a law of service and self-sacrifice in the interests of others. Those who, finding a brother overtaken in a fault, merely throw back their heads, denouncing the brother in a haughty, imperious manner, in a holier-than-thou manner, have not yet attained a proper appreciation of what is the law of Christ—the law which is to govern all the members of the body.

This law of Christ, the Apostle points out, is a law of love. Governed by this law of love, Jesus laid down his life, not merely for his friends, but even for his enemies. All, therefore, who would claim to be disciples or followers of Jesus should have the same mind, the same disposition, the same spirit, and should seek to follow the same law of love. Thus the Apostle says, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16)—in seeking to assist the brethren out of difficulty and to bring them nearer to the Lord and to his standards.

TOO MUCH SELF-ESTEEM

The Apostle points out that one great danger which besets all the true followers of Jesus is headiness—thinking too highly of self and, therefore, not thinking highly enough of the brethren, especially of the brethren who stumble in some particular in which this individual has not himself, as yet, stumbled.

One of the first lessons to be learned is that we are really nothing, that we are bundles of imperfection, that on the strength of our own merit we could not commend ourselves to God nor have his favor. Furthermore, we are to learn that in proportion as we think of ourselves as somebody, to that same extent we are not pleasing to God, and are in his sight all the more nobodies. If, therefore, anybody think of himself as a somebody in God's sight, he should begin to realize that he is nothing, a nobody unworthy of divine notice, except through the favor of God in Christ. Such a person is deceiving himself and is hindering his own progress in the good way.

Each one, therefore, instead of seeking to judge or to reprove his neighbor or his brother in Christ, should seek to prove out his own work. He should carefully discern to see to what extent he has made progress in the things which God has declared will be pleasing in his sight. He should seek to ascertain to what extent he has put away anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, and to what extent he has put on the graces of God's holy Spirit; namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

To whatever extent he can see that he is progressing along these Scripturally defined lines, to that extent he has ground for rejoicing, without in any sense or degree seeking to compare himself with others and thus to estimate himself wholly by the imperfections which he may see in others. By following this course, each should be seeking to find out his own weaknesses, seeking to bear his own burdens and seeking, therefore, not to be a burden or a reproach to others—either to the Lord or to the brethren.

Along the lines of this teaching, there is no room for clericalism. Rather, as the Apostle says, "Those who are taught in the Word should communicate with those who teach in all good things," telling them of any blessings received or of any clearer views of the Word of God which have come to them. The Apostle may also have meant that those who receive blessings from a teacher may properly seek opportunity for recompensing that teacher, either with thanks or with co-operation or in some other way helping the teacher to forward his work of teaching in any good and profitable manner.

There is a principle at stake here. God operates along the lines of justice, and he cannot be deceived. His eye reads the heart, the motive, the intention. We might even temporarily deceive ourselves with specious arguments, but no one can deceive God. It is a principle of the divine arrangement that sowing shall bring reaping, and that the thing reaped shall be of the same character as the thing sowed.—Galatians 6:7.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARDUOUS TASK

The world does not engage in this sowing and reaping that the Apostle speaks of; only the church do so. The church is composed of those who have heard the voice of God offering forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ to all those who become his disciples—offering also divine assistance and the begetting of the holy Spirit to a new nature and to glory, honor and immortality. All who have really and truly become followers of Christ, who have taken up their cross and have covenanted self-denial in walking in the footsteps of the Master—these alone are true Christians.

It is for these to order their steps in harmony with the Lord's leadings and to know that the results of their lives will be in proportion as they follow their covenant of self-sacrifice and faithfulness as disciples of Jesus. These have covenanted to give up the world, its aims, its objects, its ambitions—to sacrifice all these, that they may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus their Lord in the heavenly inheritance.—Romans 8:17.

Those should understand that it is not sufficient to agree to sow to the Spirit, but that the reaping of spiritual blessings and of heart development will depend upon their faithfulness in sowing to these ends. "He that soweth to the Spirit"—that is, he that lives a spiritual life, seeking to serve the will or Spirit of God in all of his words, deeds and thoughts—will reap the largest crop of spiritual development in the various qualities which go to make up the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, those who sow to the flesh—that is, who live after the flesh, seeking to please their own flesh, seeking to do according to their fleshly minds or wills, or seeking to please the fleshly minds or wills of their friends or relatives—these must only expect that in their case the flesh thus cultivated will grow the stronger in power to control their lives, and that they will make proportionately less progress along the lines of the Spirit.

In other words, the Apostle explains that every time we give heed to the fleshly inclinations of our fallen natures, we are hindering our own spiritual progress, and that the tendency of all such yielding to the flesh is toward corruption, toward death. On the other hand, to whatever extent we mortify the inclinations of the flesh, and seek to live in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord, in that same proportion we shall grow strong spiritually, and be prepared for the everlasting life on the spirit plane which God has promised to those who shall demonstrate their love for him and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

This does not mean that only those who attain the complete mastery of the flesh will receive any blessing from the Lord, but that unless we manifest to the Lord an appreciation of the spiritual things, we shall not make progress therein, shall not be fit for everlasting life and shall not receive it; whereas, on the contrary, if our conduct shall manifest to the Lord our love for truth and righteousness and our desire to please him, however weak our flesh, he will account such worthy of everlasting life, knowing that when they shall have the perfect bodies of the resurrection, they will be glad to live in absolute harmony with the divine arrangements. Thus the Apostle on another occasion wrote, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans 8:4.

FAITHFUL CONTINUANCE IN WELL-DOING

In verses 9 and 10, the Apostle draws his argument to a conclusion. All who wish to do right—all who wish to live according to the lines marked out by the holy Spirit through the words of Jesus and the apostles—should not only start out well by making a full consecration, but should continue faithful, and not be weary of striving against sin and of being faithful to righteousness.

God is seeking to develop and to fix character in his people; and in due time, after they shall have suffered awhile, fought and battled for a time against the weaknesses of the flesh, they will reap the reward; they will get the new bodies that God has promised—the resurrection bodies. Then their battling and trials will all be ended; for the new bodies will be in perfect accord with the new will, and there will be no cause of conflict between the two. The work of grace will then go grandly forward, through them, for the blessing of the world.

And, says the Apostle, let us not merely avoid harshness toward those who have been overtaken in a fault, let us not merely guard ourselves that we shall sow to the spirit and not to the flesh, and let us not merely avoid weariness in this good way; but let us additionally, "as we find opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith." In so doing, we shall be copying our heavenly Father's character. He is the Fountain of Blessing. From him come the blessings of the present life—the sunshine and the rain—upon both the just and the unjust, upon the evil and the good.

As the heavenly Father is continually giving blessings, rather than seeking favors, so we as his advanced and developed children are to seek to have the same character-likeness, the same disposition, the same mind; namely, a disposition to do good to everybody, but especially an earnest desire to do good unto all who are the Lord's children—unto all who are of the household of faith.