

# GOOD TIDINGS

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THE REFORMED MENNONITE CHURCH, FOR THE  
PURPOSE OF DISSEMINATING SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

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## EDITORIAL

We introduce this number of "Good Tidings" by drawing attention to some of the many blessings which God has given to us.

During the summer season we see the manifestations of nature's forces, each plant and fruit growing and maturing after the design of its kind, and for the purpose intended; teaching us that it is the development and culmination of God's works in nature, and the magnitude of His wisdom displayed, impresses us to exclaim, "God is glorified in all His works!"

At this season of the year vegetation must have attention by strenuous labor and careful cultivation, if we hope to reap a bountiful harvest, but all our efforts are insufficient if the Lord in His infinite wisdom is disposed to send drought, flood or other destructive elements. The increase in all things must come from the Lord. In summer-time we reap the harvest to serve the wants of the body; during the winter the sun with its warmth and power recedes and causes the earth to become cold, barren and unfruitful.

Summer in comparison, can be applied to the Day or Season of Grace—if well employed, assures us a bountiful

harvest the reward of our labors and is the promise given to all who "sow to the Spirit." Our Savior said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

It would be sad indeed, if we would not avail ourselves of the gracious opportunity and would allow the Day of Grace to pass unheeded, and that finally we would have to say: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!" Wisdom should teach us; "and that knowing the time, and now it is high time to awake out of sleep." God has created us with intelligence and capability to know good and evil, which is a blessing of inestimable value, and a trust committed to all. May we execute wisely this responsibility.

It is the purpose of this publication to present carefully prepared writings that harmonize with scripture teachings in plain, comprehensive language in the hope of interesting all readers in the welfare of their souls.

With this number the majority of subscriptions expire. We ask renewals to be sent in promptly, that no mistakes may occur nor any copies be missed.

We will appreciate the effort of subscribers to secure new ones from among their friends who might be interested in reading the collection of themes. As a gift it is a kind offering to friends.

May the Ruler of all, rule us, in this undertaking to do His will.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Col. 3: 1.

## SUMMER

Happy summer time has reached us,  
How we welcome its return!  
Song of birds and beautiful flowers  
Charm us now where e'er we turn.

All the seasons show God's power,  
Spring is past and summer here.  
Sow the seed and reap the harvest,  
'Tis God's promise every year.

Let us praise the God of heaven  
For His wondrous gifts of love,  
For the bounteous harvest given  
All are blessings from above.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

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## THE GRACE OF GOD

"The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Titus 2: 11.

This scripture is a positive declaration, it admits of no doubt. It comprehends a great deal. It manifests the great love of God to mankind in their helpless lost condition. It emphasizes the truth of other scriptures, notably this one: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3: 16. The coming of Jesus into a sin-stricken world is the fullness of the grace of God to us: for Jesus is the perfect Offering by which we are saved.

When we view the multitude of mankind, beholding their varied ways of living, we come to the sad conclusion that many are not obeying the grace of God. All are called as Samuel of old was called, perhaps more than four times, but fail to hearken and answer the call as Samuel did: "Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth:" Many stifle the grace of God by deferring obedience to a more convenient season. God in mercy continues to visit them, but they harden their hearts and procrastinate.

Finally old age comes upon them. They failed to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and now the evil days have come and the years have drawn nigh when they have no pleasure in them. Eccl. 12: 1. Old age tends to enfeeble the faculties of mind and body, brings coldness, and indifference steals upon the mind and hardens the heart, so that God's grace may no more strive with them. It was testified of old: "My grace shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh." Gen. 6: 3. What a sad object is man or woman with a hoary head, blooming for the grave, with tottering steps on the threshold of eternity, yet delaying repentance; for soon, O soon, shall the silver cord be loosed, the golden bowl be broken, the pitcher be broken at the fountain, the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Eccl. 12: 6, 7. Then their doom will be sealed forever, no more grace, no more mercy, but anguish of spirit, sorrow, remorse, regrets over lost opportunities, as a gnawing worm and a fire that will never be quenched: such will be their woeful lot in eternity!

Some appear to obey the grace of God; they repent of their sins, and profess conversion to the spiritual life. They become church members, engage in works of charity, and in moral and social activities to promote the uplift and betterment of mankind. These are commendable practices, but often deceptive, for they may give a false comfort to hope for favor with God and not to depend upon His grace and the "faith that worketh by love."

The Savior said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and the fruits of many worshipers show that they have not been taught by the grace of God. The Apostle says, "Teaching us that,

denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Titus 2: 12. This embraces the whole Christian life, but the grace of God teaches only those who are willing to obey and accept Jesus, the great Exponent of the grace of God. Unless we are thus taught, all our worship is a deception and a delusion.

They who obey the grace of God are taught the same doctrine and rule of life. They are taught by Jesus, and He gathers them into one body in which there is unity, love, fellowship and peace. They are chosen out of the world, therefore they are separated from all carnal practices and fleshly lusts, and from the worship of those who have not been taught by the grace of God. They ever need His grace to sustain them, and it is freely ministered to those who implore the Mercy Seat.

If we do not obey the grace of God we live in vain, for we cannot be saved, as we do not glorify and worship God our Maker. We may profess to worship Him with zeal and fervor, but if we do not with our works confess our Lord and Savior before men, He will not confess us before the Father in heaven. How impressive the declaration! "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." Mark 8: 38. We shall have no excuse to offer in that great day, "for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

Lancaster, Penna.

E. H. W.

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But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. Titus 3: 9.

### HEREIN IS LOVE

The writings of the apostle John are filled with the spirit of love. When yet a young man he left all to follow Christ, and the evidences are that his was a rich reward, even in this life. No doubt he experienced many trials and hardships, but instead of becoming weak in faith, or embittered against life, he loved God more and more and recognized the reasonableness of the Divine service.

We are impressed that he had an excellent training in the Christian virtues, and that he had real Christian enthusiasm. He felt the world could not contain the books that should be written about Christ, and the wonderful salvation He brought to mankind!

He lived many years after the other apostles, and his letters, written during his old age, are a plea for love. He addressed his fellow-believers as little children, and said, "Let us love one another, for love is of God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." I John 4: 7, 8.

It is but a faint conception we are able to have of Divine love. We are hampered by our finiteness and in this, as in so many other things, we are reminded of the apostle Paul's writing, that we know and see only in part, like unto seeing through a glass darkly. In our desire for holiness of thought and action, and with our recognition of human depravity, the appeal to us is, that through the merits of Christ it is possible for sinners like us to exclaim with the aged Apostle: "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

But we know that with those desiring to be the children of God there must be reciprocity of love. We cannot receive all the benefits and promises unless we

return love for love. There is much that we do receive, for like the rain falling on the just and the unjust alike there is a continuous demonstration of God's goodness to every living creature. But only those who give their hearts to Him can be received into that inner circle, as it were, of His tender love and care. It is one thing to receive daily natural blessings, but quite another to dwell in the love of God.

The proof that we give of true love to God is our obedience to His spirit and word. "And this is love that we walk after His commandments . . . Hereby we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments." The apostle Paul refers to the "Obedience of faith," and "The hope laid up for you in heaven, brings forth fruit."

It is not for us to accept these blessed favors of salvation and ignore the required self-denials and the cross. Naturally we like to reap the benefits without paying the price when it comes to God's service. We presume on His love. Now, as when Christ was on earth the command is: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and follow me." Matt. 17: 24. Self-denial is a requirement of Christian obedience. We must deny every impulse that is not in accord with the good Spirit that graciously follows us. The lusts of the flesh are a long line of promptings which we know to our sorrow. They are the opposites of, "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;" which are the fruits of a life changed by conversion. Separation from sin, in all its effects, is essential to Christian life and growth, and we find that, if it is coupled with love to God and man, is the foundation of all true commandment-keeping.

A high standard has been set for the Christian, but if we are sincere in faith

and love we will want to compare ourselves continually with it. It is much easier to compare ourselves with each other, but that will not avail in His sight.

No one ever feels to have fully attained this standard, but like the apostle Paul, the humble willing heart keeps "Pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The spirit we manifest, at all times, tells, whether we are obedient followers or not. "Patient continuance in well-doing" marks the true child of God, even if discouraged many times in the efforts made. Our hope is not in works, but in the merits of Christ's atonement and the assurance of His intercession.

Many are the fruits of obedience that grow out of a life truly consecrated to God. Herein is love. The joy and peace that go with faithfulness are only a foretaste of the final reward. May we all, with the apostle John, share the wonders of redeeming love!

Chambersburg, Pa.

M. C. S.

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### DIVINE TRUTH

All that God has revealed of Himself is truth, and at no time has He left Himself without a witness. The heathen nations which are without a written law, the Apostle says, are a law unto themselves and may apprehend God by the contemplation of His visible works and by the work of the law written in their hearts. The complete and final revelation of His will is given to us in the Holy Scriptures. As there is but one source of divine light and truth, the revelation, either in the written Word or in our hearts and minds, is one and the same.

We accept the Bible as a divine revelation and as supreme authority. It is a record of the events which were brought

to pass in the unfolding of the plan of salvation, and is the revelation of spiritual truths which appeal to the soul and spirit of every one. It reflects not only the image and glory of God and the perfection of His attributes, but in it we see, as in a glass, what manner of persons we are. The commandments it enjoins are not hidden from those who hearken, but as it saith, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart."

God revealed His will by degrees to mankind. The Old Covenant with His people was based on the promise given of a Messiah, and all of its dispensations were a preparation for that great event, to "prepare the way of the Lord." As a Covenant it ended with His coming.

Christ came in the manner and for the purpose foretold. He was "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." He had the witness of the Father. "The works that I do," He said, "bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me." The apostles could say, "We have seen and do testify." Those who were not His disciples were constrained to say of Him, "Never man spake as this man"; "No man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him;" "Truly this was the Son of God."

He taught in parables, by precept, and by doctrine. His sayings have the power to awaken and quicken our faith, and, as we read them, they cause us to feel our obligation to God, and impress us with the value of the soul. He did not reveal the mysteries which belong only to God, but He told us truly and finally of things as they are—of the existence of evil and of the evil power, of the grace of redemption, of the importance of salvation and its blessings, of the consequences of neglect. He spoke plainly; His words embittered His ad-

versaries and were the cause of His death. He spoke in pity for those who rejected Him; in mercy for the penitent. His words of compassion and love, of righteousness and judgment appeal to the conscience of every one and convince and convict all who give them room in their hearts.

His commandments teach us our duties to Him and to one another; His doctrines establish clearly and definitely the grounds for our beliefs, and give to us security and certainty.

He taught also by example. His perfect life is an abiding witness to His words. He lived in agreement with His teachings. He drew men to Him as He had said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Although He was possessed of unlimited power, He did not use it; He submitted to the will of His Father, and through love "condescended to death, even the death of the cross." It is His love and condescension, the forsaking of His power and glory, the entire yielding of Himself, His perfect manhood, His sinless life, His cross—that draw us to Him and compel our assent to the truth of His Word.

The truth has been freely declared, it is freely offered. It has been received by rich and poor, learned and unlearned. It has no confines of time, or place, or condition. It is the good seed in the parable of the sower, and like it in order to bring fruit it must be received into a good and honest heart. It is not revealed by human wisdom but through faith, and its saving power cannot be realized unless we consent to it and obey it. Then it will purify by obedience, sanctify and cleanse as the washing of water, and "It dwelleth in us," the Apostle says, "and shall be with us forever." To this power Jesus bore witness when He prayed for His disciples,

"Sanctify them in thy truth. Thy word is truth."

Since truth is divine, and is divinely revealed in us, it is not a matter of opinion—what we think or how we feel. It is one, and always the same, for God is one. The interpretation of the fundamental truths which Jesus taught, must be ever one and the same; they can have no double meaning. Revealed through the Spirit, they must be interpreted by the Spirit, "the Spirit of Truth that will guide into all truth." The impression we receive of them is the same. Eph. 4: 4, 7. This oneness of truth proves its divine origin, and the uniform experiences and convictions of those persons who have received it, proves that they have received it from God and not from man.

Many persons have said, "My conscience is my guide." It is clear that the conscience is not always a safe guide, since the Scriptures speak of a "conscience seared with a hot iron," of cases where the "mind and conscience are defiled," of the understanding and moral perceptions "being darkened." Acts, like persecution, which we know are wrong at all times, have been done in the name of conscience. We know too that our moral faculties may become dull and hardened by neglect and disobedience, or may be led astray by our carnal nature. We ought to consider that our actions are good or bad in their very nature, and that the conscience does not make them so; the awakened conscience perceives their nature and quality and accuses or excuses. We are accountable to God; when we do right it is always "the answer of a good conscience toward God."

We believe, as it is written, that "truth came by Jesus Christ." For it, He suffered and was crucified; He established it forever by His death. His last

Will and Testament was sealed with His blood. He placed on His Word sovereign authority when He said: "I judge no man . . . but the word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." He made it unchanging, eternal: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away." Therefore, no promise that He gave can fail. No doctrine that He taught, and no commandment that He gave can be altered or set aside.

The Old Testament and the New stand face to face; the Old points forward, the New confirms the Old. All Scripture, given by inspiration, united in one divine plan and purpose throughout, presenting one object of adoration and worship, one ideal of truth and righteousness. "Holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" in the olden time, the apostles were appointed by the Lord and endued with power from on high—all testify of Christ, and their testimonies complete the Divine Message.

To us who possess this precious Book, it is an infallible guide, "a lamp unto our path, a light unto our feet;" it is the criterion by which we prove our life and actions; the foundation on which our faith and our hope are based. Its authority is above us, above the understanding, the feelings, and the conscience, and is final in all matters of Christian doctrine and conduct.

M. H. M.

Lancaster, Pa., R. F. D. No. 4.

### THE BIBLE

May we find God's Word a treasure,  
Book of Books—God's Word sublime  
Telling us how great the measure  
Of His gracious love divine.

Read the words by Jesus spoken,  
Truths are found in every line.  
Heed the counsel—precious token,  
In our hearts His words enshrine.

Search the Scriptures—pray—believing,  
And His spirit will us guide,  
Lead to joys beyond conceiving,  
And the peace that will abide.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

### A SURE FOUNDATION

"Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." Isa. 28: 16.

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure." 2 Tim. 2: 19.

The apostle wrote his Ephesian brethren that they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.

The gospels comprise the writings of the apostles and contain all that is necessary to believe and to do in order to be saved. They are a history of the life of Christ, or so much of it as is essential to a knowledge of salvation.

The apostles went before the people not with a doctrine of their own, but with one emanating directly from Christ.

A careful study of the gospels will impress the mind with their truthfulness, virtue and power. They reveal the true doctrine of Christ, a doctrine that could not have originated in the mind of man, as it is fundamentally antagonistic to the first promptings of man's nature. It is in opposition to human policy which seeks temporal advantage, such as worldly renown, by the acquisition of worldly wisdom and the accumulation of wealth; whereas the doctrine of Christ inculcates humility, meekness, purity of heart, sanctity of spirit, unselfishness and universal love.

In the first days of Christianity the apostles were the living gospels, the incorruptable witnesses of the teaching of Christ and those who finally committed the same to writing in the four gospels and in their epistles. To set aside the

epistles of the apostles would be equivalent to setting aside the gospels themselves and would be virtually disowning them, and in effect would be ignoring the entire foundation of God for the salvation of man. The foundation of God being His word, which endureth forever, which word is declared in the gospel of Christ and the epistles of the apostles, which will enable us to know Christ and His church. It will serve as an infallible guide; if our faith is firmly grounded there will be no cause for change, as the foundation has not changed during the centuries past and will not change in time to come. What we need is not a new religion, but a return to and an adherence to the religion of Christ and the apostles.

When God's chosen people, under the old dispensation apostatized from the law, the prophet Jeremiah counseled them as follows: "Ask for the old paths where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

One of the fundamental doctrines of the New Testament is that Christ died for the offenses of man and arose for his justification, and that the benefit of His life and death is available to man, through the exercise of faith in the great service Christ rendered. This is qualified by such testimony as the following: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Faith in Christ involves a life-principle, and where there is life there is action. Actions indicate character. The Christian character is not the result of emotional exercises, but of a deep-seated conviction of reverence for God and for His word. It is a condition resulting from a supernatural agency as promised through the prophet. "I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts." This is none other than

the law of life in Christ Jesus, and must from its very nature be the same in principle and nature in all persons. If this is not so, then it is not a work of God and if the inspiration is from above the life must rise to its source.

"Wisdom is justified of all her children." If the character formed by the spirit and word of Christ does not result in the brotherhood of man then there is no evidence of Christ's divinity. But we have incontestable evidence of the efficacy and virtue of His word and Spirit, that it is the wisdom of God and the power of God to all who believe. Their transforming effect was predicted by the prophets of old and confirmed by the apostles. Their renewing power was demonstrated when three thousand were made one heart and one soul in one day.

The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth, and therefore cannot fail of creating a Christian character in all who obey it. Its doctrine is a message of universal love, and if we faithfully and sincerely cherish obedience to its precepts it cannot fail but fuse our hearts together and make us a united people, for if we through love obey its precepts we will walk in the light and have fellowship one with another. Our chief interest and greatest concern should center in the attainment of such a blessed relation, and not only for its attainment, but also a desire for its perpetuation.

Such a state constitutes a good tree, which produces good fruit. The fruit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. It springs from the spirit of Christ, enthroned on the heart. Such persons need not be appealed to by man to keep them from leading a double life. Such not only leave off some particular sins, but they separate from all sin.

The church of Christ is the salt of the

earth and the light of the world from which all who live in sin must be excluded. A divided Christianity and a disunited church, admitting unconverted persons to its communion and retaining them as members, has no promise in the gospel. Evidence of which see the following: Matt. 18: 15, 18; John 17: 21; Phil. 2: 2, 3; 1 Cor. 5: 6; 2 Thess. 3: 6.

We have previously noted the effect of being built upon the scriptural foundation as being that of unity and purity and we shall briefly consider the doctrine of the non-resistance of evil.

The work of redemption is founded on love, which is the foundation of the non-resistance of evil. God is love. Jesus Christ in doctrine and life demonstrates the doctrine of love and of peace. In teaching He explains from whence the moral chaos comes, namely, from the hardness of heart and from the enfeebled moral powers of the soul caused by sin. From which condition results war, litigation, divorce, divisions and all forms of moral irregularity.

The effect of Christ's redemption is to give power to all who receive Him, to overcome the world, which is to overcome sin. If sin is the cause of war of every form, whether between nations, between individuals or between employers and employees, and if Christ came to give power to all who receive Him in faith to overcome sin, then it is evident that all forms of war will cease among Christians. His mission was and yet is to give to those who receive Him, power to become sons of God, and if sons of God they are partakers of the divine nature being renewed to the divine Image, which is love. Such a state of heart and mind brings persons into full accord with Him, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, and when He suffered He threatened not, and also

with His Sermon on the Mount, which it is not possible to reconcile with war and violence.

Worldly governments cannot be administered in agreement with the Sermon on the Mount. That sermon and all Christ's precepts are adapted to heaven-born subjects who constitute His kingdom, who are possessed of a sentiment in accord with the Beatitudes, with the doctrine of passive submission to insult and injury and with what is known as the Lord's Prayer. If all persons were possessed with the spirit of Christ and obeyed His gospel, the swords would be beaten into plow-shares and the spears into pruning hooks and wars would end.

Civil government is a blessing to the world, as it is now constituted. Christ so recognized it, and by example and precept taught obedience to it as to honor and tribute. Yet He taught obedience to God as paramount to every other consideration.

The example and doctrine of Christ and His apostles are so plain upon the subject of non-resistance that there does not appear to be anything to base an issue on.

To be clear on this subject we keep in mind why under the dispensation of the law God's chosen people exacted justice and waged wars, namely, because sin imposed a disability, disqualifying them for conformity to the law of love. Christ removes the disability and restores the lost love, image and kingdom to the hearts of His people and thus peace returns to the earth.

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

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Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you for him hath God the Father sealed. John 2: 27.

### THE TRUE WITNESS

A witness is one that gives testimony to anything. Jesus Christ is the faithful witness. He is so called because, as the great prophet of His Church, He hath revealed the will of God faithfully, plainly and fully, so far as is necessary to our salvation. The prophet Isaiah prophesied of Him, saying: "I have given Him for a witness to the people; to be a prophet and teacher, to declare the counsel and will of God concerning the duty and salvation of men, to bear witness unto the truth."

Had sin not entered the world, false witnesses would have been unknown, but in consequence of sin, we find true and false witnesses. Since man was created in the image of God, it is a sad reflection on the intelligence of mankind that in all ages the false witnesses were vastly in the majority. Christ said, "He that is not with Me is against Me." As all mankind are witnesses, then if they do not witness with Christ, they are false witnesses, and false witnesses were always an abomination to God. They were always antagonistic to each other, and while kingdoms and enemies were overcome by faith, yet many true witnesses were horribly put to death. This condition existed when it was "yet eye for eye," but Christ said: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city."

Such testimony is confirmatory to the true witnesses of God that Christians have no assurance of bodily protection in this world, and as Christ is our witness, both to truth and suffering, mankind have a faithful example to follow. "For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving

us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not: but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

As Christ rendered perfect obedience to God, so His followers strive to be perfect in their efforts to follow Him, and when they fail through weakness or inadvertence, they do not justify themselves. They recognize God as being holy and just, and as He has made it possible that mankind can become saintly while living in the flesh, they espouse the cause of righteousness through love to Him, and not through fear of punishment. Christ being the true witness, all that accept Him as their surety, will witness to all to whom He witnessed. They will defend truth even to the destruction of the body. As Christ remained upon this earth for a short period of time only, so likewise mankind are permitted to remain here for a short time.

As to His interest in this world, He referred to what the foxes and the birds of the air possessed, but He had not where to lay His head. His followers are admonished to buy as though they possessed not and to use this world as not abusing it.

What characterized Christ while here must characterize His witnesses also, or He would have failed in the purpose for which He came, and His prayer would not have been answered.

Christ loved the Father, and if mankind love Christ, then they will also love the Father, and will work in conjunction with Christ for the promotion of His kingdom, ever realizing the need of help from Him, as they are sinful by nature and He is immaculate. Well could He witness to the truth, and as

He has promised to be with them that follow Him they too will stand as witnesses.

As He taught, reprov'd, and rebuked, so He has commanded His followers to do. "And I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, hence the Church is the fruit of His love. It is the bride of Christ and is in perfect accord with Him, and is His witness upon the earth. She witnesses to the truth by her obedience to all that Christ has commanded even to the separation of members from the church who walk disorderly.

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering." "Them that sin rebuke before all." The church also witnesses to the truth by its separation from all worship that is not in accord with what Christ taught. By laboring as the Scriptures teach, the Church of Christ is kept without spot or wrinkle, and is the true witness of Christ upon earth.

Camp Hill, Pa.

J. I. M.

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### FRUITS OF THE WORD

"For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Heb. 4: 12.

It is our safe guide, being given by inspiration, imparting the counsel of the Infinite Mind. The Scriptures prove their truthfulness in foretelling future events, in declaring present conditions, in revealing to us what we are by nature, in witnessing to our conflicts, and in finding relief for the soul from the entanglements of the flesh.

The word of promise invites us to look into God's gracious plan, that we may learn obedience to the deep wisdom it

displays, and not drift aimlessly through our voyage, beset with many snags to endanger our safe arrival at the port of eternal rest. The Great Shepherd voices safety to those who are willing to hear His voice, for protection is sure when no man shall "pluck them out of my hand." The way to spiritual success is fully open under the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway."

As surely as the sun rises and sets, so surely will our time of grace come to a close, and as we get ready for the close of the day so we should try to be ready for the close of life. To be ready our effort must be to lay aside our worldly life and to give place to the life "hid with Christ in God." This change the Savior calls knowing the tree "by his fruit." The fruit is love, peace, meekness, gentleness, patience, edifying conversation, moderation in all things, bringing into subjection the irregular desires of our nature, and separation from all wrong doctrines and worship. Our Savior reprov'd errors in life and doctrine, which reproof is to be ministered in the Church, and outside of the fold. To the redeemed when the toils and cares of life are over inexpressibly great joy will be the joys to follow!

Sterling, Ill.

C. F. M.

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### PRAYER

We are dependent creatures and realizing our inability to do anything of merit for ourselves, our souls yearn for help from the Lord, the only Source of help and comfort. The prophets and apostles taught the need and efficacy of prayer. Our Savior prayed often and communed with His heavenly Father and told His disciples, "So ought ye to pray."

It was natural they should desire Him to teach them how to pray, as John had taught his disciples. Forms of prayer

were frequent and public teachers gave desirable forms. The Jewish phylacterial prayers were long and the people were required to repeat these prayers wherever they chanced to be. They loved to be seen of men and this gratification was their reward.

It was not strange that the disciples desired a form given by their Master. Our Savior granted their request and gave them those beautiful words, which are a heritage, a blessing, to every converted soul. It is so short and perfect, combining all that the heart of man taught by God's spirit, has found most needful.

In the Lord's Prayer, by the use of the plural form of the pronoun in the first person we are taught to exclude all selfishness, and with love and reverence approach "*Our Father.*" The petition, "Thy kingdom come," embraces peace on earth good will to men, and that Christ's Spirit be enthroned in our hearts and control our lives.

Only one of the petitions is for an earthly blessing and this has a twofold meaning. We ask for food to sustain the body and preserve the natural life. It is also a petition for spiritual food, that we may have grace to enable us "to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God."

"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," is a most weighty petition. We are finite and constantly through weakness of the flesh we incur debts. The Savior is willing to forgive, but makes this forgiveness conditional. We ask to be forgiven as we are willing to forgive others. If we cherish an unforgiving spirit toward any one we cannot truly utter this petition. In effect we would be asking God not to forgive us.

"Lead us not into temptation," is a petition requiring thought. The Lord will not lead any one into temptation, but if we are not watchful He may suf-

fer us to fall into temptation. We are instructed to watch and pray lest we be overcome. But if we wilfully enter temptation this petition is inconsistent.

We shall not use a selfish prayer, nor ask the Lord to grant the desires of the heart in natural things, as the Lord who is infinite knows what is best for us and we are taught to say, "not my will but Thine, O Lord be done." St. Paul had "a thorn in the flesh," and prayed thrice for its removal. The reply was, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The thorn remained as a blessing.

The Lord's Prayer is given to His children, to those whose hearts and minds are in accord with His Spirit. Christ's kingdom came only after His death and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, when believers' hearts were fitted for the entrance of Christ's kingdom.

Paul writes, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

The cares of life, even its blessings bring anxieties. To provide for our natural and spiritual interests is not forbidden, but undue care and anxiety are.

"Let your requests be made known unto God." Our words need be few, for the Lord knows the thoughts of the heart and He knows what we need. But in coming to Him with our petition our faith is strengthened and our minds are relieved. The very act of telling to Him our sorrows soothes our grief. We have all experienced the comfort in coming to the Lord in prayer. It is an inestimable daily blessing and consolation—casting all our care upon Him, who has said to His disciples, "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

### PERFECTION

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matt. 5: 43.

Inattentive reading of this command impresses us that we should make ourselves equal with God. That we are to develop in ourselves qualities equal to those inherent in God no one can reasonably think possible. Then the sense must be limited. The Savior in this context shows the equal love which God has to good and evil, in sending sunshine and rain to both classes alike, and He directs us to show the same goodness to both our friends and enemies. Why? Because thereby we use the means which God uses to convert sinners. The righteous are circumspect, and if they are hated it can be only for Christ's sake, and the Spirit of Christ in them will follow the same beneficence which the heavenly Father exercises.

“If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.” Matt. 19: 21. This counsel was given to one who inquired after eternal life. The answer proves that his life was in his possessions, and that he had neglected the poor. The request was not that he should give all to the poor. But he was evidently too much attached to his possessions, or the Savior would not have dwelt so strongly on the danger of riches. He said he had kept the moral commandments. They have virtue, but not saving efficacy. The lovely young man, content with his morals, could not detach his affections from his worldly idol sufficiently to follow the Savior. The Savior knew his secret sin, and under his reproof “he went away sorrowful;” as many dear souls do, who are not willing to give up the worldly life, and will sacrifice eternal life for “a mess of pottage” to bitterly weep over their

folly with Esau, whose regret was natural, but their sorrow will be eternal.

“I pray . . . that they may be made perfect in one.” John 17: 23. Such was the prayer of the Son to the Father for believers, and He said, “Thou heardest me always.” Does this prayer admit the thought of divisions among those who believe the word?

“We speak wisdom among them that are perfect.” 1 Cor. 2: 6. Paul evidently means such as are older spiritually than they who are babes, yet needing the “milk of the word.”

“Till we all come . . . unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Eph. 4: 13. In this use of the term perfect the meaning is clear that a state is intended in which believers are not “Tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.”

“Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded.” Phil. 3: 15. The idea associated with this expression is, “reaching forth unto those things which are before,” indicating that there is no full attainment in the spiritual state here by our works, owing to sin dwelling in the flesh, but encouraging those who are minded to “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” that they may apprehend that for which they are “apprehended of Christ Jesus”; or, in other words, that they may not weary in the growth of grace, since virtue is a quality which may be developed, as it is said, “We beseech you brethren, that ye increase more and more.” The thought of progression is written by Peter, in saying, “To them that have obtained like precious faith with us,” “Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue.”

“Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your

faith." 1 Thes. 3: 10. This earnest concern was for them to whom the writers of this epistle say: "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, . . . so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." When the pioneers in the faith had such interest in supplying spiritual lack, who of us will say that we are not needy?

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3: 17. The Scriptures are the means to serve us for spiritual advancement. As they are to make us perfect in good works, therefore every person who can read should be informed in them. While they do not make us perfect in virtue they are nevertheless a good equipment to the spiritual soldier.

"For it became him, . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Heb. 2: 10. His Divinity was perfect, as He was without sin, but in His humanity He had to experience what we are tried with, that He might feel for our infirmities. His experience enabled Him to come into perfect sympathy with us in every human sense. The first tabernacle under Moses was a figure "in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." Heb. 9: 9. As the holy temple service, with all its strictness, could not purge the conscience, how can the moralist stand on his goodness in the day of final judgment when the secrets of the heart shall be unveiled?

"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11: 40. In this case the apostle Paul includes himself with others, and a host of the faith-

ful who had died, as being made perfect. The perfection referred to seems to be the receiving of the Holy Spirit, by the departed, as well as by the living.

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." James 1: 4. This means resignation under trials, for it cannot mean a perfectly complete spiritual state, as it is followed by the advice that if any lack wisdom they shall ask of God who will give liberally.

"By works was faith made perfect." James 2: 22. The faith of Abraham is commended, showing that his confidence in God's word constrained him to believe it even when its promise seemed contrary to all that could be hoped. His act of willingness is taken as a work of obedience to show the perfection of his faith. Obedience is a work of perfect righteousness.

"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4: 12. When perfect love is in us we will serve others in natural and spiritual duties as the Scriptures teach.

"When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." 1 Cor. 13: 10. This refers to the glorified state when all imperfections shall have ended.

"For by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10: 14. Here we are reminded of the cleansing of the Holy Ghost by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption, if we remain steadfast, as we are told: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." We learn from this that while the seed of the Holy Ghost is preserved in us we have no desire to sin, as we love a holy life.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto

perfection." Heb. 6: 1. Paul writes by way of reproof, saying: "When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God." By going on unto perfection he means to become settled in a mature state of the faith, and to avoid being entangled with legalism. We should understand the different uses of scripture terms by the contexts in which they are used. We make the discovery that we are not perfect in thought or deed, but our aim and effort shall be that by the grace of God we "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

### PASSPORT TO HEAVEN

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22: 14.

The writer is sorrowfully impressed with people claiming a hope for heaven who live a worldly life. We know in the worldly life, where there is anything important to see, we must have a ticket, or passport, to be admitted and the passport must be issued at head-quarters. So we believe it is in the spiritual kingdom; we must have a heavenly passport to enter through the gates into the heavenly city.

Jesus has demonstrated the character of a true child of God by His example and walk; also by types and figures. We read that those who received Christ received power to become the sons of God, "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1: 11, 13.

We should know by which of these births we have received our faith. There are only two classes of people, the saint

and the sinner, the children of God and the children of this world.

The Savior symbolizes His disciples by the dove, the sheep and the vine. The dove is an innocent creature, it does not remain on earth; it comes down for food, then it soars. The sheep is harmless, has no weapons of defense, is of a peaceable nature, chews the cud and parts the hoof and is inclined to gather into a flock. The vine is a beautiful illustration. The Savior says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The wood forming the vine is very pliable, it cannot carry its own weight but must have support to lean upon, the fruit is alike and when crushed will unite.

The opposite of the dove is the hawk. It also soars on high, but is of a destructive nature; it feeds on other creatures. The opposite of the sheep is the goat. It resembles the sheep in chewing the cud and parting the hoof, but has no wool; it has weapons of defense and its nature is to wander. The opposite of the vine is the thorn and bramble, which has a prickly thorn and cannot be handled without receiving hurt.

Oh, dear reader, let us reflect, do we resemble the dove, the sheep, or the vine? They denote love, peace and unity. Or do we resemble the opposite? If our passport comes from the Father, Son and Holy Spirit the fruits will be love, peace and unity, just as on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was poured out. They were together from every land and nation and three thousand souls were united. So must be our witness today, we must become a united people, not by any law or form, but by the power of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, the fruit of true repentance and sorrow for sin, realizing that through the atoning blood of our dear Lord we are cleansed. No one was found worthy to break the seal of the

book that was sealed with seven seals but the Lion of the tribe of Juda that our names can be written there. We cannot find witness for divisions. The Savior's mission was to "gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." If this is our witness then we can keep His commandments. We do not obey His commandments if we are not a united church; and if we do not keep His commandments as our text teaches, we have no right to the tree of life and our symbol is in opposition to the dove, the sheep and the vine. Our passport then originates from the earth, or the spirit of darkness and the gates will be barred against us and it will be said, "I know you not."

New Hamburg, Ont.

A. H.

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### THE SEPARATION

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them." Eph. 5: 11.

It is evident that God separated the light from the darkness. Gen. 1. As in the realm of nature light and darkness are distinct, so spiritually those in the light reprove those who live in darkness. God always required a separation. He called Abraham out from his idolatrous people into another land, Gen. 12, and made of him a great nation. As there are many such instances in the Bible it is plain that God demands a separation from sin and all things that are sinful, and especially from that which is an abomination unto Him in worship which is not in accord with His will or that which He established. We notice in reading the Old Testament that the Jews were not allowed to worship the gods of the Gentiles around them. God through Moses established a form of worship which was suitable for them in their hardness of heart, as Christ had

not yet come and opened the way to the tree of life and salvation, and taken away the stony heart. Moses says, Ex. 12: 49, "one law shall be to him that is home-born and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you." So it is under the new law. Jesus gave the same commandments to all. Therefore it is plain that we cannot worship with those who do not keep His commandments, who follow after their own ideas. As light and darkness have no communion it becomes believers "to walk in the light as He is in the light," and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, and to purify yourselves from everything that is sinful within as well as without.

Christians often are censured by those who do not agree with them as Christ was censured. If they could see that it is not done from a selfish motive, but out of love, inasmuch as the salvation of all mankind is sought, and to refrain from worshipping with the unfaithful is an admonition to convince them of error that they may turn from darkness unto light.

"Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy—are we stronger than He?" 1 Cor. 10: 22. Can we do more than He did? As he did not commend darkness how can His followers, or how can they take part in a worship which is not in accord with His will? "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing. Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. 7. As trees are known by their fruits so we can also know the false prophets from the true. If they do not bring forth the fruits of love, joy, peace and holiness, and do not walk by the same rule and mind the same thing, they are none of His. Therefore the faithful should refrain from worshipping with the unfaithful and be careful to walk and live that they may see light in their

walk and conduct. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3. As there must be agreement in natural affairs to work with others, how much more is it necessary to walk in love and agreement in things that pertain to eternal life? It is useless for us to say, we love the Lord Jesus if, we are not willing to do His will, and His will is expressed that His followers shall separate from all worship not in harmony with His will. It is useless to profess to be followers of Jesus if we are not willing to bear the cross with Him. "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you." 2 Cor. 6:17. Where there is no separation from unfaithful worship there we do not find the faith of Jesus Christ, and without the faith of Jesus Christ we cannot hope to be saved.

If we love Jesus we will earnestly strive to do His will though it is in great weakness. It is in weakness that God's "strength is made perfect."

Fresno, Calif.

I. H.

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### WITH THE SEASONS

With the passing of the seasons,  
As they swiftly come and go,  
We're reminded of life's journey  
As we travel to and fro;

In the spring-time all is sunshine,  
All is cheerful and serene;  
Fondest hopes we're entertaining,  
Trials still remain unseen.

Thus it is when we have started  
Walking on the Narrow Way,  
If we put our trust in Jesus,  
He will lead us day by day.

Soon approacheth summer's season,  
With its heat we weary grow;  
Many trials and besetments  
Meet us as we onward go.

Darkest clouds o'er us may hover,  
Raging storms will oft appear;  
Sometimes rough will be our pathway,  
And our hearts are filled with fear;

Heavy is our daily burden,  
Seeming more than we can bear,  
Though by striving, persevering,  
We'll escape from every snare.

Cometh autumn's chilly breezes,  
When the leaves to earth return,  
Down they fall, their work is ended,  
To remain they never yearn.

One by one we too are falling,  
One by one we reach the goal;  
Back to earth our forms returning,  
But forever lives the soul.

So when winter's winds o'ertake us,  
And we feel their icy blast,  
May our feeble faltering footsteps  
Lead us safely home at last.

Fayetteville, Pa.

C. J. M.

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### CHRISTIANITY VS. NON-CHRISTIANITY

What distinguishes a Christian man from a non-christian man? Does it mean that one is good and the other bad; that one believes and the other one does not believe in Jesus Christ? The New Testament affirms that there is none good, and that even the devil believes. Has one become affiliated with a church and received water baptism, and the other probably has accepted neither?

Christianity is not dependent upon anything that we can or may do, but rather upon what God through Christ has done for us. The only thing that we can really do is to try by prayer, submission and obedience to receive the greatest of all blessings, a changed mind and heart. It is vital that we ever are watchful, and prayerfully endeavor to prove our spirit by the recorded Word of God.

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:12. Jesus and the life referred to are one. If we have life we have Christ. We think of all mankind as having life, yet not all are Christians. “Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.” John 3:7. This means a Christian is supernaturally endowed with life, different from the natural life. It is not one of development, but of generation, which bears resemblance to Christ in nature, as a branch of the same tree. “I am the Vine, ye are the branches.” The Bible refers to this life as charity, (love,) which never fails; involving not only this present span of time but for time evermore. Eternal, is the word used, which we are unable to comprehend, but we can know in part for which we should be thankful.

Jesus refers to us as living and dead; lost and saved; to conversion, as passing from death unto life. The Christian is a mystery, and the fact that “it doth not yet appear what we shall be” makes him more of an enigma than ever, especially to those who are naturally minded.

The test of spirituality is that you cannot tell “whence the spirit cometh or whither it goeth.” If we can account for it on the principle of influence, will-power, etc., then it is not the real thing no matter how perfect the imitation may be. Probably the greatest difference between spiritual and natural life is that one conforms to the temporal world, while the other bears resemblance to the eternal state. Even though the spiritual life here should be the fruit of the Spirit, the difference between the natural and spiritual life is marked, resulting in two distinct classes of people. The spiritual person may appear peculiar, and usually is misunderstood. Jesus refers to His disciples as a peculiar nation or people,

“not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

While he is here the Christian will always have a struggle between light and darkness, time and eternity, God and the devil. Obstacles are continually springing up from within and without. This condition God revealed to Paul as being good. The answer, “My grace is sufficient,” meaning if we have sufficient faith to ask, He will help us to overcome. Can we consider the lilies, how they grow, and *believe* it is God that giveth the increase? This reference is beautiful. The lesson for us is to have faith so that God’s will can be fulfilled in us.

The Christian tries to become dead to the spirit of the world; in contrast the non-christian seemingly strives to become awake to those things which are so much loved by the world. The Christian has great need of God’s help, for who does not cherish the good-will, honor and praise of mankind? No one can faithfully serve two masters, when they demand opposite service. Here is a very good example of the cross of Christ. However, when we recognize how foreign hatred, vanity, honor, envy, strife, bloodshed, etc., (some of the characteristics of the worldly spirit,) are to the spirit of love, of which Christ is the very embodiment, and when love, instead of duty, prompts us, then it is that the cross becomes lighter. Christ is bearing our cross, and has promised to do so till the end.

To discourage worldly pleasures is not the paramount concern of the Christian, but the confusing of the pure religion of Christ with the religion which has grown out of compromise with worldliness is vital and must be discouraged. It is much easier to float down stream than to oppose the current. We are inclined to forget that “Love is the fulfilling of

the law." The worldly spirit within us is the great enemy to the soul. We can be thankful if we realize its destructiveness. The spirit of the world hates the spirit of Christ and a Christian will experience this, if not from without, yet from dictates within.

The Christian is blessed that God's warming influence has reached all of us, and has made peace possible, so that we may live together and accomplish much, whether we be Christians or not. The Christian will endeavor during this blessed period, to build upon the rock, so that when the storms and blasts come, his structure will not fall. If we meditate we will realize that the fall will be a great one, if our hopes have been based on a temporary foundation.

We must face God alone sometime. If we could truly realize that He always is our witness, how differently we would think and act from what we do at times! When we compare ourselves with grass, which in the morning groweth up and flourisheth: in the evening is cut down and withereth, we wonder whether we are ready for the reaper standing at our door!

Lancaster, Pa.

M. H. B.

### THE OLD AND NEW COVENANT

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Heb. 8: 7, 8.

The Old Covenant served its purpose at the time and under the conditions then existing, man being under the hardness of heart, and not spiritual, was not able to fulfill the spiritual law. The law of Moses need not have been given if man had remained in his first estate—then he was holy and pure, as God also

was; when he gave way to the temptation to attain to a happier relation in life God was displeased and departed from him, yet God did not forsake him entirely, but still comforted him when obedient to the duties required of him and God gave him a hope of better things to come: which things he could not obtain until God saw fit to bring him into a state in which he could obey the spiritual law, which is the New Covenant. The First Covenant was intended to remind mankind of their fall, and of the promised restoration, but the duties of the new life were not required until the new life came into existence. The First Covenant was not faultless, not because it did not serve its purpose under existing conditions, but because it could not restore the original life; the sacrifice which Christ made was necessary for that purpose and only after the sacrifice did the New Covenant go into effect. The first was established on promises which related largely to this life only, but the second upon better promises, namely, the things which affect the welfare of the soul in the eternal world, and the praise and glory of God the Father and His beloved Son in this world. The change of the covenant was necessary as there was a change in the priesthood, (Heb. 7:12). There must also be a change in the life of the believer. No one could love his enemy at the time the old covenant was in effect. Now it is commanded, and where the command is there is also power given to obey it. That puts an end to strife and contention for selfish ends, and establishes the spirit of charity so that we can exercise forbearance toward the weaknesses of others as we too have weaknesses, knowing that we have an Advocate with the Father, and need His kindly offices, and others also are imperfect, and as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us, so we also

should forgive one another. We are no longer justified in being ignorant, for the law is written in the heart, and God does not wink at willful iniquity. In consideration of the great sacrifice which Christ has made for us it is only a reasonable service that we should make some sacrifice, even to present our bodies a living sacrifice, which implies that we take in subjection every thought to the obedience of Christ, which deprives the body of much which it would desire; but the reward is worthy of it all.

Landisville, Pa.

C. S. N.

### THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN

The house we live in—our body—is often referred to in the New Testament as “the tabernacle”—a very expressive name. Tabernacle means a temporary place of abode. We are merely sojourners here during life, which is the season of preparation for our real home in eternity.

This is beautifully expressed in 2 Cor. 5:1. “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

So each human being has a soul or immortal part, and a body or tabernacle in which the soul dwells while on earth. The Psalmist says, “I will praise Thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” Psalm 139:14.

Only an infinite mind could have designed and created of “the dust of the earth,” that is, the elements that compose the earth, so perfect and marvelous a mechanism, and endowed it with life. Body and soul are so closely interwoven that the finite mind cannot separate them. How admirably is each part of the body fitted for its office in the working of the whole organism! How all the parts or members of the body are bound

together and kept in harmony! So that “if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.”

We, the tenants of this earthly house, feel perfectly at home in it, and a wonderful house it is—every part of it endowed with life! It is self-regulating, and if not hindered, makes its own repairs. It is governed by laws which the Creator has made. These are generally called nature’s laws, but they are God’s laws, and, whether or not we recognize God as our Creator, we should respect them. It is to the interest of every human being to respect these laws, for if we break them, we are sure to suffer the punishment that follows disobedience, and there is no respect of persons.

All know that there is in human nature a constant tendency to go wrong. If we yield to this tendency we surely will get into serious trouble. How does this affect the natural body—our earthly house? If we work beyond our strength, eat more than we need, which are very common and strong temptations; if we think unkind thoughts, or give way to jealousy, suspicion, or unbelief, or any unworthy thoughts, we check or interfere with the normal working of our wonderful living mechanism; nothing acts as it should, and we become generally miserable and unhappy, often not realizing what is the matter. Unless we see our mistakes, and come back to God in penitence, and ask Him to help us mend our ways, we will surely go down—physically and spiritually. The worst influence that can be brought to bear on our bodies is that of wrong thoughts, and of these, want of faith is the strongest for evil. In the Book of Revelation we read of the terrible punishment that awaits the fearful and the unbelieving.

All human beings are free agents, we can do with our body and our soul as

we will. How important that we appreciate our responsibility! and try to do the best we can for each. Our heavenly Father is ready and willing to help us in this as well as in all that is good. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in." Rev. 3:20. Those who open the door to Him are taught of Him. They receive the Holy Spirit—the Comforter—which will guide and strengthen them as long as they obey it. Those who do not open the door to God reject Him. They do not receive the Holy Spirit, because they do not want it, and by their own choice they cannot be taught of Him. So we see that those who honor God as the Creator and accept His Son Jesus Christ as the Redeemer are three-fold creatures—they have body, soul and spirit, while those who reject Christ have only body and soul.

St. Paul wrote, "For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 6:20.

Christ teaches those who have accepted Him to serve God, and not to serve the body or tabernacle, but to keep it under and control it. They are taught to be temperate in all things. "Let your moderation be known unto all men," Phil. 4:5. This way of living brings the body to its highest state of efficiency so that it may serve well both the soul and the Spirit, and thus we may have comfort in this life, and hope for that which is to come; which is as God meant it should be.

Christ says, "The life is more than meat and the body than raiment." This is far reaching, as are all His teachings. The body and our duty to it are of far greater importance than the clothes that we wear. Our clothing should be so simple as to need little attention other

than that it be clean and in order, and make the body comfortable. Christ also says: "Moreover, when thou fastest, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance \* \* \* but anoint thine head and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret." Matt. 6:17, 18. He wishes His children to keep their trials and denials as much as possible a secret between themselves and God, and He will help to bear them all. He wishes us to be of a cheerful countenance, keep ourselves clean and in order, and fully trust in Him. His religion is not a religion of melancholy but of "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Are we, in our daily lives as thankful to God as we should be for what we are apt to consider ordinary blessings? When we can walk and talk, and see, and open and close our eyes without pain, are we thankful? Do we appreciate and apply to ourselves at the table and elsewhere the true meaning of temperance? Let us encourage ourselves and one another in self-denial in secret, as Christ teaches. Let us discipline our desires for the benefit of our body and our soul. St. Paul writes, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection." 1 Cor. 9:27. Again, in 1 Cor. 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" How impressive! How we should try, and ask God to help us, to keep our bodies as a fit place for the Holy Spirit to dwell! We need to prove ourselves daily, and daily to pray for forgiveness for our certain shortcomings. May the prayer of St. Paul in 1 Thes. 5:23, ever be an inspiration to us—"And I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Lancaster, Pa.

L. L. F.

### THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

“Use hospitality one to another without grudging.” 1 Peter 4:9.

There are times in our lives when we enjoy solitude. But there is inherent in each of us a desire for companionship with those who are mutually interested in the trials and joys which come to us in this life. It is in such friendship that we are privileged to realize with the Psalmist, “how good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity.”

When Jesus sent forth His disciples to preach to the people about the kingdom of Heaven, He told them to provide nothing for the journey but instructed them thus: “And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.”

At one time as they went, Jesus entered into the village of Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem, at the foot of the Mount of Olives, “And a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.” It was at this time that Martha became impatient with her sister Mary who “sat at Jesus’ feet and heard his word,” instead of helping her to serve. Then Jesus gently rebuked her: “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

It was their brother Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead. When Jesus was told of his illness, He said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.” But when both of the sisters greeted Him in

this trustful manner, “Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died,” and when He saw the Jews weeping, He “groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.” Jesus also wept.

After this miracle the Jews feared His influence and endeavored to apprehend Him. “Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with His disciples.”

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany. “There they made Him a supper; and Martha served but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him.” It was at this time that Mary anointed Him, as they sat at meat in the house of Simon the leper. This angered some of them, who said it could have been sold for more than three hundred pence, approximately one hundred and fifty dollars, and given to the poor. But Jesus said, “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”

While Paul and Silas were on their journey to confirm the churches, “a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.” They immediately departed and came to the city of Philippi, “which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia.” A certain writer states that, “The Jews there were so few that they did not even possess a synagogue.” As it was a custom of the Jews to worship on the river bank, the little company journeyed thither on the Sabbath day. And they “sat down and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of

Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul, And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained them." Though they "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia," yet the first convert to Christianity in Europe was not an European, but an Asiatic, being a resident of Thyatira. It is also remarkable that in Paul's vision, a man importuned him to come to Macedonia and help them, but the first convert was a woman, and this in an age when women did not enjoy the respect and freedom which was later made possible through the teachings of Christ.

When writing to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul counsels that they should submit themselves unto such as those of the household of Stephanas, and to "everyone that helpeth with us and laboreth." He informs them that they of Stephanas' household were the first fruits of Achaia and devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

He refers to the households of Aristobulus and Narcissus when writing to the Romans, that of Onesiphorus in the Epistle to Timothy, Ceasar's household and the church in the house of Nymphas, in his letter to the Colossians.

In the Epistle to Philemon, Paul also greets the church in his house. It is in this Epistle that he beseeches him to receive the slave Onesimus who had been a fugitive, but was now "a brother beloved." He writes in a touching manner: "Though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the

aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ."

Aquila and his wife Priscilla are frequently mentioned. When Paul departed from Athens and came to Corinth, he first met them, "And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers." He writes to the Romans that they should greet the church that is in their house, that they had sacrificed much for his sake.

In addition to the above, there are also a number of others mentioned who "labored much in the Lord." However, it is likely that they could not accommodate the church in their homes, which must have been a common practice at that time. There is every evidence to believe that they made an effort to cultivate the friendship of one another, that they might "endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." In the Third Epistle of John, we read, "Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by *name*."

It is our privilege in this age to enjoy the fellowship of the Spirit, as in the days of the apostles, the faithful spent many hours together, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. We are especially interested in the welfare of the church, as Paul writes to the Galatians: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." However, we would not forget the admonition to the Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." And the Corinthians also were taught, "let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."

Waynesboro, Pa.

B. F. M.

**I TRUST IN THEE**

Thou art my rock, O Lord,  
 My strength and guide;  
 I'll ever trust in Thee,  
 Whate'er betide.  
 When trials do oft assail,  
 May I o'er all prevail;  
 Lord, I will never fail  
 To trust in Thee.

My fortress strong Thou art,  
 I will to Thee,  
 When dangers threaten me,  
 For safety flee;  
 Tho' foes may oft abound,  
 And enemies surround,  
 My hope in Thee is found;  
 I trust in Thee.

Thou, Lord, wilt surely hear,  
 To Thee I cry;  
 In sorrow and distress  
 Thou wilt be nigh.  
 To Thee my voice I raise  
 In songs of worthy praise;  
 O, Lord bless Thou my days,  
 I trust in Thee.

Thine is the perfect way,  
 Mine it shall be;  
 I will Thy word obey,  
 And follow Thee.  
 When scenes of life are o'er,  
 May I but reach that shore  
 Where sorrows are no more,  
 And dwell with Thee.

Fayetteville, Pa.

C. J. M.

**BRIEF NOTES**

As a child, at school, a kind teacher taught us to sing little songs in concert. One of them was about "Kind words that never, never die." The influence of the thoughts aroused by the singing of that little song has gone with me through life. The apostle Paul admonishes to think on the things that are just, pure, lovely and of good report. In thinking of them do we not discover something that is enduring and undying? And in the accomplishment there-

of, do we not see therein "the hands of the living God?"

\* \* \* \*

All of us, no doubt, at times are led to reflect on the countless ages that lie back of us; and with regret, if not with sorrow and self-reproach on more or less of our past lifetime. We also meditate on the endless ages of futurity; and we plan for many things in the future, for our natural life, notwithstanding its insecurity and uncertainty. But it is only in the wonderful present in which we think, act and live that life, with an ever present sense of accountability for the use we make of the fleeting moments. Misspent time forever gone! Serious thought.

\* \* \* \*

Knowing that the evils with which we have in the past become contaminated in our hearts, may not be apparent and exposed to the view of our fellow-men, we yet feel that it is all open and revealed before our God, to whom we are accountable. Under the feeling of condemnation and guilt, which it brings, how inconceivably grand and gracious is God's plan of salvation when there is no other avenue of escape from the consequence of our sins, which have caused a separation between us and our God,—only the provided means, in the acceptance of Christ as Mediator, Redeemer and Savior.

\* \* \* \*

While we cannot change the past in our lives, we may benefit by it in the present. The knowledge of our failings and misspent time should bring self-abasement and humility, without which Christian living is an impossibility. It was ever a humiliating and unhappy thought with the apostle Paul, that he had "persecuted the church of God:" and it caused him to exclaim, "I am not fit to be called an Apostle." Yet

finally, in writing to his Philippian brethren, he says, "This one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

\* \* \* \*

The effort to prove that "there is no God," involves a maze of lengthy explanations, scientific research and study, while Christian living is ever in contrast by reason of its simplicity and requiring no such effort; for it is of necessity only an outward expression of an inward principle, which cannot be acquired or conveyed by human effort, whether by teacher, preacher or evangelist. The testimony of Christ is, that "No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." Paul defines that "drawing" as "the grace of God," which "hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world."

\* \* \* \*

Death may have removed near and dear ones whose approval we sought in our course and actions in the affairs of life, yet we often seek to do what we believe would be pleasing to such if they were still present with us. In Christian living it will much more be our constant concern to ascertain whether what we do or contemplate doing is pleasing to our heavenly Father and will merit his blessing. Should we not ever be deeply impressed with a sense of responsibility in our course and actions in life, and the importance of our ever being and remaining one of these little ones, whose "angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven," and who will communicate to us His displeasure when we do our own, and not the Father's will?

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What was the Jews' religion?

A. It taught outward cleanliness and inward holiness pointing to regeneration.

Q. What is meant by withdrawing yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly?

A. Reference is made to "traditions received," which leads to other instructions given on the same subject, such as found in Mat. 18: 1 Cor. 5. The meaning is separation in church and social matters.

Q. What is true charity?

A. In 1 Cor. 13: it is explained to mean practicing the Divine nature. Charity is God's love ruling in the heart which will reprove sin in ourselves and all others by obedience to the dictates of the Divine Mind as revealed in His Word regardless of consequences.

Q. How shall we understand the Savior's act of driving the traders from the Temple?

A. They supplied things needed in their worship, but intruded into parts that were not intended for trading. It is right for us to trade but not to let the trading spirit into the temple of our hearts that shall be occupied with love to God.

Q. Can the Church of Christ be divided in doctrine and each division be a branch in the "True Vine?"

A. When the Savior said to His eleven disciples the last night He was with them, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," John 15: 5, He meant those eleven men, without intimating churches. The doctrine of love forbids division, and so does the Savior's prayer John 17, and Paul's precept, Rom. 16: 17, and other teaching.

### EARLY CHRISTIANS

Historians tell us that Christians during the early centuries of the Christian Era declined participation in war and government. The purity of their religion, the innocent and austere lives of the greater number of them, was acknowledged by all who knew them.

Why should persecution be brought upon them, when they yielded the most passive obedience to the law? A reason has been assigned for the conduct of the emperors toward the primitive Christians, which may throw some light on the subject. The agreement that existed between the religions of the world was largely supported by the respect they had for the traditions and ancient ceremonies.

“It might, therefore, be expected that they would unite with indignation against any sect of people which would separate itself from the communion of mankind, and, claiming the exclusive possession of divine knowledge, should disdain every form of worship except its own as impious and idolatrous.” (Historian’s History of the World, Vol. 6, Page 314).

It is clear, according to the above quotation, that the early Christians were a separate body, and that they were willing to suffer persecution rather than to give any encouragement to a worship that was not in full accord with the teachings of Christ and the apostles. By embracing the Gospel, Christians were charged with an unpardonable offence. They were said to dissolve the sacred ties of custom and education, to violate the religious institutions of their country, and to despise what their fathers held as sacred. The whole body of Christians unanimously refused to hold any communion with the gods of Rome, of the Empire, or of its citizens. It was

in vain that the oppressed believer asserted the right of conscience. Though his situation might have excited pity, his arguments could never reach the understanding of those carnal men. As a consequence, the early Christian Church suffered severe persecution from the Pagans who charged them with being an association of atheists who merited the severest criticism of the civil magistracy. The pure and sublime idea, which they entertained of the Supreme Being escaped the conception of the Pagan multitude, who could not understand the Christian religion. These Pagans saw no images and, consequently, concluded that the Christians were atheists; they saw no priests and felt that their worship lacked authority, solemnity, and dignity; they saw no sacrifices and, consequently, doubted its efficacy with the Deity.

According to prophecy, the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom on the earth was looked for by many of that day. They were astonished, however, that the Christians should abandon the temples of those ancient heroes to choose for the object of their religious worship an obscure teacher who had fallen, a sacrifice to the malice of his own country or to the jealousy of the Roman government.

The Pagan multitude had their delight in temporal things and, in their opinion, Christ’s mild constancy in the midst of cruel sufferings, His universal benevolence, His simple actions and character, did not compensate for the want of fame, of empire, and of success. They refused to acknowledge Him as the Divine Author of Christianity and lightly considered His mysterious birth, wandering life, and ignominious death. Though He was rejected by the masses and His followers were ridiculed, the Christian Church continued to spread

until the followers of Christ were found in many provinces and almost every city in the empire.

“The new converts seemed to renounce their family and country, that they might connect themselves in an indissoluble band of union with a peculiar society which everywhere assumed a different character from the rest of mankind.” (H. H. of the W., Vol. 6, Page 318).

The same historian says of them: “Saving the spiritual jurisdiction, they freely abandoned all other matters, or held them of small account. During the first two centuries, despised, maltreated, spat upon, under the ban of opinion and of the law, and often put to death, they were everywhere seen to be patient and resigned, speaking less of the world than of Heaven, and full of confidence in a master who does no wrong and who can repair injustice.” (Page 328).

The Christians of the first century felt themselves aliens in the world, and, in the State likewise. They claimed to be citizens of a heavenly kingdom, yet they prayed for the rulers in the kingdom of the world. The whole world “lieth in wickedness,” and the State no less. Between Church and State, between Christ and Belial, there could be no fellowship. The Christian’s position was not at all understood by the unconverted world, and as a consequence, they were charged with holding the State as the seat of demons, on the one hand, and as the minister of God on the other. They were said to abhor the State and to pray for it. Jesus and the apostles did not permit their followers to revolt against the State, but commanded them to obey it, and to submit willingly to the punishment it imposed. The apostles actually commanded that they should pray for the Emperor, and the

Magistrates by Him appointed. “Be ye not seduced by philosophy” was the Christian watch-word. It was said of them that they had no need of inquiry and learning; they were to shut up their reason in prison, and were to read the Holy Scriptures, but no worldly books. The learned and influential people of that day took exception to the position taken by the Christians, and reasoned that such a secluded religion could not prosper, as the State needed the aid of the Christians, and the Christians needed the protection of the State.

Christ and the apostles had clearly stated that His kingdom was not of this world, and that His disciples were chosen out of the world. This the early Christians fully understood, but the unbelieving world held them up to ridicule, and charged them with condemning ancient and modern forms of worship.

The historian further says: “The Christian life was to be ‘unspotted from the world.’ Most Christians of primitive times interpreted this to mean that they should have as little as possible to do with ‘the world.’ Nor was this a difficult matter, for the greater number of them were people in humble life whose conduct was subject to little outward control, if only they performed the hard work required of them. Few of them were in ‘society,’ and, hence, it was of no consequence what religion they professed or what manner of life they led.”

When the profession of Christianity became popular, during the reign of Constantine, about the close of the third century, when Church and State united we find among the leaders of the dominant Church and State a disposition toward defenseless Christians very similar to that of the Pagans of the first century. From that time until about the year 1660, there were thousands of

meek and lowly followers of Christ slain for the testimony of Jesus. During all those centuries, the most severe persecution suffered by the true Christians was instigated by those who professed the Christian religion.

At the beginning of the Reformation, about 1500 A. D., Luther, Zwingli, and other reformers were persecuted for their faith by the church then in power, but it is deeply sorrowful that when those reformers and their followers came into power, how soon they began to persecute those who did not agree with their religious views. In the year 1526 Felix Mantz, an Anabaptist, was drowned at Zurich on account of his faith, at the instigation of the Zwinglian (Reformed) Church, which was organized only five years before that date. History abounds with testimony that many defenseless Christians suffered martyrdom at the instigation of the great reformers of the 16th century. The authority for statements made in this article is the "Historian's History of the World," and consists of gleanings here and there to show the attitude of the world toward the early Christians.

Such historical facts are a confirmation to all true Christians that the simple, plain teachings of Christ and the apostles were never popular in the minds of the worldly wise.

Christ's Kingdom is ruled by love; worldly kingdoms by the sword. We can as little participate in both kingdoms as could believers of the first and the 16th centuries.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. L. K.

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And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12: 2.

## REGENERATION

Nicodemus, the Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, came to Jesus by night commending Him.

Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3: 5.

By nature we live after the flesh, serving "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." In this state we cannot please God. The flesh must be crucified.

Water represents the word. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John 15: 3. The language of the prophet is beautiful: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. 55: 1.

The invitation to come, was always extended. The prophets say come, and the Savior says, come! All who thirst for pardon and grace are invited to come. All who thirst for happiness are invited to come to Christ. The blessings which He bestows are abundant and precious like the waters.

Ezekiel refers to the water that issued out from under the threshold of the house, growing wider and deeper and at length becoming an impassable river. Ezekiel 47: 1. This is figurative. Both Solomon's temple and the later temple were well supplied with water to wash the sacrifices. It may represent that the convicting grace of God will continue seeking entrance in every unright soul with increasing fullness. No human power can stay that which proceeds from the Fountain Head. It is impossible to stop water,—it seeks its level. It is also impossible to hinder the workings of grace in a willing soul.

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the

Lamb." Rev. 22: 1. To be born of water and of the Spirit, may indicate a clear conception of the Divine blessings granted to one possessed of the new life. Therefore having a knowledge of God and of His perfections and mercies our souls should be filled with holy affection. This river proceeded out of the throne of God and the Lamb, showing that all felicity comes from God. "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4: 24.

On the day of Pentecost the Spirit made the believers of one heart and of one soul. Acts 4: 32. They were a united people bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Paul writes, "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2: 1. This is regeneration and it is not, in baptism and other outward forms.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. J. T.

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### THE OCEAN

O, wondrous Ocean, mighty Deep,  
 Could words thy beauty tell!  
 Thy vast expanse is broken by  
 The surging waves that swell.

O, Ocean grand, with rolling tide  
 Thy foaming billows roar,  
 And sandy beach so vast and wide  
 Makes beautiful thy shore.

Who can behold the ocean's strength,  
 Or who can breast its tide  
 Without a feeling in his soul  
 That God doth here preside?

Great God, with reverential love  
 Thy wondrous might we see;  
 Teach us to look to heaven above,  
 And trust our souls to Thee.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

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### FAITHFULNESS IN DUTIES

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." Rom. 12: 11.

This quotation is one among the many beautiful and practical precepts and

commands with which this whole chapter abounds.

The word clothful might in a moral sense suggest the chief characteristic of a man with a self-indulgent aversion to exertion. "The slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth." Prov. 26: 15. This quotation represents an extreme example of one who hates action.

In business we admire the man who does whatever he undertakes, with a certain amount of energy and enthusiasm, and completes it in a business-like manner. This may apply to the management of large interests, involving money or property, as well as to the smallest personal affairs of life over which one may have the stewardship.

I once happened to be in company with a man of some ability and renown, who remarked: "What I admire most in a man is earnestness, in whatever he attempts."

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord," is more especially written to, and for the believers in Christ, and to them it more particularly applies. A follower of the meek and lowly Jesus does not desire a foremost place in the affairs of this world's kingdom, yet he earnestly desires to be a faithful steward over any possession, however large or small, with which the Lord has blest him. If he is called to a place of responsibility what an inspiration this worthy advice can be to him!

Sometimes we think a slothful, careless manner in business affairs, carries with it a noticeable similarity in the spiritual life; again in this case this counsel can be so aptly applied to encourage and correct.

Fervent in spirit, eager to do good, serving the Lord by distributing to the necessities of others and by a peaceful manner of life the Christian can go

happily onward, rejoicing in hope, trusting in the Lord, realizing that any ability or qualification with which he has been endowed is simply a gift from God, and nothing for which he can claim any merit, but that all honor must revert to the Giver. He realizes too that because of the hindrances of the world and a sense of human frailty, nothing worthy can be attained without a certain amount of fervor, this joined with a firm faith and belief in God's promised care for His children and His abounding grace and mercy, is what gives the Christian an assurance of a blissful immortality.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

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### THE ISRAELITES' DESIRE TO HAVE A KING

And it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his two sons, Joel and Abiah judges over Israel. They did not walk in the steps of their father, but they turned judgment aside and took bribes, favoring those who had means to pay while the poor were deprived of their rights.

The Israelites were dissatisfied and asked Samuel to give them a king as other nations had. They wanted to put into the hands of a mortal the government which had always been in the hands of their God.

Samuel saw this was a formal renunciation of the Divine Covenant and he was greatly distressed. He prayed to the Lord in their behalf, and was told to grant them a king, but to remind them of their wrong doings and to warn them of the trouble a king would bring upon them. The Lord told Samuel, "it is not you they are turning away from, but they have turned from me in asking for a king." Samuel then told them what power the king would exercise over them but they did not heed his warning.

There was at that time a wealthy man named Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin who had large possessions of land and stock. Some of his asses strayed away and he sent his son Saul, with a servant to find them. On their way they came near to Ramah, Samuel's home. The servant said, "There is a seer or prophet living here whom all the people honor. Let us go to him with a present and he may be able to tell us where to find the lost animals."

The Lord had told Samuel of these men coming on this errand and also told Samuel to anoint Saul as the future king. Saul was tall and fine looking. He came to Samuel asking for the Seer. Samuel told him that he was the Seer and that the lost animals were found. He asked Saul to go with him to the hill where they would have an offering and a feast. Samuel then told him the desire of Israel was upon him and his father's house.

Saul was very modest and humble and did not seem to fully understand Samuel's words. He said, "Is not my tribe of Benjamin the smallest of all the tribes, and is not my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?"

Saul and his servant remained all night with Samuel and the next morning Samuel sent the servant on his way and spoke alone to Saul. He brought a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head, telling him the Lord had anointed him to be Prince over His land and people. He told him what to do and that on his return he would meet a company of prophets, who had instruments of music and were filled with God's Spirit, and at that time he would receive a new heart and he would also praise the Lord.

This all came to pass as Samuel told him. On his return Saul told his people he had met Samuel but did not tell

that Samuel had anointed him to be king. Samuel then called the people together to Mizpah and told them God had chosen them a king. Samuel had the men of each tribe pass by. The tribe of Benjamin was taken, and out of that tribe Saul was called. He had hidden away and when he was brought forth, Samuel said, "This is the man the Lord hath chosen." The people cried, "God save the King."

Samuel wrote the law for both the king and people and placed the book before the Lord.

Saul had been trained for an agricultural life and after his consecration he returned to his father's farm, waiting for a call from God. While many of the people rejoiced over their king yet some wondered if this man whom they did not know could help and save them.

One day while plowing with a yoke of oxen a messenger came to tell Saul that the Ammonites, a strong nation, had come against Jabesh, a town in Gilead. The men of Jabesh were not strong enough to defend themselves and begged that their lives be spared. The Ammonites agreed to return in seven days and they then would put out the right eye of every man in the city.

When Saul heard of this a kingly spirit was aroused in him and he felt strong to meet his enemies. He sent word to Jabesh they should have help on the morrow. They in turn sent the Ammonites word that they would meet them and they should do unto them as it seemed good. The Ammonites looked upon this message as a token of submission and were not prepared to meet Saul's army. The Ammonites were utterly defeated.

Samuel took the people, with Saul's army, to Gilgal and gave them his parting address. He said, "I am old and gray-headed and my sons are with you.

I have hearkened unto you and have made a king over you. Now in the presence of the Lord and your newly appointed king I would ask if I have defrauded or oppressed any man, or if I have received bribes to blind my eyes therewith, and I will restore it unto you." The people answered, "You have ruled justly and wronged no one." Samuel then said, "The Lord is witness and His anointed, the king is witness that I have taken nothing from any man." The people answered, "He is witness."

Samuel then reminded them what the Lord had done for them in the past, how they had been led out of Egypt and how they had been ruled by judges and when they became disobedient the Lord had allowed them to fall under the power of their enemies. They desired a king and now the Lord has set one over them. If they obey the Lord and do not rebel against Him it will be well with them, but if they are disobedient God will punish them as he did their fathers. At Samuel's request the Lord sent thunder and rain, which was an unusual thing at that time, it being the time of wheat harvest when no rain fell there. The people were frightened and asked Samuel to pray for them for they felt they had done wrong in asking for a king. Samuel said they had done wrong, but if they would turn to the Lord and be obedient He would be with them. If they were not obedient both they and their king would be destroyed. Samuel said he would continue to pray for them. Samuel returned to his home in Ramah.

It seemed to have been God's will that Israel should be a quiet people, living peacefully, obeying His will, and not striving to be a strong nation having riches and power. It will be remembered that God did not change the government of Israel, it was the people who

changed. God permitted them to have a king, yet he did not approve of the change. God never gave up the supreme government but was still King of Israel. The king chosen was only a deputy of the Lord. They never made new laws nor changed the old ones, so God was still the Supreme Ruler.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

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### A CHILD'S STORY

My dear little children:

This story is about a lame man who was more than forty years old and had never walked. Each day his friends carried him to the temple and laid him at the gate "Beautiful." Here he would ask alms of those who entered.

This gate was very large and built of brass, fifteen yards high and eight yards wide, and of most fine workmanship. Some writers think it was built by Herod the Great, others that Solomon built it and being so beautiful it was not burned with the rest of the temple. You have heard of King Solomon and of the wonderful temple he built and which was afterward destroyed.

We think of gates as being used only to pass into a yard or garden. My earliest recollections are of swinging on a gate and being gently reminded that gates were not intended for that purpose.

In olden times the gates were a very important part of a temple or city and were very costly and finely built. The kings would stand there if they had something special to tell the people. In one of our oldest cities, St. Augustine, the gate-way, with its walls has been preserved to show how towns and cities were walled to keep out enemies and they could be entered only by the gates.

This lame man saw Peter and John passing through the gate and he asked alms or help from them, Peter told him, "Silver and gold I have none; but such as I have I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength, and he stood up and walked and went with them into the temple leaping and praising God.

We can imagine how glad and thankful this poor lame man was, for it was beyond the skill or power of man to cure one who had always been lame.

The beggars of those times came to the gates early in the morning and stayed until evening, holding out their hands and asking alms of people who passed in and out. Some of course like the man in the story were crippled and could do no work, but others were beggars because they wanted to do nothing else. We read of beggars in all ages, and as we have them today, it is probable there will always be some of this class among us. Some worthy unfortunate persons, are driven to begging to supply their necessities and we feel thankful when we can give to such, but it is often a greater charity to help or encourage all those who can work or do something useful by helping them to be more self-supporting instead of begging.

Perhaps some of you, my dear little readers, know something of being lame or disabled. Often children are hurt when romping, or by falls that they cannot walk for a time. If you have ever been crippled that you had to be carried around as this poor man had been all his life, then you will not wonder at his joy on being able to walk or that he followed Peter leaping and praising God.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.