

# GOOD TIDINGS

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

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## EDITORIAL

The first of a series of ten articles called "Bible Notes" written by our late brother Elias H. Hershey, appears in this number of "Good Tidings." These articles explain Old Testament scriptures and will be published in consecutive order, beginning with comments on the Book of Genesis.

We begin our sixth year with this number of "Good Tidings" and take the opportunity at this time, to thank all who from time to time, have kindly contributed articles for publication; also those who have been instrumental in giving the paper a wider circulation. We heartily solicit a continuation of your support.

"Good Tidings" has now a circulation of approximately seventeen hundred. The receipts barely cover the expenses incident to its publication, but if each member who is financially able will send in one or more new subscriptions it is possible that unitedly we may be able to increase the circulation to two thousand copies; this increase in volume would lower the cost per copy of printing very materially.

There is to-day an enormous amount of capital employed to circulate literature that has a darkening influence on

the world; therefore every member of the church who takes an interest in the distribution of literature that may have an enlightening influence, is truly supporting a good cause.

The church, like the human body, has many members, each contributing to the support and perfection of the whole. "So we being many, are one body in Christ and every one members one of another," Rom. 12:5. Christ is the head; He is glorified by His Church as a whole, according as each individual member responds to the counsels and commands of his head.

We may see no direct fruits resulting from our individual efforts, but if our motive is to encourage faith in God, we stand approved, and should feel content to let the consequences over to Him who has taught us to put our talents to ursury and to be faithful stewards of His manifold bounties.

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### THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL

Man by nature is selfish and incapable of loving his neighbor as he loves himself. He may check his disposition and modify it so as to improve his moral deportment, but being devoid of the divine life in the soul, his actions will not be in harmony with the life and the teaching of Jesus. Hence the declaration, "Ye must be born again;" which implies a life from above—a restoration of the love and image of the Father.

This is characterized by faith and obedience and creates fellowship with God and with all the saints. It also confers power to overcome the world by a subordination of every principle antagonistic to supreme love to God and the loving of one's neighbor as himself. Through regeneration the law of love is by the Holy Spirit, written upon the heart and put into the mind, and be-

comes the law of the spirit of life. Christ, in His declaration of the Father, taught the law of love and forgiveness, of mercy and submission. Those in possession of the principle of life will harmonize with His teaching; consequently He made obedience to His precept a mark of discipleship and heirship. In His exposition of the kingdom He demonstrated that it was not of this world—that it was spiritual and consisted in a state of heart, saying, "It is within you." Those who constitute the kingdom are characterized by an humble, meek, and lowly spirit and disposition, patient of injuries and void of resentment. The effect of regeneration cannot be otherwise than in harmony with the life and the teaching of Jesus.

It must be admitted that the baptism of the Spirit would bring a new life—a divine life to the soul. This life emanating from Jesus would be in agreement with His teaching and lead in His steps, showing the power of love in all the relations of life. Under the law it was allowed to resist evil by civil process, or by force of arms, and for certain reasons to annul the marriage covenant; all of which was an accommodation to the needs of man under the infirmity sin had imposed. Christians are under the economy of love, hence the precept, "Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

We are confronted with the problem of harmonizing the principles of justice and equity as enforced in human government, and love and mercy as taught by Jesus. The highest and most enlightened form of human government is and must be based on the law of justice and equity, and carry it with the power to punish the transgressors and to wage war in its defence. If Christians hold office under the government

it becomes their duty to enforce the law, and if necessary to the supremacy of it, even to destroy life, which is antagonistic to the example and teaching of Jesus. Therefore Christians cannot hold office under a worldly government, for by so doing they enter into coalition with the principle of force. If man had continued in the image of God there would not have been war and violence on the earth, but peace and good will. Since Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, to regenerate man, or recreate him after the image of Him who did create him, then surely peace should return to the followers of Jesus. As His true followers are guided by His Spirit, they are separated from the world and are united in faith and doctrine, having love to all mankind.

The solution of the problem, "How to reconcile or harmonize the principle of human government with that inculcated by Jesus," becomes very simple if we recognize two distinct classes of persons and two distinct kingdoms. The one class constitutes the regenerated and the other class the unregenerated.

Worldly government is indispensable to the latter. The regenerated, who are followers of Jesus and who constitute the spiritual kingdom and church upon the earth, are influenced by the principle of love, and their practice is in harmony with the life and teaching of Jesus. They are subject to the government, they pray for the rulers and for all mankind, and willingly pay all demands of the government in the way of tribute. The idea is generally entertained that Jesus sent His disciples into the world to be a power for good, by discharging the duties of citizenship under the earthly government, and aiding in its reformation through legislative power. At least the idea is prevalent that it is the duties of the followers of Jesus at the present time.

If the doctrine of non-resistance is based upon Gospel principle and teaching, then it is incompatible with it to assist in enacting and executing laws for the forcible suppression of vice and immorality. That duty devolves upon the magistracy, and not upon the peaceable followers of Jesus. They cannot fill the office of the magistracy, neither can they serve as soldiers.

Jesus taught that His followers shall not sue at the law, even for the necessities of the body. He addressed Himself to the individual, and by precept and example labored for the regeneration of the individual. "Make the tree good and the fruit will be good."

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

#### BIBLE NOTES

We are informed that "in the beginning" God created all things, that He made us "in His own image," that He gave us dominion over all things on this sphere, and called all "very good." That Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat a certain fruit proves that they had a will which they were to hold subject to Divine command. From whence came the lying spirit in the serpent that deceived them we are not told nor why the serpent then could speak is not revealed. It may have been Satan that "was cast out into the earth." Following their disobedience Adam and Eve discovered their nakedness and protected themselves with "fig leaves," for which the Lord substituted "coats of skins and clothed them."

This circumstance foreshadows the truth that when we are old enough to know of our disobedience, we try to satisfy our guilt of conscience by a moral or religious change without a full surrender of our will to Christ that we may obtain the true righteousness from "the Lamb that was slain," prefigured by the coats of skins.

When the Lord spoke to them "in the cool of the day" they hid themselves. The disposition to hide our convictions, because of coolness to God, is still the way sinners do. The first transgressors tried to shift their wrong on others, but Divine justice placed the penalty where it belonged. We cannot satisfy God by our excuses. Our intelligence teaches us our duty.

The seduction by Satan started the enmity displayed by Cain when he slew his brother for his righteousness, which enmity has ever since been the cause of persecution. Enmity caused the death of our Savior, the Chief of martyrs, whose sacrifice atoned for the first transgression, leaving us accountable for the sins only which we voluntarily commit. Although the author of sin prevailed over the free-will of our first parents and they brought forth good and evil offspring, yet to Cain was given power to overcome the evil of which it is said, "Unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him," but he did not use the power. Sinners now have power to restrain evil tendencies and to preserve moral rectitude, and as they have such self-control surely the righteous are able to control themselves if they will.

The tree of life was prominent in the midst of the Garden of Eden, but the two transgressors were driven away from it, lest they would eat of it and live forever under the curse. Access to it was closed by the presence of cherubim and a flaming sword, emblematic of the holiness which is between us and eternal life.

Cain and Abel brought offerings unto the Lord at that early time. They may have been prompted by the sense of a Higher Power which we feel. This prompting may have been natural in Cain, or it may have been induced by the example of Abel's worship. It could

not have been spiritual, or the Lord would not have rejected it. The example indicates that there may be unacceptable worship, not only by those who worship idols, but as well by those who do not. The fruit of Cain's life showed the character of his worship, which coincides with the evidence given by the Savior: "By the fruit ye shall know the tree." This standard is maintained throughout the whole Bible that acceptable worship must agree with the commandments.

After the death of Abel, Seth was born, of whom Eve said: "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel." "Then began men to call on the name of the Lord." Two classes of worshipers are noted thenceforth; these ever since have been distinct, for when they made alliance the righteous were divinely punished for having fellowship with unrighteous worshipers.

Evil has always been a strong element in human nature and when it had become very general, God, by a flood, destroyed those who did not heed the preaching of His servant Noah. He gave a long opportunity, but few heeded the warning. Refuge in the Ark typified fleeing to Christ under the last covenant. Refusal of the last covenant leaves us no promise of another opportunity for choosing. The first order of marriage was observed by those who entered the Ark, but was afterward abused by some having more than one wife.

Noah built an altar after the flood and offered sacrifices, giving evidence of true worship, for "the Lord smelled a sweet savour." After the flood God renewed the covenant by giving Noah and his sons the same temporal duties He had given our first parents, and He put a "bow in the clouds" to witness that He would not again destroy the world with water.



The sin for which God destroyed the world was "that the sons of God saw the daughters of men \* \* \* and took them wives." The sons of God were of the lineage of Seth who had the true worship, while the daughters of men were the lineage of Cain who were under the worldly curse. The intermarriage produced "men of renown," but brought destruction. When the sons of God now mingle with the worldly class it brings renown, but it does not accord with the separation divinely sanctioned. The judgments visited upon disobedience, it is said, "are written for our admonition." On this commingling in marriage, judgment was visited and it is one of the judgments written for our admonition. For believers to marry unbelievers is now under the same condemnation. A believer's marriage shall be "only in the Lord." 1 Cor. 7:39.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

### BAPTISM

The mode of baptism has been, and is yet, the subject of more concern with some well-meaning people than the other ordinances and doctrines combined. Since transgression or disobedience is sin, and the wages of sin is death, should not mankind be equally anxious about all commands and ordinances?

When God commanded a service under the law He was specific as to time and place and in every instance when man disobeyed he was punished, in some cases even by death. This proves that God's word is immutable and it was man's portion to obey, to merit God's approbation. If God demanded strict obedience under the law, is it reasonable that His people should use their own judgment under the gospel?

The prophet pointed forward to Christ as the one that must be heard and fore-

told the portion of those who should refuse to hear Him. Christ came to redeem mankind from the law by fulfilling its just requirements which man was unable to do and He gave commandments and the ordinances. The proper observance of these is the testimony that we hear Him and are redeemed.

Since God is all-wise, must we not conclude that in making His last will known by His Son nothing was omitted that would tend to man's happiness and comfort in this life, and assure him everlasting life.

After the atonement Christ said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Goye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

The apostles were commanded to teach all nations. Christ told them what to teach and what they were to observe—"all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

From the above command I think all will agree, that teaching precedes baptism in this commission, since all are to be baptized in the name of the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Ghost. To be baptized in the name of the Father would indicate knowledge of the Father's love, mercy and righteousness. In the name of the Son would mean the acceptance of His redemption and sanctification; in the name of the Holy Ghost—being brought under His enlightening and purifying influence.

Knowledge of the Trinity which is acquired by regeneration then is indispensable to baptism. Christ clearly stated in what names they should baptize, and what should be observed after baptism. From what He said, little children could not be baptized, as they

could have no knowledge of the Trinity. If infants are to be baptized without knowledge of the Trinity, and belief in the name of the Trinity, there would be two baptisms, one without faith and the other in faith, but the Apostle says there is only one baptism. As Christ commanded baptism on faith, only believers may be baptized. Infant baptism is an addition to God's word, and to add to His word was strictly forbidden under the law, and in the Gospel. Rev. 22:18.

Many opinions are given as to the proper mode of baptism. Christ commanded baptism, and what should precede it, and also what should follow it, but not one word as to how it should be performed. Since He gave no command or precedent, have we ground to be solicitous as to the mode? Some argue that as Christ was baptized by John in Jordan we have a precedent or example. First, John's baptism was not Christian baptism but was unto repentance. Christ had not yet suffered, and it could not have been Christian baptism. John's baptism in Jordan, and Philip's baptizing the eunuch are the only instances recorded in the New Testament where there is a certainty that baptism was observed in the water, and there is no certainty that either one immersed. From Christ's silence on the mode, and with no certainty as to how the apostles baptized, is there any room to be disturbed about the mode? Should we not be more anxious about the things which He has clearly taught?

Lemoine, Pa.

J. I. M.

### THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSIBILITY

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid." Matt. 5:14.

These well known words were spoken by Christ to His disciples in the Sermon

on the Mount, and these words apply to His disciples unto this day. Every true disciple is impressed with the duty of letting His light shine to God's honor and glory. I say every true disciple, because not all are true who so profess to be, even as all were not Jews who professed to be Jews. For as Paul said in Rom. 2:28, 29, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit; and not in the letter whose praise is not of men, but of God."

As the prophet declared, "Darkness covereth the earth and gross darkness the people," it was highly necessary that a light be brought into the world. This light came in the form of the promised Redeemer and as John said, "In Him was life and the life was the light of men." And again, "The darkness is past and the true light now shineth."

Our Savior came as the Light of the World. He knocks at the door of every heart for entrance. To all who will open to His gracious call the light will enter, and a knowledge of self will be revealed. The light shining within reveals our depraved nature and tends to keep us humble. Whenever we rise from this humble condition and become exalted, it is because we have allowed something to obscure the light. If we have the light we will walk in the light even as He is in the light. We will strive to walk in full agreement with the Gospel plan which is the full revelation of God's will toward man, revealed through Jesus Christ, of whom the Father testified, "This is my beloved Son, Hear ye Him." "If we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." Here we have a fruit and a witness. All true

followers of Christ will have fellowship one with another inasmuch as the true Light enlightens them. They will be of one heart, of one mind and all speak the same thing. Fellowship, peace, and harmony will exist among them. Love will prompt them to seek each other's welfare. They will admonish one another in the fear of the Lord, and such admonition will be accepted in love. They will labor together to uphold the truth in Christ. They will keep and practice the ordinances which Christ gave, when he said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." They keep them not to establish their own righteousness, but in remembrance of God's great love and to commemorate and keep fresh in their minds Christ's suffering and death. They love Him because He first loved them.

They also represent that city that is set upon a hill. From that city the true light will ever shine to enlighten a darkened world.

They will ever build upon the immovable rock of "Christ and Him crucified" that the true light may send forth its beams to direct the erring sinner to peace and safety.

Archbold, O.

W. J. R.

### A WORD OF COMFORT

Throughout the land many are mourning the loss of dear friends and relatives, from whom they have been separated by death. The Grim Reaper, as it is often termed, is no respecter of persons. The beggar in the street and the king on the throne are alike powerless to resist the march of time, and the dissolution of earthly ties. None are exempt; when death calls we must obey, regardless of whether our work is finished or not. Tender ties are torn asunder, a vacancy is left in the circle of home and friends.

A certain poet, conscious that there is no freedom from the certainty of death, and that it makes its appearance in "hovel and mart and palace," wrote, "There is no flock, however watched and tended,  
"But one dead lamb is there;  
"There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,  
"But has one vacant chair."

To all of us at some time has come, or will come, the day of mourning. We have followed to the grave many who were near and dear to us. Loving voices are stilled, familiar forms are no more; there is neither hope nor expectancy of meeting again on the earth.

None but the parent can know the depth of that anguish which attends the death of a child. None can realize until they have had the experience, what it means to part with a kind father or mother! How overwhelmed we are with memories of the past as we recall the many sacrifices made for us, the intimate conversations, the kindly counsels, the anxiety shown for our welfare. Little do we know, as husbands and wives, how precious is our association, until the silver cord is severed, and one or the other departs from time, leaving the survivor with a sense of irreparable loss. The severance of brother from sister, of relative from relative, and friend from friend, all call forth the manifestations of grief, and our humanity cries out, "Why did this have to be?"

At such times our hearts are deeply moved, and seeing the frailty of our earthly life, we inquire, "Is man only born to die? Is this all of life?" Something within us tells us, "No." "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." 1 Cor. 15:36. All nature points to a renewal of life, after death, and we turn to the only source of comfort and instruction—God and His Word.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." Rev. 14:13. How comforting when we can apply these words to the departed one! "They rest from their labors." The warfare is ended, the mighty conflict is over, the weary strife against sin has ceased, and they have won the victory. Their condition is a happy one, because they have faithfully endured to the end; no more must they struggle as we who remain, and they can now say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "Their works do follow them." Although they are now absent from us, the memory of their "good fight of faith" remains. Even as the light of the sun, after it has set, is reflected from cloud and sky, casting a mellow radiance over the landscape, so the recollection of their cheerful, unselfish lives, and of their kind admonition and encouragement inspires us to greater effort in our spiritual journey that we may meet with them again.

For the Scriptures give us the consoling promise "that those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." 1 Thess. 4:14. The Savior died and arose again to abolish death. The grave could not hold Him, nor can it hold those who have followed Him; "for He is the resurrection and the life." John 5:29; Rom. 6:5. The faith of Christians rests upon the hope and certainty of the resurrection of the dead.

In that final day all who are in the graves must come forth, and stand before God in judgment; Rev. 20:12. What a great and terrible day that will be! But we need not fear it if we are in readiness, because we shall "love His appearing." It will be a time of release from the dark tomb; a time of rejoicing for the faithful who remain on the earth, a time of entrance into everlasting glory!

Some there may be who cannot entertain so sure a hope for their departed friends. If so, the loss indeed is hard to bear; but judgment belongs not to us; we only can commit them into the hands of One who knows the hearts of all men and who will judge righteously.

May we be impressed with the thought that we are mortal, and that, sooner or later, the summons will come that we can be stewards no longer. May we improve our precious time, so that we may then be numbered among the blest, as described by the prophet Esdras:

"I, Esdras, saw upon the mount Sion a great people, whom I could not number, and they all praised the Lord with songs.

"And in the midst of them there was a young man of high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns, and was more exalted; which I marvelled at greatly.

"So I asked the angel, and said, 'Sir, what are these?'

"He answered and said unto me, 'These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God; now are they crowned, and receive palms.'

"Then said I unto the angel, 'What young person is this that crowneth them, and giveth them palms in their hands?'

"So he answered and said unto me, 'It is the Son of God, whom they have confessed in the world.' Then began I greatly to commend them that stood so stiffly for the name of the Lord.

"Then said the angel unto me, 'Go thy way, and tell my people what manner of things, and how great wonders of the Lord thy God thou hast seen.' "

Stevensville, Ont. W. I. T.

The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge. Prov. 17:15.

## BEARING THE CROSS

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples. If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matt. 16: 24.

The cross, in our Savior's time was an emblem of pain, guilt and ignominy; but suspension on a cross was a very common form of punishment among the Romans. However, it was inflicted only on slaves, as it was thought too infamous a punishment for those who were free, regardless of what their crimes might have been.

Jesus, after many false accusations had been brought against Him, was condemned to death on the cross. Before His death, He told His disciples of the many things He must suffer—of His crucifixion and of His resurrection. Peter answered Him, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." But He turned, and said unto Peter. "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art an offence unto Me; for thou savourest not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Matt. 16: 22, 23.

The disciples expected the promised Messiah, their Lord, to appear as king of literal Israel who would deliver them from Roman rule and restore them to power by again establishing their government. They believed that Christ was this king and when He began to reveal to them that He must go to Jerusalem to suffer many things at the hands of those in authority, even death, they were loathe to believe Him, hence Peter's reply "be it far from Thee, Lord." It was not until a considerable time after Christ began preaching and teaching, that the disciples understood that His kingdom was not of this world.

Peter loved his Master, and naturally was not willing to have Him suffer these

things. He was not yet under the influence of the Holy Spirit, which was not given until after Jesus ascended to the Father. He therefore could not comprehend our Savior's words. Jesus knew that His suffering and death would be disappointing to the disciples and He spoke of it with the view of preparing them for that which was to take place, and to impress them with the necessity of accepting Him in faith.

Through Christ's suffering and death man is reconciled to God, and can come to Him with assurance that he will in no wise be cast out. John 6: 37. All that is required of us is to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him. We must be willing to subdue our carnal inclinations and sacrifice all things, even our lives if necessary for His sake.

The apostle Paul, in writing to his Galatian brethren, said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2: 20.

If Christ dwells in us, we will no longer cherish the things of this earth, but will set our affections on things above. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5: 17), and the fruits of this new life are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. 5: 22.

According to nature, we are governed by self love, but when we allow the love of God to reign in our hearts, we bring our selfish desires into subjection, which is a cross to the flesh, for the flesh is constantly warring against the Spirit. We meet with many temptations and trials, but we know that God will always grant us strength and courage to bear our cross if we are willing to own



Him as our head and captain and as the author and finisher of our faith.

It is only by confessing Christ and humbly following Him that we can hope to receive eternal life, for "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." Luke 14: 27.

"What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Matt. 16: 26. The world with all its glory and riches cannot compare with "the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. 2: 9.

Christ said, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in Heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven." Matt. 10: 32, 33.

Let us give these important matters serious consideration. Let us read and meditate upon the Word—the only safe guide—take up our cross, and follow Him who will lead his people to victory and finally to a happy end.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. J. T.

### "COME TO ME"

O those blessed words of welcome,  
"Come to Me," is still the call.  
Coming down through all the ages  
Giving hope and life to all.

Soul inspiring words of Jesus—  
Come to Me with all your care,  
Even when your faith would falter  
Come, O come, find comfort there.

Weak and sinful, often failing,  
Still the Savior bids you come;  
With His love and mercy helps you  
So that you may overcome.

O those precious words of Jesus,  
Let them cheer your weary way,  
Striving now to do His bidding  
By His grace you'll win the day.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

### THE STRAIT AND NARROW WAY

"Straits is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it." Matt. 7: 14.

Some years ago when traveling through a large city, while standing at a corner of a street for some time viewing the vast number of people on the sidewalks I was impressed with the thought, whether the words of this text are true. Did God create such a host of people to be lost and just a few to be saved? It caused me great anxiety as I did not realize at the time that I was conferring with carnal reason.

This seems to be a question to many persons in our time, so let us turn to the Word for relief. Christ taught that as it was in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man.

It is not God's will that any should perish but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and live. He has opened the way and extended the invitation, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest, take My yoke upon you and learn of Me for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11: 29.

We read that in the time of Noah men disregarded the commands of God and the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they choose, and their children became mighty men, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and it repented Him that He had made man. And the Lord said, I will destroy man from the face of the earth. And he told Noah, in whom he found grace, to build an Ark. "And, behold, I, even I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life." The Lord said, "My

spirit shall not always strive with man, \* \* \* yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." Noah preached to them but they heeded not. The fountains of the deep broke up, and the windows of heaven were opened and it rained forty days and forty nights until everyone perished except eight souls who were willing to enter the Ark.

In the time of Lot the two great cities of Sodom and Gomorrah became so wicked that God said He would destroy them. We read, Genesis 18:23, Abraham drew near and said, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked. Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou also destroy it? And the Lord said, If I find fifty righteous I will spare the place for their sakes." Then Abraham asked if there were forty-five, then for forty, thirty and for twenty. And he said, "Oh; let not the Lord be angry and I will speak but yet this once, peradventure ten shall be found there? And He said I will not destroy it for ten's sake." But there were only four righteous found, Lot and his wife and two daughters. It was said, "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee," but Lot's wife looked back and she became a pillar of salt.

Jesus spoke by parable, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, 'Tell them which are bidden, Behold I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage. But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.' " Matt. 22.

From these examples we can see that it was always on account of unwillingness to obey God's commands that de-

struction came upon the people. So it shall be with man in that great and notable day when the Lord will come as a mighty Judge. We will be barred from His presence forever if we are unwilling to deny self, take up the cross and follow the meek and lowly Jesus, unwilling to bear the reproaches of the world and despise the shame.

The fountain of Life is constantly flowing: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. But man seeks an easier and a broader way in order to gratify the lusts and pleasures of this life; "For wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."

New Hamburg, Ont .

A. H.

### BRIEF NOTES

In the affairs of life man endeavors to use all available means to prosecute his work effectively; planning for conditions that may arise in the future of his lifetime. Why then, when eternal interests, immeasurably greater, are at stake, will he not act with similar wisdom and discretion?

\* \* \* \*

In Christian living there is the feeling that if we were given a thousand lives to live and could live them all in the fullest measure of love, service and devotion to God, it would still be a very insufficient expression of the gratitude we would desire to render to Him for the care, mercy and love bestowed upon us.

\* \* \* \*

The Apostle speaks to his fellow-believers very tenderly as "little children." How truly in striving to live as Christians we find our acts and experiences resemble those of little chil-

dren. As such we may not understand our need of training, and that in situations peculiarly affecting us individually, we must often walk by faith and not by sight, as we selfishly incline. In the prospect of the greater reward as the result of a true faith, and of love and service to God as our chief aim, hope still affords us an anchor without which we would often be tossed, as it were, upon troubled waters.

\* \* \* \*

It will not be long at best, and we know not how soon, on life's brief sojourn we will come to the Dark River, which we must cross before we can reach the Shining Shore. Are we prepared to pass over with the support of a strong arm, available only through the saving faith which finds expression in the endeavor to live our earthly life according to the will and purpose of our heavenly Father? Or will we merely hope that when we arrive at that dark cold stream we may then somehow be safely ferried across? What an unhappy situation if we should, upon arriving there realize the consequence of an improvident course, and then vainly cry in despair, "Tarry, tarry, boatman tarry!"

\* \* \* \*

The writer has been impressed by the remarks attributed to John Quincy Adams when he was an old man: "Time is too short for me rather than too long. If the day had 48 hours instead of 24, I could employ them all." In marked contrast with the thought in these words is the impression given to-day by many in their intense quest for pleasures and pastimes. There is a lesson too for the Christian with whom there is constantly present a consciousness of work not completed or imperfectly done, that he feel the need of profitably occupying the fleeting moments, having a sense of accountability in the use of time, that the investment which has been made in him

may bring returns in love, service and honor to his Creator.

\* \* \* \*

The life of true faith requires that our chief endeavor be to bring our acts and conduct into conformity with the example in the life and conduct of Christ; that we live consistently in agreement with His gospel.

However much we may try, we can never accomplish this without having divine love—the Spirit of Christ—as the ruling power in the heart. This necessitates a willingness and effort by the power of that grace to subordinate our selfish desires. By grace we must constantly scrutinize our motives and desires, overcoming the evil promptings to which we by nature incline—that Christ's spirit may rule in our acts and conduct and be manifest in our daily life.

\* \* \* \*

Man's conduct and conversation always reflect the condition of the heart. A sad condition is often revealed to us in mingling with our fellow-men, whose thoughts find expression in unedifying conversation, in joking, jesting and profane talk; their acts also betraying the motives and desires that are cherished and followed. Well could the prophet Jeremiah declare that, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

When by the work of God's grace operating upon the heart, divine love controls, and its appeals and teachings are heeded and obeyed, the change, in acts and expression, becomes one of most outstanding contrast. For then selfish desires are subordinated; impure thoughts no longer cherished and entertained; desires for revenge replaced by feelings of love and forgiveness. The desire foremost in the heart and expressed in act and conduct is to glorify God and do His will.

The proclamation by the angel regarding Christ's Kingdom was, "Of His Kingdom there shall be no end." What a contrast with what history reveals regarding worldly kingdoms which rose and fell, tottering thrones and groaning empires!

In further contrast we see kings, princes and potentates maintaining their dignity and arrayed in pomp and splendor; while He, of whose Kingdom "there shall be no end" Himself declared, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Born in the lowly city of Bethlehem, cradled in a manger, His whole life was an example in humility, meekness and lowliness; and His declaration was that unless we likewise become humble we can never enter His Kingdom.

What shall we say of those who profess to be in His Kingdom and under His dominion and rule, yet seek and receive honor and acclaim, and maintain and defend their rights, title and dignity?

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q.** Is the conscience always a safe guide?

**A.** An approved conscience is one void of offense towards God and men. Such conscience would not allow one to offend God by rejecting any part of His Word; nor to offend men by conduct not in accordance with love. But the conscience may become evil or defiled—"seared with a hot iron." An unenlightened conscience may mislead even the zealous, as Paul's, when he persecuted the early Christians. Acts 26:9. The conscience is a safe guide only when enlightened and its dictates are in harmony with God's Word.

**Q.** Does conversion always effect an outward change?

**A.** All adults are included under sin and must become converted or born again. Some unconverted persons live very correct lives; others are very vain and love display; again others are careless and indifferent. There is no uniformity in the habits, aims and interests of unconverted people.

True conversion brings about a change of heart and a renewed spirit of the mind. One common interest supercedes all others in the truly converted; the effect of which is uniformity in doctrine and life. Simplicity, moderation, and non-conformity to the world will be manifested by all; consequently true conversion effects an outward change.

**Q.** Should a penitent sinner desiring salvation be encouraged to join the church?

**A.** Not until he first makes an unconditional surrender to God, experiences a change of heart and lives in agreement with the teachings of Christ. The church cannot effect this change of heart—it cannot give life; its ordinances and services are intended to encourage and strengthen the faith already received. The church is made up of God's children who are drawn together by the fellowship of the Spirit. The penitent sinner having become a child of God will naturally be drawn to the church of Christ.

**Q.** Do aged believers who have served the Lord faithfully for many years become exempt from doubts and fears?

**A.** So long as life continues Satan will make an effort to discourage believers by tempting them to doubt whether they have been as faithful in performing their duties as they should have been, causing fear that the Lord may not accept them on account of their many failings. True believers, however, will never doubt the promises of God; they also know the wiles of Satan, and

by faith they will resist him so that he must flee. Having perfect love, fear will be cast out so that they can calmly wait upon the Lord in the knowledge that the bounds of the evil **one** are set and he cannot harm them.

Q. What effect should Christianity have on our everyday life?

A. It should temper us in our business ventures, leading us to avoid risks that may hazard another's money or that would savor of undue desire for earthly gain. Moderation in all things; due consideration for another's conscience in the liberties we take; sobriety, cheerfulness, impartiality in judgment; laboring in an honorable calling; helping the poor and needy, all are outward evidences of true Christianity.

Q. How can we bring into "captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ?"

A. Thought is the mysterious faculty of the mind. In fact the mind operates by thought and there is no cessation to this activity during waking hours, and even in sleep the subconscious mind acts in dreams. Thoughts come and go almost like the lightning flash. How then can we control them? How can we bring them into captivity? Only by the grace of God. In the Christian experience evil thoughts come, prompted by the unconverted flesh and the Devil. They cannot be evaded, they cannot be prevented. They can, however, by the "weapons which are mighty through God," be brought into subjection. The Apostle no doubt had evil thoughts in view, when he said, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." The inception of evil and sin is by evil thoughts, but if we do not entertain them, or act upon them, we are not condemned—we have

overcome. We may feel deeply abased at the multitude of evil thoughts that present themselves, but if we deplore them and refuse to harbor them, then we can say with the Apostle: "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

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### GOD'S KINGDOM ON EARTH

We read in the prophecy of Daniel, "And in the days of these Kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2: 44.

Our Savior when upon earth asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." The Savior then said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Upon this, Peter's confession, Christ's church was built. We believe the Church originated on the day of Pentecost, after the outpouring of the Spirit and then Christ's kingdom referred to in Daniel's prophecy was established.

After Christ's death and resurrection, He commissioned His disciples, saying, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

At that time the Roman Empire controlled about all the important countries. The Greek language was general and the



way was open for the Apostles to preach the gospel to all the world—the Roman Empire. The apostles labored faithfully, teaching the doctrine taught by the Savior and established churches wherever there was a community of believers.

We have evidence that the church declined, and that false teachers arose, perverting the minds of many at an early period, but there were always a number of faithful followers who upheld the truth, and separated from the unfaithful worship and kept up apostolic doctrine and ordinances.

Our Savior called His followers Disciples. Later we read that at Antioch they were first called Christians. As time passed they were given different names, such as Novatians, Albigenses, and Anabaptists. So far as we can learn these people protested against the corruptions in the dominant church and contended for unity and purity.

The church was always persecuted as our Savior said it would be, and many of the apostles suffered martyrdom. Later many were put to death on account of renouncing the practices of the dominant church, and insisting that no baptism was valid but that which was received on faith. They were so cruelly persecuted that they hid in dens and caves in the earth for safety. We do not know what these persecuted ones were called, but they seemed to observe church order and upheld apostolic doctrines.

About the year 1160, Peter Waldo, a wealthy citizen of Lyons, became deeply impressed and spoke and taught the Scriptures (thus promulgating the truth). From him the name Waldenses likely originated. These Waldenses were persecuted and dispersed into many different countries.

At the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, Menno Simon, then a

Catholic priest, became disturbed upon hearing of one who was put to death on account of being rebaptized. Although Menno was a priest he had never read the New Testament for fear of being misled. He learned to know some of these persecuted ones and then for himself began to read attentively the New Testament. He was convinced that he had been in error, since God alone had power to forgive sin and that Christ alone had purchased salvation. He found no scriptural ground for infant baptism and saw that human authority cannot bind to eternal death. He consulted with others of the Reformers and found that they differed in their opinions and that they appealed to worldly powers for protection, thus uniting church and state. This was at variance with Christ's word which so plainly said, "If ye were of the world the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

Menno Simon then renounced his former faith, his worldly honor and reputation and was moved to cast his lot with those believers, who, few in number, were as sheep without a shepherd. From them he received baptism and became a leader and teacher. He was active in disseminating the truth and labored successfully in Germany and the Netherlands until the close of his life in 1561.

His followers were called Mennonites. He did not originate a new doctrine, but upheld the same taught by the apostles, and continued by their followers and successors.

We maintain that this prophecy of Daniel is in fulfillment. All other kingdoms mentioned in his prophecy have been overthrown. All earthly governments, from the imperfection of their nature, contain in themselves the seeds

of their own destruction. The names of those ancient kingdoms are found only in history. But this kingdom cannot be affected by any change and "shall not be left to other people." This spiritual kingdom, the everlasting gospel, can never be destroyed but will continue until the end of time.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

### CHRIST'S INVITATION EXTENDED

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matt. 11: 28, 29, 30.

What a precious promise offered in our dear Savior's counsel! He has extended the invitation unto all men, pleading with them to obey His teachings and to come to the knowledge of the truth and live. He invites all to come and partake of the waters of life freely, which are offered without money and without price. He has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." It is by grace through faith that we are saved and not by any works that we can do. He is ever ready to help us in every time of need. Surely we would all desire to enter into that rest, which God has promised to those souls who are faithful unto Him. So let us strive to be diligent; to make our calling and election sure.

The weapons of the believer's warfare are not carnal but "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God."

It is the tendency of mankind, according to nature, to walk upon the broad

way that leadeth to destruction. When one comes to a realization of his unsaved condition, he then seeks a means to reform his life, that he may have a hope of being redeemed. God has given us the means. God's love for us was so great that He gave His only begotten Son, who came into the world to take our sins upon Himself. He bore the cross, and was crucified, died, and arose again and is now seated at the right hand of God, interceding for us. He died for our redemption; the debt has been paid, and we are invited to come to Him and accept Him as our Lord and Savior. Christ, then, is the hope of the penitent sinner; all who give place to that still small voice which speaks to each soul will be accepted by Him. They will be prompted by love to give thanks and praises unto God for calling them from darkness unto His marvelous light. It is through obedience to Jesus Christ that we become heirs of His Kingdom.

Our Lord has given us the precious gift of grace, and His word will teach us to repent, and obey His commands. Here we have a constant, daily strife—the spirit against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit. He has extended His strong arm to us which we can ever lean upon in every time of trial, temptation and affliction in this life.

Now we desire to walk upon the straight and narrow way that leadeth unto life, and teaches us self-denial. We give place to Christ's teachings, taking our thoughts captive unto the obedience of Christ. Old things pass away, and behold all things become new. He will lead and guide us into all truth. May we put our whole trust in Him who careth for us and ever give Him all honor and praise.

Lancaster, Pa.

O. E. R.

### THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER

In prayer we make known our wants to God with the assurance that "His ears are open to our cry." For the worry and anxiety which too often follow the accidents and misfortunes of life, prayer is the remedy. This is beautifully expressed by the Apostle's words, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything 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." Phil. 4: 6, 7.

Some person's lives are saddened by afflictions and trials; others, by their daily cares are likewise burdened. Worry is needless; God will work just as effectively without it. Mary weeping at the empty tomb and saying, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him," is an illustration of the needlessness of worry. Jesus, now risen, said unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She had but to remember the words spoken when He was yet in Galilee—the promise that on the third day He should rise again. There are no situations in life to which the promises of God will not apply.

We should think of God as being present everywhere, full of kindness and love; that He wants us to come into intimate fellowship with Him, so that, in the true spirit of devotion, it may be as natural to communicate with God as with the closest friend. Our requests are to be made known unto the Lord who knoweth all things and careth for us; He will then be with us, leading our thoughts aright and drawing us ever nearer to Him. If unceasing prayer be cultivated, we shall be less inclined to worry.

The Apostle Paul taught not only by precept, but he could point to his own example and to his experiences which were familiar to many. When impris-

oned with Silas in Phillipi, after being scourged, at midnight they prayed and sang praises unto God, rejoicing in persecution. The power of God was manifest as the prison doors opened and they were delivered from bondage; the jailor and his house repented and were baptized. He tells of being beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked, in perils, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; yet, though in every city bonds and afflictions awaited him, he could say, "But none of these things move me." "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." In all his experiences he made his requests known by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving and the peace of God dwelt with him.

Such freedom from anxiety is health to the soul. It fills the entire being with rest, contentment, love, zeal, and every Christian grace. May we seek to follow more closely the example of the great Apostle and cast our burdens upon the Lord who has promised to care for us. Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Jas. 5: 13.

Prayer is very much encouraged by the Lord Jesus. He said, "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." He gave instructions when He taught the Lord's prayer. He prayed often; on one occasion He continued all night in prayer, and when He suffered crucifixion He called upon God. He gave the solemn warning, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21: 36.

Waynesboro, Pa.

G. M. H.

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Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Prov. 8: 33.

### HOPE

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Rom. 8:24, 25.

Without hope it would seem impossible for us to live for we all to a greater or less extent look forward to the future. Without hope we would despair. Most people hope for something better in this life, but we who have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, base our hope on the meritorious work of Jesus our Savior. We are willing to trust Him and suffer with Him, believing that He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to Him in the appointed way and we are "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2: 13.

It is well that we should look forward ever trusting in Jesus for help and assistance in time of need. Being compassed with a sinful flesh which is ever inclined to lead us astray it becomes us to strive to be faithful so that we may not be turned out of the way. For we can do nothing of ourselves, it is alone through Him we live, move and have our being. The Lord Jesus is called our hope. 1 Tim. 1: 1. It is through Him we hope to gain everlasting life.

In this life we have trials and temptations. In the life to come there will be love, joy, peace and holiness without end in the presence of God and the holy angels. There sorrow, pain and sickness will be no more. Knowing these things why should we lose hope? For as it is written—"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2: 9, 10.

These and many other promises in His word should inspire us to continue to trust Him, not forgetting that if we wish to obtain this heavenly rest we must walk in the ways of our Lord Jesus and ever watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. We must strive to hold fast till He come, for He will come sooner or later and the important part is to be ready when the Lord does come. No matter what is our station in life we all have a promise, if we humble ourselves under His mighty hand—and why should we not? We cannot even make one hair white or black. Matt. 5: 36. Neither can we do anything without Him. "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." Isaiah 40: 22. Knowing therefore the greatness of our Creator let us ever humble ourselves under His mighty hand and place our whole trust and hope in Him who is the Creator of all things visible and invisible.

Fresno, Calif.

I. H.

### GOD'S CARE FOR THE FAITHFUL

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and His ears are open unto their prayers." 1 Peter 3: 12.

These words are part of the apostle Peter's letter to his persecuted brethren who lived in that territory where he had labored for the spread of the Gospel and building up of the churches. All through his letters he earnestly exhorts them to follow Christ who died to purchase their salvation. He exhorts them to be of one mind, to be pitiful and courteous, to render good for evil, to be careful of their speech, to seek peace and ensue it. Finally he says, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and His ears are open unto their prayers." Peter, like

the Psalmist, Psalm 34: 15, could in sincerity speak these words for he had many experiences which proved them, as when he confessed Jesus to be the Christ, Matt. 16: 15-19; when he witnessed the transfiguration, Matt. 17; when his self-confidence was reproved, Luke 22: 31, 32; when he was brought before the council, Acts 4; when instructed in a vision to not despise the Gentiles, Acts 10: 9, and when liberated from prison by an angel of the Lord.

From the beginning of time the Lord's eyes were over His people and He answered the prayers of all who believed the promise and looked forward in hope of the Redeemer, who would come and restore that love which was lost in the Garden of Eden, and who would renew that fellowship which had existed between God and man before man transgressed the command of God. After the fall, God saw that the wickedness of man was very great in the earth and it repented Him that He had made man; and He said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth." Gen. 6: 7. "Noah who was a just man found grace in the eyes of the Lord," and was saved from destruction in the flood. Gen. 6: 8, 9. According to God's command he builded an ark and the Lord said unto him, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation." Gen. 7: 1. After he quit the ark he builded an altar unto the Lord who smelled a sweet savour from the sacrifice he offered. Gen. 8: 20, 21. God made a covenant with Noah and said He would never again cut off all flesh or destroy the earth by a flood of waters and as a token of the covenant said He would set His bow in the cloud. Gen. 9: 8-17.

In the twelfth chapter of Genesis we read how God called Abram and promised him a blessing, and when Abram builded an altar unto the Lord He ap-

peared unto him. Abram believed God and withheld not his only son, but would have offered him as a sacrifice upon the altar had not God staid his hand, and his faith was counted unto him for righteousness.

Joseph was sold as a slave and taken into Egypt; because of his faithfulness the Lord was with him and prospered him; during the time he was in prison the Lord's eyes were over him; and when he ruled in Egypt under Pharaoh, during the years of famine, under his direction many souls were saved from hunger, even his own brethren who at one time despised him.

Moses, another of God's servants, was obedient to the Lord's commands and was instrumental in leading God's people, Israel, out of bondage; and God's eyes were over him and his ears were open unto his prayers until his journey on earth was ended, and he "died in the land of Moab" and "God buried him." Deut. 34: 5, 6.

David, who was a man after God's own heart, sought the righteousness of God and labored as in the eyes of God who watched over him, answered his prayers, blessed him, and gave him a promise that when his days should be fulfilled and he should sleep with his fathers, He would set up of his seed a kingdom, the throne of which he would establish forever. 2 Samuel 7: 11, 12.

The eyes of the Lord were over Daniel, and He answered his prayers and sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths that they could not hurt him, Daniel 6: 22; he believed in his God and even contrary to the king's decree continued to pray unto Him daily, thereby laying off a testimony against worshipping any person or anything except the true God of heaven.

These and many other Old Testament characters to whom God revealed His will, all looked forward in hope of the



promise which was fulfilled in Christ, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Romans 10: 4; through Him the new dispensation was ushered in. This dispensation began on the day of Pentecost when those who believed, received the Holy Spirit or Comforter, Acts 1: 4, which was promised by Jesus Christ, who said, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever," John 14: 16. "He shall teach you all things," John 14: 26; "He shall testify of me," John 15: 26, "and He will guide you into all truth," John 16: 13. In this dispensation it is through this same spirit that God's will is revealed unto those who put their trust in Him. If they strive by grace to do His will they become partakers of His righteousness; and will show forth His righteousness by their walk, conduct and conversation, and thereby be "heirs according to the promise."

God's word holds out many promises to the believers, both temporal and spiritual; God's children are those who believe His word and keep all of Christ's commandments. "God's eyes are over them and His ears are open unto their prayers." All who are faithful unto the end shall hear the happy plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25: 34.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. C. L.

### UNIFORMITY IN DRESS

The Savior in speaking to Nicodemus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." St. John 3: 3. The new birth points to a change of heart—to a passing from spiritual death to spiritual life. When we come into possession of the Christ-life we love what He loves; our affections

become centered on things above; Christ becomes our ideal, and by the power of His Spirit we are separated from the spirit of the world. We are brought into harmony with His teachings of condescension, simplicity, peace and unity.

The Holy Spirit impresses the same rule of life on all who receive it. "Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1: 10. "That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." Phil. 1: 27. "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Phil. 2: 2-4.

The foregoing scriptures plainly teach that believers must be united spiritually, and if united spiritually, it is reasonable that this love, fellowship and oneness in spirit will be manifest by similarity of life and conduct. There can be no order without uniformity of practice, and from this principle springs uniformity of dress in the church. Those who are in possession of the Christ-life fully realize that there is no saving merit or righteousness in dress, but adopt a plain and uniform mode because it is becoming to the profession, and is an outward evidence of separation from, and of non-conformity to the world.

The plain dress was never adopted by God's people because of a special requirement by the church, but it is simply a continuation of the practice of the common, plain people at the time of the Reformation. Since it is considered convenient and serviceable, we say, to encourage a change would be unedifying as it is unnecessary.

Although plainness and uniformity may seem like a great sacrifice and even

a mystery to those who follow the ever-changing fashions of the world, it agrees with Christ's doctrine of simplicity and harmony and the Apostolic teaching of non-conformity to the world. It is promotive of order and in keeping with modesty; it is consistent with the spirit of humility and unworldliness which every follower of Christ must possess and is an expression of that spirit bearing outward evidence of separation from and of non-conformity to the world. It also is a silent witness against the gross extravagance of those who conform to the fashions invented for the gratification of the pride and vanity of the human heart.

We quote from "Christianity Defined": "A Christian is fully sensible that there is no saving merit, virtue or righteousness in dress, though it be in every respect fitting the profession. He attains to no righteousness for all his self-denial; but being characterized by moderation, he gives evidence of the Christ-life within him. Anyone who entertains the view that there is merit in plainness, whether it be in the cut of the hair, wearing of the beard, or in apparel, is greatly in error. On the other hand those who from gospel principle (through an enlightened conscience) discard the vain fashions of the world, and walk in humility and meekness, demonstrate thereby a fruit of the Holy Spirit."

Many churches to-day have class parties, social gatherings, dinners, suppers and various other ways and means of drawing people into the church. They accept as brothers and sisters those who give no evidence of a change of heart, which is contrary to Christ's teaching—"Ye must be born again." Their outward adorning of fashionable and attractive apparel is also at variance with Apostolic teaching. "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or

gold, or pearls, or costly array, but (which) becometh women professing godliness) with good works. 1 Tim. 2: 9, 10.

How impressive when we behold the innocent ones led astray by the many deceptive practices seen on every hand! Children who are not capable of understanding the scriptures and unable to comprehend what it is to be born again are easily deceived and led away from the simple truths by those who profess to know Christ but whose hearts are far from Him, as shown by the lives they live; by the adorning of their bodies; by their indulging in pastimes and amusements, giving no evidence of separation from the world.

May all who have found the heavenly treasure strive earnestly, in all honesty and with sincerity of purpose, to do the Father's will, that the adorning may not be outward, "but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible; even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Glen Elder, Kansas.

L. L.

### THE DANGER OF BECOMING LUKEWARM

We are familiar with the reference in the book of Revelation to the Laodiceans, who felt rich, increased with goods and had need of nothing. They did not know that they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Their condition is described as lukewarm, neither cold, that is without pretensions to religion; nor hot, which is to be full of love to Christ and zeal for His glory. As lukewarm water is liable to produce nausea so the figure used in the language of the Apostle is expressive of disgust at their slothfulness, and the judgment of Heaven was: "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Let us examine ourselves. The conveniences around us, religious liberty, and protection against violence and oppression we accept as a matter of course, while in comparison the early Christians knew only hardship and suffering. This relative freedom from trial tends to lull us into quietness and ease. Our flesh, the unrenewed part, may prevail to make us negligent and slothful, and to cause us to be slack in the exercise of watchfulness. By nature, lovers of ease, we are averse to the effort required to combat the evil tendencies in us. The Apostle James tells us to "resist the devil, and he will flee from you." This promise should strengthen us in our determination to steadily and courageously oppose him as the enemy of our souls.

But, if we yield to temptation, Satan will follow us continually and our eyes may become so heavy in the sleep of security that we lose our former vigilance and watchfulness. Only God can lift us from such a state of drowsiness: to Him we must appeal.

It can well be said now as the shipmaster said to Jonah as he lay in natural sleep, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not."

If we are sincere He will gladly hear us, and the testimony is, "He giveth more grace." We are sensible of the dangers to which we are exposed and strive against them. We have an earnest longing for true submission to God's will, and are appreciative of experiences that arouse conviction in us, and also of the gentle and loving reminders which we may receive directly or indirectly from our fellow-believers.

Though the cultivation of self-knowledge is not conducive to ease, it is a means of growth in spirit and that is what we most cherish. Our "gift" dare

not lie dormant, but, as Paul writes to Timothy: "I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee. . . . For God has not given us the spirit of fear (that we shrink at the appearance of difficulties) but of power and of love and of a sound mind." The "law of sin" in our members keeps us "in captivity," but we must not allow it to overrule. Like the children of Israel with the Gideonites, Joshua 9, we cannot exterminate our carnal desires, but they must be brought into subjection.

From the Gideonites we may also learn a lesson in submission. In order to save their lives, they considered it reasonable to give up their freedom, accept of any terms and endure any hardships; and the spirit of resignation expressed in their words is an example to us: "And now behold we are in thine hand. As it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do." How reasonable it is that we should be influenced by the hope of everlasting life to mortify our lusts, renounce the world, deny self, and submit wholly and unreservedly to the cross of Christ.

As the earth brings forth thorns and thistles of itself, the destructive growth of evil in us must be checked by frequent and persistent cultivation. So there is no time for idleness if we would keep God's Spirit alive in our souls. As children of light and of the day, it behooves us to obey the counsel of the Apostle Paul, "Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober."

Chembersburg, Pa.

C. L. R.

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### "IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID"

In the fourteenth chapter of St. Matthew we read of a storm at sea, when the disciples of Jesus were in a ship. The ship was being tossed with the waves, the wind being contrary. And in the

fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea, and when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea they were troubled and cried out with fear. But Jesus spake unto them saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Then Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water;" Jesus said, "Come." And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying "Lord, save me." Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him, saying, "Of a truth Thou art the Son of God."

In our journey through life we are often perplexed by temptations and many anxious cares. But if we call on Jesus and hear His gracious words, "It is I; be not afraid," how soul cheering! The same Jesus that encouraged Peter to come to Him also invites us to come. When courage fails and doubts and fears, through our infirmities, almost sink us in despair, we should ever remember that Jesus is ready and willing to help us to overcome. His invitation to come to Him is not only limited to *one* time, but to every time that we call upon Him in faith. We have free access to His throne of grace to "obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4: 16.

Those who are called to obey their Heavenly Father may be tempted that they cannot be faithful;—to such Jesus says the comforting words, "Come, It is I; be not afraid." We should trust in Jesus for if He could still the storm, He can also help us when tried

and tempted, and bring peace and rest unto our souls.

Hagerstown, Md.

C. C. S.

### SOON FORGOTTEN

Life is short, and time is fleeting,  
O, how swiftly years go by!  
Soon we're aged, and awaiting  
For the summons from on high;  
Soon we're called to cross the water,  
Which 'twixt life and death doth flow;  
Rank or station will not matter,  
If a Godly life we show.

High or lofty, mighty, famous,  
Soon our lives will be forgot,  
Soon the world will never name us,  
And our place shall know us not.  
Few will miss us, when we slumber  
In our place beneath the sod;  
Of our friends, tho' great their number,  
Few remember, paths we've trod.

Tho' the birds may come to warble  
Sweetest notes within their breast,  
Sit awhile upon the marble  
Of the place wherein we rest;  
Soon again they're swiftly going,  
To some high or lofty bough,  
Little caring, never knowing,  
Who beneath them sleepeth now.

Cedar trees may cast their shadow  
O'er our head, but soon will pass;  
Gentle murmuring of the breezes  
Rustle through the church-yard grass.  
Lovely flowers may bloom above us,  
But our place is soon forgot.

Thus we rest in dreamless quiet,  
Till the great and final day,  
When the graves again will open,  
And before us judgment lay;  
May we hear the welcome plaudit:  
"Come, thou good and faithful soul,  
Enter now thy joy eternal,  
Thou hast reached the heavenly goal."

Fayetteville, Pa.

C. J. M.

It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. 2 Tim. 2: 11.

### **“SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME”**

There are well-meaning persons who place saving virtue in water baptism. Some go so far as to say that innocent children must be baptized to be saved. The scripture that is referred to as a ground for infant baptism is found in Luke 18:16—“Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

When the disciples asked the Savior, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, “Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

The little child that the Savior had called had not been baptized, yet is was a symbol of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the disciples were told that they must be converted and become as little children before they could enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

From the above scriptures, we would conclude that little children are in the Kingdom of Heaven, and nothing can change that relation as long as they are in their innocency. When they attain to years of accountability they too must be converted as Christ said of the disciples; and as testimony or witness to such change, and on the confession of their faith, they are baptized.

When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, his preaching evidently brought conviction to his hearers, and they said, “Men and brethren what shall we do?” The reply was, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Little children have nothing to repent of; as they have no knowledge of Jesus Christ, they could not be baptized in His name, neither could they be baptized for the remission of sins, because they have not sinned. The last command of the Savior to the disciples was, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Trinity. Infants cannot be taught, and as they have no knowledge of the Trinity, they could not be baptized in that name.

If baptism is essential to the salvation of little children who know nothing of sin, they would be saved by works, but Paul says that we are not saved by works, but alone by faith. If we are saved by faith, then it is not by works. Works are a fruit of faith. “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” James 2:17, 18.

We would admonish all to search the Scriptures. Peter says that baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Under the law it was said,—“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I commanded you.” Are they who baptize infants not adding to God’s word, since Christ said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Mark 16:16.

Williamsville, N. Y.

A. M.

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### **GOD’S OMNIPRESENCE**

“Thou God seest me.” This was the expression of Hagar when she found that God cared for her in the wilderness.



When we consider our limited vision and ability and try to compare ourselves with God, we truly should feel humbled and abased. When we contemplate God in His perfection—His omnipotence, His omniscience, His purity and holiness, and also that His eye penetrates all space, we verily should fear and reverence Him.

"He is the King Eternal, Immortal and Invisible, the only wise God." 1 Tim. 1:17. He created us with wonderful minds, and an immortal soul to save or lose, depending upon our obedience or disobedience. At an early age we are conscious of right and wrong. His grace appears unto us and apprises us of our sinful condition. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. He calls us. Our guilt causes us to fear Him, and like Adam and Eve we would hide from His presence. We seem to forget that, "Thou God seest me," and that we cannot escape His all-seeing eye.

The Psalmist realized this when he said: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into Heaven Thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." Psalm 139. Thus, "All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Heb. 4:13.

Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons to hide their shame and nakedness. This was all in vain; God in mercy later clothed them: "Unto Adam also and to

his wife did the Lord make coats of skins, and clothed them." Gen. 3:21.

The aprons of fig leaves may typify our ineffectual efforts to hide our nakedness by engaging in good and moral works to justify ourselves, and to appease God's wrath and judgment to come. This will not avail. It may only prove our unwillingness to take up our cross and obey and follow Christ.

The skins with which Adam and Eve were covered necessitated first a death of the animals. This may foreshadow the righteousness of Christ and our death to sin before we can receive *His* righteousness. By His death He made the supreme sacrifice for our sins and "was raised again for our justification." "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:4. This blessed Jesus has remitted our sins and now "clothes us with the garments of salvation and covers us with the robe of His righteousness." God's eyes will still be upon us, but no more to bring condemnation and the torment of fear, for "His perfect love casteth out fear," and admits us into communion and fellowship with Him. Now His protecting eyes are over us to preserve us in this blessed and happy relation. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and His ears are open unto their prayers." 1 Peter 3:12.

The consciousness of God's eyes being upon us should inspire us to obedience and deter us from again committing sin. If we put our trust in Him, "He will never leave nor forsake us." The Psalmist proclaims His watchful care: "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

Does the sinner who often seeks the cover of the night to perpetrate his evil

deeds realize that "Thou God seest me." The darkness may hide him from the eyes of man, but not from the eyes of God—"the darkness and the light are both alike to Him." Though to our mortal eyes God is an invisible, incomprehensible, mysterious Being, the day shall come when all eyes shall behold Him: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Rev. 1:7. This event will usher in the final Judgment Day, "when the dead both small and great shall stand before God;" when every soul will be "judged according to their works" and receive their final reward, either to enter the joys of Heaven, or be cast into "outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 8:12.

In that day of reckoning what shall be the consternation of those souls that tried to hide from God's all-seeing eye and continued in sin! Then God's eye will be upon them as a "flame of fire." They will, in their dire extremity, say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall upon us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne and the wrath of the Lamb." What, too, will be the awful disappointment of those who tried to hide their nakedness with the cloak of their own righteousness, or with a religious worship which yet ignored the doctrine of Christ, unwilling to be clothed upon by the robe of His righteousness, "which is the righteousness of the saints," and which only will satisfy the pure and holy eyes of God. These, it is said, will hear the awful sentence, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." This will be the final decree of the great Judge of all the earth. There will be no appeal, no revocation

to all eternity. Their destiny is sealed forever.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

### CONVERSION

"Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18: 3.

There can be no question but that it is the will of God that all men shall be saved. This He has repeatedly declared in His word. He has also made ample provision that all may be saved and invites, entreats, and beseeches everyone to come and receive the great salvation which has been wrought; and it is declared that He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to Him through Jesus Christ.

The Holy Scriptures were given to direct man and instruct him how to be saved. The above text settles the matter conclusively, that no one can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven except he becomes converted.

A certain devotional writer, one of our early ministers, has called attention to the fact that conversion is the work of four distinct operations; each one in succession being a consequence of that which precedes it.

The first operation is a sense and knowledge of sin. This is wrought and brought about by the law of God. The soul by this knowledge and sense is overwhelmed with terror and guilt, and if heeded this operation brings on repentance, which could not take place unless the other preceded it.

The operation of repentance leads to a cessation from sinful acts and deeds, so that there is a change in the outward walk and conversation. But repentance does not take away the guilt of sin, nor does it change the disposition of the heart in which the vicious disposition of

self-love, or the flesh, will still be perceptible. But God, in His wisdom and power, turns this to the advantage of the penitent soul by bringing him more fully into humility, submission, and subjection by the perception of his own baseness and utter impotency, and the necessity of a better righteousness than he can attain of himself; by this experience he is brought to the feet of Christ. Here the third operation is experienced, being brought about by the two preceding it.

Christ reveals Himself to all such sin-sick and lost souls, as having wrought a sufficient righteousness to make them acceptable to God, since by His death He made a full satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins which had so greatly terrified them. Here then they can see that there is full and complete satisfaction offered to God for all the sins committed. Now the whole power, and every faculty of the soul is subdued and subjected but is not yet changed.

The fourth operation comes in as a consequence of the three preceding it. The promise of the Savior is that He will send the Comforter, or the Holy Ghost, who will infuse the love of God into the heart. By this means, man receives power to become a child of God and is quickened, renewed, regenerated and the kingdom of God is erected within him. Christ said, He and the Father will make their abode with such and sup with them. God is love, and all His influence and reign is love. This is what makes heaven; and as He now rules in the soul by the same influence and power that rules in heaven, that which is wrought by the change set forth is called the kingdom of heaven.

Stevensville, Ont.

R. S. B.

### TIME AND ETERNITY

The passing time is measured by days and years. Between the day of our birth

and the day of our death is embraced the full extent of time for us. This period affords us an opportunity to decide for ourselves our future state, for our eternal happiness depends upon our acceptance of Jesus Christ as a Savior *now* in this blessed time of preparation and probation. "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." We are born into the world, endure for the span of our natural life, are cut down and fly away. This is true of nations as well as of individuals. Nations arise in the world for a time, and pass away.

We are inclined to speculate upon the extent of time and the great mystery in which the future is enshrouded. No doubt our Creator had a wise purpose in not revealing to us what we have no need for now and probably could not grasp or comprehend. We are admonished to seek first "the kingdom of God and His righteousness." Each day we find evil promptings present that ~~help~~ us to understand what Jesus meant when He said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

A certain writer has made the following comparison: "High up in the north in the land called Smithjod, there stands a rock. It is one hundred miles high and one hundred miles wide. Once every one thousand years a little bird comes to this rock to sharpen its beak. When the rock has thus been worn away, then a single day of eternity will have gone by." This is impressive, but to believe that eternity cannot be measured is sublime. It can be imagined inasmuch as we "now see through a glass darkly." As finite beings our concern should be for the present. The thought that it must cease makes our time here all the more precious.

We believe the earth shall pass away but that the soul of man is immortal and during this period of grace God shows His blessings upon all, "For He

maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

The fact that we are happy here does not in itself prove that we shall continue to be so when time (grace) has passed by. It may be said, "they have their reward." "They that know Thee, the True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" shall have received the Life which as we have written is not only now and forever, but which was before the world. Let us examine ourselves. Does not all that we really call happiness depend upon the extent to which we allow Light, Love—God to enter our lives? Does not godlessness bring with it only shadows, darkness and unhappiness? We can and do experience the fruits of both conditions while sojourning in this period. After all we cannot conceive of an existence without God, much less realize what it would mean to be addressed thus, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25: 41.

As for those who have been obedient and have received Life, it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. 2: 9. But to comprehend even darkly or in part, the spiritual life, we must be born again; we must now become subjects of this Kingdom of which Jesus is Ruler, and continue loyal to be justified in the hope of reigning with Him in the next world, which we are accustomed to regard as eternity.

Lancaster, Pa.

M. H. B.

### THE WAY TO HEAVEN

"He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life." John 5: 24.

The Savior spoke much concerning the glories of the heavenly kingdom, and wished to impress upon the minds of His hearers, that He being the way, the truth and the life, was the means whereby they could find peace and rest for their souls.

When He was transfigured upon the mount and Moses and Elijah had vanished, signifying that the law was fulfilled and the prophecies had ceased, the Voice from heaven exclaimed, "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." The declaration, "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live," signifies that those who are dead in trespasses and sin and who hear and obey shall be raised to newness of life. "In Him was life and that Life was the light of men."

It would not avail to hear and not obey His word. There must be evidence of a change of heart, through regeneration, for faith without works is dead. To hear His word and believe on Him that sent Him, will release the soul from the bondage of sin and bring peace and joy to the mind; it will restore fellowship and communion with God, and it has "the promise of the life that now is and that which is to come." Everlasting life is the goal sought by all, but attained only by those who strive lawfully, and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Solomon's counsel to "remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth" is appealing, though sad, for it gives evidence that man is not inclined, as he grows to maturity, to hear and love the Lord, but would rather turn away from Him who alone can speak peace to his soul. Man is endowed with many blessings in this life for the noble purpose of praising God and loving mankind. The soul which yields to the selfish emotions of

the heart and the dictates of the carnal mind is helpless. Only by submitting to the will of the Lord and yielding to His grace does the soul come into its true possession of everlasting life.

"And shall not come into condemnation,"—peace awaits the regenerate soul, who is willing to deny self, take up the cross and follow the Master. If he lives aright, consecrating all to Him who gave him life, he has accomplished the object of his being and will not know condemnation, for over such the second death shall have no power.

"Is passed from death unto life"—a state most glorious and sublime, but is given only to those who desire to be chosen and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. When King Agrippa acknowledged to the Apostle Paul that he was almost persuaded to be a Christian, saying, "I will hear you again at a more convenient season," he desired life, but was not willing to accept the means whereby he could obtain it. Multitudes seem impressed, see the open door, the beckoning hand, the joys beyond, hear the words, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," and receive the counsel, "My love, my dove, my fair one come away;" but still give evidence of awaiting a more convenient season, trifling with time, with God and eternity.

The Savior came that we might have life and might have it more abundantly. His words to the unsaved, "Why will ye die and not live" assure us He opened the way to the tree of life, that all could come to the knowledge of the truth and live. Knowing a change of heart and fidelity to God are imperative to future bliss, why should we hesitate to secure that which will be to our eternal good?

Williamsville, N. Y. W. S. N.

## GOOD TIDINGS

GOOD TIDINGS finds a welcome  
In the believers' home,  
Its lessons are instructive  
To all who seek the throne.

It brings to us a message  
To cheer us day by day,  
Gives strength that we may ever  
Walk in the narrow way.

It also is a teacher  
To all who love the Lord;  
Tells us to live in unity  
And walk in one accord.

Its teaching will direct us  
To seek the God of love;  
That when life's cares are ended  
We'll share that home above.

Sterling, Ill.

C. F. M.

## KING DAVID'S FLIGHT AND THE DEATH OF ABSALOM

After King David and his servants fled, Absalom and his friends came to Jerusalem and Ahithophel counselled Absalom how to proceed. Hushai also came and Absalom expressed surprise, asking him why he was not with King David. Hushai replied, saying, "Shall I not serve in the presence of the son as I did in the father's presence?"

Ahithophel's counsel was, "Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night, and I will come upon him while he is weary and weak-handed and will make him afraid and all the people that are with him shall flee and I will smite the King only, and I will bring back all the people unto thee."

This counsel pleased Absalom, but he wished also to hear what Hushai would advise. Hushai told him to wait, gather a large army and go to the battle in his own person. He said David and his men were mighty, chafed in their minds and like a bear robbed of her whelps, were mighty, valiant men of war.



Absalom concluded Hushai's counsel was better, so Ahithophel's counsel was defeated.

Hushai at once sent word by Ahimaz and Jonathan to tell David not to lodge in the wilderness, but to pass on hastily. These messengers were seen when they set out and men were sent to capture them, but a woman hid them in a well in her house, covering the mouth or top of the well with a cloth on which she had spread meal. The men were not found although the woman's house was searched. The men delivered their message to David who with his men crossed the river Jordan in safety.

When Ahithophel found that his counsel was not followed, he foresaw that Absalom's cause was lost, and not wishing to share in his disgrace he returned to his own home and took his life.

Absalom made Amasa captain of his host. Amasa was also a nephew of David. David and his men were weary and hungry and some of his friends met him at Mahanaim with sheep, wheat, barley flour, honey, parched corn, butter and cheese of kine, also beds and earthen vessels. Among these friends were Barzillai, Shobi and Machir.

David divided his army into three divisions under Joab, Abishai and Ittai. He wished to go with his men to battle but they refused to let him go, saying, "If we flee they will not care for us, it is you they wish to destroy and thou art worth ten thousand of us." David consented and said, "What seemeth best to you I will do, but deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom." He gave this command to his captains and all the people heard his request.

The armies of David and Absalom met and the battle occurred in a dense wood of Ephraim. There was a great slaughter. Absalom rode on a mule under the thick boughs of a great oak tree where

his head was caught in its branches. He hanged there while his mule ran on leaving him hanging on the oak. A man seeing him there ran to tell Joab of it. Joab asked why he did not kill Absalom, he would have given him a reward. The man replied, though he had been given a much greater reward he would not have disobeyed King David who had requested that they do Absalom no harm. Joab however was proof against any such feeling and went after him at once. He thrust three darts through his body and they then cast the body into a great pit, while Absalom's army fled to their tents. Joab had the trumpet blown to recall his army from pursuing Absalom's men.

Earlier Absalom had erected a tomb for himself which stood for many years, although his body was never placed there but was left in the pit covered with a great heap of stones.

David sat between the gates waiting to hear the news. Ahimaz, who earlier had carried messages to David, wished to take him word of the battle and its results, but Cushai was first sent and Ahimaz followed.

David's first question was, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" This seemed to be his greatest concern and when he learned of Absalom's death he wept and refused to be comforted, saying, "Oh, Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee, Oh, Absalom, my son, my son."

When Joab heard how David lamented he reproved him, for it seemed his army had returned by stealth, as though they were ashamed and it looked as though David cared more for Absalom than he did for his army and friends. So the victory that day was turned into mourning.

David then aroused from his grief. He did not at once return to Jerusalem but remained beyond Jordan until he

was certain the tribes would feel to recall him since they had chosen another for their king.

But all the tribes had a desire to return to David and they blamed one another for their rebellion. The tribe of Judah had been headquarters of the rebellion, with Amasa active in Absalom's cause, so David made him captain of the host in Joab's place. David was asked to return to Jerusalem which thing he did.

Shemei who had cursed David when he fled from Absalom came to the king and asked to be forgiven.

Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, also came to meet David. He had not dressed his feet, trimmed his beard, nor changed his clothes from the day of David's departure until his return, thus showing his fidelity to David and the unfaithfulness of Ziba. His possessions inherited from King Saul were restored to him by David.

Borzillai, who had befriended David when the latter was in need and in great distress, also came to help conduct him to Jerusalem. He could have remained in Jerusalem, for it was David's wish that he be near. But he said the infirmities of age were pressing upon him, as he now was fourscore years of age and why should he stay and be a burden. He spake touchingly and with feeling. Then after King David had kissed and blessed him he returned to his own home.

The tribe of Judah had possession of Jerusalem and had been foremost in following Absalom. A jealous feeling arose between the ten tribes and the tribe of Judah. A man named Sheba raised an insurrection and the ten tribes followed after him. Amasa, who had charge of the tribe of Judah, was sent in pursuit of Sheba. As Amasa did not return as soon as he was expected Joab and Abishai were sent after Sheba. They met Amasa and his men at Gibeon and Joab

cruelly and treacherously killed Amasa and again took command of the forces. Sheba was captured and put to death and Joab returned to Jerusalem. There were numerous wars with the Philistines and giants of formidable size (having six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot) took part in one of the battles. They were of the family of Goliath whom David had earlier slain. David was in great danger and his officers told him, "Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle that thou quench not the light of Israel."

David then composed the beautiful words contained in the eighteenth Psalm, enumerating his deliverance from the hands of his enemies and enumerating the mercies of God.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

### A CHILD'S STORY

My dear little children:

I am going to tell you a story about St. Peter. When Jesus was here He chose twelve men to be His Disciples. He called them to come and follow Him.

Jesus saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. He called to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Peter had been catching fish for the market, and in that way made a livelihood; we might think he would hesitate or might have said he would think about it first, and arrange matters before he could give up his work, but immediately he left his net and followed Jesus.

Peter was with Jesus and heard that wonderful sermon on the Mount. He saw the miracles that Jesus did after He came down from the Mount, when He healed the man who was a leper, and cured of palsey a centurion's servant.

Later Jesus went to the home of Peter where his wife's mother was sick with a

fever. He touched her hand and the fever left her and she arose and waited upon them.

No doubt Peter, after seeing all these wonderful cures and hearing the words that Jesus spoke, was fully convinced that Jesus was Christ. He was a man that was quick to see and do what he thought was right.

One thing we notice about Peter, he was in almost every instance the first one to answer and is nearly always named first when the disciples were called, or spoken about.

On one occasion Peter and others of the disciples were fishing all night and caught nothing. At daybreak Jesus stood on the shore and called to those in the boat, "Children have ye any meat?" Then one of the number recognized the voice of Jesus, and began to say how good it was that He had come when they were so discouraged, but instead of making any remark, Peter put on his coat and jumped overboard and swam to the shore to be first to welcome and show his joy in meeting his Master.

At a certain place there was much inquiry and wonder as to whether Jesus was the Christ. Some thought He was one of the old prophets who had risen

from the dead. After they had told what the people said about Him, then as if to prove them, Jesus asked the question "But whom say ye that I am?" Here again Peter is first and with these wonderful words said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter knew what he believed and was willing to say that Jesus was the Savior of the world.

We see so much to admire in Peter, perhaps it is because we see so much of the human in him. He makes us think of ourselves, that we too are weak, and often make mistakes, and we are glad to know that with all Peter's failings he still was a faithful and much loved disciple of his Master.

We love to think of Peter's zeal  
How promptly he obeyed  
When Jesus said, "Come follow Me,"  
No longer he delayed.

Impulsive, quick in word and deed  
Was Peter's usual way,  
And much indeed he had to learn  
From Jesus day by day.

But God who knows the hearts of men  
Can guide their steps aright.  
And Peter's love and fervent zeal  
Found favor in His sight.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.