

Established in Faith

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

THE TRUE CHILD OF GOD

is admonished to be on the alert to make progress, both in knowledge as well as in grace. In this scripture, the Apostle Paul emphasizes that the followers of the Master should be ‘rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith.’ This scriptural admonition, if wisely received in the hearts of the consecrated Christian, will be of great encouragement to his people now living at the end of this present Gospel Age.

This condition of steadfastness is one in which the consecrated child of God is anchored, and “which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” (Heb. 6:19) Paul also encourages, “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised.)” (Heb. 10:23) The Scriptures present to us a broad spiritual balance,

in that they reveal the necessity of true Christian progress, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of being rooted and grounded in the faith—"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."—Eph. 4:14

In our text, the apostle is addressing those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Redeemer, and who, through full consecration to do the Heavenly Father's will, have been accepted as potential members of the body of Christ. These understand that it is the Divine will that through our Lord Jesus—as Head of the church—and his body, will soon establish his kingdom upon the earth. Through that kingdom, he will deliver mankind from the power of sin and death. All those who are in Christ Jesus have received him with this calling and understanding. This is the only message which God has sent through his Word. This is "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3

It is these consecrated Christians to whom Paul admonishes that they continue in the faith, not combining earthly philosophy or understanding with this heavenly message. Having received Christ Jesus, and having been accepted as members of his body, they are to realize the ultimate Truth that in him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:3) Furthermore, they are to understand that in him, "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." (vss. 9,10) Having thus recognized and accepted him as their master, and heavenly

teacher, they are admonished to continue to make progress in being rooted and grounded in him. They thus place themselves in a position to partake more and more of his wonderful Spirit of truth, realizing that any other course of action would serve to confuse and confound the heavenly message in their minds and hearts.

THE ROOTS OF FAITH

Turning from the figure of a man walking in Christ Jesus as a member of his body, the apostle in our text, (Col. 2:6,7) gives us the illustration of a tree, the root of which goes ever more downward, and the trunk, together with its branches which reach ever upward to obtain that nourishment will give it strength and stability. In this beautiful illustration, which has been taken from our natural surroundings, the Christian life and its relationship to Christ Jesus is seen as the roots of faith that push down deep into the knowledge of the Divine plan, while the branches of character grow higher and higher, developing and maturing the rich fruits of the Holy Spirit of God.

While the Christian is growing up in character likeness to our Redeemer, and the roots of his faith are reaching down into the deep things of the Word of God, he is becoming more established and settled in the knowledge and Spirit of Christ. Paul teaches, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the

world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”—I Cor. 2:10-12

A tree that is well rooted in the earth is able to withstand the violent winds and storms that may come upon it, and so it is with the Christian whose faith has been properly established. He should be so fixed and firmly established in the promises of God, and so filled with the spirit of those promises, that no winds of doctrine can overturn his faith or shake his confidence in the Divine will concerning him. The apostle cautions against a contrary spirit, and to be alert toward those who would otherwise lead the Lord's people astray. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.”—II Tim. 4:3

It is not a sign of spiritual health and growth for one to be ever looking around for something new and different. When we first learned about the Divine plan, and our blessings associated therein as called to be members of the body of Christ, it was proper that we should be on the alert. We wanted to find the best possible explanation of God and his ultimate design and purpose concerning the human family, and his plan of reconciliation and restitution for the sin-sick and dying human creation. When we were gradually favored by God with a true and better understanding of his glorious plans and purposes, we saw revealed therein the length, breadth, height, and depth of Divine love and the wondrous harmony of the Scriptures. In our hearts, we knew, and rightfully so, that it was the answer to all our questions, even as the psalmist proclaimed, “He satisfieth the

longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.”—Ps. 107:9

After God has thus shined into our hearts through the precious word of Truth, and in responding properly to this evidence of his grace, we went on to the next step and presented ourselves in full consecration to do his will. We are assured that as a result of our actions we would be accepted as members of the body of Christ, and also trust that our spiritual vision would be enlarged and enriched.

The plan of God as revealed in his Word furnishes an abundant source for research and study in spiritual things. Let us therefore be more diligent in searching the promises of God for our information and guidance. There is virtually no limit to these glorious promises, and it is by this means alone that we may become established in the true faith. Such looking into the Word of God will help establish us in the proper spirit of the Divine plan and to maintain a clear vision of the Father’s will for us with respect to that plan. Our spirit should be one of deepest gratitude and thankfulness that we have been granted this glorious Divine revelation. It will be by thus following in the Lord’s way that we will find the only true joy and will be able to make progress that is authorized and encouraged in the Word of God.

The Truth of the Divine plan embraces all of the scriptural teachings relative to Christ and his work as well as our own relationship to him as members of his body. We should familiarize ourselves with the many important features of this Truth. This glorious faith which was once delivered unto the saints is firmly founded in the Word of God. No matter how

searching and scrutinizing our study may be, it will cause the Truth to shine out more beautifully and to convince us more than ever how truly wonderful it is in every aspect.

To be established in this faith, we should know what our Lord taught, and why he taught it. We should learn how to connect the different aspects of the Truth into one harmonious whole. In this way, we will become thoroughly furnished, not only in the knowledge of the Divine plan, but in the manner in which that plan is to be a guide in our lives, and with the desire to do the Father's will. Step by step we learn that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (II Tim. 3:16,17) It is in the personal application of the Truth that its real importance becomes most apparent.

DOCTRINAL ROOTS

The firmly established Christian is confident of his standing in the Truth because he knows, through a consistent study of God's Word, that the doctrines of Christ to which he has subscribed are firmly established therein. Knowing this, he realizes also that the responsibility for these doctrines is not his, but the Lord's. Being confident of the Divine will for himself, and of the Divine plan to bless all the families of the earth in due time, he is willing to give all of his attention to serving and pleasing the Lord. He is assured of the Lord's guidance and direction.

To boldly stand for the Truth and to uncompromisingly present it to others does not mean that we

are judging and condemning those who may not have the same understanding that we do in spiritual matters. We should be sure first of our own position and to not adopt a compromising policy as described by the Apostle James, as being “double minded,” and therefore “unstable” in all our ways.—James 1:8

Those who are firmly established in the faith once delivered unto the saints, and who have partaken of the spirit of that glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, are therefore in a more responsible position to exercise tolerance toward others who may not be as certain of their Christian beliefs. To be rooted and established in the Truth means that one has found the will and purpose of God. The assurance of his position in the Truth and his standing with the Lord should produce in him an amiable and sympathetic attitude toward those who may not be so richly blessed.

Let us, therefore, seek to avoid all snares and pitfalls that may be set for us by the Adversary in these days of final testing upon the consecrated people of God. We are now living at a time during these closing years of the Gospel Age when faith in God and in his Word is being ignored or challenged, and yet it is a time when the truly consecrated and enlightened children of God have much to strengthen their faith in the wonderful promises of his Word. It is a time for the lifting up of the head in confidence and full assurance of faith rejoicing in the clear vision of Truth with which our returned and present Lord has favored his people. We are living in a most momentous time in the history of the world.

It is a blessed privilege that all of the consecrated may enjoy today. In order for the Lord's people to

hold up the banner of Truth against a worldly spirit, they will need to be more and more emptied of self, and filled with the Spirit of God and his spirit of love. We become filled with the Spirit of God by continued, energetic and careful study of his Word. It is with an earnest endeavor that we must apply its principles in our daily lives, and we will find that it is the spirit of a sound mind which will give us a sense of balance in relation not only to a proper appreciation and understanding of the Truth itself, but also of all our experiences as Christ's followers.

Being firmly established in the faith and fully convinced of all its many implications insofar as our relationship to the Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus is concerned, we will vow to tolerate no deflection on our own part from the course of true fidelity to the Divine will and purpose.

While granting no liberties to ourselves outside of the clear expression of the Divine will for us, we should nevertheless grant full liberty of thought and conscience to others, by leaving them in the Lord's hands. Let us patiently and carefully watch for opportunities to do all in our power to assist and bless others to see the way of Truth more clearly.

We know that the plan of reconciliation and recovery from the penalty of sin and death that remains over all mankind will come to an end in due time. In this wonderful realization, we trust and praise our loving Heavenly Father. The Prophet Isaiah, looking forward to that grand time, says, "It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:9 ■