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IF YE DO THESE THINGS.

“For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”-2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

THIS statement of the Apostle Peter is suggestive of several important thoughts. It indicates the possibility to the class addressed, of “an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” This is the prize of the high calling of the overcoming saints of the Gospel Age. True, when we consider its exceeding glory, faith is prone to stagger at the promise that, poor and imperfect though we be, God proposes in the ages to come to how the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:7.) Nevertheless, such is the case: “unto us are given the exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust”—through the worldly desires, “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” (2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 2:16).

These exceeding great and precious promises contemplate the adoption of these called ones by the great Sovereign of the whole universe as His sons and heirs; as joint-heirs with His only begotten Son, the heir of all things; they shall be with Him where He is, and behold His glory; and they shall put off this mortality, and, like Him, who is “the express image of the Father’s person,” they shall be clothed with immortality. So shall they be forever with the Lord, and see Him as He is; for they shall be like Him. Having overcome the world, they shall sit with Him in His throne, even as He overcame and sat down with the Father in His throne (Rev. 3:21).

“Fear not, little flock,” says the prospective Bridegroom of the church, “for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32), “for the Father Himself loveth you, ‘because ye have loved Me and have believed that I came out from God.’” Nor will He give the kingdom to His beloved grudgingly, for Peter says, “an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly”; there will be a glorious welcome, a joyous greeting, and a coronation jubilee among all the heavenly hosts when the laurels of victory are placed upon the heads of all the overcoming soldiers of the cross—the heroes who nobly fought the good fight of faith—who kept the faith, fought the fight against the world, the flesh and the devil, and finished their course in faithfulness even unto death.

All this abundance of grace and glory is the possible inheritance of even the weakest saint, who, trusting not to his own ability to make his calling and election sure, humbly looks to God for strength from day to

day to endure hardness as a good soldier. If any man attempts to do this in his own strength, he must surely fail; for the fiery trial that is to try everyone will prove too much for the mind of the flesh; but God who worketh in the consecrated to will and to do His good pleasure, will so fortify and equip those who depend upon His grace, that, with the Psalmist, they can say, "It is

God that girdeth me with strength . . . By Thee I have run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall"; and with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." (Psa. 18:32, 29; Phil. 4:13.)

Let us not fear, then, to lay hold upon the exceeding great and precious promises when we are so fully assured that He who has begun the good work in us will finish it, if we let Him. (Phil. 1:6.) "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith" (1 John 5:4); not faith in ourselves; for we can have no confidence in the flesh. The poor, weak and faltering flesh does not warrant us in reposing confidence in its ability to fulfil the great responsibilities of soldiers of the cross. We must draw our supplies of wisdom and strength from above: they are not within us except as implanted there by the Spirit of God.

We next notice that while Peter's words encouragingly indicate the possibility of the glorious inheritance to all who are called, there is also the implied possibility of failure to enter into it. There an "if," a contingency, upon which the scales of Divine Judgment as to our worthiness or unworthiness of the inheritance, must turn. And it is in view of this contingency that Paul urges all the called ones to great sobriety of mind and carefulness of conduct, saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12), and again, "Let us, therefore, fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Heb. 4:1). It is not enough, therefore, that we have consecrated ourselves to God as living sacrifices; that we have covenanted to follow in the footsteps of Jesus; for the consecration, the covenant, the promise, will avail nothing if we prove unfaithful to it, except to rise up in judgment against us. "Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay" (Eccl. 5:4, 5). See also (Deut. 23:21, 23; Prov. 20:25; Het). 10:38, 39; Psa. 15; Luke 9:62).

Our attention is next drawn to what is implied in this expressed contingency, "If ye do these things." What things? The reference is to the things mentioned in the preceding verses, viz., that with all diligence, we add to our faith, fortitude; and to fortitude, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

It is important to observe here, that while all of these virtues are essential requirements of those who would be esteemed of God as faithful, they are only of value as they are added to, or built upon a foundation of faith—"Giving all diligence, add to your faith"—your "precious faith," as described in verse 1. This faith is our abiding confidence in the Divine Plan of Salvation, which centres in the redemption accomplished through the precious blood of Christ, who freely gave Himself a ransom. for all. No righteousness of our own, without this foundation of faith, can avail anything to commend us to God. All our works of righteousness must be built upon this faith.

But is not faith in Christ sufficient unto salvation without the subsequent doing of anything? To this, the Scriptures plainly answer that a faith that Christ will save us in our sins, while we still love sin and do the works of sin, is a misplaced faith; for Christ never proposed to save us in our sins, but from our sins.

God is faithful to forgive sins and to cleanse from all unrighteousness those who come unto Him by Christ, through faith in His shed blood (sacrificed life), as the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins, and in His cleansing power.

“He that saith, I know Him (Christ, as my Lord and Saviour), and keepeth not His commandments (to do the works of righteousness, and to bring forth the fruits of repentance from sins), is a liar,” says the Apostle John, “and the truth is not in him.” (1 John 2:4.) Therefore, the Apostle Paul also exhorts believers, saying: “Beloved, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12, 13).

It was God that provided for us the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and it is God who has drawn us unto Himself, and who has promised us all needed grace to walk in the paths of righteousness; end more, even to follow in the footprints of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While, therefore, with fear and trembling—with great carefulness—we endeavour to work out our salvation, it is our privilege always to realise the promised grace to help in every time of need, and to be confident that our best efforts toward righteousness are acceptable to God when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith.

Having this foundation, then, and "having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"—through the desires of the flesh—and having by faith - - bold also on the "exceeding great and precious promises" of being made partakers of the divine nature and joint-heirs with Christ in His kingdom and glorified being anxious to make our "calling and election sure" let us consider these additions to our faith, which, possessed and continuously cultivated, are the assurance that we shall never fall, and that an abundant entrance into the kingdom shall be granted to us.

The first addition (virtue) is fortitude or strength of character in righteousness. This implies the cultivation of the strictest integrity in our dealings, both with God and our fellow men, scrupulous honesty, justice, and truth being the only standard. The Psalmist clearly defines it thus, saying, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour; in whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not (i.e., who will not violate a contract found to be unfavourable to himself), He that putteth not out his money to usury (taking unjust advantage of the necessities of others), nor taketh reward against the innocent, He that doeth these things shall never be moved." (Psa. 15.) Such a one is a virtuous man, a man of fortified or strong character.

The second addition is knowledge—the knowledge of God and of His righteous will concerning us, revealed through His Word, by the Holy Spirit. Neglect of this divinely appointed means of knowledge is equivalent to setting up our own imperfect standard of righteousness and ignoring the divine standard. It is, therefore, important that we give all diligence to the study of the divine oracles that we may be fortified in faith and works accordingly.

The third addition, self-control, is one of the most important elements of good character. "He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." is the counsel of the wise man; and many a victorious general has yet to learn to conquer and control himself. Self-control has to do with all our sentiments, thoughts, tastes, appetites, labours, pleasures, sorrows, and hopes. Its cultivation, therefore, means a high order of character development. Self-control, accompanied by faith, fortitude, knowledge from on high, implies increased zeal and activity in divine things, and increased moderation in earthly things, in judgment, in conduct, in the regulation of temporal affairs, etc. "Let your moderation be known unto all men." (Phil. 4:5.)

The fourth addition is patience. Time is a very necessary element in the process of perfecting every good thing.

The fruit too soon plucked is the unripe, hard, bitter fruit. Time, as well as pruning and fertilising and

cultivating, and shower and sunshine, is necessary to develop the ripe and luscious fruitage that delights the taste. So it is also with the development of plans and purposes, of education and of grace. God's deep designs work out slowly, not only in His great universal government, but also in the hearts and minds of His intelligent creatures. God is operating all things according to His own will, along the lines of the fixed principles of His wise and righteous laws—physical, moral and intellectual. To be impatient in any case is foolishly to insist upon having the unripe, bitter fruitage, which, if the Lord grant it, will prove a sickening penalty for the impatience that demanded it. "Let patience have her perfect work" (James 1:4). "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him" (Psa. 37:7). Wait the Lord's time and way and the indications of His will in every case, both with regard to ourselves and others, and "they that put their trust in Him shall never be confounded."

Faith, fortitude and knowledge prepare God's people to have patience with every effort toward good, however weak—patience with the poor blinded world, with the "babes in Christ," with the slow and stupid, with the excitable and blundering, with the over-confident Peters and the skeptical Thomases. But to have patience or fellowship with the "unfruitful works of darkness" and sin, is a perversion of this grace; for these, wherever found, should be promptly and sharply reprov'd, and rebuked according to their evil intent, with patience, nevertheless, toward the repentant prodigals, and always with meekness.

It is noticeable that the Lord seems to forewarn His people of the great need of patience in the "harvest" or end of this age, patience toward fellow-men, and patience in the warfare against evil, and in waiting for the Lord's time and method of setting right the wrongs of "the present world." The poor world, lacking faith, fortitude, -knowledge of the Divine Plan, and patience, will fall a ready prey to unrest and anarchy in the near future. The Word of the Lord to His people is, "Ye have need of patience" (Heb. 10:36).

The fifth addition is godliness, god-likeness, piety—that devout, controlling reverence for God which yields a hearty, cheerful, loving conformity to His will—fervency of spirit in serving the Lord. This is a later development and a vital element in the Christian character. Piety, godliness, springs spontaneously from appreciative and grateful hearts, whose delight is in the law of the Lord, in meditation upon His precepts and promises, and in secret communion with God in prayer and praise. Loving, cheerful activity must result from such an inner life for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and the whole being is quickened to new life. Only those who have a living faith in God, and who are fortifying their characters against evil, and growing in knowledge and self-control and patience, are prepared to appreciate the grandeur of the divine character; and only such are really energised by a desire for God-likeness.

The sixth addition is brotherly kindness which, of necessity, grows out of godliness. As god-likeness presupposes the other graces mentioned, so its development implies an appreciation of divine justice and beneficence and will broaden and deepen our sentiments toward all the well-disposed, however imperfect, and especially will it enlarge our hearts to all who are of the household of faith—"the brethren."

The seventh addition is charity, love—the bond of perfectness which unites all the other graces, and, as a name, stands for them all.

Love to God alone is not the full manifestation of this grace; nor can there be, according to the teachings of God's Word, a sincere love for God, without a corresponding love to man: "If a man say, I love God," says the Apostle John, "and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 Jno. 4:20). And Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one for another" (John 13:35).

It is the abounding of these graces of character added to our faith in Christ as our Redeemer and Saviour that insures the soul against the possibility of falling: "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall." The

contingency is not in the doing of these things perfectly, and regardless of the righteousness of Christ to cover our transgressions and compensate for our daily shortcomings; but if, added to our faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, we have cultivated all these graces to the extent of our ability, we shall not fall. When we have done all that we can do, we are still unprofitable servants, not daring to trust in our own righteousness, but in the ample robe which is ours by faith in Christ, while, with consistent "diligence," we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that the righteousness of Christ is only applied to such as desire to forsake sin and to pursue that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14) .

A PRAYER OF FAITH AND LOVE,

Father, I lay my hand in Thine to-clay,
Thou knowest all my need.
Thy power will keep me through the unknown way,
Thy loving hand will lead,

And there is One beside me when I pray
Who lives to intercede.
Father, I bring my work for Thee to bless,
My thoughts for Thee to guide,

Trusting Thy love and
Thy great tenderness,
Whatever may betide,
Fearing no longer loss or loneliness

Since Thou art by my side.
Father, I dedicate my life to Thee,
Cleanse it from every ill,
Help me to be what

Thou would'st have me be,
Teach me to do Thy will,
And in love's confidence, from sin set free,
To trust Thee, and be still.
A.R.G.

PEOPLES PAPER.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression "sed, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

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SHAKING THE HEAVENS.

WHILE there is undoubtedly a general shaking of the religious systems that has been in progress for many years, there is just as certainly a general testing of those who have learned the present truth. "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire."

It is evidently possible to build upon the true foundation, Jesus Christ, wood, hay, and stubble; wrong teachings and wrong methods. but only if our faith structure be the gold, silver and precious stones, will it stand the fire (1 Cor. 3. 10-14).

Some are apt to think we take too narrow a view in respect of our privilege of knowledge of the present truth. They perceive that there are many good people still associated with the churches of Christendom, and seem to long after old fellowship and so be willing to compromise the truth.

It would seem that many forget the joy which the present truth brought them.; also the responsibility of holding forth the word of life, and preserving the pureness of doctrine.

When we heard the "knock" (Rev. 3:20) of our Lord's presence, how glad we were; when we tasted of the feast to which He invited us (Luke 12:37), how sweet it was. No wonder we are admonished to "buy the truth and sell it not."

The church of God is to be the pillar and ground of the truth, the preserver of the light. What kind of a light keeper would he be who did not keep the lens clear, so that the light should shine in all its power and beauty to guide the mariner on the ocean and guard from dangerous reefs?

There are, no doubt, many good people still bound in church associations, and even in such delusions as Christian Science or Theosophy, etc. There were many good living Pharisees in our Lord's day connected with the Synagogues, but those who clung to the "old bottles" could not enjoy the "new wine." The "wheat" had to come away or else be 'burned up with the "chaff."

Those who prefer to remain with Christendom, compromising (the Laodicean spirit) truth and principle, are to be taken as partaking in her sins and to receive of her plagues (Rev. 18:4).

It is not for us to judge who is who, or to decide whether or not there are true Christians here or there. If we have heard the call to "come out of her my people." we should come out and stay out and "Be ye separate." If the Lord says, "come out," it means that He is out, and we wish to be where He is—though "despised and rejected."

If He has "spued out Christendom" (Rev. 3:16), which, we may say, daily shows evidence of having been "cast off," are we going to be like Lot's wife, looking back and longing for old associations?

No, let us flee to the mountain (kingdom), for He who is with us, is able to direct us and care for us "though all the world forsake."

Some who have "let slip the things we have heard," have been "busy spreading errors, and besides having reached the position of those who say, "the Lord delayeth His coming"—denying the parousia or presence of Christ, prior to His manifestation—they teach that He is to come again in human form, to be visible to all the world, though Jesus said, "The world seeth Me no more." They also deny that there is ally personal devil, and teach the anti-ransom and anti-Christian theory _of Universalism.

This condition seems to illustrate the statement, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness."

While some let slip the things we have received, the truth remains as clear and beautiful as ever. One cannot add anything to the Divine Plan to make it any better, or take anything from it to make it more beautiful.

The circumstances of our day portend the coming climax. Soon the number of God's elect will be complete. The Bride will be made ready, the wise virgins will have entered the feast chamber and the door will be shut. The question is, shall we be inside or outside among these who had no reserve of "oil" !! Whose light had gone out—to whom the light of truth respecting the Bridegroom's coming had dimmed.

Let us realise our responsibility of preserving the present truth in its purity and beauty, in all wisdom, gentleness, patience and sympathy, seeking to assist all who may be feeling after the "old paths."

SUBMISSION.

"O! teach me, Lord, the art
With Wisdom to remove
The errors that deceive the heart
And Truth to clearly prove.

"O! arm me with the mind,
Meek Lamb, that was in Thee;
And let my fervent zeal be joined
With grace and charity."

When loneliness steals o'er you
"a coldness chills the air, "
"Aloof" seem friends and "distant,"
"I'm forsaken" you declare:—

Then clasp that Friend the closer,
the faithful saving friend,
To everyone who's trusting
He loves them to the end.

John 13:1. Psalm 125:1, 2.

The Love of Christ.

It is difficult to define the love of Christ. How different is love, as interpreted and practised by man, to the love in the life and sacrifice of Christ. There was no selfish thought of personal gain mingling in the love that led our Lord to leave the glory which He had with the Father to come and suffer and die, or, as the Apostle has beautifully stated the matter, "He who was rich for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich." His was a loving interest in mankind, and a thorough devotion to the Father's will. He sought nothing in return, and His love and kindness were ever supreme under all circumstances.

In 1 Cor. 13, the Apostle describes love, and states how essential it is; without it whatever good works might be done would be of no account. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Again, in Gal. 5:22, he shows that the spirit of love has the fruitage of joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness and faith. So, "love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things—love never faileth." Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and so the Psalmist represents Christ as saying, "I delight to do Thy will O my God, Thy Law is written in My heart." The Poet has beautifully said,

"As every lovely hue is light
So every grace is love."

Our Lord's life certainly exemplified the graces of the spirit.

In early life, we read of Him being seated with Doctors of the Law, listening to their discussions and asking them questions. Apparently, He would have been pleased to have found something in the Law that would justify Him entering upon His Father's business at that time; not finding anything, He returned with His parents to Nazareth, and was subject to them, and increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

At the age of thirty, He was baptised in Jordan and received the holy spirit which appeared upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven said, "Thou art My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

From His knowledge of the Law and prophecy, He knew the Father's will concerning Himself. He said, "I came down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him that sent Me." "Therefore (loth My Father love Me because I lay down My life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, I lay it down of Myself." His was a voluntary laying down of His life. He needed not to be admonished or ex-ported respecting the meaning of His consecration covenant. Within His heart there burned such a fire of consuming love that the sweet incense of His devotion ascended continually as a sweet perfume to God. He knew that He was the good Shepherd that was to lay down His life for the sheep. He knew, also, all the conditions. if faithful in His mission, He would be raised from the dead by Divine power and be received again in the heavenly courts, to a station still more glorious, even than the glory which He had "with the Father before the world was." All this, as well as the salvation of mankind, depended upon His perfectly fulfilling the Law and laying down His life according to the pattern in the typical sacrifice of the Day of Atonement. What a stupendous task it was, even for a perfect man, yet He said, "For this cause came I into the world." "He who was rich for our sakes became poor." His wealth consisted of heavenly glory, and, subsequently, of human perfection and every good possession. Could He lay it all down and be wounded for the transgressions of the whole world as "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of

the world?" (John I:29). He knew that the flesh, however perfect, was unequal to the task without Divine aid, and, therefore, we read that "He offered up prayers and supplications with strong cryings and tears unto Him who was able to save Him out of death, and was heard in that He feared." "Though He were a Son yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." He who was the author and finisher of our faith, and who was the perfect pattern, lifted up to die for all men, was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." "For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross despising the shame." It was the Father's will that by His suffering He should be made perfect.

Truly, God's ways are not as our ways. Christ suffered in the flesh, showing that affliction is a purifying furnace, a means of disciplining, of strength and ennoblement of character, and such is the heritage of all who will walk in Christ's steps (1 Pet. 4:1).

In our Lord's case, He suffered not for His own sins, but for the sin of the whole human race. Yet though He was tempted in all points, like as we are, He remained sinless, He was touched with a feeling of our infirmities. "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." His quick sympathy was with man in his anguish, which sin had brought on all.

He saw how the weak were oppressed, heard the cry of little children, sighed over the deaf and dumb, had compassion on the lepers, and wept at the graveside. He felt keenly the rejection by His own people whom He "would have gathered as a hen Both gather her chickens, but they would not." His love and consideration were so often met by abuse and insult. These elements of grief and pain were not to be compared with that more awful sorrow which He experienced as He took the place of sinful man and paid the sacrifice of human guilt. "He tasted death for every man," was so identified with sin, its shame, suffering and penalty, that He felt Himself forsaken by God.

By that one act of the cross He suffered "the just for the unjust," and could wipe out the guilt and lay the foundation of a redemption which includes the whole family of mankind. With and for us He died; for us He has met the demands of a broken law.

Why, then, we ask, did men gather around Him with unbounded devotion and look to Him as their legislator and their judge? Was it because of the miracles which He performed, or was it because of the beauty and divinity of the great law of love which He manifested? Certainly, that great law of love deserved that all men should accept it, but it was neither His miracles nor for the beauty of His doctrines that Christ was worshipped so much as the fact of having such power and greatness and denying Himself the use of that power for selfish purposes. He walked among men as though one with them, relieved them in distress, taught them to love one another, and bore with undisturbed patience all the vile accusations. When His enemies grew fiercer He still endured in silence, until in astonishment they saw Him arrested and put to the cruel death of the cross, steadfastly refusing to use, on His own behalf, the power He had so beautifully demonstrated for the benefit of others. It was a combination of greatness and self-sacrifice that won their hearts. The mighty power held under mighty control—the unspeakable condescension, the cross of Christ. The cross is the heavenly prism that enables us to distinguish the constituents of the Divine character. There, all may learn for themselves the power of Divine love, which could stoop to such humiliation and suffering. There, we will recognise the victory of the Son of God over all the malice and power of the enemy. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

The enemies accused our Lord of being the friend of publicans and sinners. God has justified Him by showing that if He associated with such it was to lift them up and make them martyrs and saints. They said He was mad. God has justified Him by making His teaching the illumination of the noblest and wisest of the race. They said He had a devil. God has justified Him by giving Him power to cast out the devil and bind him with a mighty chain. They said that He blasphemed when He said He was the Son of

God. God has justified Him by raising Him to the right hand of power and His second presence is to be in power and great glory. God's wisdom is shown to us in allowing His dear Son to suffer for the sin of the world, and in first saving and selecting the Church. This is spoken of as a great mystery, ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew, for "had they known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

'The Apostle has pointed out that all the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, have been revealed to them by His Spirit. It is this class that are exhorted by Peter not to think it strange concerning the fiery trials that are to try them, but to rejoice in as much as they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy.

There is no promise of an easy way to glory. Thorns and thistles aptly represent a pathway of sorrow and trial, but it is the way the Master went. The sign of the curse became on the cross of our Saviour the insignia of Royalty. The lesson to the follower of Jesus is just this. The trials and experiences of life which are trying us so, and often are so hard to bear, are really the chipping and polishing of our characters. If we are exercised thereby, and with patience and fortitude, endure suffering for Christ's sake, we have the words of hope and comfort of the Apostle Paul. (Rom.

8:17, 18), "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him, and the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

The life of Christ is the perfect pattern to which we are to compare ourselves, lest we become weary and faint in our minds. Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his friends, but while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

At the present time, "the love of Jesus, what it is, none but His loved ones know," but we rejoice in the knowledge that the time draweth near when, at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on the earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Correspondence,

West Australia,

Dear Brethren,—

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Yours in Christ,
H.E.G.

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Dear Brethren,

Victoria, on to others that they might know the good things in them.

Paper” for 12 months, including July and August, as I have them. I like them very much, and will pass them I am sending you postal note for 2/0 for the “People’s

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I have just read your little paper, “The Voice,” and note you are prepared to forward copies of free literature. I am deeply interested in such works and would be delighted if you would forward a copy of those mentioned in “The Voice.”

Yours in the Master's service, M.S.W.

Berean Biblical Institute,

Enclosed is postal note for 2/6; subscription for the "People's Paper," now being posted to me. I may say I like the "Paper" very much, and if my health improves may later get some of the other publications. At present I am unable to see to read for long.

Yours faithfully, W.J.S.

Dear Brethren,

I am enclosing 5/- for renewal of my subscription to "People's Paper," and would like what you can spare of "The Voice" (Humanity's Only Hope), to distribute. I have not done any tracting for some time, as the I.B.S.A. are continually doing the town and the people seem to confound one with the other. After the "Indictments" were put round, they were thrown out of letter-boxes into the street, and I thought it best to wait till the people got over their annoyance. As time goes on, and the trouble deepens, the people may be glad to read any solution offering.

Yours in the blessed Hope, FJ.A.

[The above reference serves to impress the necessity of wisdom in this, as in all other methods' of service for the cause of the truth. Many of the friends find that it is more profitable and carries more respect and influence to not

place tracts in the letter-boxes, which often contain so much of advertising matter, but to either place them under the doors, or knock at the homes of the people and ask if they would like to accept the paper on the Scriptural teachings with a kindly word of encouragement to read.

All interested in the Lord's work will be pleased to know that good results are in evidence from tract distribution, and also from coupons in the newspapers. Those desiring to co-operate in this work are invited to communicate with us.]

Question Box.

- Question.—Under what covenant is the Church being called?

Answer.—Peter, in Act 3:25, says, “Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, ‘And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.’” Paul also gives the same instruction (Gal. 3:16, 17). “To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ. •And this I say that the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, the Law which was 430 years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” See also verses 26-29. “For ye are all children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, and if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise,” not according to either the works of the old Law Covenant or of the works of the New Covenant, which will come into force after this age has ended; for Romans 11:25-27 tells us that it is specially for the natural seed of Abraham, after the full number has been selected from the nations, to compose the Church of the first born. This is very plain, and a reference to Jer. 31:27-34, where the New Covenant is first and most particularly spoken of, will thoroughly confirm this statement. The promise is to those whose fathers had been brought up out of Egypt, and with whom the old Law Covenant had been made. Jeremiah is foretelling the long punishment of the Jewish people because of their failure to keep their covenant, and then comforts them with the wonderful promise that the Lord will make a new covenant, which will accomplish what the old Law Covenant had failed to do. It will write God’s Laws in their hearts and in their minds, so that they will love righteousness and hate iniquity. We would notice that there is no promise of a heavenly inheritance, nor of any spiritual life or blessing, but the promises are like they were under the Law Covenant, all concerning earthly blessings. How different this is to the operation of God’s grace during this Gospel Age, when all the promises are spiritual—nothing of an earthly nature is promised, no earthly inheritance, all the hopes of the Church are heavenly. Again, under the New Covenant, they will be rewarded according to their works, under the Gospel Age arrangement, it is according to your faith. When the New Covenant operates then all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. No one will need any more to preach or say to his neighbour know the Lord, for all shall know Him.

So then the Church are not under the New Covenant, but are chosen as the “seed of Abraham under the Abrahamic covenant, which is an everlasting unconditional covenant which Heb. 6:13-19 states is our hope sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” That great covenant existed 430 years before the Law Covenant. The apostle says the Law Covenant did not disannul the original Abrahamic Covenant, so that when Christ made an end of the Law Covenant, nailing it to the cross, it was simply taken out of the way and left the original glorious promise to Abraham still there, and it is under this promise concerning the selection of the seed that we are being chosen, and are thus privileged to become joint-heirs with Christ—the bride of Christ, just as Rebekah became joint heir with Isaac by becoming his bride, and so shared in the Abrahamic inheritance.

It is so that the apostle explains the matter in the allegory of Galatians 4, Sarah represents the Abrahamic covenant. Hagar, the bondwoman, is the Law Covenant, and “the brethren as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” The apostle makes no mention of the New Covenant here at all, for it has no operation until the Abrahamic seed is complete, then, as already stated (Rom. 11:25-27) all Israel shall be saved, for this is my covenant with them. See also Ezek. 37:24-28; Acts 15:14-17.

(A full explanation of the covenants, their purpose and operations throughout the various ages past, present and future, is contained in the booklet, “God’s Covenants,” which is recommended to all the interested. The price is just 8d., post paid.)

Holding Fast at the Mark.

There is no doubt that in the divine schooling there is a mark or standard of fitness for graduation to the Church in glory. When first we surrendered our wills to the Lord it was necessary that the consecration should be a whole or perfect sacrifice of our wills to the Lord's will; but our wills were not at the mark or standard of perfect love.

And if our experiences could be imagined as cut short in death immediately after our consecration, we could not think of ourselves as "fit for the Kingdom," because the rewards are not promised to consecrators, but to "him that overcometh." Thus in the case of the Master Himself, our forerunner, it was necessary that He should suffer and thus be proven worthy of entering into His glory. In a word, as the child cannot be graduated the day he enters school, no more can we who enter the school of Christ.

The rapidity of progress in learning the lessons depends greatly on our temperament and our zeal. Some evidently make as much progress in one year as others do in twenty, and very many never graduate at all—never reach the mark or standard which God demands, perfect love. The Word of God, our text hook, informs us that "Love is the fulfilling of the law," (Rom. 13:10) that "the end or purpose of the divine commandment is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience" (1 Tim. 1:5). "As many, therefore, as be perfect [willed, at the mark of perfect love] should be of this mind." (Phil. 3:15-17.)

Those who have "thus learned Christ" He has taught the meaning of (1) perfected love toward God, which would prompt them to do and _to dare anything in his service; (2) of perfected love for the "brethren," which would prompt the laying down of life itself in their service; (3) of perfected love for the world, yea, even for enemies, which would lead to do good to them that hate us and despitefully use us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely.

Alas! we cannot suppose that many of the consecrated have reached this standard or mark, hence we must expect that few have graduated as "fit for the Kingdom"; hence also the intimation of Scripture that the left-overs—nongraduates—will be "a great company" as compared with the Little Flock of overcomers who do attain to the mark, the fixed standard. Here, however, it is well to remember that this "mark" or standard of love is not of the flesh, but of the mind or heart. As the Apostle says, "We cannot do the things that we would." Our blemishes of the flesh sometimes momentarily stumble us into an unloving word or act, which if repented of will not be reckoned against us nor put us away from the mark and the loving acceptableness of our Lord, which the mark represents.

"LET NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN."

"Hold fast that which thou hast; let no man take thy crown," seems logically to refer specially to those who have reached the mark or standard of perfect love, and not merely to those who have taken the first step of consecration, entrance into the school of Christ. The words "Hold fast that which thou hast" implies a previous effort and attainment, and that the attainment has had something to do with the right to the crown; and that the position attained must be held if the crown would be ultimately possessed. The intimation is also clear that the holding fast will be at the cost of a severe struggle.

This may be a new and somewhat startling thought to some who have erroneously supposed either that consecration alone was necessary, or that to attain the mark or standard of perfect love would end the struggle. Apparently, the severest struggles, tests, temptations assail those who are at that mark, and this is in accord with our Master's promise that we shall "not be tempted above that we are able to bear." The stalwarts at the mark should be able to bear most and they will be most severely tried. Mark the exhortations to these: "Watch ye, stand fast, quit you like men." No longer "babes in Christ," "no longer

children,” their special test is as men, strong in the Lord and panoplied in the whole armour of God. Harken again to the Word, “Having done all, stand!” These words do not fit one entering the school or entering the race; they are most appropriate to those who have reached the standard of perfect love. Those who have “done all,” who have attained the mark of character and “put on the whole armour” are the ones who are cautioned, warned to “hold fast” and “stand fast” and “fight a good fight.”

“WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND?”

“These fundamental truths have been true and applicable to the Lord’s people throughout this Gospel Age, and hence the narrowness of the way and the few there be who have found and walked therein—in all a little flock. But now, more ‘particularly than ever before, this warning applies, and probably to a larger number of the Lord’s people than ever at any time in the past. It is doubtless for this reason that so many Scriptures seem to specify our time in connection with these warnings. For instance, we read; “Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.” (Eph. 6:13.)

The logic of this situation implies that during the last years of the Gospel Age will come the severest of trials and the most subtle tests of our love. (1) For God as represented by our love for His Truth and the honor of His name;

(2) our love for the Lord’s brethren; (3) our love for our enemies. And whenever the “brethren (of whom so much might be expected) become our enemies, the test of our love will be the severer. In view of these things, “what manner of person ought we to be, in all holy living and God-likeness?” In view of the solemnity of the situation, how “circumspect” we all should be! How we should scrutinise our every act and word and thought! And our thoughts require our special care, because by the thoughts and intents of the heart we are being judged. And words and acts proceed therefrom. How often ambition hides its envious desires under the cloak of duty. How many of the fires of the “Holy Inquisition” were lighted by the torch of “duty”! Let us each be on guard. Ourselves or others we might deceive, but not God, Who says, “Be not deceived. God is not mocked; he that doeth unrighteousness is unrighteous”—not merely he who professes. He whose acts and words are loving, gentle, kind, considerate under trying conditions give evidence of being begotten of the God of love and of having developed much Christ-likeness. Consider our Lord’s love for His enemies and His forbearance for them when railed at, “Come down from the cross!” Consider how, when reviled and slandered, he reviled and slandered not in return! Consider how gentle was His reproof of the perfidious Judas, and how He merely hinted a reproof to Peter, who denied Him with cursings! In his case surely Love was ready to cover a multitude of faults. Let us not be easily offended nor of implacable spirit. Let us with generous and forgiving spirit say with the Apostle, “None of these things move me” from my stand at perfect love; it shall grow more rooted and grounded in proportion as it is tested. Let us be on guard against the spirit which is envious of the honours, privileges and blessings granted to another. Contrariwise, let us have so much of the spirit of love that we will rejoice with all who rejoice in the Lord and will mourn with all in distress. To feel even a coolness of sentiment in connection with the prosperity of a brother or a lack of interest in His welfare is a sign of serious danger—that we have slipped from the mark. This should alarm us and lead us to fresh energy.

As St. Paul says, “Ye were called to liberty, but use not that liberty for an occasion to the flesh.” Our real liberty which brings us blessing and Divine favour and peace of soul is a liberty from error and superstition, and a liberty from the bondage of selfishness—a liberty to sacrifice, to serve, to lay down our lives for the brethren and for all men as we have opportunity—and particularly the liberty or privilege of showing to those of earthly relationship that we are copies of the Master and have His Spirit of self-denial, love, sympathy, good fruits.

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