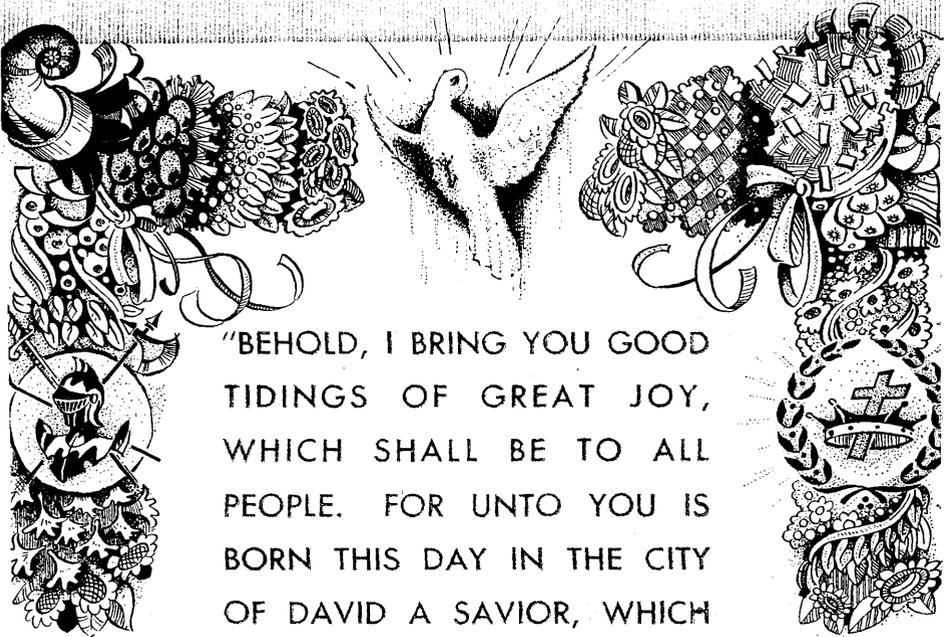


THE DAWN



"BEHOLD, I BRING YOU GOOD
TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY,
WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL
PEOPLE. FOR UNTO YOU IS
BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY
OF DAVID A SAVIOR, WHICH
IS CHRIST THE LORD."

DECEMBER 1948

A HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

Of Wondrous Birth

*A LIVING Christ, of wondrous birth
Who trod the dreary paths of earth,
Shedding abroad his holy light
Through the deep gloom of sin's dark night.*

*A dying Christ, whose precious blood
Seals the poor sinner's peace with God;
And fills the soul with fullest love,
Like to the joy prepared above.*

*A Christ ascended—all is done,
A world redeemed, a victory won.
With angel hosts, a glorious throng,
We'll sing with joy salvation's song.*

*A living Christ our spirits need,
A loving Christ our souls to feed;
A dying Christ, our ransom he,
A risen Christ to set us free.*

*This too our need—a Christ within,
A life with God, afar from sin,
A Christ whose love our hearts shall fill,
And quite subdue our wayward will.*

THE DAWN

A HERALD
OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

Vol. XVII, No. XII

DECEMBER 1948

One Dollar a Year

The Closing Of Another Year

LET us all review the year, especially from the spiritual standpoint, to note what progress each of us has made in spiritual growth, in grace, in knowledge, in love—and the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. In proportion as these are large let us rejoice, in proportion as they are small let us lament the fact, yet not to a degree of discouragement or surrender to the enemy. Let us hear the Master's voice saying, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."—John 16:33; II Cor. 12:9

We are glad at the close of the year to remember how good our Heavenly Father is, how generous, how sympathetic, how compassionate, how loving and kind—especially to the household of faith.

We rejoice, then, not only in our favor and blessing, but also in the coming blessings, all of which we recognize to be of, by, and through divine goodness. Let us remember the text, "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness."—Psalm 65:11—Reprints

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Seeking God in a Chaotic World

OUR generation has witnessed two global wars. They were waged, we were told, to make an end of war, to make the world safe for democracy, and to give the peoples of the earth freedom from want, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and freedom from fear. Not one of these objectives has been realized. Countless millions of the earth's population are living on near starvation rations, millions are shut up behind an iron curtain of censorship so rigid that there is practically no free expression of thought, and little freedom of religion. The world has not been made safe for democracy, and besides, the people of all nations are living in almost constant fear of what tomorrow might bring in the way of further economic hardships, and the possibility of another devastating war in which atomic bombs will wreck the cities and destroy the populations of all nations.

It is this condition of things which caused a mother in Salt Lake City to write to a newspaper columnist as follows:

"In these frightening times I want to find God, for myself and for my children. It is terrifying to have to bring them up in a world where everything is so difficult and so uncertain. My husband and I have no foolish hope of making the future secure for the children, or attempting to predict what the future will be. What we hope now is to prepare them for whatever may come, and have them accept it courageously. And if we, and they, could find God, would that not be the greatest of all possible safeguards?"

But this mother doesn't want anyone to think that she has failed to find God because she has neglected to attend church, for she says:

"I don't just mean going to church and Sunday School. I've done that, and it never has meant anything to me. My people, and my husband's, too, were religious in a lifeless, polite sort of way, and they weren't one bit better than the neighbor who never went near a church. My brothers are good and successful men, and they long ago dropped all pretense of believing in anything spiritual, or rather, believing in the churches, as necessary. But they, like

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

my husband, do actually believe in God, though they don't say much about it. What puzzles us is what to give, what to tell our children. If we are going to tell them the story of a leader whose law is love, forgiveness, meekness, sharing, then how can we defend our own life or the lives of all the other church-going people who give an hour a week to a sort of courtesy call on God, and show absolutely no difference in any other way, going right on with law suits, scandals, and money-seeking materialism."

This is a very revealing and heart-searching appeal, and without doubt it represents the feelings of countless millions in this chaotic world of today—a world that was supposed to be Christian, but which is falling apart and leaving the people terror stricken because it has been so un-Christian. But let us hear this baffled mother reveal further the dilemma with which she is confronted, as she attempts to apply reason to what she sees occurring, and harmonize it with the claims of Christianity:

"If we were really Christian, shouldn't slums and poverty, social injustices and inequalities have been blotted out long ago, and the whole so-called Christian world be living in peace and forgiveness with its neighbors? If, you have found the answer, it seems to me that is the most important secret that anyone could impart to those of us who still, to use the old phrase, walk in darkness, and want so terribly to find the light."

What is the answer to this paradoxical situation which confronts the professed Christian world of today? Well, first of all, it is essential to recognize the fact that what has been called a Christian world is not Christian, and never has been. This mother gets right at the core of the matter when she asks, If we were really Christian wouldn't slums and poverty be abolished, and wouldn't we have peace on earth instead of hate and ill-will? Of course we would! And the revealing thing about this is that the world has never enjoyed these Christian conditions. We have had the name Christian, but very little of its real spirit, especially in the case of international disputes. As a matter of fact, many of the bloodiest wars of history have been fought in the name of Christ, but utterly contrary to his spirit and teachings.

Are we to conclude from this, then, that Christianity is a failure? By no means! Christianity has not failed in the world because it has never been tried. But some may ask, Is not the fact that Christianity has not been practiced by the nations, in itself a failure of the divine purpose in Christ? No, because it was

not the divine plan for the world, as constituted by men, to be made Christian. The disciples of Jesus were called out of the world, and nowhere in the Scriptures is it indicated that the Christian's work has been to bring the world into the church and make it Christian.

In Jesus' day he spoke of the world as being under the rulership of Satan, whom he referred to as its prince. The Apostle Paul wrote that Satan is the god of this world. The Apostle John wrote that Christians are not to love this world, and as Jesus indicated, we are to keep separate from it. Instead of its being the divine plan that this world over which Satan is the ruler should be made Christian and accept the rulership of Christ, the prophecies of both the Old and New Testament point out that at the end of this present age the world comes to an end. If God expected that it would become a Christian world there would be no occasion for its coming to an end.

And now that this present world, or order of things—as the term world most frequently means in the Scriptures—IS coming to an end—falling apart through the weight of its own sin and selfishness—it is but natural that those who were led to believe it was a Christian world should be confused. Much of the cause for confusion vanishes simply by facing the fact that what we see coming to an end is not a Christian world, even though it has had the name Christian erroneously applied to it.

In the newspaper columnist's reply to this perplexed mother it was urged that she have faith in God, that this would solve her problem. This was good advice. But the mother indicated that she and her husband—and her whole family, in fact—already believed in God. What she wanted to know was what God is doing about this terrifying situation that confronts the confused peoples of the earth today—whether or not he is interested in the human race, and how we can trace his hand in the affairs of men.

The Bible really furnishes the answer to all these questions, but to be comforted by those answers it is necessary to have faith in the promises of God, and faith in his great plan of the ages which comprehends blessings for all the peoples of earth. First of all, then, let us note a fact or two that should help to increase our faith in the Word of God. The very language this distressed mother uses in the opening sentence of her appealing letter is a fulfilment of prophecy. She uses the expression, "In these frightening times."

Jesus foretold this frightening time, explaining that there would be upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, and that the hearts of the people would fail them for fear as they looked forward to the things coming upon the earth. How true this is of the very conditions in the earth today!

And this prophecy at the same time reveals that Jesus did not expect the world would become Christian, and that peace and good will would reign everywhere. Instead of this, Jesus raised a question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) The implied answer to this question is No, that instead of faith, there would be almost universal unbelief, and this, too, we see is true of the present time.

The Prophet Daniel foretold our day as one in which there would be a great increase of knowledge, and much running to and fro in the earth, that is, much and rapid travel. We see how wonderfully this prophecy also has been fulfilled. No matter which way we turn we are confronted with the evidence that knowledge has increased, and that people are running to and fro. Almost every day we hear of new inventions and discoveries, and almost every day we learn of improved and faster means of travel.

Within the last few weeks we have been reading and hearing about the new jet fighter planes which travel nearly 700 miles an hour. And it is in keeping with the prophecies that oftentimes the first use to be made of these new inventions is for purposes of war. The jet plane is first a fighter plane rather than a peace plane. Atomic energy is first used to destroy what the Apostle Paul described as "this present evil world."—Gal. 1:4

But these facts should not discourage us, nor cause us to lose faith in God or his Word. The reverse should be true. They should help us to realize that God, who knew the end from the beginning, foresaw the times in which we are living, and foretold them through his prophets in order that his people might know their position on the stream of time and have faith in the outworking of the divine plan to bring about the blessing of the people which he promised through his Word.

Not a single item of the divine plan has miscarried or failed. It is only because God's plans have been misunderstood, and because the professed followers of Jesus have attempted to do things in his name which he did not authorize, that they have become confused

and now wonder what has happened to Christianity. The plan of God, according to the Scriptures, was to establish a rulership over this earth in which his Son Jesus would be the chief Ruler, the King of kings. But the Scriptures also reveal that it was the divine plan that a small number were to be selected from among the human race to reign with Christ. This company is scripturally designated the "church"—from the Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning "called out," or selected. In Greece today, an election is called an *ekklesia*, that is, a selection of certain ones to fill certain offices.

So the divine plan was that throughout the nineteen centuries of the present age this work of selecting the church of Christ was to be done. The means of accomplishing this divine purpose has been through the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. Those who have accepted this true Gospel, and have responded to the divine invitation to follow in the Master's footsteps, suffering and dying with him, have been inspired with the promise that if faithful they shall live and reign with him. This work has gone grandly and victoriously on, and is now nearing completion.

Meanwhile—and Jesus foretold this also—a counterfeit kingdom of Christ was conceived back in the Dark Ages, and brought into being by the union of church and state. It was called Christendom—that is, Christ's kingdom. Here in America we have held aloof from the church-state systems which gave the name Christendom to the devil's world, but the name has been retained, and now millions, like the mother in Salt Lake City, are bewildered because as a nation we don't act like Christians.

However, this counterfeiting of the plan of God has not hindered the development of his purposes. Now that the calling and preparation of the true church of Christ—which has been the work of God during the present age—is nearly complete, we can look forward to the near future with the hope that the kingdom of Christ will be established, that there will be a real Christian world created in which peace and security and good will shall reign supreme. That new world order, which is to be established on the ruins of the world we see falling apart at the present time, will be the answer to every true Christian's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth even as it is in heaven."

And when this truly Christian world is established it will mean more than merely economic security and international peace. With

God's will done in earth as it is in heaven, it will mean the end of sickness and death. Yes, it will mean even the resurrection of those who have died. The Apostle Paul wrote that Christ must reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that the last enemy to be destroyed is Death.—I Cor. 15:25, 26

So, to all who want to find God, we would say, study his Word, earnestly and prayerfully, and be prepared to believe his promises and to live in harmony with his righteous precepts. One of his promises is that those who seek shall find, but we must seek him where he is to be found, and that is in his inspired Word, where he has revealed himself and his loving plan to bless all the families of the earth.

Religion in the Schools

FROM time to time we have reported items in connection with the controversy raging in America between Catholics and Protestants over the issue of teaching religion in the schools. Generally speaking, the Protestants seem willing, and in many cases belligerently determined, that the spirit of the Constitution be lived up to in this connection; while on the other hand there seems to be evidence that the Catholic Church often takes an opposite stand.

This attitude of the Catholic Church has been given impetus recently through a declaration by the Pope. According to *The New York Times*, Pope Pius has urged teachers to oppose what he describes as "pernicious attempts to separate religion and education," and to combat "the exaggerated importance given to technical and material education."

While all Christian people will agree with the Pope that the religious education of children should not be neglected, there are many who will insist that this is not the job of the public school teachers, that the first responsibility for this is with the parents. But regardless of our views as to how the religious education of children might be accomplished, there is no mistaking the meaning of the Pope's words when he speaks of the separating of religion from education as being pernicious. This means, in effect, as the Pope sees it, that that part of the American Constitution governing the conduct of our public schools is pernicious. In view of this, it

should not surprise any of us to note the efforts of the Catholic Church in this country to abridge the provisions of the Constitution in this respect.

There is no doubt, however, that a knowledge of religion—if it is truly the religion of the Bible—is a real asset in a person's life. This is true of both young and old. In the Bible—and in the Bible alone—is to be found the true explanation of the present chaotic state of the world, and what the certain outcome is to be. Those who really know their Bibles have a wonderful hope for themselves, and also for their neighbors; for they know that God is overruling the destiny of men and of nations, and that soon he will manifest his interest in the human race through the medium of Christ's kingdom, which by divine arrangement will extend blessings to all the families of the earth.

An Animal Story

ONE of the unusual news items which has come to our attention lately carries a British date line and tells of a church service held in Hereford, England, to which the congregation, and particularly the children, were invited to bring their pets. The service was attended by dozens of cats and kittens, ducks, chickens, guinea pigs, lambs, all sorts of dogs, and even a white mouse. About twenty horses were brought to the outside of the church, but the head usher decided they would be too large to occupy the pews, and that it would be better for them to enjoy their "standing room only" outside the building.

The minister of the church, during the course of his sermon said, "Animals and birds are a part of God's creation, and there is nothing contrary to our Christian religion in the belief that our pets will live hereafter. There are animals and birds in heaven as well as human beings and angels." The newspaper reporting this incident observed that during the service there were a few grunts and growls and squeals, but no unseemly incidents. Perhaps we should interpret the "grunts and growls and squeals" as the animals' way of saying, "Amen."

While most of us would probably consider a church service of this nature quite out of place, yet it does give rise to some interest-

ing reflections concerning truths brought to our attention in the Bible. The minister who preached this sermon doubtless based his hope of life after death on the general teaching of churchianity that man possesses within him a "soul," which is a living entity capable of existing after the body dies. This living entity is commonly called an "immortal soul." Apparently the minister must believe that the lower animals as well as man possess immortal souls.

It is true that according to the Bible the term soul is associated with animals in the same way as with man. For instance, the Prophet David speaks of the soul of a "turtle dove." (Psa. 74:19) In the Book of Numbers we are given an account of a tax that was to be levied, composed of various animals, such as sheep, oxen, and asses, and these are all described as "souls"—the souls of sheep, oxen, and asses.—Num. 31:28

The great difference between the commonly accepted viewpoint of the soul and what the Bible teaches is that nowhere in the Bible is there anything about man possessing an immortal soul. As a matter of fact, the expression "immortal soul" does not even appear in the Bible, nor does the Bible use any expression having an equivalent meaning. This is a great truth which, as Lord Byron put it, is "stranger than fiction."

The word soul simply means a living being, thus we *are* souls. The lower animals are living creatures, hence are properly referred to in the Bible as souls. But neither human beings nor the lower animals possess something that is separate from the body which continues to live when the body dies. This is a heathen theory which was introduced into the Christian church about the second century after Christ, and has been accepted and taken for granted as being true by most professed Christians ever since, but it is not taught in the Bible.

However, this does not mean that there is no hope of life after death, for the Bible teaches that there is to be a resurrection of the dead. It should be obvious that if no one is dead there can be no resurrection of the dead. On the subject of the resurrection the Apostle Paul wrote, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—I Cor. 15:22

In this connection it is interesting to note that the first time the word soul appears in the Bible is in a description of the creation of Adam. The Bible says that God "formed man of the dust of the

ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) This says that man became a soul as a result of the union of the body with the breath of life. This means that when the breath is no longer in the body, the soul has died, or has ceased to exist.

The whole world was plunged into death as a result of Adam's sin. Jesus took the penalty of death upon himself, and this is why the Apostle Paul wrote that "in Christ shall all be made alive." But it is well to remember that none of these promises apply to the lower animals. God has not promised to resurrect them. But, as far as death is concerned, the Bible tells us that men and animals all die in the same way. "As the one dieth, so dieth the other," the Scriptures declare, "so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast." (Eccles. 3:19) The difference is in connection with God's promise to restore man to life in the resurrection.

The English minister's assertion that there are animals in heaven, as well as men and angels, is worthy of note. In the Bible there are many wonderful promises of God pertaining to the restoration of man to life on the earth. Some of these promises describe paradise conditions restored on a global scale. One of them, in order to assure us of the glorious conditions of peace and good will among men which will then exist, illustrates this future blessed state by the idea of lions and lambs lying down together, and their being led by a little child.

This, however, should be understood merely as a symbol of the blessed condition of harmony among men which will be brought about through the administration of the laws of Christ's kingdom. It does not, even in the remotest sense, imply the resurrection of animals. So it is, that while most of us might like to indulge in a bit of wishful thinking, to know the real facts of these questions of life, death, and the hereafter we must depend on what the Bible teaches.

THE Apostle Paul said, "One star differeth from another star in glory." (I Cor. 15:41) The fact that no two stars are alike, while thus declared as a truth by the inspired apostle, was not discovered by human wisdom until the advent of the telescope 1,500 years later.

Your Questions—Scripturally Answered

ABEL'S TYPICAL SACRIFICE

In Genesis, fourth chapter, the account of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel is recorded. The record is that "Cain was a tiller of the ground" and "Abel was a keeper of sheep." It seems natural, therefore, that Cain should sacrifice fruit and Abel a lamb; but what was wrong with Cain's sacrifice? Why did God reject it and accept Abel's sacrifice?

THIS question draws to our attention the earliest record in the Bible of sacrifice. Without knowing what was involved, it is easy to understand the question of our inquirer. We believe that there is a definite reason why God accepted Abel's and rejected Cain's sacrifice. It was to teach a lesson of truth. Back in Eden, after the transgression of father Adam, God had said that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. This indefinite statement is accepted by Bible students as the first assurance from God that the penalty for sin placed upon the race would one day be removed. In the New Testament it was later revealed that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. (Heb. 9:22) So in the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice God was giving another assurance that the penalty for sin would be removed because of the death of a lamb, even the lamb which He would supply—His only begotten Son. John 1:29 says, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming

unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Cain's subsequent action toward Abel reveals that neither his heart nor his sacrifice was right in God's sight.

HELL-FIRE

In Mark 9:43-48 Jesus says that it is better to cut off a hand or a foot, or pluck out an eye than to be cast into hell-fire, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Who are we to believe as to whether or not there is hell-fire, Jesus or you?

WE CANNOT help but wonder if our questioner accepts this statement of our Lord as being entirely literal. If so, what a peculiar place heaven would be! Some there will have only one hand, some will hobble around on one foot, and some will be half blind. However, very few accept this text as a literal statement. The offending hand represents anything as dear as the hand. If anyone finds himself doing that which is not pleasing to God, he must cease doing it. Or if anyone finds himself walking in a manner not pleasing to the Lord, he must refrain from walking in sin, even if it requires the sacrifice of something as dear as one's foot. And so, if the evil in one's eye may cause him to fall, that evil course must be cast away if one is to inherit everlasting life. May we suggest to our questioner that if the hand and the foot and the eye are used figuratively, surely the term

"hell-fire" must also be figurative.

The word translated "hell" in Mark 9:43-48 in each instance is from the greek word "gehenna." All Bible authorities agree that "Gehenna" referred to the Valley of Hinnom that existed just outside the city of ancient Jerusalem in which the refuse and the dead animals of the city were burned. That which was not destroyed by the fire was destroyed by the maggots and worms which infest all such places. The whole picture is one of destruction, not of torment.

It is true that the translators believed in eternal torment and not destruction for the wicked; but if we reason together we will see that the Master is here using the Valley of Hinnom which destroyed, either by fire or by worms, all that was put into it, as a symbol of destruction. This bears out the united testimony of the Word that the "wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23) Sinners will not be able to escape the full penalty for sin, which penalty is not "Gehenna's fire." But, "Gehenna's fire," which existed in the Valley of Hinnom, was used by our Lord to represent the wages of sin, which is death. See Revelation 20:14; 21:8

The primary application of this text is only to Christians—those consecrated to the Lord and begotten of his Spirit; although the same principle will operate during the kingdom reign of Christ toward all those who are wilfully wicked. Christians are now on trial for everlasting life. The surest way of losing out in the race is to follow the "lust of the flesh, and the lust

of the eyes, and the pride of life" (I John 2:16), for these lead to destruction; and the surest way of gaining the victory is in casting off the things of the flesh, and being faithful unto death in the service of our Lord.—Rev. 2:10

JESUS' BIRTHDAY

What proof have we that Jesus was born on Christmas day, December 25? Is it wrong to celebrate Jesus' birth on an incorrect date?

NO CERTAIN knowledge of the exact day of Jesus' birth exists. It has been celebrated on various days. As far as can be learned, December 25 is first mentioned during the third century. As to the exact day of Jesus' birth, there has long been diversity of opinion. Many believe that the existence of heathen festivals celebrated on or about December 25 had great influence on this date being selected by the Roman church for special religious services.

We do not believe that Jesus was born on December 25, but rather that his birth occurred about the first of October. The shepherds of Palestine do not watch their sheep in open pasture and sleep outdoors during the month of December. In addition to this circumstantial evidence, certain scriptural evidence proves beyond reasonable doubt that his birth was about the first of October.

The ministry of our Lord lasted for three and one-half years. Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks (Dan. 9:24-27) shows that our Lord's ministry would begin

at the start of the seventieth week, and that he would be cut off in the middle of that week. Each of these weeks was seven years in length; the middle of the week was therefore three and one-half years from the beginning of his ministry. We know that he started his ministry when he came of age under the Law, which is thirty years of age, and he delayed not to begin his work. We also know that he was crucified at the time of the Pass-over, which is about April 1, in the Spring of the year. The three and one-half years of his ministry, then, which began when he was thirty years old, started about October 1, which month must have been the true month of his birth. Had the Father wished us to celebrate the true date of our Lord's birth, that date would have been more clearly marked in Holy Writ.

Most Christians regret the degree of commercialism that has developed in connection with the Christmas holiday. If the day is given over to riotous living and drunkenness, no good can come from the Christmas holiday. Nowhere in the Scriptures are we exhorted to celebrate the birth of Jesus, yet to the extent that our Lord and his ministry are brought to the attention of the people, and to the extent that children are taught unselfishness in learning of the great Gift that God has made for man's salvation, and to the extent that families are reunited in the spirit of mutual love and understanding, we believe that it is right for young and old alike to take advantage of this day. It would, in fact, be a blessing on any day to

meditate upon the greatness and the goodness of our Father in heaven, who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:15

BETTER THAN SOCIALISM

Isn't the "new world order" which you often refer to a period of true Socialism led personally by Jesus Christ?

IT IS difficult of course to define "true socialism"; for it is used by various groups who differ more or less in their particular conception of how regulated systems of co-operative action can be established and maintained. There are many ways in which the new world order will differ from socialistic ideals. The new order will not be dependent upon the vote of the people. The laws of that day will not be determined by legislation and colored by political expediency. The law will be perfect and just and good. It will be God's law; and it will be enforced by Christ, of whom it is written, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18) He will "lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet."—Isa. 28:17

His reign will accomplish much more than a socialistic government ever could. He will take away the stony hearts of the people and give them hearts of flesh. Concerning that day it is written, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they

shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Heb. 8:10, 11) There is nothing in the tenets of socialism to lead one to hope for eternal life. In this also the kingdom of God is better than any human conception of government, "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—I Cor. 15:25, 26

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

Because I do not keep Saturday as the sabbath, my neighbor tells me that I have the "mark of the beast." I cannot bring myself to believe this; for I would do anything that I knew the Lord wanted me to do, and I pray to know his will. What is your opinion as to the "mark of the beast"?

THE expression, the "mark of the beast," is found in the Book of Revelation, but strange as it may seem to some, the word "Sabbath" does not even appear in the book—even though some refer to it as Christ's own epistle—nor is seventh-day Sabbath keeping even indirectly mentioned. There is actually no scriptural authority for claiming that failing to keep the seventh day as Sabbath, or the keeping of the first day as Sabbath is the "mark of the beast." It is simply an opinion or interpretation, wholly unauthorized by a close study of the teaching of the Lord and the apostles. Do not let any vain imaginations frighten you.

As to what constitutes the "mark of the beast," we cannot be certain

that we have the correct thought. Many of the symbols of Revelation are made clear in the Bible, yet in this connection there is nothing definite so that we can positively determine its meaning. We do have a thought, however, which we believe is in full harmony with the rest of the Scriptures, and we present it for your consideration. The Apostle Paul says, "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." (Gal. 6:17) In this connection, also read II Corinthians 11:23-25. In olden days slaves were branded. A particular mark meant that the slave was owned by a certain individual. The Apostle Paul was a bond servant of Jesus Christ. (Col. 4:3) He bore in his body the marks of his relationship with Christ; he told the Galatians that he was not willing to serve any other master.

If the "marks of the Lord Jesus" show that one is a bond servant of Jesus Christ, it seems reasonable to conclude that the "mark of the beast" denotes a state of bondage to Satan and his systems of error. In another place the Apostle Paul wrote, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16) Those who serve the "beast" and its "image" have their "mark." Those who are God's children have the "marks of the Lord Jesus," for they partake of the sufferings of Christ; but they also have the assurance that after the sufferings are over they will reign with him.

Walking with God

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

—AMOS 3:3

THE query of our text was addressed to the nation of Israel, the typical people of God. In the preceding verse the Lord declares to them, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) As his own chosen people, God had been faithful to them, but they had not been faithful to him, and in this prophecy he explains his purpose in chastising them, that it was to bring them into line with the covenant he had made with them. He wanted them to see the error of their ways and to make a more earnest effort to do his will, and it was his will that they walk with him. But how could they walk with God unless they were in agreement with him, that is, unless they were fully committed to the doing of his will?

While in principle the thought of our text applies to human relationships, God asked the question of those who professed to walk with him with the intent of pointing out to them that this could be true only if they were in full agreement with him and with his will. This was true of typical Israel, and it is equally true of the Lord's people today. We can walk with God only if our hearts and lives are in agreement with his will. God does not change his course in order to walk with us. Instead, we must find out the way he would have us walk, and agree to walk that way if it is to be true of us that we are walking with God.

The Hebrew word translated "agreed" in our text is one that is used almost exclusively in the Old Testament to denote joint action in the doing of God's will. In Numbers 10:3 it is translated "assemble," and in the passage instructions are given to the effect that when two trumpets were blown all the children of Israel were to "assemble" at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. If but one trumpet was blown, then only the princes of Israel were to

assemble. Failure to respond to the call of these silver trumpets would denote a lack of full obedience, a failure to walk with God. In Nehemiah 6:10 this same Hebrew word is translated "meet" and the reference is to meeting together in the house of the Lord.

From the use of this word in our text, and from its other uses in the Old Testament applying to God's people, it becomes clear that God wants his people to be in agreement with him as a group, that his will for one is his will for all, that in the execution of his plan he calls for joint action—that when his "silver trumpets" are blown he expects all his people to assemble. This has been true in God's dealings with all of his people in every age. His chosen people in every age are his co-workers in the great plan of human redemption and salvation, and those who have had his blessing are the ones who have been attentive to the silver tones of truth that have reached their ears through Jesus, the prophets and apostles and others whom he has raised up from time to time.

Enoch Walked with God

In Genesis 5:22, 24 we are told that Enoch "walked with God." Not a great deal is said in the Scriptures concerning Enoch, but we are assured that he had faith in God and was faithful in bearing testimony to the truth that God had revealed to him. (Heb. 11:3) Jude informs us that Enoch prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord to judge the world, and that myriads of his saints would then be associated with him. (Jude 14) In the light of truth subsequently revealed it is manifest that Enoch's walk with God consisted of his faithfulness to the light then due to be understood. His heart was in agreement with God's plan, and his lips bore testimony thereto.

Genesis 6:9 declares that "Noah walked with God." We know more about Noah's life of faithfulness to God than we do about Enoch's. He was a chosen servant of God to perform a very definite mission in connection with the ending of the "world that then was." (II Pet. 3:6) It required great faith in God and utmost confidence in his instructions to perform the task assigned to him, but it was his faithfulness in obeying the divine will that constituted Noah's walk with God.

Much was involved in Noah's walk with God. He was called upon to be a preacher of righteousness, and was commissioned to

build the ark in preparation for the coming flood. Had he failed in either of these privileges of service he would not have been walking with God. But he did not fail. He was in agreement with God's will for him and did not shirk the responsibilities involved in doing what he knew the Lord wanted him to do.

Abraham walked with God, his great faith enabling him to believe and act upon the promises made to him. But his being in agreement with God cost him a great deal, changing the whole course of his life. Abraham's faith in the Lord and his agreement with the divine will constituted him a friend of God. One of the essential foundations of genuine friendship is agreement. Those who are out of harmony with each other cannot be whole-hearted friends.

In Moses we have another noble example of one who walked with God because of being in agreement with him. As a young man Moses was interested in the promises of God and solicitous for the well-being of God's people. He had more respect for the promises of God and what they implied for him and all his brethren than he did for the glory of Egypt. On one occasion he manifested his interest in God's people by slaying one of their oppressors. But it required more than his faith in God and his interest in the people of God to constitute walking with him.

Forty years after Moses fled from Egypt to escape the wrath of Pharaoh, God appeared to him at the burning bush and there gave him a commission of service. He was to return to Egypt, intercede before Pharaoh on behalf of his brethren, and be the great deliverer of the children of Israel. At first Moses' agreement with this plan of God for him was only in part. Doubtless he was glad to learn that God intended to deliver his chosen people from Egyptian bondage, but he did not agree with God that he was the one who was qualified to take the lead in such a great undertaking, so he offered the excuse that he was not able to speak.

In response to Moses' objections God assured him of his cooperation by providing Aaron to be a mouthpiece. Finally Moses agreed with the Lord and embarked zealously on the mission assigned to him. It was at this point that his walk with God began. Prior to this he was in the position of those who know something about God's promises, and have a measure of confidence in their Author, but have not come into full agreement with him as co-

workers in his plan. There is a definite time in the experience of every servant of God when the opportunity is given either to go forward and co-operate fully in the divine program, or else be left on the sidelines among those who are glad that God has a plan but do nothing special about it—they do not walk with God!

A Cloud of Witnesses

We might go on and cite one after another of those ancient servants of God and note their faithful walk with him, a faithfulness based upon their being in agreement with him. The Apostle Paul speaks of them as a "cloud of witnesses," recalling their example of loyalty as an incentive for us likewise to walk by faith with God and to follow faithfully in the way he indicates to be his will for us. (Heb. 12:1) This may oftentimes mean, as it did in the case of Abraham, exercising implicit faith in the promises of God and following his directions without knowing just where he may be leading. But even under such circumstances our hearts should be able to respond in those well-known words of the poet:

*"I'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
I'd rather walk by faith with him
Than go alone by sight."*

But in order to walk with God at all it is essential that we be in agreement with him, and the outstanding example we have of complete fidelity to God is Jesus. After telling us of the great "cloud of witnesses" with which we are surrounded the apostle sets before us the perfect example of Jesus—"Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:1, 2) Had Jesus not been in agreement with his Heavenly Father he would not have attained that high position "at the right hand of the throne of God."

At the early age of twelve Jesus began to inquire the way of the Lord—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" he asked his parents when they found him in the temple. (Matt. 2:49) Even then Jesus knew that he couldn't properly be about his Father's business until he discovered what that business was. What he probably learned on this occasion was that under the requirements of the Law it would not be proper for him to enter upon

the service of God until he was thirty years of age. So we read that when he began to be about thirty years of age he came to John at Jordan to be baptized.—Luke 3:23

That Which Had Been Written

It was at Jordan that Jesus began his walk with God. There he entered into a covenant with his Heavenly Father, agreeing to do all that had been written of him “in the volume of the Book.” (Heb. 10:7-9) Jesus stedfastly adhered to the terms of this covenant. On one occasion at least it appears that his own natural preference would have been to take another course, but even in this severe time of testing he set aside his own wishes, saying, “Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”—Matt. 26:39; Luke 22:42

On many occasions during the self-sacrificing ministry of Jesus we find him emphasizing his agreement with God. “I and my Father are one,” said he. (John 10:30) What a beautiful statement of the resignation of his own will to that of his Father! They were one because he was doing his Father’s will, not because they had jointly decided what was to be done. And if it were proper for Jesus, the “holy, harmless, undefiled” One, to agree with the divine will in order to walk with God, is it not likewise essential for his followers to commit their ways fully to the Lord if they are to have the assurance that they are walking with God?—Heb. 7:26

This point cannot be emphasized too strongly! Satan has made great inroads of deception in nominal church circles with the argument that, after all, it doesn’t matter so much how one serves the Lord, or what he believes, but the important thing is to be sincere in what we do and the way we live—that this is all the Lord requires. Sometimes even among those enlightened by present truth there is a tendency to adopt this easy going viewpoint of what it means to walk with God. Nominal Christianity finds it easy to yield to this indifferent attitude toward truth and the practice of the truth, for long ago they found their creeds indefensible. They reason that little is gained by arguing over viewpoints that cannot be supported by the Scriptures, and since they do not know the truth, they feel that the better way is simply to be sincere and live upright lives, and let it go at that.

But Jesus did not have this viewpoint, nor did any of the apostles. Jesus had agreed to do all that had been written of him,

and thus being guided by the Word of God, he walked with God. Jesus knew that moral uprightness alone did not constitute walking with God. He knew that God had a definite plan for the redemption and recovery of the human race. He knew that he had come into the world to perform a service in connection with that plan. He knew, therefore, that the only way to be pleasing to his God was to discover from the Word—the “volume of the Book”—just what that plan was, and the exact manner in which he was to serve in connection with it. There were certain things which God wanted done, and certain ways to do them, and it would have been unthinkable for Jesus to undertake a service for God along any other line.

In His Steps

Few Christians would disagree with this thought with respect to Jesus, but it is important to remember that as Christians we are called to follow in his steps, hence that this principle of learning and doing God's will also applies to us. If we want to walk with God we must walk as Jesus did in this respect as well as to emulate him along other lines. Jesus' first advent occurred at the end of the Jewish age and the beginning of the Gospel age. God's will for his people therefore changed at that time, and Jesus was the first One to call attention to this change.

Until then, the keeping of the Law was an important consideration for all who would be pleasing to God. Jesus did not teach that the Law had become unimportant, but that now there was a higher service to be rendered. He introduced a new covenant, not the prophetic “New Covenant” of Jeremiah 31:31, but a covenant which called for sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5) From that time forward, no one could walk with God simply by sincere efforts to live up to the requirements of the Law Covenant.

The apostles recognized this, and taught it. Many in the early church failed to grasp the full significance of this great change which had been introduced by Jesus, so there was considerable controversy over the matter. But not once did the apostles suggest that if any couldn't see this great truth of the new age they should not be concerned about it, that they could walk with God just the same.

When Noah walked with God it was necessary to build an ark, but in Moses' day a tabernacle was needed. So, beginning with

Pentecost those who would walk with God were given a different task than were those who served him during the Jewish age. As God's plan developed there was another work to be done. This meant that those in the early church who walked with God were walking together. Not only were they in agreement with God, but they were also in harmony with one another—they walked together, they served together, they died together, being together faithful to their covenant of sacrifice even unto death.

Another Change

Now we have reached the end of the age which was introduced by Jesus at his first advent. It is still God's will that his people follow in the footsteps of Jesus by laying down their lives sacrificially in his service. The great truth of the redemption and of the kingdom is the same now as then, but certain details with respect to the service of God are indicated by the Scriptures as being essential at the end of the age. One of these is the difference between "sowing" and "reaping." Another is indicated in the divine commission to the church—Head and body—which is outlined in Isaiah 61:1-3: that additional feature of this commission, the declaring of the "day of vengeance of our God."

But in order to appreciate the importance of these changes, it is first of all necessary to take into consideration certain prophecies pertaining to the disclosure of truth at the end of the age. The Scriptures foretold that following the death of the apostles there would be a great falling away from the faith once delivered unto the saints, that a great Antichrist system of Christianity would develop, that the truth would be largely buried in the rubbish of human tradition and then, at the end of the age, it would be restored, causing the people of God to rejoice.

Those who are rejoicing in the light of present truth have no difficulty in noting these developments in history, and they know that in fulfilment of the Master's promise, when he returned he girded himself and served his people with "meat in due season." (Luke 12:37; Matt. 24:45) To use another metaphor, they have heard the silver trumpet of truth, and have recognized that thereby the Lord has called them to joint action in the doing of his will; that now, if they are to walk with him it is essential that they heed the clarion call of truth, and be ready to devote their lives to fur-

thering the divine cause in the earth as it is outlined in "present truth."—II Pet. 1:12

In many respects Pentecost itself was no more a marked development in the plan of God than was the serving of the promised "meat in due season" by our returned Lord, and through "that servant" whom he promised to appoint as steward for the purpose. As in the case of other changes in the plan of God from one age to another, so now there is a transition period during which the work of one age is gradually closing, and the work of the new age beginning to appear. Obviously this has an important bearing on what the Lord wants his people to be and to do.

First there is the harvest work to be done. This is the completion of the work of the Gospel age. In addition to this, there is the proclamation of the glorious hope of restitution pertaining to the incoming millennial age—the wielding of the harvest sickle of truth, and the blowing of the antitypical jubilee trumpet. It was this twofold work which began with the return of our Lord. "Food for Thinking Christians" was placed in the hands of church attendants, and "Millennial Dawn" soon became a widely known and intensely hated expression in the professed Christian world.

On the part of those who heard and accepted the reassuring message of truth there was a spontaneous agreement that it was from the Lord, and a wholehearted desire to walk with God in keeping therewith. They all walked the same way. They all did the same things—those things which the truth had revealed to them as being the will of their God. True, some became disgruntled and chose to go their own way, but it has always been thus. This falling away of individuals was true in the early church, and it is still true today. But it is just as true today as it was in the early church that those who are walking with God because they are in agreement with him and his message of truth are also walking together, having together responded to the silver tones of truth, and together are telling the whole world these blessed tidings of the kingdom now so near.

And one of the beautiful things about walking with God is that those who are thus enjoying the blessings of his fellowship have no desire to condemn or judge those who are not walking with them. We can feel exactly as the Apostle Paul did concerning those of his day who chose to walk in another direction, that the "Lord

knoweth them that are his." (II Tim. 2:19) At the same time, we should not slacken our efforts to carry out the terms of our own consecration along the lines which the message of present truth indicates to be God's will for us. Simply because someone else doesn't see matters as we do is no excuse for us to say or think that it doesn't make any difference.

Besides, the Lord's people should always be in a hopeful attitude toward others, feeling that if they do not see the truth today, perhaps they will tomorrow. Such an attitude helps us to be patient toward even those who today may violently disagree with us. But to walk with God requires more than to be tolerant of those who are not walking with us. God had certain purposes in giving us his truth, and one of them was that we should testify to it, not only to one another, but to the whole world.

"Ye are the light of the world," Jesus said of his church, and the light that the Lord wants the world to have now is that which pertains to the near establishment of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ. (Matt. 5:14) The bearing of such a message to the world calls for a presentation of the whole plan of God, including the "day of vengeance." The Scriptures are explicit on this point, so definite that there is no valid reason for any truth-enlightened, consecrated Christian to ignore the divine will, nor to suppose it possible to walk in another direction and still be walking with God.

The issue today is not human leadership, or whether or not we are affiliated with this group or that group. The issue is whether or not we are walking with God by doing what he has commissioned his people to do in these closing hours of the Gospel age. We often sing,

*"Send out thy light and truth, O Lord,
Let them our leaders be."*

but the mere singing of these words is not enough. Two great truths are involved here: first, we are to make sure that we are following the leadership of the truth, which is the leadership of the Lord; and if we are doing this we will also be laying down our lives by making known his truth to others, as far as possible giving the whole world an opportunity to hear the glad tidings. Thus we will be walking with God, and in the very nature of things we will be walking with one another.

Brethren, let us not for a moment compromise the truth, nor allow ourselves to think that it makes little difference what we do about its service. It has been given to us as a sacred trust, and by it we have been called to serve the divine cause. Let us serve in the right way, and let us serve together. Let us walk with God as did the prophets, our Lord Jesus, the apostles, and all who have learned to know and love the doing of God's will.

As the Year Ends

We have just about reached the end of the trail which will be marked in history as the year 1948. Together we face another new year. New tasks will challenge us, and new opportunities of service will be given us.

For each, the old year has had its full measure of bitter and sweet, of failure and accomplishment. Nothing can be done to alter the record of our personal performance during the year that is closing. However, the new year stands before us as a block of stone uncut, as a piece of paper untouched—a new leaf. What each day of the untrod months ahead holds in the way of joys or trials none of us knows, and it is well that we do not. It is best that the Father holds in his hands the "keys of tomorrow."

But let us bury with the year that is ending our regrets for our failures, and let us turn our faces with confidence to the first rays of the new year. We can be confident in His saving grace, confident in His overruling providence, confident that His strength is sufficient for our every time of need. Let us go forward, then, with determina-

tion to do His will better in 1949 than we have ever done before.

One Minute Sermon

Happy, surely, will all those be who at the close of the year can look backward through it and realize that safe and secure in the city of refuge which God has provided for us as his people, we have been prospering, and rejoicing, growing under his favor and guidance in knowledge of himself and of his plans respecting mankind; and especially being prepared for the glorious work of the millennial kingdom. We trust we shall find much encouragement as we look back.

We must abide continually in Christ under the cover of his merit and his robe of righteousness. It will comfort our hearts, in any event, to remember the suggestion of the apostle that if God so loved us while we were yet sinners that he gave his only begotten Son for our redemption, much more does he love us—more even than that—now that we are adopted into his family and seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, however imperfectly our good desires may be accomplished.—C. T. R.

"Songs in the Night"

DECEMBER 1

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.—Romans 8:25

THE waiting time is by no means a time of rejoicing, except in hope. This is a time when truth and righteousness are being humbled in the dust, when they that live godly must suffer persecution, when our eyes must look upon scenes of sorrow and mourning, when our ears must hear the wails of distress, and when our feeble flesh must experience the pangs of death. But, oh, there is a glorious release to come "in due time"! Wait for it patiently: "Let patience have her perfect work." Submit to the humbling process. The church's pathway of present humiliation leads to the future glory.—Z '06-3784 (Hymn 102)

DECEMBER 2

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.—Psalm 119:105

THE need of this lamp is most evident. Those who have it not stumble on in the darkness; we who have the light of the divine Word are not in darkness even as others—"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day." (I Thess. 5:5) We belong to the new dispensation, and our citizenship is in heaven. By faith we are dead to the world and alive toward God, and are therefore counted as children of the light even in the present darkness; and the eyes of our understanding are enlightened by the hopes and gracious promises of the divine Word, while others rejecting this lamp are in corresponding darkness and ignorance.—'05-3686 (Hymn 260)

DECEMBER 3

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.—Matthew 11:28

IT IS God's will that the heart de-

sires of his children shall be accepted, both in prayer and service, and not the imperfections of their earthen vessels. O how comforting is this thought! How often you have experienced it! You were perhaps overtaken in a fault, entrapped by the weakness of the human nature, or trouble, and almost disheartened, you went to your Father in prayer. You had no words of utterance, but you groaned in spirit to God—"being burdened." God heard you and blessed you, answering your unuttered prayer and giving strength. Paul's conclusion is ours; we have every cause for rejoicing. What shall we say then? "If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Z '82-373 (Hymn 241)

DECEMBER 4

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. . . . And I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.—Philippians 3:7, 8

OF THOSE who retain their hold on earthly things the Lord declares, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?" These riches are not merely of gold, but may be of honor, position, power, approbation of men, etc. All these are likely to prove a hindrance in the race upon which we have been invited to enter for the prize. As we look back to the faithful witnesses of the past, we find that they carried very few weights along with them. They cast their weights aside, and ran with patience the course before them.—Z '13-5319 (Hymn 240)

DECEMBER 5

Because Thy loving-kindness [favor] is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee.—Psalm 63:3

WHOSOEVER receives the light of truth intelligently must rejoice in it; and rejoicing in it, he must let it shine out upon others, or, by covering his light with a bushel, he will demonstrate his lack of courage, lack of ap-

preciation, lack of earnestness—qualities which the Lord is not specially seeking among those whom he has invited to be sharers with Jesus in the glories of the mediatorial kingdom about to be established amongst men.—Z '12-4967 (Hymn 181)

DECEMBER 6

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?—Psalm 116:12

WHILE human love and acts of kindness often draw largely upon us for the exercise of this grace of gratitude, appreciation, how much more does the constant loving-kindness and tender mercy of our Heavenly Father thus fittingly draw upon our inmost being to respond in grateful acknowledgment and praise! To him we are indebted for every good that we possess. What this implies only those can know who have been brought by his love into the secret place of the Most High, and made to feast upon the “finest of the wheat,” the wealth of our Father’s storehouse.—Z '14-5538 (Hymn 100)

DECEMBER 7

Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.—Psalm 141:2

AT THE close of each day let us square our day’s account with the Lord at his throne of grace, recounting so far as we are able its opportunities used and neglected, its victories won or its defeats, its self-sacrifices and its selfishness—thanking God for the grace that helped in time of need and apologizing for all errors and defeats, craving forgiveness in the name and merit of our Savior, and promising greater faithfulness and zeal by the Lord’s grace the next day.—Z '98-2240 (Hymn 161)

DECEMBER 8

Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope.—Acts 2:26

HE WHO lacks this rest lacks the evidence that he is an Israelite indeed and in covenant relationship with God

through Christ. He who has this rest of heart has in it a foretaste, an assurance, of the perfect rest of the future. For if now we can rest by faith, notwithstanding the besetments of the flesh and the Adversary under present adverse conditions, how gloriously we will rest by and by, when that which is perfect shall have come, not only in our own change to the Lord’s character-likeness, but in the change of all the outward environments which will then be accomplished.—Z '07-4015 (Hymn 99)

DECEMBER 9

When He was reviled [He] reviled not again.—I Peter 2:23

LET us not only see to it that we are as nearly as possible faultless and undeserving of reproaches and buffetings, but when these experiences come to us let us remember to take them patiently, uncomplainingly, and thus to more and more develop and exhibit the character-likeness of our Lord. Those who thus do, have the Lord’s guarantee that every such experience shall prove a blessing in the end. Those who, on the contrary, undertake to “battle for their rights,” show that they either do not understand the nature of the covenant they have made to take up the cross, or else that they are unwilling to comply with the terms of that covenant.—Z '06-3889 (Hymn 195)

DECEMBER 10

There shall be no night there; . . . for the Lord God giveth them light.—Revelation 22:5

OH, WHAT a vision of rest and peace, of glory and blessing, of joyful fellowship, of deathless love, of unsullied purity and unending bliss! Who but those who have caught a glimpse of its glory can estimate its power to inspire to holy zeal, to earnest endeavor, and to patient endurance of all the losses and crosses of the path of discipline that leads to it? It is no matter of surprise that not all who name the name of Christ are filled with the inspiration of this blessed vision; for but few, even of those who theoretically know these things, really behold the vision, and by faith realize that they

have a place in it.—Z '97-2087 (Hymn 117)

DECEMBER 11

And they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening.—II Chronicles 13:11

IF YOU are within the first veil, thank God and take courage, remembering that to "keep your body under" you must have all the spiritual strength and light to be derived from the unleavened bread and the golden candlestick. Let us press up close to the second veil, and there at the golden incense altar offer an offering acceptable and of sweet savor to God through Christ.—Z '80-154 (Hymn 73)

DECEMBER 12

Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.—Revelation 19:9

LET us praise God for the blessings and mercies already ours, and go on faithfully rejoicing in the light of our lamps and in the anticipation of the glorious nuptial feast and the later glorious work, with the Bridegroom, of blessing all the families of the earth. He that hath this knowledge will by it be separated more and more from the world and its spirit, and be gradually more and more transformed from glory to glory in the likeness of the Bridegroom.—Z '06-3869 (Hymn 230)

DECEMBER 13

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and He shall hear my voice.—Psalm 55:17

UNQUESTIONABLY the best men and women in the world are those who pray, and pray regularly, who bow the knee, as did Daniel. (Dan. 6:10) Unquestionably the moments thus taken from earthly affairs are well spent and bring more than commensurate blessings upon the worshiper and all with which he has to do. Unquestionably it is impossible to live a consecrated life in neglect of prayer. . . . To the

Christian this privilege is still further enhanced by a realization that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous," in whose all-prevailing name we may approach with courage to the throne of heavenly grace, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.—Z '11-4875 (Hymn 97)

DECEMBER 14

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.—Acts 20:32

LET us lay this well to heart: neglect of God's Word of grace, neglect of his promises means a deficiency of strength to bear the trial which is our portion. It means also the opening of the door for Satan to put light for darkness and darkness for light for our confusion. It means that those who will give strict heed in following might be unable to distinguish between the bleating of the sheep and the "midnight howl" of the wolf; might be unable to distinguish those who are holding fast and blowing on the trumpets of the Lord's Word and those who are seeking to cause divisions among the sheep and speaking perverse things—misrepresenting facts, that they might divide the flock and draw some after themselves.—Z '09-4459 (Hymn 61)

DECEMBER 15

I have fought a good fight, . . . I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.—II Timothy 4:7, 8

HOW humble and yet how confident are the closing words of the great apostle's testimony. . . . His boast . . . was simply that he had fought well, fought faithfully, fought to the best of his ability, against sin abounding on every hand and weaknesses in himself. His boast was not that he had made a faith, nor that he had expressed the Gospel in the most clear and positive manner which would descend generations after him to glorify God and to bless his

people; but his boast merely was that he had "kept the faith," the faith which God through his Word had inspired, the faith which he had received, and was given to all of the Lord's people; he had kept it, he had been faithful to it, he had not bartered it for a mess of pottage, earthly advantages.—Z '97-2230 (Hymn 34)

DECEMBER 16

Come ye yourselves apart . . . and rest a while.—Mark 6:31

THE Lord would have all his disciples come to him for counsel and for rest and refreshment. "He never asks of us such busy labor as finds no time for resting at his feet." Nor would he have us rest too long when other weary hearts are waiting for our ministries of love and consolation. His invitation is not to the listless and idle, but to the active souls—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"—rest in the midst of your cares and trials and perplexities, a sweet rest of mind, and peace, which the world with all its delusive charms can never give, nor with all its sin and woe can ever take away.—Z '95-1754 (Hymn 108)

DECEMBER 17

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.—John 15:13

AND if we love as Christ loved, we shall be glad to give our lives to each and for each according to the needs of each, laying down our lives for the brethren in moments or hours or as each may need our help. Ah, what a new, what a different view is this of the love of the brethren! The practice of it would cut off some of our special fellowships with those who need our assistance little, and would transfer our fellowship and sacrifice of time to those of the brethren who need it more. And what a blessing, what an uplifting would come to some of the meaner ones, and what a blessing from the Lord would come more and more into our own hearts as we became more and more copies of him in thought and in deed.—Z '08-4254 (Hymn 28)

DECEMBER 18

It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.—I John 3:2

HOW satisfactory! How far beyond all that we could have asked or thought! "Like Him." What more could we ask? "Like Him," whom "God hath highly exalted, far above angels, principalities, and powers"! We stand amazed at such grace! Moreover, we can realize that he who called us to become "partakers of the divine nature" and joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his mediatorial kingdom has provided for our every comfort and joy in that heavenly state, the details of which we may not now grasp. Prophetically of these it is written, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness."—Z '10-4675 (Hymn 105)

DECEMBER 19

Quench not the spirit.—I Thessalonians 5:19

IF THE spirit of worldliness come into our hearts, it will extinguish the light of the Holy Spirit. If the spirit of selfishness or thoughtlessness enter our hearts, it will cause the light to grow dim and finally to die out. Weariness in well-doing will produce the same result. If we indulge in pleasures of the flesh, these will tend to quench the Spirit. Sinful pleasures should, of course, be shunned by everybody. But there are pleasures which are not sinful and which are proper enough for the natural man. Yet to whatever extent the consecrated indulge in these and thus gratifying the longings of the flesh, proportionately the new nature will suffer.—Z '12-5129 (Hymn 1)

DECEMBER 20

He that saith he abideth in Him ought to walk even as He walked.—I John 5:6

THOSE who most cheerfully, most zealously forget self and earthly ambitions, aims, and projects, and who most fully give themselves to the Lord and to his service, these may walk nearest to the Lord at all times; these may go with him to the mount; these may be special witnesses of his powers, and

these in special times may be close to the Lord. Some, like John, may not only sit at meat with him, but sit next to him—in his bosom. In proportion as our lives are copies of the Lord's, all the time and influence at our disposal, outside of necessary obligations for things needful to ourselves and families, will be spent as he spent his time—in doing good unto all men, especially unto the household of faith.—Z '04-3334 (Hymn 196)

DECEMBER 21

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.—Isaiah 54:10

How wonderfully the Lord has guided his people! His children have ever been his constant care. No good thing hath he withheld from them, and all things have been made to work together for their good if they obeyed him. Who that has trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smiles and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, has not proved the verity of his precious promises and his abiding faithfulness! Surely "not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you" (Joshua 23:14) In the smallest and in the greatest affairs of our lives he has ever watched for our interests. Every cloud has had a golden lining!—Z '14-5538 (Hymn 63)

DECEMBER 22

It is the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.—Lamentations 3:22

OUR highest interests, our real interests, are matters of our Father's constant care. If we keep very near to the Lord we are protected from the power of the fallen angels, who would, if permitted, bring about our ensnarement and overthrow. They cannot really harm us if we are watching and keeping our garments white. Only a lack of faithfulness would subject us to their power to any extent so far as our new creature interests are con-

cerned. They can neither harm our bodies in any way nor cause any violence to us, unless the Lord permits it for our highest good—perhaps for our deliverance and exaltation, as in the case of our Master.—Z '14-5540 (Hymn 165)

DECEMBER 23

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.—Ephesians 6:10, 11

WHOEVER does not take heed to the Word and thus put on the armor of God is thereby showing his lack of faith, his unbelief, being disobedient to the Word of the Commander. When he assures us that every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is, and that only the gold and silver and precious stones of divine truth will constitute such faith as will stand the tests of this day, we may be sure that our Lord understood the matter thoroughly; and in proportion as we have this faith we will be energetic in getting rid of any wood, hay, or stubble of our theology, and replacing the same with the precious things of the divine Word, that we may be able to stand in the "evil day," that we may be counted worthy to be helped of the Lord as those who are truly his. According to our faith it will be unto us.—Z '07-4004 (Hymn 125)

DECEMBER 24

And there were . . . shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.—Luke 2:8

THESE men were quietly tending their flocks by night when suddenly the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them and they were sore afraid. But their fear was soon overcome by the message of the angel: "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." It will be observed that the blessedness of these tidings is cumulative: first it is "good tidings"; then it is "great joy"; and then the crowning feature of it is that it is "to all people"—not only to you shepherds who are this night look-

ing for the hope of Israel, but for all your friends and relations and neighbors far and near; and to all their friends and relatives and neighbors, both to those who now live and to those who shall live, as well as to all those now in death.—Z '92-1478 (Hymn 76)

DECEMBER 25

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.—Luke 2:11

LET US, then, rejoice at this joyful season of the year and have our hearts filled with appreciation of the divine love and generosity, which gave us the great gift of Messiah, and thus indirectly a knowledge of the kingdom yet to come and of our share in that kingdom, which shall bless the world. As we have freely received let us freely give, and thus copy our Lord and the Heavenly Father. Some may have the opportunity of giving many gifts of many kinds. All will have the privilege of offering to their fellows, directly or indirectly, gifts of God's love, by making known to them the riches of his grace, as presented in "The Divine Plan of the Ages."—Z '08-4298 (Hymn 77)

DECEMBER 26

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.—Psalm 30:5

OH, HOW glorious the thought of soon entering into the joys of the Lord, soon entering the mount of God! Are we prepared to enter in? Are we clothed in the pure white robe of Christ's righteousness? Is it clean, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, or is it all besmeared with stains of earth? Be not deceived: If walking hand in glove with the world, minding earthly things, you are almost sure to get your garments crushed and stained, and to be unprepared for the marriage.—Z '80-113 (Hymn 166)

DECEMBER 27

He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.—Matthew 24:13

IT BEHOOVES us, dear friends, to look about us to note to what extent we have been faithful to our covenant of sacrifice, and to remember that it is

not a sacrifice for a day or a year but "even unto death." "Be ye faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) . . . Let us see if the days and hours as they pass are spent in a consecrated manner; let us note to what extent moments and days are spent in some selfish manner, or wasted upon others beyond the reasonable requirements of duty as marked out in the divine Word. Let us see to what extent we perform our vows unto the Lord; let us take note of what of time or influences or money we are using in the divine service and what proportion this bears to the whole.—Z '05-3685 (Hymn 160)

DECEMBER 28

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.—II Corinthians 7:1

IT IS not possible for the human mind to grasp the riches of divine grace and love and power. We cannot comprehend them, we can merely apprehend them. If God be for us, with all of his infinite wisdom and power, it implies also that Christ is for us, for he is one with the Father; it implies also that all the angels, cherubim, and seraphim, and all the heavenly powers of our knowledge and beyond our knowledge are for us—all enlisted upon our side, to do us good, to help us, to succor us in time of need, to uphold us in time of temptation, to strengthen us to do the Father's will. "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."—Z '08-4214 (Hymn 242)

DECEMBER 29

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.—Hebrews 4:16

AT THIS, the close of another year and the opening of a new one, we urge that all Christians keep daily record with the Lord and never retire to rest without obtaining this grace of forgiveness and help. But if any have delayed the matter and a cloud has come between them and the Lord, let them surely avail themselves of these prom-

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

ises in the close of this year, that they may start the New Year with a clean slate—with the smile of their Father's face upon them, and with the fellowship of their Redeemer and with fresh resolves for earnestness and carefulness in walking in his steps.—Z '11-4932 (Hymn 300)

DECEMBER 30

The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing.—Isaiah 14:7

THANK God for the prospect of an unshakeable kingdom, whose King shall reign in righteousness and whose princes shall decree justice (Isa. 32:1; Prov. 8:15) and under whose dominion the whole earth shall be at rest. (Isa. 14:7) This is the kingdom which the prophet declares will indeed be "the desire of all nations," when it is once established and its blessings begin to be realized by the world. Yes, truly "the desire of all nations shall come"—with blessings of life and health and

peace and prosperity and good government.—Z '02-3053 (Hymn 156)

DECEMBER 31

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: To shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.—Psalm 92:1, 2

WITH the climax of Christian growth the climax of worship is reached, and the earnest child of God will presently experience the meaning of the apostle's words: "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." (I Thess. 5:17, 18) Communion with God and the feeling of continual trust in his goodness and care will become interwoven with all the affairs of life, so that thus to pray without ceasing, and to be continually thankful, will become as natural as breathing. But this continual prayer and thanksgiving can never take the place of formal recognition of worship of God, either to our own hearts or to our families.—Z '85-799 (Hymn 27)

RESOLUTIONS FOR 1949

*A little less impatient with those we deem too slow;
A little less of arrogance because of all we know.
A little more humility, seeing our worth is slight;
We are such trivial candles compared to stars at night!
A little more forgiving and swifter to be kind;
A little more desirous the word of praise to find.*

*The word of praise to utter and make a heart rejoice.
A little bit more careful to speak with gentle voice;
A little more true eagerness to understand each other;
A little more real striving to help a shipwrecked brother.
A little more high courage to each task that must be done;
These be our resolutions—God help us every one!*



JESUS, THE WORLD'S SAVIOR

THERE is no better time to remind ourselves and others of the wonderful place Jesus occupies in the plan of God than at this season of the year when so many are commemorating his birth. The custom of sending greetings to friends and relatives affords an excellent opportunity, for you can make your greeting a message of truth.

We have available for this purpose a thirty-two page booklet, with an appropriate cover for the holiday season. It is entitled, "Jesus, the World's Savior." These booklets are available with envelopes to match, and are priced at twenty-five for \$1.00; fifty for \$1.75; one hundred for \$3.00. Order early.

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KNOW YOUR BIBLE SERIES: This is a group of double-faced twelve-inch records, containing fourteen short Bible Lectures presented in sequence. Titles of the lectures are:

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About this time of year all of us begin to wonder what we will give to our friends and relatives for Christmas, and we wonder if you have ever considered The Dawn Magazine in this connection. Whether or not those to whom you make gifts share your understanding of the Bible they should find much satisfaction in reading The Dawn, for in its variety of subject matter and its different approaches to the truth there is sure to be much to suit the reading taste of the average person.

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YOUR AMBASSADOR OF GOOD WILL

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY

December 5

GOLDEN TEXT: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."—Matthew 28:19

ACTS 1:8—The historical records of the New Testament may be divided in a general way into two parts: (1) that which pertains to the life and ministry of Jesus, and (2) that which has to do with the experiences of his apostles and associates in connection with the establishment of the Early Church. Our lesson for today is concerned principally with the latter, although it is introduced by the account of Jesus' commission to his followers to go into all the world and preach the Gospel.

Before his crucifixion, as well as after his resurrection, Jesus outlined to his disciples what their work was to be, that they were to be his witnesses both in Judea and unto the uttermost part of the earth, that one of the purposes of giving them the Holy Spirit would be to authorize and empower them thus to serve in the divine cause. In the Book of Revelation, where we are furnished with a picture of the church's work complete, we read that those who are faithful to this commission, who lay down

their lives as "witnesses for Jesus and for the Word of God," are rewarded with the high honor of living and reigning with Christ a thousand years.

Many have misunderstood the intent of Jesus' command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, supposing that faithfulness in this would result in converting all nations to Christianity, thus bringing peace on earth and good will among men. The conversion of the world ultimately will be accomplished through the church, but not until all her members have proved their faithfulness even unto death and have been brought forth in the "first resurrection" to live and reign with Christ. Meanwhile, the preaching of the Gospel serves merely to reach those who respond in full consecration to follow Jesus, and incidentally to give a witness to the world.

ACTS 4:1-4—When the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost, they lost no time in responding to its inspirational power, for they began at once to preach the Gospel. However, they found, even as Jesus did, that the religious rulers of the people were not ready to receive it. In all Israel, trained under the law of God and witnessed to by Jesus through his teachings and by his miracles, only a few thousand were in the proper heart condition to respond, while the remainder walked on in darkness.

The Israelites believed in the resurrection—except those who belonged to the sect of the Sadducees—but their rulers were grieved because the disciples preached that it would come through Christ. In his preaching, Peter did not use the word resurrection. Instead, he referred to the hope of the resurrection as “times of restitution of all things,” and asserted that it had been spoken by the mouth of all God’s holy prophets. He explained furthermore that the promises of God pertaining thereto would be fulfilled through Christ, following his second advent. This grieved both the priests and the Sadducees.

ACTS 13:2, 3—Congregations of consecrated believers were soon established through the preaching of the Gospel, and these, being properly instructed in the truth, sensed their responsibility to carry the Gospel to others. In this scripture we are told of the action taken by the church at Antioch in sending Paul and Barnabas to represent them in the missionary field. And this, too, is indicated to be through the direction of the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 16:9, 10—The divine commission was to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, and the Lord himself, through his overruling providences, directed the course his workers took. This was not always done in the same way, but the divine will has been carried out in the matter. It was undoubtedly under divine direction that the Gospel spread north and west from Judea, more than it did south and east; although to some extent all countries have received a witness.

ACTS 28:16, 30, 31—It was in keeping with the thought just expressed that Paul was privileged to preach the Gospel in Rome, although he was taken there as a prisoner. He was a favored prisoner, being permitted to dwell in his own hired house, although chained to a guard. He preached the Gospel under these circumstances for two years, witnessing to all who came to him. Probably many of those who visited this outstanding prisoner were from various parts of Europe, and thus in this most unusual way the message spread.

It is noteworthy that the preaching of the Gospel by the early disciples was almost always accompanied by great difficulties. They were mobbed and stoned, imprisoned, and put to death, thus fulfilling Jesus’ prophecy, “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” Nevertheless they also realized the power of the Lord giving them strength to endure, and doubtless often recalled the Master’s further statement, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Should we not be faithful witnesses now, when the conditions are so much more favorable!

QUESTIONS:

What did the Lord expect would be accomplished by the preaching of the Gospel to all nations?

What term did Peter use when preaching the doctrine of the resurrection?

How did the Holy Spirit indicate the Lord’s choice of Paul and Barnabas to represent the church at Antioch?

How did the Lord direct Paul as to where he was to serve?

LETTERS IN THE BIBLE

December 12

GOLDEN TEXT: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."—I John 5:13

A VERY important section of the New Testament is made up of letters—inspired letters—written by one or another of the divinely chosen apostles of the church. Some of these letters are addressed to particular congregations of the time, some to individuals, while others are general letters, or epistles. They have all become general, nevertheless, in that by divine providence, they have been made a part of the Word of God to the entire church.

In a sense we might say that these letters are supplemental to the main body of the Word of God, for it is doubtful if they contain any information that could properly be referred to as new truth. Their great value is the application they make of the principles of the truth to specific circumstances and situations which arise in the lives of individual Christians and in ecclesias, or churches.

Thus Paul's letter to the Corinthians points out the carnality of following human leaders, there-

by emphasizing the great truth set forth by Jesus, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." (Matt. 23:8) His letter to the church at Rome clarifies the matter of how both Jews and Gentiles come into harmony with God through faith in Christ and full consecration.

In our Golden Text John explains that the purpose of his writing was that "ye may know that ye have eternal life." From one standpoint this could be said to be the purpose of all the apostolic letters, for no follower of Jesus can be assured of eternal life except on the basis of knowing that his life is pleasing to the Lord, and all the letters of the New Testament, in one way or another, deal with this very issue.

In John's letter he said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (I John 3:14) This undoubtedly is one of the final tests of discipleship, of being a true follower of the Master. John reasoned that if we do not love God's people whom we see, how can we love God whom we do not see. It is a very practical viewpoint, but one, nevertheless, which touches every phase of the Christian life.

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11—Paul's letter to the church at Philippi is one of the few in which we find no word of criticism. This little group of disciples must have been manifesting great earnestness in applying the principles of the Gospel to their daily lives. In chapter two, verse twelve, the apostle indicates as much, saying that they had al-

ways obeyed, not only when he was present with them, but endeavored to be even more faithful during his absence.

This letter is to some extent in the nature of a farewell message, for it was written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome, and at a time when he was not absolutely sure whether he would be released or whether he would remain there until he was executed. He had "confidence" that the Lord had further service for him while in the flesh, but was wholly resigned to whatever the divine will might be.—Phil. 1:20-25

In writing this letter, Paul wanted the Philippian brethren to realize that the Lord was abundantly able to care for their spiritual needs regardless of whether he was permitted to visit them again or not. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it," or complete it, wrote the apostle. He wanted them to realize that they were in the Lord's hands, not his, that it was God who was working in them, and that they were to continue to work with the Lord.—Phil. 1:6

This is a valuable lesson for every follower of the Master. It is all too easy to lean on the arm of flesh, to put our trust in human leadership rather than in the Lord. The Lord's people are to assist one another in every way they can to make their calling and election sure. We are to respect the Lord's choice of teachers in the church, but we are to accept their help only as it is in harmony with his inspired Word, and the final decision on this must be our own.

Paul was one of the inspired servants of the church, but in his humility he was assuring the church at Philippi that they could get along without his personal ministry in the event he was not permitted to return to them.

In addition to reaffirming the Christian's individual responsibility before the Lord, the first eleven verses of this epistle also remind us of the importance of love in the Christian life, a love that discerns between right and wrong, and is self-sacrificing in its service of the right.

In these verses Paul also emphasizes his interest in the preaching of the Gospel, indicating his rejoicing that the Gospel was being preached even though in some cases it was not with the proper spirit. Here, then, we have three great essentials of the Christian life—an individual stand with the Lord; a heart and life filled and controlled by love, and an active interest in disseminating the Gospel of the kingdom.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8, 9—In these two verses we are given a very comprehensive outline for holy meditation and true Christian living. Those who "think on these things," and follow the teachings and example of the Apostle Paul should without question make their calling and election sure.

QUESTIONS:

What are some of the purposes of the apostolic letters?

Does a Christian need the help of other Christians in order to make his calling and election sure?

What are three of the great essentials of the Christian life?

GOOD NEWS IN THE BIBLE

December 19

GOLDEN TEXT: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."—Luke 2:10

LUKE 2:1-14—In this beautiful story of the birth of Jesus we have a marked contrast between present reality and what God, through his angel, promised for the future. The promise was "good tidings" for all people because a Savior had been born; but, as for the Savior himself, there was "no room for him in the inn." The promise of an opportunity of salvation for all still holds true, but in all the centuries since Jesus was born there has continued to be little room for him in this world of sin and selfishness.

True, millions have taken his name, and the world over which Satan is the prince has been named "Christendom" in an outward recognition of him, yet only in the hearts and lives of his truly consecrated people—in all, but a "little flock"—has the Savior of the world found genuine acceptance.

It is also interesting to note the lowly character of those whom the Lord selected to receive the angelic announcement of the birth of Jesus. They were not among the great

and honored of the time. The scribes and Pharisees were passed by and this outstanding message of all ages was delivered to shepherds who were watching their flocks by night. To these it was given to hear those reassuring words, "Fear not."

Fear has plagued the world from the very beginning of man's downward course into sin and death, and the chaotic state of human affairs today presents frightening aspects to those who think seriously as they look forward to the things coming upon the earth. We are truly living in a fear-filled world, even as Jesus said would be true of the present time. The only remedy for this state of fear is to be found in Jesus, and in the fulfilment of the promises of God through him.

However, when the angel said to the shepherds, "Fear not," the fear alluded to was probably not that almost universal disease of fear which has afflicted the human race throughout all the ages, but rather, that they inevitably would be suddenly startled by this manifestation of the miraculous. Angels had appeared to various of God's servants in the past. Sometimes they brought messages of joy, but on other occasions the reverse was true. The angels which reassured Abraham concerning the birth of Isaac also told him, and later Lot, of the destruction of Sodom.

When the shepherds realized that they were being honored by the visit of an angel, they naturally would be fearful that it might be an indication of dire calamity soon to come upon them, so the angel

quickly assured them that all was well—"Fear not," the message we have for you is a good one, one that will cause you to rejoice; and besides, ultimately all mankind will rejoice because of what I am about to announce, for it is "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

These "good tidings" consisted primarily of the fact that a "Savior" had been born—a Savior whose power to save would bring everlasting life within reach of every member of the human race. In order to be this Savior of the world it was necessary that Jesus be "made flesh for the suffering of death." Not many of earth's millions as yet have had their opportunity to accept the provisions of divine love through Jesus, but eventually all nations will be blessed by him and will join in saying, "We will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:9

Mary was told that she should call the child Jesus, meaning Savior, and in Luke's account of his birth we find the angel explaining to the shepherds that he was the Christ of promise. The title Christ means "anointed," and the thought is that he was the one appointed and sent by Jehovah to be the Savior of the world. One of the prophecies stated that his name would be Emmanuel, which means "God with us," and he truly was God's representative among men,

and in due time will manifest God's love by giving all mankind an opportunity to live forever.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Isaiah's prophecy of the birth of Jesus refers to him as "The Prince of Peace," and surely peace will yet come to the world as a result of his birth—peace among the nations and within nations; peace in human hearts, and above all, peace between God and men. This will be during the thousand years of his reign.

Frequently the expression, "good will toward men," is interpreted to mean good will "among" men, but this evidently is not the correct thought, although there shall be good will among men when universal peace is established. We think that here the Lord is telling us of his good will toward men, expressed through the gift of his beloved Son to be the Redeemer of the human race. Surely it was a wonderful token of his love, and how thankful we should all be for this unspeakable gift!

QUESTIONS:

Have messages from God, delivered by angels, always been "good tidings"?

Primarily, what constituted the angelic message "good tidings"?

When will the promise of peace on earth be fulfilled?

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—ISAIAH 9:6

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE IN THE BIBLE

December 26

GOLDEN TEXT: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."—Revelation 11:15

APPOCALYPTIC means revealing, and surely there are many wonderful things revealed in the Book of Revelation. Our Golden Text is itself a most reassuring revelation of truth concerning the purpose of God to re-establish divine authority over his earthly creation. The passage does not mean that the selfish governments of this present evil world are taken over by Christ and reformed. The thought is, rather, that the sovereignty of earth which through the centuries was exercised by humanly constituted governments is taken over by Christ. So far as the kingdoms themselves are concerned, they are destroyed.—Psalms 2:8, 9

This taking over of the rulership of earth by Christ is said to occur when "the seventh angel sounded." It is this angel that sounds the "trump of God" which introduces the seventh thousand-year period in the plan of God, referred to by many students of the Bible as the

Millennium. It is during the early part of this period that man-made rulership is overthrown and Christ's authority manifests itself in the affairs of men. In connection with this change it is said that "the nations were angry." This undoubtedly explains the madness of the world during our generation, for already the nations are beginning to be dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel.

REVELATION 21:1-7—In this wonderful passage we are presented with a word picture of the kingdom of Christ established on the earth and functioning for the blessing of the people. We are given a combination of symbols, for no one of them would convey the full thought by itself. The kingdom will be the "new heavens and new earth," in fulfilment of Isaiah 65:17; it will be the "new Jerusalem," in fulfilment of Isaiah 65:18; and it will be the "tabernacle of God with men," because it will be through this kingdom that God will deal with and bless mankind.

And how wonderful will be the results of that new kingdom! "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain," we are assured. No wonder the Revelator wrote that "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"! Surely this means that all things will be made new.

Promises like these go so far beyond anything that could be accomplished by human ability that they would mean little to us but for the assurance that the Almighty God is their Author, and

that his power stands pledged to fulfil them. Yes, we are thankful that "he that sat upon the throne said, . . . Write: for these words are true and faithful." What God has promised he is abundantly able to fulfil.

REVELATION 22:1-5, 17—In this passage we have still another illustration of the kingdom of Christ and of the blessings which will flow out from it to the people of earth—that of the river of life flowing from underneath the throne of God and of the Lamb. In this picture is illustrated the fact that God's promised blessing of "all the families of the earth" is made available through the sacrifice of the slain Lamb, and will flow out to the people through the agencies of the divine kingdom.

Associated with the river symbolism there is also the "tree of life," with its abundant and continuous supply of fruit and with its leaves, which are for the healing of the nations. When Adam transgressed God's law he was driven out from the Garden of Eden and the flaming sword prevented his returning and partaking of the tree of life, but in this apocalyptic vision we are assured that the life-giving properties of the tree of life will become available for the people. The "tree of life," of course, is merely a symbol of the provisions of life through Christ.

"And there shall be no more curse." This curse has been upon

the human race from the time of Adam's sin, and has extended even to the earth. But, thank God, it will be removed. Sorrow and sighing will flee away. "There shall be no more death."

"And there shall be no night there." At the present time darkness covers the earth and gross darkness covers the people, and weeping has continued throughout the nighttime of God's disfavor. But how wonderful the promise that "joy cometh in the morning."—Psalm 30:5

Verse seventeen is one which has been greatly misunderstood—"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. . . . And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This text is often treated as though it applies during the present time, but it is well to remember that there is no "bride" to say, "Come," until after the marriage of the Lamb. (Rev. 19:7) This does not occur until the full end of the Gospel age. Now the invitation is to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, suffering and dying with him. It will be during the millennial age, following the uniting of the church with Christ in glory, that all mankind will be given the opportunity to partake "of the water of life freely."

QUESTIONS:

At what time does Christ take over the rulership of earth?

Of what are the new heavens and new earth a symbol?

Is the river of life now flowing?

JESUS, THE WORLD'S SAVIOR

December 19

¶ Ernest, do you know that many outstanding statesmen and educators throughout the world are saying that the only possible solution for the problems which are now vexing the nations is for the people to return to God?

¶ I know that, Frank, and it should require only a moment's reflection on that thought to realize that it is a very sound approach to the question of how the world is to be saved from its present state of chaos and distress. But Frank, how is the world to return to God? Just what is implied in that idea? It is one thing to talk about returning to God but quite another thing to do it. At least, so it seems to me.

¶ Well, the procedure is not so difficult as it may seem. As Christians we should know that in the Bible the Creator has provided his people with a blueprint of his plan for world peace. His Word reveals in no uncertain terms that Jesus is the chief One in the divine arrangements for the blessing of the people.

¶ Well, it's true all right, Frank, that the song of the angels on the night Jesus was born identifies him as the Savior of the world, and the One through whom God's good will was to be manifested toward the dying race.

¶ Yes, and the angels also prophesied on that occasion that through Jesus there would come peace on earth.

¶ I know that, Frank, but who IS Jesus, and what reasons do we have for believing that he meets all the qualifications which are needed by the One who is to be successful in restoring peace to the chaotic world of today? The reason I ask these questions, Frank, is that there is so much said about Jesus

that is vague and indefinite, as though the name itself should serve as a sort of magic wand to assure the distressed world that all is well.

¶ Ernest, I know of no better way of finding the answers to your questions than to examine some of the prophecies and promises of the Word of God which speak of Jesus and of his qualifications for filling the role assigned to him in the divine plan. I think we should start by noting the scriptural fact that Jesus had a pre-human existence. That is brought clearly to our attention in John 1:1-3.

¶ Isn't that the passage where Jesus is spoken of as the "Word," and states that the "Word was God"?

¶ Yes, but the Greek text is poorly translated in our Common Version of the Bible. In the Greek text the term "Logos" is used, which means mouth-piece, or representative. The text states that the Logos—translated Word in our English Bible—was a god, or mighty one, and that he was in the beginning with THE God, that is, the Almighty God. And then the passage declares that "the Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, . . . as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

¶ According to that, Frank, it was not God himself who was made flesh and who dwelt on earth as a man.

¶ You have the correct thought, Ernest. It was not God, but the Son of God whose birth was announced by the angels.

¶ But Frank, why was it necessary for Jesus to be born into this world as a man in order to be the Savior of the world?

¶ In Hebrews 2:14 we learn that the divine purpose in this was that Jesus might die as a human being, and,

through death, redeem those who are under the sentence of death, which, of course, is all mankind. And in John 6:51 we find Jesus' own explanation of the matter, that he gave his flesh for the life of the world.

¶ Frank, didn't the Apostle Paul write something to the effect that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"?—I Cor. 15:22

¶ That's right, Ernest, and in I Timothy he explains that Jesus gave himself a "ransom" for all. And the word ransom as here used in the Greek text has the thought of "corresponding price." It was a man, that is, Adam, who sinned and brought death to the race, so Jesus gave himself in death, as a corresponding price, to redeem the world from death.

¶ And the thought occurs to me, Frank, that Jesus' willingness to die for the people was a wonderful demonstration of his unselfish desire to bless the world. When this fact is understood it should go a long way toward causing people to have confidence in him. Don't you think so?

¶ Yes, I do, Ernest. The whole world praises the spirit of sacrifice on behalf of others, recognizing its value in those who would rule over the people. And in all the annals of history no ruler, no statesmen, no president, king, emperor, or dictator, has ever matched Jesus in his spirit of devotion, first to God, and then to mankind. He went about doing good, the Scriptures tell us. (Acts 10:38) He used his strength to teach and heal those with whom he came in contact, as daily he carried on his ministry of self-sacrifice.

¶ Yes, and finally he completed that wonderful life of service by voluntarily giving himself up to die the cruel death of the cross. The world will be able to trust a character like that! And how the people will rejoice when they realize that his long-promised kingdom has been established on the earth! And the Bible does make it plain that Jesus is destined to be the King of earth, doesn't it, Frank?

¶ Yes, Ernest, the "King of kings and Lord of lords." One of the prophecies

concerning him states, "All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy: . . . He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight."—Psalm 72:11-14

¶ That's a wonderful promise, Frank, but it was made thousands of years ago, and still it has not been fulfilled. It has been nearly 2,000 years since Jesus was born and since he died for the sins of the people, and still the world is without the benefit of his kingdom of blessing. How much longer will it be necessary to wait before the people accept his rulership over them? Getting back to our original question, how can the world return to God unless they are willing to accept the provisions of the kingdom of Christ which he has provided for them?

¶ Ernest, it is not a matter of waiting for the world to accept the kingship of Jesus before he can rule. There is a definite time in the plan of God for the kingdom of Christ to be established; and we are living in the beginning of that time now. That is one important reason the governments of this earth are becoming more and more helpless in their efforts to keep the people under control. When they recognize their utter failure, they will be glad to look to the Lord for help, and then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God.

¶ In other words, Jesus will know how to bring the world under control when God's due time arrives.

¶ That's right.

¶ And Frank, doesn't the Bible also speak of Jesus as being the future Judge of the people?

¶ Yes, and one of the promises of God pertaining to this reads, "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor."—Psalm 72:4

¶ Well, that certainly presents a bright

prospect for the future judgment day. But Frank, the text stated that Jesus shall break in pieces the oppressor. Who is referred to as the "oppressor"?

¶ The greatest of all oppressors of the people throughout the ages has been Satan, the Devil. He has enslaved the minds of men through deceit, and thereby prevented them from knowing and serving the true God, whom to know and serve in the right way will mean life eternal. You see, Ernest, traditional misconceptions of the judgment day have hindered many from appreciating Jesus as the great Judge of mankind.

¶ It's true, all right, Frank, that instead of looking forward to the judgment day as a time of blessing for all mankind, people as a rule have dreaded its approach, supposing it to be a time of doom for nearly everybody.

¶ Actually, however, it will be a time of blessing.

¶ Frank, in what sense will the judgment day be a time of blessing for the people? Could you give a little more information on that point?

¶ Well, for one thing it will be a time of enlightenment, when they will learn the truth concerning Jesus, and how divine love was manifested by his dying for their sins. There was a judgment day, you know, in the Garden of Eden. Our first parents failed then, and the condemnation of death came upon them. But Jesus took that penalty upon himself, and he will serve as Judge during the future judgment day for the purpose of giving the entire human race an opportunity to escape the results of original sin.

¶ But, Frank, doesn't the Bible say something about books being opened in the judgment day, and doesn't that mean that all the past sins of the people will be brought up against them and that they will be made to suffer on account of them?

¶ Ernest, the whole world are sinners, and God knew that when he sent his Son into the world to die for the people. No purpose would be served by checking over records in a book to find out how good or how wicked a person might be.

¶ But the Bible does speak of books being opened, does it not?

¶ Yes. That is mentioned in the Book of Revelation. The books which are to be opened, however, are not record books of the lives of those who have died. They are, instead, the books of divine revelation. As I said a moment ago, the judgment day is to be a time of enlightenment, and it is this that is symbolized in the Bible as the opening of the books. Ernest, that gift which the announcer spoke about at the beginning of the program is a book that tells all about the judgment day—just how Jesus will serve as Judge, what responsibilities the people will then have; and the wonderful opportunity that will be theirs to receive God's gift of everlasting life through Jesus.

¶ I want to read that book, Frank. Isn't there a prophecy of his birth in the Old Testament which foretold that Jesus would be called a Wonderful Counsellor?

¶ Yes. That is the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6, 7. "Unto us a child is born," is the way it starts, and then mentions various titles which would be ascribed to him, one of which is "Counsellor."

¶ Is that title in any way related to Jesus as the future Judge of the world?

¶ Yes, Ernest, I believe it is. Jesus will serve both as Counsellor and Judge of the people, and he will indeed be a wonderful Counsellor and a wonderful Judge. Another prophecy concerning him tells us that he will not judge after the sight of the eye, nor by the hearing of the ear, which means that he will be able to read the hearts of the people and will mete out justice with mercy. This prophecy reads, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding. . . . And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. . . . And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."—Isaiah 11:2-5

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

December 26

¶ Ernest, have you ever wondered why it is that although the angels announced the birth of Jesus with an assurance of peace on earth the world has never enjoyed anything more than brief, intermittent periods of partial peace?

¶ Frank, millions of people have wondered about that, and besides, as I remember it, one of the prophetic titles given to Jesus in the Old Testament is "Prince of Peace." Isn't that right?

¶ Yes, Ernest, it is. The title "Prince of Peace" is mentioned in the prophecy of Jesus' birth which is recorded in the ninth chapter of Isaiah and the sixth verse. It might be well to read that verse, Ernest. I think we will all enjoy it.

¶ I'll be glad to Frank, although it's one of those texts which one hardly needs to read because it's so well known. It says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." You know, Frank, all of these titles which the prophet ascribes to Jesus must be very meaningful. Perhaps before we examine the question as to why Jesus, The Prince of Peace, has not yet brought peace to the world, it would be well to discuss briefly some of these other titles. The text says, for instance, that Jesus shall be called The mighty God. Does that mean that Jesus is the Almighty God, that is, that the Father and the Son are the same person?

¶ No, Ernest, it doesn't mean that at all. But it does mean that Jesus has been highly exalted in the divine arrangement, and that the Creator is pleased to have him worshiped as a mighty God. Concerning Jesus the

Apostle Paul wrote that eventually to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess; and this, the apostle adds, will be to the glory of God. The Creator has decreed that all men shall honor his Son even as they honor him. The Scriptures point out that when Jesus was raised from the dead he was highly exalted to the right hand of God.

¶ Frank; doesn't the Bible say something about Jesus being called Emmanuel, and doesn't that mean "God with us"?

¶ That's right, but again we are not to understand this as meaning that Jesus is the Almighty God, the Creator himself. Jesus' coming to earth to die for the people was a wonderful manifestation of the love of God. Divine power operating through him was an eloquent demonstration of that power which eventually will be used by Jesus for healing all the sick and raising all the dead. In Jesus, men saw all the glorious characteristics of God manifested; and this will be even more so, when through the administration of the laws of his thousand-year kingdom, they recognize that divine wisdom, justice, love, and power are operating for their eternal blessing. Gladly, then, will the people acknowledge him as the Creator's representative in their midst, and will honor and worship him as such.

¶ That seems like a reasonable way of understanding the matter; but I notice, Frank, that Jesus is also spoken of in the text as "The everlasting Father." Doesn't that mean that he is our Heavenly Father?

¶ No! The term "father" simply means life-giver. Since through Jesus the people are to receive everlasting life, he is properly called the everlasting Father. There are a number of Scriptures which convey a similar thought to this. Take the explanation given us by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:45, 47. Here he says, in effect, that Jesus is the "last Adam."

¶ What does that mean?

¶ Well, Ernest, we know that the first Adam was the father of the human race, but he generated the race in a dying condition. He is the original

father of all mankind, but not an everlasting father, not a father who gave his offspring everlasting life.

¶ Would it be proper to say that Jesus will regenerate the race?

¶ Yes. As a matter of fact, Jesus referred to the time when this will be done as that of regeneration.—Matt. 19:28

¶ When will that be, Frank?

¶ That will be during the thousand years of Jesus' reign. In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah we are told that Jesus shall see his "seed." In this prophecy we are told that Jesus would be cut off from the land of the living and that there would be none to declare his generation. From a natural standpoint this was true. Jesus did not raise a family; nevertheless, from a symbolic standpoint he will be the father who will give everlasting life to all mankind. Thus it will be that he shall see his seed.

¶ Will that work of regenerating the race be in any way related to the resurrection of the dead?

¶ Yes. In a sense, it's merely another way of describing the resurrection. A similar thought is suggested by the Apostle Peter in his use of the word "restitution," when he says that there

will be times of restitution of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. Restitution means to restore. Resurrection means to raise up, while regeneration gives the thought of the reviving of life. It requires the use of all three terms to give us the full thought of what Jesus will do for dying humanity through the administration of the laws of his kingdom.

¶ Well, Jesus certainly will be the "everlasting Father"! And that, I think, brings us to the final title, "The Prince of Peace," and thus we come back to our original question, Why is it that The Prince of Peace has not yet established peace? As you know, Frank, it is nearly two thousand years since Jesus was born, and since the angels sang "peace on earth."

¶ I know that, Ernest, but Jesus has done more already toward establishing peace than many of us realize.

¶ What do you mean by that?

¶ Well, as a rule, we think of peace in contrast to war, and frequently use both terms merely in connection with the relationship of nations. But when we think of Jesus as The Prince of Peace, we should realize that this title implies much more than the fact that

Other Radio Programs

The following broadcasts are heard weekly over the "California Rural Network"—individual stations listed below.

BIBLE LECTURE

G. Russell Pollock—5 P. M. Sundays

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN—A News Program

Norman Woodworth—6:45 P. M. Saturdays.

Blythe	KUCB 1450 kc.
Brawley and El Centro	KROP 1300 kc.
Indio and Palm Springs	KREO 1400 kc.
Riverside	
and San Bernardino	KPRO 1440 kc.
Channel 248 on FM dial	KPOR FM

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTS

Vic. and N. S. W. Time

Geelong	3GL 222 metres 10:00 A.M.
Sydney	2KY 294 metres 8:15 A.M.

Western Australian Time

Perth	6KY metres 10:15 A.M.
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POLISH BROADCASTS

Ashtabula, Ohio	WICA 8:45 a.m.
Boston, Mass.	WORL 10:30 a.m.
Chicago, Ill.	WGES 8:45 a.m.
Niagara Falls, N. Y.	WHLD 9:45 a.m.
Springfield, Mass.	WSFR 10:00 a.m.
Stevens Point, Wis.	WFHR 10:30 a.m.

eventually he will establish peace among nations.

¶ What else does it imply, Frank?

¶ Well, we should remember that the whole world of mankind is at enmity with God. Through sin a state of disharmony exists between God and men. Jesus, in his role of Redeemer and Mediator will re-establish peace between God and men.

¶ Frank, didn't the Apostle Paul say that "being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ"?

¶ That's right, and during the thousand years of Christ's reign, all mankind will be given a full opportunity of enjoying peace with God. And this, of course, is fundamental to genuine peace among themselves.

¶ In other words, Jesus, as The Prince of Peace, will establish peace of heart, as well as peace among the nations.

¶ That's right, and no one can have genuine peace of heart unless through Jesus he enjoys peace with God. So you see, Ernest, God's peace plan which is being carried out through Jesus is a long-range one. The foundations were laid when he died on Calvary's cross as man's Redeemer, and it will not be complete until the end of his millennial kingdom, when all except the wilfully wicked of mankind will, through him, be reconciled to God and be at peace with him.

¶ That will mean peace among the nations also, will it not?

¶ Yes, certainly! There are a number of wonderful prophecies in the Bible concerning that. One of them is that of the forty-sixth Psalm, which describes the destruction of all the instruments of war and declares that the

Lord will make wars to cease unto the ends of the earth.

¶ I believe there is also a prophecy which speaks of beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning-hooks.

¶ That's right, and it's found in the fourth chapter of Micah, verses one to four. This prophecy describes the setting up of Christ's kingdom, and says that all nations shall give their allegiance to that kingdom. It represents the people as saying, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord, . . . and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."

¶ And it is when the nations learn the Lord's ways and walk in his paths that they "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks"—is that the thought?

¶ That's right, and the prophecy explains further that "nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Thus will The Prince of Peace establish peace among the nations.

¶ But Frank, there could still be a great deal of strife within nations, could there not?

¶ Strife of that sort is usually based upon economic necessities, and the prophet assures us that "every man shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, . . . and none shall make them afraid." This means that there will be peace within nations. In other words, there will be universal peace—that is, peace among nations, peace within nations, community peace, peace in the heart, and fundamental to all peace the world will be at peace with God. All of this will be accomplished through Jesus, the Savior of the world.

¶ Truly, Jesus is The Prince of Peace!

BROADCAST TOPICS: December 5 (Pacific Time Zone)—"Why Christ Returns"; Gift Book No. 2. December 12 (Pacific Time Zone)—"The Increase of Christ's Kingdom"; "Chosen People" book. December 5 (Mountain, Central, and Eastern Time Zones)—"The Hope of Life"; "Hope" booklet. December 12 (Mountain, Central, and Eastern Time Zones)—"What Is the Soul?" "Hope" booklet. December 19 (All Time Zones)—"Jesus, the World's Savior"; Christmas booklet. December 26 (All Time Zones)—"The Prince of Peace"; Christmas booklet.

His Unspeakable Gift

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."
—II CORINTHIANS 9:15

JESUS was God's "unspeakable" gift to mankind—to both the church and the world. Millions now commemorate his birth, but only the few as yet have a genuine appreciation of the important position he occupies in the plan of God for the redemption and restoration of the human race. And even those who are rejoicing in the knowledge of present truth are incapable of grasping wholly what Jesus means to them, and will eventually mean to all mankind. Truly he was an "unspeakable" gift, that is, a gift of such inestimable value that his merits cannot fully be explained.

The Apostle Paul credits Jesus with the statement that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) Perhaps this explains in a manner the overflowing spirit of joy that seems to exist during the Christmas season, when nearly everyone is planning to give. But the Christian should be watchful lest in the excitement of presenting little gifts to others he does not lose sight of Jesus, the greatest of all gifts to men.

It is now quite generally recognized that December 25 is not the true anniversary of the birth of Jesus—that it is approximately October 1 instead—but this should make little difference to us as Christians, for in our hearts and lives we rejoice every day in the blessings received through God's gift. Every day of the year we should give special thanks to God for his "unspeakable" gift!

The Spirit of Giving

The spirit of giving is the spirit of God. In one of the most precious texts of the Bible we are told that "God so loved . . . that he gave"—that is, he gave that which cost him more than any other possible gift could have done: he gave his own beloved Son. (John 3:16) Godlike love, therefore, manifests itself in giving that others

might be benefited, be blessed. This means that if we want to be like God we must be actuated by the spirit of giving, that the greatest joy of our lives will be experienced, not through receiving, but by giving.

When Jesus urged us to be "perfect" even as our Father in heaven is perfect, he illustrated what he meant by reminding us that God causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon both the just and the unjust—that is, he is impartial in bestowing these common, yet life-giving blessings, upon others. (Matt. 5:48) And we should emulate this all-comprehensiveness of divine love and thus in this sense be perfect as God is perfect.

There are so many things which we as human beings need that it is all too easy, even for Christians, to go through life thinking only of our needs, and of how they may be supplied. Even as infants we need the care of a mother, and through the maturing years we are constantly in need of care, of food, of clothing, of shelter, and of many other things. Most experiences of life tend to emphasize our needs, hence self-interest usually is considered the most important law of life.

True, the blessedness of giving is enjoyed by many through the exercise of this higher law of life in giving time and attention to their loved ones—their families and special friends. Indeed, this opportunity of giving has been a saving grace to prevent the human race from becoming even more selfish than it is. However, for the Christian, the exercise of this blessed privilege of supplying the needs of one's own immediate family is not enough. Those of us who have learned through the truth to appreciate the meaning of God's unspeakable gift to the church and to the world should be so actuated by this example of divine love that we will want to widen the circle of our giving.

We know that the value of God's unspeakable gift centers in the fact that Jesus himself gave his life that we might live. Describing the attitude of those who have come to understand and appreciate the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice the apostle says, "We thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which "died for them, and rose again." (II Cor. 5:14, 15) Here is the heart response of those whose eyes of understanding have seen in God's gift, and in Jesus' sacrifice and example,

the better way of life. In turning to a life of giving, they first of all give themselves to him who gave all for them.

When this unreserved presentation to God and to Jesus is made, we are, through the Redeemer's merit, accepted into the divine family, becoming "sons of God." (I John 3:1, 2) Involved in this is the Lord's appeal through the Psalmist, "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." (Psalm 45:10) This does not mean that we are to neglect those who by ties of flesh are dependent upon us; but it does mean that our interests have been enlarged, and that our concern for our immediate family is now motivated by God's will, that we want to love and care for them as God directs, and in so doing to realize that it constitutes in part the giving of our all to the Lord.

At One with Him

When we become sons of God, we are members of a larger family, and the interests of that family become our interests. God is the Head of this family, our Heavenly Father. Jesus is our elder brother. The interests of this family are very wide, and our Heavenly Father and Jesus are so devoted to them that they have already made great sacrifices to assure their accomplishment. Four thousand years ago God revealed the wideness of his interests when he assured Abraham that it was his intention to bless all the families of the earth.—Gen. 12:3

And it was in the outworking of this good will toward his human creation that God gave his Son. He "so loved" that he made this sacrifice in order that his erstwhile creation might have an opportunity to return to him and enjoy everlasting life. The Scriptures speak of Adam as being a "son of God." (Luke 3:38) Had he not disobeyed God's law, thus incurring the death penalty, his children likewise would have been members of God's family. But even though the world was plunged into sin and death, God still has an interest in the dying race. From this standpoint, his love in giving his Son to be man's Redeemer was a love for his own, and now that we have dedicated ourselves to the divine cause, we should be concerned over the well-being of all those whom God loves and for whom Christ died.

This should be so real that we will constantly have it on our hearts, as though it were a family responsibility. It is the responsi-

bility of the family of God. As a matter of fact, while few in the world know about it as yet, it is nevertheless true that the whole creation is groaning in pain together until now, waiting "for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:22, 19) Yes, God has begotten us as new creatures into his family by his Spirit, because he saw that our hearts were in tune with his own heart of love, and because he knew that we wanted to be like him in our willingness to give our all that others might be blessed.

Our original consecration must have been sincere, else God would not have accepted us and taken us into his family; but he knows that we need to be tested—that it is one thing to say that we will give our all, and quite another thing to do it. We rejoice in God's gift to the world, and are happy in the thought that all mankind will eventually be richly blessed as a result of his unspeakable gift. This much is undoubtedly true of every truth-enlightened Christian in the world today. But how much do we rejoice in God's gift, and how happy are we that through Jesus all the families of the earth are to be blessed?

This is a question which each consecrated child of God can answer only for himself, but God has given us a criterion by which we can judge ourselves on this point. He has so arranged it that in the giving of our all to him we use our time, our strength, our means, our all, in bearing testimony to his love as it is manifested in his glorious plan for the blessing of all mankind. It is a very simple arrangement, but it serves two very important purposes in the plan of God. It is God's way of reaching and calling those who become fellow members of the body of Christ, and it affords an opportunity for each of these called ones to demonstrate his real interest in the divine cause. For, if we are truly rejoicing in the prospect of all the families of the earth being blessed by and by, nothing will hold us back from doing what we can to bless them now.

In thus laying down our lives in the ministry of the truth, we are manifesting our interest in the divine cause in two ways. John admonished that we should lay down our lives for the brethren, and it is well to remember that all of the brethren, to begin with, are as we were—ignorant of the great plan of God, and strangers to his promise. (I John 3:16) It was because some of the brethren were busily engaged in laying down their lives for us by bearing

testimony to the truth that we were brought into the body of Christ. So now we have the same privilege. And it is well to remember that a proper ministry of the truth includes the more personal service to one another in our church meetings and general fellowship.

Our public ministry of the truth also serves, incidentally, as a witness to the world, a witness which the Lord has clearly shown that he wants his people to give. But when we speak of the "witness" being incidental we should have clearly in mind the difference between this result and the work by which it is accomplished. The work of God can never be incidental, nor should we thus think of our great privilege of laying down our lives in his service. Being "workers together with him" should be the all-consuming consideration of our lives.—II Cor. 6:1

We should always make a distinction between what is accomplished by our sacrificial work, and the work itself. The primary purpose of God in arranging for us to lay down our lives in the ministry of the truth has been the building up of the church, the making ready of the bride. Incidentally, as this primary purpose of the Gospel age is being accomplished, a witness is given to the world. We might properly think of the "witness," therefore, as a sort of by-product of our work, but the work itself is not incidental.

As Christians we are commissioned to preach the glad tidings of the kingdom. (Isa. 61:1-3) Surely that which we have been commissioned to do by the Holy Spirit of God should not be considered incidental. Nor should we conclude that it is optional, so far as the will of God is concerned, whether or not we give our all to him and to his service. If we are members of his family the proof of it will be the manner in which we manifest our interest in those for whom he gave his Son to die. And he will measure our interest, not by what we say about it, but by what we do.

So, at the close of another year, and during this season of giving, let us reflect more earnestly than ever upon the meaning of God's unspeakable gift. And may our meditations be directed along the lines suggested by Paul; namely, that since so much was given for us, and for all mankind, the only adequate way to express our appreciation is to give our all to the Giver. Many of us did this long ago, but at the close of 1948 are we continuing to give our all?

There can be no better time to bring our consecration up-to-date than at the close of the year. If we do, and if we enter 1949 more determined than ever to lay down our lives for the Lord, for the truth, and for the brethren, and even in bringing a little ray of hope to the world, the new year will truly be a blessed one, for we can be assured of the truthfulness of Jesus' words, that it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

Encouraging Letters

Again Enjoying Fellowship

Dear Brethren in Christ: We are very happy to tell you that we have received the booklets you sent us in response to our mail inquiry. After hearing your Frank and Ernest program a few Sundays ago, and after many years, we are once again associated with others "of like precious faith." It has been a great joy to us to meet the dear friends of the Vancouver Ecclesia. It also happened that our finding of this "pearl of great price" coincided with the visit of Pilgrim Brother MacAulay to Vancouver, and so had the joy of meeting him, and gaining additional strength through his discourse after our many years of isolation. There are four of us here, and we shall endeavor, with the Lord's blessing, to spread this Gospel of glad tidings, and possibly to find others who, like ourselves, were standing (as we thought) alone. We can procure cards and literature from the Vancouver Ecclesia, and will endeavor to place the book "When Pastor Russell Died" with others we may know and hear of, as you suggest. In closing, it may be of interest to you to know how we happened to be picked out of the air by your "Frank and Ernest" discourse. The first week we just got a few closing words as my daughter happened to turn on the radio by chance. I was out of the house at the time, and when I came in later they told me how much those few words sounded like Brother Russell. The next Sunday we all listened, but it happened that no local

meeting place was announced, so we were still a little in the dark, but with a much firmer belief that we were listening to the "plan of the ages." The third Sunday we assembled by the radio again, and at the conclusion of the talk we heard the words of The Dawn hymn, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." That was all the assurance we needed. The meeting place in Vancouver was announced. We are forty miles out of town, but that night my daughters took the car and drove in to find if these things were so. No more room for doubt when they returned with their arms full of tracts and booklets, all full of that glorious hope which shall be to all people. With Christian love to all, (I speak for all here) Your brother in Him, H. W. P., Can.

Can Now See the Presence

Your new book, "Behold Your King," was excellent, and since reading it I have found no difficulty in accepting the fact of our Lord's presence, a subject which before I was only vaguely able to understand, for, having expected the Lord's presence to be a fleshly one, I could not understand nor grasp the greater and more harmonious significance of his invisible presence. When I studied "Behold Your King" I went again to the volumes of our dear Brother Russell, the wise and faithful servant, and to the Reprints, and afterward I was thoroughly convinced, and how strengthening the

fact! I have suggested to our little ecclesia that we study the book in class, but being short of copies we have been unable to take it up. Perhaps you could supply us with two or more volumes of "Behold Your King," for it is the subject of the Lord's presence, or manner of his second advent, which we are now studying in Volume II of the Studies. L. C., Colo.

God Is Love

Dear Friends: I listened in again this morning and I liked what you said about hell. I remember as a small child deciding that if God loved us he would not let any of us burn forever. My dear mother was rather shocked when I announced my decision. I first asked her if I were terribly naughty if she would want me to burn forever, and of course she said, No! Then I said, Well, if God loves us even more than our mother, would he want us to burn? I think mother rather agreed with me. May I intrude on your generosity again and request your Gift Book No. 1. I am enclosing one dollar towards the fine work you are doing in giving the people, including me, an entirely new understanding of the Bible. Gratefully, W. H., Calif.

A Balanced Ministry

Dear Brethren in Christ: After reading your review of aims and intentions to serve the Lord and his people through The Dawn, as expressed in its first issue, I feel I must tell you something of my appreciation of it, and the help in times of need which it has often supplied. Our Heavenly Father has been pleased to use your efforts for the blessing and strengthening of many of his people who were bewildered and confused by the wolves which had scattered his flock. This has been done by preaching the whole truth, not just one portion of it. I used to marvel at Brother Russell's ability to bring in a little of every feature of the truth in every discourse or article. That is what has endeared The Dawn to me. It follows the whole commission to preach, as given in Isaiah 61:1-3, as he did. It has been my hope and prayer daily that you may have strength and courage to continue in the

same way faithfully unto the end of the way. Some seem to enjoy using a one-stringed instrument to praise the Lord. It may be chronology, God's vengeance on the nations, spirituality, character development, or service (meaning to them, putting out books and tracts only), but we are told to "sing unto the Lord with an instrument of ten strings." That is why I have so much appreciated the ministry of the brethren of The Dawn. They are doing that. May our present Lord guide and bless your efforts to continue to serve and praise him in this way, and thereby strengthen and help the brethren. With Christian love, yours in His service, A. E. E., Mo.

Given New Hope

Dear Frank and Ernest: To me, your broadcast of September 19 was wonderful. For reasons with which I need not bother you, my heart has been full of anguish, and for nearly eight years I have searched for some creed or doctrine that would make it easier to bear. But in both church and Bible lessons I have looked in vain. They are all so self-righteous and believe that only a few of all whom God has created will be saved—that all the good and bad, those who have lived good lives and suffered many heartbreaks, and the cruelest, wickedest persons on earth are all to be resurrected and destroyed together. It does not seem reasonable, consistent, godlike, and most important, christlike, that so many should be destroyed because they have not kept all of God's commandments. I, too, cannot believe a God of love would create so many and save so few after Christ's great sacrifice. I was full of despair, but your broadcast has given me new hope. Knowing that someone who understands the Bible believes there is a chance for the many millions who "know not what they do," has strengthened my faith and makes each day so much more worth living. I thank you very much for the copy of "Chosen People" which you sent me and I would very, very much like to have a copy of Gift Book No. 1. Will you send me a copy, please? Will you tell me if there is a church whose doctrine is like yours? Most church services leave me with such an unsatis-

factory feeling. If there is a more christlike church, I would like to find it. Thank you very much for your help. I know someone has to pay for these books, so am enclosing this small amount to help a little in this wonderful work. I hope it will help many others as much as it has helped me. Thank you again. Sincerely, Mrs. G. H. N., Maine

A Friendly Visit

Dear Friends: For that is what your visit is in our home—two friends we listen to Sunday mornings. We have received so many blessings from your talks—so much help in understanding the Bible. We would like to have your Gift Book No: 1. Sincerely, Mrs. J. M., Ariz.

Comforted

Gentlemen: Will you please send me your book, "God and Reason." Your little booklet, "Hope," has done me a world of good, and I certainly appreciated it. I only hope that others who read it get as much out of it as I have. It helped so much that I am passing it around for others to find comfort as I have from it. Yours truly, W. S. H., N. C.

Wants a Supply

Dear Friends: I am enclosing \$5.00, for which please send me twelve "Behold Your King." I received and read the copy ordered a few weeks ago. It

seemed to me that one could hardly read it without believing the message. So many are beginning to think and talk about the world outlook, and I would like to have a few of these books on hand to lend to my neighbors. May God guide, direct, and bless you. I. J. B., Fla.

Educational

Dear Sirs: Please send without charge your booklet entitled "Hope." I have just heard your broadcast, and have found it very educational as well as inspiring. I believe this type of program is what Christians throughout the nation have been looking for many years. May God's blessings be with you as you continue this fine work. J. A. M., Ariz.

From England

Dear Brethren: Loving greetings in our Redeemer. We do appreciate the loving helpful service you are rendering the brethren by the periodical visits and ministry. The fellowship, the very upbuilding ministry of the Word, the conscious linking us to others of like precious faith, is a great encouragement as well as a source of comfort and strength to us lonely and isolated ones. We thank the Lord for the arrangement of such labour of love, and pray the Lord's richest and choicest blessing for each and all who make this possible. The Lord guide you and be with you always. Yours in Christ Jesus, G. A. F.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

DECEMBER 2—"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized."—Acts 22:16 (Z. '01-186. Hymn 108)

DECEMBER 9—"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."—James 1:12 (Z. '98-41. Hymn 69)

DECEMBER 16—"How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be

God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."—I Kings 18:21 (Z. '02-42. Hymn 62)

DECEMBER 23—"A word spoken in season, how good is it! A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."—Proverbs 15:23; 25:11 (Z. '02-381, 382. Hymn 131)

DECEMBER 30—"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness."—Psalm 65:11 (Z. '00-365. Hymn 219)

The British Section

Outlook from Britain

THE people of Britain, one of the victorious nations of the late war, are still suffering severe hardships and their standard of living is now lower than at any period during the war. The fact is, that she cannot grow enough food to feed herself. Although the people endeavour to produce more goods to sell abroad in order to obtain the currencies needed to import food, the continued rise in prices abroad of those things she must buy, make it that she is no better off; so further appeals are made to produce more, and still more.

The conditions in Germany are bad, and that country has become the centre of contention amongst the Powers. Before the first World War, Sir Norman Angell published a book entitled, "The Great Illusion." War, he stated, under modern conditions, is such that even the victorious nation loses, and to think that nations gain from war is an "illusion." The people of Britain would like to be clear of the burden of Germany, but how? Discord between the victor nations makes peace impossible.

France is in the throes of political strikes, so also is Italy. In Europe, the Vatican is striving desperately to put into political positions her nominees, hence the new so-called Christian Demo-

cratic parties are largely Catholic, operating under the guise of democracy. On the other hand, in all these countries, communistic agitation is increasing, and the governments for their own protection are purging their staffs, by dismissing those who favour communism.

The Government of the U. S. A. is urging the peoples of Europe to come together to form the United States of Europe, beginning with the Western Union nations, and buttressed in the north by the Scandinavian peoples and in the south by Spain and Portugal. Thus a line of defence would be established against Soviet Russia. The European nations are being advised that this is expected as the price of E. R. P.

The nations are lining up for what? Will peace be established, will economic conditions improve, so that the peoples can have the food, clothing, and freedom they require? The evidence is the other way, mutual suspicion and self-interest dominate the nations, and opposing ideologies muster their forces for the battle. In volume IV of *Studies in the Scriptures*, it is pointed out that the impending trouble would be largely between capital and labour. This is what we see. Labour in its extreme sense is represented by communism which has a great influence in Europe, whilst the stronghold of capitalism is now the U. S. A.

In Britain, nationalisation is tak-

ing the big industries from private (capitalist) owners and turning them over to the state (people). Railways, coal mines, electricity, and gas undertakings have been thus dealt with, and in the near future steel manufacture will be taken. Commercial concerns are called upon by the Government to limit their profit making, and thus it is hoped to prevent Britain from falling into revolutionary conditions which are so prevalent on the Continent.

Will the nations be able to save themselves and to perpetuate their dominion? From the scriptural standpoint they are drunk with the wine served to them by the "woman" seated upon the scarlet coloured beat, and therefore cannot save themselves. (Rev. 17:3) To use the illustration of Daniel 7:11, the beast will be slain, its body destroyed and given to the burning flame of trouble at the end of this age. The only hope for humanity is the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Is It Lawful? Is It Expedient?

"All things are lawful, . . . but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful, . . . but all things edify not."—I Cor. 10:23

THE Christian is one who has not only turned from sin to righteousness and accepted Jesus as his Redeemer from sin and death, but who, accepting the terms and conditions of the high calling, has consecrated his justified human nature

unto death, and has been begotten of the Holy Spirit, in order that in the resurrection he might experience a change of nature, even to be a partaker of the divine nature. (II Pet. 1:4) His calling, therefore, not only requires him to live in harmony with righteousness to the extent of his ability, but also to submit to the regenerating and transforming influences of the Spirit of God, accomplished frequently at a sacrifice of the flesh, that he might be ready for his resurrection change.

Hence, the liberty of Christ to which the consecrated Christian is called, gives him the privilege of doing only those things in accord with the moral law that are also in accord with the will of God as expressed in the terms of his calling. Therefore he must not only continually ask himself the question, Is this right, or is that wrong? but, additionally, Is this, or is that, God's will for me?

Paul's words quoted above suggest two important reasons why the Lord's people must do this. First, because of the effect of what we do upon others. "All things are lawful, . . . but all things are not expedient." Following the example of his Master, the Christian, during his earthly probation, is required to pursue a course which will have the greatest possible influence for good upon others. He must say, If I do this thing will it set a good example to my brethren?

If he be an elder brother, he must ask himself the question, Is my example a good one for the younger members of the Lord's

family? For instance, one may have a good reason for going to hear a prominent preacher of the nominal church, but the example of seeing another "sit at meat in the idol's temple" (I Cor. 8:10) may not be good for a weaker brother, not yet fully separated from the ways and ideas of great Babylon; and the course of wisdom and love is surely to avoid everything likely to be a stumbling block to another.

Again, Paul says, "All things are lawful, . . . but all things edify not. Many things are lawful to us, which, being secret and private, are in no danger of setting an unwise example to others. Yet these can have a powerful effect upon our own spiritual life, our growth as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Many of the Lord's people, before seeing the light of present truth, had a hobby, or some interest in life of which they were very fond: for instance, good literature, or good music, which possibly occupied a considerable amount of their spare time. These earthly affections sometimes tempt one to give them indulgence after beginning to walk the narrow way.

While the reading of the world's classics is quite lawful, we need to ask ourselves the question, Is time so spent edifying? Is it building us up as new creatures in Christ Jesus? And then, after an honest examination of our position, we should seek by the Lord's grace to keep our course in accord with those things that will enable us to make the greatest possible progress in the narrow way: progress that will be beneficial not only to ourselves, but also to our brethren—

fellow members of the body of Christ. As Paul says, "Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."—I Cor. 14:12

May these two infinitely wise and helpful questions suggested by the apostle continually be with us: "Is it expedient?" "Is it edifying?" And the Lord will surely bless the results to our eternal good.

A Christmas Reverie

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. . . . And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke 2:8-11

ALTHOUGH the festival of Christmas is ostensibly kept in commemoration of the birth of Jesus, as must be admitted, it is in itself but an old heathen festival, dating back to the days of ancient Babylon; and its mistletoe, yule log, Christmas tree, setting on fire the Christmas pudding, etc., are all relics of pagan customs. Nevertheless, there is much in the Christmas season to cause us to think of and meditate upon the birth of Jesus—God's only begotten Son, who was willing to leave the glory of his position with the Father and come to earth to die for man's sin. As the apostle says, "Since then the

children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same" (Heb. 2:14, R. V.), and gave his flesh for the life of the world.—John 6:51

While endeavouring to appreciate more and more the great love of both the Father and the Son in connection with this wonderful transaction, with all it means to us and the whole world throughout the eternal future, it is also interesting as well as helpful to remember that events associated with our Lord's first advent in some ways seem to foreshadow events associated with the early years of his second advent: the former shadowing forth the greater glory and blessedness of the latter; and the latter being so closely associated with the happenings of our own day, makes them in some ways of even greater inspiration and interest than the happenings of those sinless years of the Master's first presence in Israel.

"The Lord Gave the Word"

For instance, when Jesus was born, the Father arranged to have his presence announced by one angel only. But shortly after, a company of the heavenly host took up the new song. How very similar this is to the method the Lord has followed in these days of the second presence of the Redeemer! An angel, the seventh messenger, first announced the Lord's second presence; and the evidences of his presence were first brought to the attention of some claiming to be shepherds of the Lord's flock. A few of these who were faithfully keeping watch

over their flocks (Heb. 13:17) received the joyful intelligence: "The glory of the Lord shone round about them," and they began to proclaim the good news.

How beautifully, too, does verse ten sum up the message of present truth! Seventy years ago the Christian religion, as propounded by the nominal church, was to a large extent a religion of fear. In contrast with the fears of orthodoxy relative to the eternal misery of nearly all God's creatures, the plan of the ages shows that the Gospel is to be good tidings of great joy unto all people. "Fear not" were, therefore, the first words of the angel unto the shepherds.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."—Luke 2:13, 14

Another interesting parallel may be seen in this scripture relative to these days of our Lord's second presence. Within a few decades of the messenger's beginning to proclaim the Lord's presence and the glad tidings of salvation which shall be unto all people, quite a company of Spirit begotten ones began to take up the same glad strain—the great plan of salvation which so magnifies the character of our Heavenly Father ("Glory to God in the highest"), and which is to eventuate in peace on earth, and good will among all mankind.

May we use all our opportunities of faithfully singing the new song, that in due time we may be "caught up" to be with our Master, there to glorify God forever.

Speakers' Appointments

H. E. ANDERSON

Wilmington, Del. (Morning) Dec. 5
 Philadelphia, Pa. (Afternoon) 5

W. T. BAKER

Newark, Ohio Dec. 1
 Nelsonville, Ohio 2, 3
 Zanesville, Ohio 4
 Shadyside, Ohio 5
 East Liverpool, Ohio 6, 7
 Cleveland, Ohio 8
 Toronto, Ont., Can. 12
 Orillia, Ont., Can. 15-17
 Buffalo, N. Y. 19
 Tonawanda, N. Y. 20
 Syracuse, N. Y. 21

J. BEDNARZ

York, Pa. (Evening) Dec. 11
 York, Pa. (Morning) 12
 Lancaster, Pa. (Afternoon) 12

F. BRIGHT

Allentown, Pa. Dec. 26

JENS COPELAND

Brooklyn, N. Y. (3 P. M.) Dec. 19

O. D. DEIFER

Shamokin, Pa. Dec. 19

E. L. FOWLER

Oakland, Calif. Dec. 5
 Whittier, Calif. 19

W. J. HOLLISTER

Paterson, N. J. Dec. 5

L. JACOBS

Groton, Conn. (Evening) Dec. 18
 Groton, Conn. (Morning) 19
 New London, Conn. (Afternoon) 19

R. A. KREBS

Galveston, Tex. Dec. 1, 2
 Mobile, Ala. 4-6

Nashville, Tenn. 7, 8
 Madisonville, Ky. 9, 10
 St. Louis, Mo. 12
 Hannibal, Mo. 13
 Quincy, Ill. 14, 15
 Canton, Ill. 16
 La Salle, Ill. 17
 Rockford, Ill. 18-31

R. J. KRUPA

Flint, Mich. Dec. 12
 Chicago, Ill. Dec. 31-Jan. 2

L. P. LOOMIS

Baltimore, Md. Dec. 19

E. LORENZ

San Luis Obispo, Calif. Dec. 19

J. Y. MAC AULAY

Broadbent, Ore. Nov. 27-Dec. 3
 Sacramento, Calif. 5
 Oakland, Calif. 6, 8
 Redwood City, Calif. 7
 Stockton, Calif. 9
 Sonora, Calif. 10
 Fresno, Calif. 11, 12
 San Luis Obispo, Calif. 13
 Los Angeles, Calif. area 14-28
 San Diego, Calif. 29
 Phoenix, Ariz. Dec. 31-Jan. 2

E. R. MAC JILTON

Washington, Pa. Dec. 19
 Monessen, Pa. 26

W. S. MARSHALL

Orland, Me. Dec. 5
 Orono, Me. 12
 Kenduskeag, Me. 16
 Bangor—Brewer, Me. 19
 Corinth, Me. 25, 26

L. H. NORBY

New Haven, Conn. (Morning) Dec. 26
 Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon) ... 26

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

H. PASSIOS		W. N. WOODWORTH	
Duquesne, Pa.	Dec. 5	Paterson, N. J.	19
G. P. RIPPER		H. L. YOUNG	
Santa Ana, Calif.	Dec. 26	Lehighton, Pa.	Dec. 12
M. A. STAMULAS		Easton, Pa.	
Reading, Pa.	Dec. 5	C. W. ZAHNOW	
C. A. SUNDBOM		Marianna, Ark.	Nov. 30, Dec. 1
Chicago, Ill.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2	Monroe, Ark.	Dec. 2, 3
W. TWELKER		Little Rock, Ark.	4, 5
Riverside, Calif. (Morning)	Dec. 19	Fort Smith, Ark.	6
Pomona, Calif. (Afternoon)	19	Stigler, Okla.	7
J. I. VAN HORNE		Ada, Okla.	9, 10
East Liverpool, Ohio	Dec. 12	Durant, Okla.	11, 12
F. S. WASSMANN		Dallas, Tex.	13
Wallingford, Conn. (Morning)	Dec. 12	Bowie, Tex.	14, 15
Bridgeport, Conn. (Afternoon)	12	Electra, Tex.	16
G. M. WILSON		Nocona, Tex.	17-19
Paterson, N. J. (Afternoon)	Dec. 12	Iowa Park, Tex.	20, 21
Rutherford, N. J. (Evening)	12	Weatherford, Tex.	22
		Mineral Wells, Tex.	23
		Austin, Tex.	24, 25
		San Antonio, Tex.	26, 27
		Tucson, Ariz.	29
		Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2

CONVENTIONS

SAGINAW, MICH., DECEMBER 12—Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

DETROIT, MICH., December 26—Maccabees Bldg., Woodward Avenue at Putnam.

PHOENIX, ARIZ., December 31-January 2—The convention is to be held at the Osborn School Auditorium, 3415 North Central Avenue. Present plans include a Watchnight service on the evening of December 31, and a public meeting on the afternoon of January 2. Noon and evening meals will be served in the school cafeteria. Hotel or auto court reservations may be obtained by writing the class secretary, Emile Herrscher, 407 Heard Building, Phoenix, Ariz. It is expected that Brothers J. B. Brown; J. H. Cole; L. Paul Davis; E. Fay; E. Fowler; J. Hull; N. Molenaar;

A. Newell; G. R. Pollock; G. P. Ripper; F. W. Rice; J. Wyndelts; J. Y. MacAulay and C. W. Zahnnow will serve.

CHICAGO, ILL., December 31-January 2—The convention opens Friday evening at eight o'clock. All sessions will be held in the Central Masonic Temple, 910 N. LaSalle Street. The program will include a Watchnight service, a vesper service, a question meeting, and a public discourse. Brother Jens Copeland will give a report of his visit to the British Isles and the Scandinavian countries. Other speakers will be Brothers R. J. Krupa, D. J. Morehouse, and C. A. Sundbom. The Chicago Class will serve supper on Saturday and dinner on Sunday. For details write the secretary, Edmund Jezuit, 4327 S. Christiana Ave., Chicago 32, Ill.



God's Long Promised Gift

FROM the very beginning of things God knew what the world needed. He had given man a free will, and did not prevent him from falling into sin, as he might have done. Then he said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here, indeed, was the first intimation that at some time in the future God's great gift would be sent to the world. The Lord also spoke to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob of the future blessings and confirmed his promise to Israel for an "everlasting covenant." For centuries the Jews looked for its fulfilment.

When Jesus was born, many Jews believed the advent of their Messiah was at hand. No doubt they knew something of Daniel's prophecy concerning the Messiah and the foretold time of his arrival. (Dan. 9:25-27) They had computed the time correctly, though they misunderstood the character of other important events in connection with the life of Jesus. It was allotted to Jesus to fulfil certain other prophecies; he must be "despised and rejected of men," and die on the cross for the sins of the world. Thus doing, he became God's great gift to mankind; and as a result of his sacrifice he shall soon lift the human race out of the thralldom of sin and death, and give everlasting life to whosoever will receive it on his righteous terms.

Today Christian people rejoice in the fact that God gave to us such a wonderful gift, that met the requirements of the situation in full, that he went into death on man's behalf, and that therefore the entire human family will be called forth from the grave and be given a chance to gain everlasting life on the earth in the great age that is soon to open up for all. Let us indeed thank God for his wonderful gift, and for the hope we have in his glorious Word.

We rejoice that he will give to all men gifts of healing and blessing and life—in the world's eternal holiday from oppression and death to be introduced by the Festival of Christ, which will last for a thousand years. Then gladness will continue on through the endless ages of eternity, with not a sin or sorrow to mar the world again. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Revelation 21:4



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That the church is "the temple of the living God"—peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

That meantime the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

That the basis of hope for the church and the world lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5, 6

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be a partaker of the divine nature and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

That the present mission of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35