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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

Scriptures Clearly Teach Series,
Conclusion—The Hope of
the World 2

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

Committed to Serve 8
Motivated by Christ's Love 10
Ministry through Giving 12
Serving with Love 14

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

Our Commission 16
"Where Christ Sitteth" 29
The Rest of Faith 44
Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 6

PUBLICATIONS' LIST

Ten-cent Booklets 32
Five-cent Booklets 33

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

Domestic Radio Stations 34
Foreign Radio Stations 35

ENCOURAGING LETTERS 58

ONE-MINUTE SERMON

The End of the Age 61

OBITUARIES 56, 62

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS 63

The Hope of the World

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 willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35

'Eschatology' is a word not often met with in ordinary conversation today. It is a word of Greek origin—*eschatos*—and literally means 'the furthest', 'the last'. Applied to Scriptural matters it may be called 'the doctrine of last things'. It has to do with the subjects of death, resurrection, judgment, immortality. This was early a subject of vast and wide debate in the church, and whole sects were built on 'this, that, and the other' interpretation of the words of Jesus and the teachings of the apostles concerning the end toward which the Christian was tending.

There has, since those early days, been much speculative philosophy about these same subjects, and perhaps as much confusion exists now as then as to just what was to be the end of the earthly life. Does man go to heaven? Does he abide forever in a hell of flames and torment? Does he enter at death into a purgatory of cleansing experiences? Does he ultimately earn a place in Paradise? Is death the end of everything, and is this life man's only experience?

The questions are endless; the answers, however, are also numerous, with seemingly conflicting answers for every

question. Is there a true answer? And if so, may it be easily found?

Let us take the last two-part question first, and reason out an answer from God's Word. God says, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isa. 1:18); and the psalmist says, "Thy Word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." (Ps. 119:160) Jesus himself declared concerning his Father, "Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17), and concerning himself, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) The Apostle John also declared Jesus to be the Word of God (John 1:1), and Jesus taught both the multitudes, and his disciples privately, concerning the hope that the world might find salvation through him and his ministry of reconciliation.

Reconciliation of man to God through Jesus Christ is the central doctrine of the Christian faith, and at the heart of this central and most important teaching is Jesus, the atoning sacrifice for man's sins.

In parable after parable, Jesus declares the purpose of God to be that through his—Jesus'—sacrifice, man might again find life; that even as the 'first Adam' lost life for his children, so the 'last Adam', Jesus himself, should purchase the world of mankind from the hands of divine justice, and having bought it, restore the world to life. To restore is 'to replace', 'to reestablish', 'to return', and in the case of the human race it could only mean a giving back to them something they had once possessed, otherwise it could not be a matter of restoration at all.

What was it man had once possessed, lost, and through the Mediatorial work of Jesus, could have restored? Life, for one thing; a sinless state, and a perfect environment. Without the sinless state, life could not be lastingly restored.

Mark well this fact! God could not give man a spiritual reward, for man had never possessed a spiritual nature. Any one being begotten by God to a spiritual nature is no longer

counted as human by God, but is described by the apostle as a "New Creature" in Christ.—II Cor. 5:17

The vast majority who have been born into this world have no conception of being children of the Spirit, or New Creatures. They are human, and have no defined spiritual aspirations. They are of the earth, earthy. (I Cor. 15:47) To impose upon such a reward of heaven as a dwelling place for eternity would be to compel them to live under conditions for which they have no desire. Jesus, in his many parables, speaks of his going away from the earth, but that he would return in due time and take over the rulership of earth's affairs.

Through the testimonies of the ancient prophets, the mind of God concerning his plan for world restoration can be traced. Peter, the apostle, declared that these "times of refreshing" which should come from "the presence of the LORD" had been "spoken by the mouth of all his [God's] holy prophets." (Acts 3:19-21) These 'times of restitution' consisted entirely of giving back mankind his lost heritage, the earth, which had been prepared for the human creation.

Moses spoke of the coming of one who would speak with such authority that all would have to hear him and obey if they desired life, and all the prophets from Moses to Jesus also spoke of a time of restoration which will apply to all mankind. True, the people of Israel gradually came to the viewpoint, which was encouraged by their leaders, that they as a nation were to be the chief recipients of God's restoring favor, and assumed to themselves all the values inherent in the promise made by God to Abraham, that through Abraham should come the 'seed' that would carry out the work of blessing.

The Apostle Paul, however, in the masterly argument presented in his letter to the Galatians, punctured this theory by the fact of the universality of the promised blessing. He identifies the 'seed' of Abraham with Jesus Christ, and shows Israel that their position was assured only by and through the Law Covenant which was added to the original

promise, and which, having done the work for which it was intended, had ceased to be of any further value in the out-working of the divine plan for man's salvation. The original promise, however, remained, and would be fulfilled in due time through the redeeming work of the Messiah, the Savior, which work would apply to all people—"all the families of the earth."—Gen. 22:18

First, however, must be accomplished the work of selecting from all kindreds, peoples, and tongues those who will constitute the bride of Christ, the co-workers who were to have the oversight of humanity's affairs in the reestablishment of peace and happiness on the earth.

The times of restitution, or restoration, which will be ushered in during the millennial reign of Christ and his church, his bride, are spoken of by another, and one of the greatest of God's prophets, Isaiah. He refers to this great work under the symbol of a road along which mankind would travel toward the new Paradise. In the thirty-fifth chapter of his prophecy he speaks of the wilderness of this earth restored to beauty and perfection. He describes the blinded, sin-sickened masses of humanity, having lost all physical vigor and spiritual strength in their long struggle to establish themselves without God's aid, finally being brought to hear the true message of hope, and to see the blessings they might enjoy under the rule of the glorified Christ.

He then describes the onward march, during the thousand years of the Messianic reign, of the people of earth, all who respond to the voice of the risen Lord calling them back from the tomb and from among the shambles of a fallen man-made 'civilization'. (John 5:28; Rev. 18:4) "An highway shall be there," Isaiah says, "the way of holiness." Paraphrasing his following comments, he says: "Unclean ones shall not reach its end uncleansed, but it is meant for such. Foolish, headstrong men shall not repeat their former mistakes, for all things that formerly caused them to stumble shall be removed." These, ransomed from sin and death by the great sacrifice of Jesus, shall reach the end of this trial

period rejoicing, and shall "come to Zion" with "joy and gladness."—Isa. 35

The Apostle John, sees the completion of this picture and records it in Revelation 21:3-5: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, . . . and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; 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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

MAY 4—"The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."—I Samuel 16:7 (Z. '03-171 Hymn 198)

MAY 11—"For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter."—Psalm 44:22 (Z. '03-408 Hymn 325)

MAY 18—"We which have believed do enter into rest."—Hebrews 4:3 (Z. '99-253 Hymn 120)

MAY 25—"Be not overcome of evil."—Romans 12:21 (Z. '97-267 Hymn 130)



II Peter 1:16,17

"WE HAVE NOT followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

WHEN DARK THE NIGHT

WHEN dark the night and fears assail,
You're trembling, and alone,
Remember this, God's angels watch,
He careth for His own.

No child of His He'll 'ere forsake,
His promises are true.
So when in trouble, think of this:
He's watching over you.

He gives His angels charge o'er thee
To keep in all thy ways—
Through joy or sorrow, pain or woe
They're at your side always.

What peace to know our Father cares
And not a hair can fall
Without his knowledge—and His ear
Is open to thy call.

Your guardian angels 'round about
Have access to His throne.
They do His bidding, for they know
He careth for his own.

They ever watch lest thou should'st dash
Thy foot against a stone.
So rest in faith, dear child of God—
He careth for his own.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

LESSON FOR MAY 7

Committed to Serve

KEY TEXT: "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more."—*I Corinthians 9:19*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *I Corinthians 9:1-7,19-27*

THE APOSTLE PAUL was a wonderful example of a Christian in many ways. One of these was his service to Jesus, his Master, and to God, his Heavenly Father. It seems paradoxical that the Corinthian Church should question his zeal and motives. In answering those in that church who would "examine" (vs. 3) him, he defends himself by citing the rights that were his. "Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who at any time pays the expenses for doing military service? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock

and does not get any of its milk?"—*I Cor. 9:4-7, New Revised Standard Version*

First we note that Paul asks, "Am I not an apostle?" He answered this question on another occasion by referring to himself as "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father)." (Gal. 1:1) No man had anything to do with his apostleship. Rather, he was appointed by Jesus and the Father. He also asks, "Am I not free?" Paul is alluding to the rights that he possessed, and Barnabas too, who had been his companion during the first journey they had taken to establish new ecclesias of the LORD, and who was now toiling as a servant of the LORD in this capacity on the island of Cyprus. As stated, one of their rights was that of being supported by the

brethren as they performed this work.

Although Paul knew he had the right to receive support from the brethren, he preferred not to be chargeable to any. Toward the close of his ministry as he met for the last time with the elders of Ephesus, he said, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." (Acts 20:33,34) Likewise in writing his first letter to the brethren in Thessalonica from Corinth, he said, "Ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God." (1 Thess. 2:9) We note the loving zeal displayed by Paul in his service to God, working day and night. He worked to supply his needs, and used the remaining time to serve God!

Of course there were many brethren whose hearts were full of magnanimity and love for God who insisted on assisting the Apostle Paul. One of these was Lydia, who insisted that her home be the home for

Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke. (Acts 16:14,15) What a privilege it is for brethren to share what they have with those engaged in full-time service for the LORD.

In verses eight to eighteen of this epistle, the apostle gives examples from the Law, and from the Old Testament, citing this right. But what really motivated him was that he might "make the Gospel free of charge, not making full use" of his rights. (1 Cor. 9:18, R.V.) These sentiments remind us of our Lord Jesus' words, "Freely ye have received, freely give."—Matt. 10:8

So intense was the Apostle Paul's desire to serve God that he was willing to forego all his personal preferences and desires. He said, "Though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them." (1 Cor. 9:19, NRSV) By willingly so doing, Paul sought to convince men of all persuasions and walks of life to see the wonderful Gospel message and the call of Christ. He ran the race for the prize. He was a good example. He fought the good fight victoriously. ■

Motivated by Christ's Love

KEY TEXT: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."—II Corinthians 5:18

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: II Corinthians 5:11-21

THE MINISTRY OF the Apostle Paul accomplished much valuable service to God, particularly because it was motivated by his Christ-like love. He was instrumental in establishing the Church at Corinth, and because of this these brethren were especially precious to him. The first letter he wrote to them included admonishments; they had begun to develop the wrong spirit, and showed evidences of carnality. So they would not misunderstand, he spoke plainly to them in this second letter. He said, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you."—II Cor. 2:4

The Church at Corinth had the same foes to face as do all Christians, namely, the world, the flesh, and the devil. How

could the Apostle Paul motivate them to fight harder against these? One way was to remind them of the love that Jesus had for all mankind which made him willing to die for them. So, too, he reminds them and us that this same love should urge all to faithfulness.—II Cor. 5:14

The knowledge of God's wonderful plan of reconciliation should be inspiring to all the LORD's people. It is an emphatic reminder of God's love and Christ's love for us and the world. Those who are blessed with a knowledge of his plan in the present time—the Gospel Age—should be motivated to do as Jesus did, and lay down their lives for their brethren. Paul said: "He [Jesus] died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—vs. 15

As the plan of God unfolds to those called by God in this age, they are able to see that a class is being invited to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and these, by consecrating their lives to God, are begotten by his Holy Spirit, and become New Creatures. "If any man be in Christ, he is a New Creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (vs. 17) No longer are we to look upon one another from the human viewpoint, but should recognize that this miraculous development taking place in each of us is so that we may join Jesus in being ministers of reconciliation, and eventually assist in bringing all the world into harmony with God.

Earlier in this fifth chapter of II Corinthians, Paul tells of the heavenly hope that these 'called out' ones have. He explains how, at present, we have this earthly body (a tabernacle—a tent) which, upon being 'taken down' will be replaced with a spiritual body, "eternal in the heavens." The receiving of the Holy Spirit by each consecrated Christian is a guarantee to him that this will occur, but not until the work of the present age is

accomplished. The Corinthian Church had to continue fighting against its foes, always keeping in mind this heavenly hope, being motivated by Christ's love, and training to be ministers of reconciliation. Paul alludes to them as "ambassadors for Christ." (vs. 20) They do not belong to this "present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), but rather are God's spokesmen for his program of reconciliation with the world.

This wonderful program of reconciliation is God's plan, which starts with those selected out of this world as a people for his name, and extends to all the world of mankind, as the former become ministers of God for reconciliation. The entire program is motivated by love. The love of God first gave his Only Begotten Son to be our Redeemer. God hath made Jesus "to be sin [a sin-offering] for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Cor. 5:21) The love of God made possible the selection of these to be ministers of reconciliation. Finally, this love makes possible the reconciliation of the entire world of mankind. ■

Ministry through Giving

KEY TEXT: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."—II Corinthians 9:6

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: II Corinthians 9:1-8,10-15

THERE ARE TIMES when there is a need to give of our goods to help others. Such was the case when the Apostle Paul wrote his second letter to the Corinthian Church. The brethren in Jerusalem and Judea continued to be in dire straits economically. After the crucifixion of Jesus, his small band of followers was ostracized by Judean society. Prejudice against them was so severe that they had to pool their resources in order to survive. (Acts 2:44,45; 4:34,35) Employment was difficult to obtain, so that many were in continual poverty. When a great famine occurred throughout all the world, the brethren in Judea were affected more by it than other Christians. They were sent aid from all the churches in other places, and Paul and Barnabas were used to bring their gifts to the elders at Jerusalem.—Acts 11:27-30

From this early experience, Paul became acquainted with the hardships of the brethren in Judea, and from that time forth kept them in remembrance. Later on, a conference was held in Jerusalem to settle the question of whether or not Gentile brethren had obligations to keep the Jewish Law described by Paul in Galatians 2. James, Peter, and John recognized that their work was to see to the needs of the Jewish brethren; Paul and Barnabas were to serve the Gentiles. However, Paul and Barnabas were asked to remember the poor among the Jewish converts, to which Paul replied that this "he was eager to do."—Gal. 2:10, RSV

Paul never forgot his brethren in Judea, and wherever he went to establish ecclesias, he would tell them about these poorer brethren, and encourage the newly established

groups to send gifts to help them. Apparently the church at Corinth had made a generous commitment to be used for the Judean poor, and the Apostle Paul told the churches of Macedonia—who were slow in responding to the need—of their generosity. In the interim, with all the problems in the church of Corinth, and Paul's admonishing letter to them, there may have been some doubt that they would carry out their commitment.

So, in Paul's second letter, he wrote that he knew of their eagerness to assist the brethren, and his confidence that there was no necessity to remind them of this need. In any event, Paul arranged for Titus, who delivered this letter to Corinth, to receive their generous gift lest later some dissension might make them reluctant to carry out their commitment. When the Macedonian brethren would come to Corinth with Paul, he did not want them to find that they had changed their minds about sending aid; it would be humiliating.

This lesson's Key Text is a quotation from Proverbs 11: 24.

It is a good lesson for the Corinthian brethren, and for us. God will reward all generosity with generosity. Those who withhold giving, will reap sparingly, even to bringing poverty. "God loves a cheerful giver." (II Cor. 9:7) In Paul's parting words to the elders at Ephesus he said, "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." —Acts 20:35

These words of our Lord are not directly quoted in the Bible, but there is an applicable incident in Luke 14: Jesus had been invited for a meal at the home of a chief Pharisee. He gave a lesson on the rewards of generosity. Jesus said to his host, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; [rather] call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." —vss. 14:12-14 ■

Serving with Love

KEY TEXT: "Now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."—I Corinthians 13:13, RSV

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: I Corinthians 13:1-13

THE GREATEST MOTIVATING force in the entire universe is love. This is because God is love. (I John 4:8) The only place in the universe where there is a lack of love is on earth. Ever since the Adversary, Satan, usurped the authority over mankind and took over the dominion of earth, selfishness has become a dominant characteristic of earth's social order.

God's plan is to restore righteousness to earth and to replace selfishness with love. As a first step for this accomplishment, he sent his Son to be man's Redeemer. God was motivated by love to do this. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Jesus, too, was motivated by love, for he said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down

his life for his friends."—John 15:13

As a second step in God's plan, there is the selection of a church class to be associated with Jesus in the kingdom work. To these Jesus said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12) Being called to serve as Jesus also was called, they are to serve with love.

To establish the church in its beginning, God gave them gifts. These gifts are the subject of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthians, particularly in I Corinthians, 12th chapter. Apparently some members of the Corinthian church wanted these gifts for spiritual prestige and not for the purpose of seeking out a people for God's name. So after explaining that all should not expect to receive these gifts but all should earnestly desire the higher gifts, he

showed them a "more excellent way." (I Cor. 12:31) This way was to develop love, the subject of I Corinthians 13.

In the search for God's people, much is required of the followers of Jesus in this service for God. Some have the gift of oratory to present God's message to those being drawn by God. Others have a knowledge of God's plan and can discuss scriptures clearly with newly interested brethren, increasing their faith. Some have a capability for acquiring wealth and use it to help the needy and give of this wealth freely in the LORD's service. The Apostle Paul mentions each of these needs for spreading the Gospel message, and shows how without the motivation of love, this service will be useless.

He says, "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal." (I Cor.13:1, RSV) The gift of oratory without the motivation of love results in a big noise being made. So he continues, "If I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not

have love, I am nothing." (I Cor. 13:2, RSV) Those who have been privileged to be called by God to follow in the footsteps of Jesus have been given much knowledge. To his disciples Jesus said, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries [sacred secrets] of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 13: 11) This knowledge is indeed a great treasure. Yet if it fails to develop love within us, we become nothing with this knowledge and the absence of love. Finally Paul says, "If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned but have not love, I gain nothing."—I Cor. 13:3, RSV

The narrow way is one of sacrifice. Upon our consecration, we give everything to God, and he gives it back to us appointing us stewards over these goods. We are to use these wisely and well in his service. The Tabernacle sacrifices were a picture of self sacrifice. Yet, however well we might fulfill these consecration vows, if done without love, we are nothing.

In God's kingdom, love will be the motivating force welding earth's society into a large cooperative body in which all are serving one another. ■

Our Commission

"God is the LORD, which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar."

—Psalm 118:27

ONE OF THE symbolisms used in the Scriptures to illustrate the condition of the world of mankind in its alienation from God through sin, is that of 'darkness'. The whole period of the reign of sin and death is pictured as a nighttime, when "darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." (Isa. 60:2) The Scriptures also reveal that this nighttime of sorrow is to terminate in a morning of joy. The psalmist declares, for example, that while "weeping may endure for a night," "joy cometh in the morning."—Ps. 30:5

The new day of righteousness and joy will come as a result of the rising of the "Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2), and in that daytime of peace and joy, all mankind will be enlightened concerning God and his laws: for the knowledge of his glory will then fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. No one then will need to say, "Know the LORD:" for all shall know him "from the least of them unto the greatest."—Jer. 31:31-34

But we have not yet reached that time of universal knowledge. True, there are signs all around us that the new

day is soon to dawn, but the meaning of these signs can as yet be appreciated only by those who can view world developments through the prophetic telescope of God's Word. For the world in general, the darkness of the long night of sin and alienation from God is even more dense right now than ever before, causing countless millions to lose all faith in God and in his promises.

However, throughout the nighttime experience of the human race there have always been a few to whom the LORD has revealed the light of truth concerning his will for them and his plan for the blessing of all mankind. This has been a highly favored class. Of those who were thus blessed in Jesus' day, he said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." (Matt. 13:16) Also, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." —Matt. 13:11

While many important features of the divine plan were not brought to light until the coming of Jesus at his First Advent, prior to that time, beginning with Abel, the LORD revealed the truth to his special servants to the extent that it was necessary in order that they might be able intelligently to cooperate with him in the outworking of his plans and purposes. To each in his turn God showed the 'light', and those who appreciated this great favor recognized the responsibility thus imposed, and met those responsibilities even at the cost of sacrifice. They all bound their sacrifice with cords 'even unto the horns of the altar'.—Ps. 118:27

In our relationship with God, it is fundamentally important always to remember that he has not favored us with the light of truth simply to satisfy our curiosity, or that we might have a feeling of well-being because of enjoying a better understanding of the Bible than some of our neighbors. Being in the truth must mean more to us, much more, than the fact that we have the best religion in the world, or that our doubts have all been cleared up, and our fears set aside. If the eyes of our understanding have been enlightened with

present truth, it is because God has called us into his service, and has something important for us to do.

EXAMPLES FROM THE PAST

Abel was the first of God's servants to lose his life because of faithfulness to the truth as it was revealed to him. Paul explains that it was Abel's faith that enabled him to offer a sacrifice that was more acceptable to God than was Cain's. (Heb. 11:4) Faith comes by hearing the word of God, so it is evident that God made known to Abel the nature of the sacrifice which would be acceptable. And the reason for this is apparent, for in the outworking of his plan, even at that early date, God was beginning to point forward by symbol to the fact that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin. Abel might not have understood this point, but the important consideration was that the LORD had indicated what kind of sacrifice he wanted, and Abel was faithful to the truth as it was revealed to him.

It was important information to Noah that a flood was coming, and that there would be an opportunity for some to be saved from the destruction to be wrought by the Deluge. Truly he was honored. But there was a purpose in it. God gave Noah this information because there was something to be done. There was an ark to be built, and a witness that needed to be given to the people of that day, and Noah was the one selected by the LORD to be his coworker in doing these things. Neither of these tasks was an easy one. Together they imposed a load of responsibility upon Noah that could be carried out faithfully only with the LORD's daily help. But he accepted the responsibility. God showed him the light, and he bound his sacrifice even unto the horns of the altar.

At the burning bush the LORD revealed the light to Moses, not merely to reassure him concerning his love for the Hebrew children, but because the time had come when they were to be delivered from Egyptian bondage, and Moses was chosen by the LORD for the great task of leading them forth

to liberty. After making sure of the LORD's will in the matter, and that divine grace would supply all his needs, Moses accepted the responsibility, and for forty long years carried its weight. It was a glorious vision of truth which the LORD gave to Moses at the burning bush, but a very costly one. The truth is costly to all who are faithful to it.

THE PROPHETS CALLED TO SERVE

God's dealings with all his holy prophets were along the same general line as we have noted in connection with Abel, Noah, and Moses. He took them into his confidence with respect to the special features of truth which were pertinent to their times, not merely as a favor, but because there was something he wanted them to do. Isaiah, for example, was given a vision of the LORD "high and lifted up." The sight of such glory and perfection caused the prophet to exclaim, "I am a man of unclean lips"; that is, he was made to feel his own unworthiness, and his inability properly to speak for the LORD.—Isa. 6:1-5

But in the vision, the prophet's lips were made clean by a coal from off the altar. Then he heard the LORD inquire, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isa. 6:8) To Isaiah this was the real import of the vision. To him, this was the means the LORD was employing to call him into service. He had been shown the light, not merely that he might rejoice in the LORD's glory, but because the LORD had a mission for him to perform. Isaiah was quick to catch this meaning of the vision, and responded, "Here am I; send me."

Of Jeremiah, the LORD asked, "What seest thou?" In response, the prophet described a vision which had to do with the destruction of Israel and the Babylonian captivity. (Jer. 1:11,13) This was a vision of present truth to Jeremiah, and the purpose of it was that he should bear testimony to Israel concerning it. "I have put my words in thy mouth," said the LORD to the prophet. (Jer. 1:9) What an honor was thus bestowed upon him, but how costly; for it imposed upon the prophet the responsibility of testifying to the people a

message that was unpopular, and for which he was caused to suffer and eventually die. But he was faithful. He bound his sacrifice to the altar.

In the experience of the Prophet Ezekiel we have a similar lesson emphasized. To him also the LORD gave a vision of his glory. Writing about it, the prophet explained that "the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." (Ezek. 1:1) In the next chapter of his prophecy, Ezekiel writes, "He said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me."—Ezek. 2:1-3

Thus again we have the same sequence in God's dealings with his servants. First, they receive the vision of his glory, and then the directive to go and tell the message. God uses various methods by which to reveal his glory to his servants, but the general results are always the same, for thereby he enlightens his co-workers with a knowledge of himself, and of his plans and purposes as they relate to the time and people involved. The tasks assigned to Noah, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel differed only in detail, for they all were given a message to declare. Noah was to preach righteousness to "the world that then was" (II Pet. 3:6); Moses was to appear before Pharaoh and demand the release of the Israelites, and was also to acquaint the Hebrews themselves with God's plan to deliver them; all the prophets were given a message to Israel—a message costly to deliver. Of all these it was true that God showed them the light, and in response they bound their sacrifice to the altar by faithfully performing the mission assigned to them.

JESUS ALSO FAITHFUL

We have in Jesus, our Redeemer and Head, the most outstanding example of the principle outlined in our text, for not only did Jehovah reveal the light to him in a

marvelous manner, but he was faithful to the obligations the truth exacted of him. To Jesus, even as to Ezekiel, the heavens were opened and in a still more outstanding manner. Jesus, unlike the prophets, anticipated the privilege of service, and was alert to ascertain the Father's will. "Lo, I come," wrote the psalmist concerning him, "to do thy will O my God."—Ps. 40:6-8; Heb. 10:5-10

In these words we have expressed the true spirit of consecration. While no one is called into divine service without being shown the necessary light by which he is enabled to serve acceptably, it is also true that the beauties of the divine plan are revealed only to those who indicate their willingness to do the will of God. True consecration is not making a bargain with the LORD, but is a wholehearted expression of our desire and determination to do his will, ever and always, regardless of what that will might be, and what our faithfulness in doing it might cost.

This is the thought expressed in the words. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:9) In a general way Jesus knew considerable, even before this, concerning the plan of God. He realized that he had come into the world to perform a special mission, and at the age of twelve was concerned about his "Father's business." (Luke 2:49) But not until the proper time came, and he demonstrated his willingness to do the Father's will, were the heavens opened so he could behold the glory of God and learn the details of the divine mission which had been assigned to him.

And how wonderfully faithful was Jesus in meeting the responsibilities imposed upon him! Peter epitomized the Master's life in the one short statement that he "went about doing good." (Acts 10:38) We cannot imagine the Master doing anything else but good. He was a reflection of his Father, God, and God has always been doing good to his creatures. He is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. (James 1:17) The greatest good the Creator had purposed to do for the human race was to be accomplished through Jesus, and it was inevitable that every detail of Jesus' life of

faithfulness should exemplify the spirit of benevolence, and together add up to make that one great sacrifice which was consummated at Calvary—that good deed which was meritorious to redeem the whole world from sin and death.

When on the cross Jesus cried, "It is finished," he had reached the end of a life of sacrifice to which he had been inspired by the light which had been shown him when the heavens were opened. He had seen the meaning of that vision, and forthwith bound his sacrifice to the altar until it was wholly consumed. While it is true that the completion of his sacrifice at Calvary was a wonderful event, and somewhat spectacular when compared with the lesser deeds of love which made up his everyday life, nevertheless it was these that helped to prove his faithfulness, and they led up to that glorious consummation which made him the Redeemer of the world.

As we join that little band of disciples which followed so closely to Jesus and observed the details of his life, we note his untiring zeal and devotion to God and to the service which had been given into his hands. "I must work the works of him that sent me," we hear him say, "while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." (John 9:4) In the first instance, Jesus used these words with reference to his own earthly ministry. His 'night' came when he was arrested and crucified. To him the night had settled down only when it was impossible to say anything further concerning the plan of God. Even while hanging on the cross, Jesus preached a wonderful sermon on restitution to the thief when he said to him, "Thou shalt be with me in paradise."—Luke 23:43

The 'works' of the Father which Jesus was commissioned to do were the preaching of the kingdom message—illustrating it by his miracles—preparing the disciples to be his ambassadors after he returned to his Father; and giving his flesh for the life of the world. In carrying out this mission he was never guided by his own preferences. He was glad to toil and suffer as the Heavenly Father indicated it to be his will. He did not purposely expose himself to danger before

the due time. He did not court persecution just to be a martyr.

Jesus loved all mankind and would have gladly preached the kingdom message to Gentiles and Jews alike, but he recognized the chronological features of the divine plan and was guided by them. Hence, Jesus said to his disciples, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 10:5,6

In all these ways we can with spiritual profit follow the example of Jesus. Like him, we should work while it is called day, for we also know that the night cometh wherein no man can work. For some of us this might well be when we have reached the end of the way. For the church as a whole, it will be when it will no longer be possible to bear witness to the truth. In either case, we are not to cease telling the glad tidings of the kingdom as long as it is physically possible to do it.

Time prophecies of the divine plan served to guide the Master with respect to the need of withholding the Gospel from the Gentiles until the full end of the seventieth prophetic week. (Dan. 9:24-27) But when he told his disciples that they were to go into all the world to preach the Gospel it was the divine intention that this commission was to remain in effect until the last member of the body of Christ passed beyond the veil. There is no time prophecy that is intended to set aside this inspired commission.

The preaching of the Gospel accomplishes the same result now as it did in the beginning of the age. In the divine providence, the kingdom message does an additional sowing work today, as well as a reaping work. Besides, the Gospel today includes dispensational truths which were not due to be understood earlier in the age, and would have been untimely to preach even if known. But these slight variations in the message, and the different results of our labors, do not change the commission to let our light shine before men

by holding forth the Word of life in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation.

SAUL SAW THE LIGHT

In the experience of Saul of Tarsus we have another example of one to whom the LORD revealed the light of truth, and who, in turn, bound his sacrifice to the altar. It was a glorious vision that was given to Saul. He saw a light shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday. He heard a voice speaking to him—the voice of Jesus of Nazareth whom Saul was persecuting. He even caught a glimpse of the glorified Jesus, seeing him as “one born before the due time.”—I Cor. 15:8, *Margin*

Saul was quick to grasp the meaning of this wonderful experience. He was doubtless well acquainted with the manner in which God dealt with the ancient prophets, and he knew that an experience of this kind could mean only that he was being called into a special divine service. Realizing this, he inquired, “LORD, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6) This is the meaning of revealed truth. Are you rejoicing that the eyes of your understanding have been opened to behold the beauties of the divine plan, and through the truth, to discern the glory of God? Continue to rejoice, but remember that this blessing is yours because God has something for you to do—not a mission as great as that assigned to Saul, but one, nevertheless, that will become great in the LORD’s sight as you prove faithful to it. It is a mission that will require the remainder of your life to perform.

From the day that Paul accepted the responsibility imposed upon him by the light from heaven, he was a bond-servant of Jesus Christ. He had no other mission in life but to “seek first the kingdom of God.” (Matt. 6:33) How true were his words, “This one thing I do”! (Phil. 3:13) Whatever of material needs confronted the apostle, he treated them as mere incidentals upon which as little as possible of time and attention should be spent, his chief concern ever and

always being the 'one thing' to and for which he had been called of God. This is why he could testify to King Agrippa, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."—Acts 26:19

Paul knew that the heavenly vision was not given to him merely for his own benefit, for he realized clearly that he was called to be an ambassador for Christ. The LORD told Ananias what great things Paul was to suffer for the cause of Christ, and in order for this to be true it was essential for him to make known the Gospel of Christ. It was Jesus' faithfulness in letting his light shine that led him to Calvary, and Paul's faithfulness along the same line led him to a Roman prison and death. Any Christian can escape the privilege of suffering with Christ simply by neglecting to hold forth the Word of life. And it is well to remember that it is only those who suffer with Christ who will reign with him.

IN THE END OF THE AGE

The progress of truth throughout the ages has not been gradual, but rather it has been intermittent and dispensational, and as the LORD has revealed it to faithful servants of his own choosing. Thus God used the prophets, and to each of them he gave a special message that was due and needed at the time. Isaac and Jacob, for example, did not, through their own studies, increase the light that was given to Abraham. The privilege of the children of Israel was to be faithful to the light as God gave it to them through Moses, not to change or add to it. They failed because they were unfaithful to that light.

There was a marvelous revelation of truth through Jesus, and from Pentecost on, through the apostles. This was by special revelation, and in keeping with important time features of the divine plan. It was not to be expected that following the death of the apostles the light would increase through the efforts of the church as a whole to delve into the mysteries of God. The responsibility of the church, on the other hand, was to hold fast to what had been revealed to them through God's specially chosen servants. It was

because the church failed in this that a great apostasy developed.

While God's rich blessing was upon the faithful members of the church throughout all the age, no further outstanding revelation of the truth occurred until the harvest at the end of the age. It was a case of holding fast, rather than making progress. Church history reveals that there were individuals in every part of the Gospel Age who held to the great kingdom Gospel as taught by Jesus and the apostles, despite the errors with which they were surrounded. These were the wheat which, according to Jesus' parable, were to grow together with the tares.

But in the end of the age another special revelation of truth was due. It was foretold by Jesus in one of his prophecies concerning the time of his Second Presence. He said that he would come forth and serve the household of faith with "meat in due season." (Luke 12:37; Matt. 24:45) One of the great truths which was due to be understood now was the hope of restitution blessings for the world. The Early Church understood this, but it was measurably lost sight of throughout the age by all except a few followers of Christ. In the end of the age, however, it was important that the church have this doctrine restored. In keeping with the divine plan, it was essential that an announcement of it be made to the world in advance.

The promised 'meat in due season' included a clearer understanding of all the great fundamentals of the divine plan. This heavenly vision which has been given to the church in this end of the age through that "faithful" and wise "steward" embraces all the precious items of truth as they were known to the various servants of God in the past. (Luke 12:42; Matt. 24:45) It has given us an enhanced appreciation of the Abrahamic Covenant. We understand the purpose of the Law Covenant, and why it was added to the original covenant made with Abraham. We now understand the real purpose of the First Advent of Jesus and why his kingdom was not established in power and great glory at

that time. We understand that the purpose of the Gospel Age was not to convert the world, but merely to select a people to be the bride of Christ, and to share the glory of his kingdom.

And how glad we are to have so clearly established the fundamental fact of truth that the "wages of sin is death" and not eternal torment! (Rom. 6:23) The Early Church understood this, but during the Dark Ages it became buried in the rubbish of human tradition.

How satisfying is the truth pertaining to the manner of our Lord's return, and that he is even now present as a 'thief in the night', leading his people as Chief Reaper in the prophetic harvest which is the end of the age! The harmony of these great truths—all of them—and the special beauty with which they have been made to shine in this due time of the harvest has not been the result of the laborious study of all the LORD's people, but by a special dispensation of divine grace reaching us through the returned Lord who used "that servant" (Matt. 24:45,46) to minister this rich portion of spiritual food to the household of faith.

Let us rejoice in this 'heavenly vision', but let us remember that if our eyes have been blessed to see the truth, if we are among the favored few to whom the LORD has shown the light, it is because he wants us to sacrifice our all in his service, to bind our sacrifice with cords even to the horns of the altar. It is just as true of us now as it was of Noah, Moses, the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles, that God has revealed his plan because he wants us to cooperate in it; so let us endeavor not to be disobedient to the heavenly vision.

And what, some may ask, are we to do? First, we should see to it that our own lives conform to the high standards of righteousness set forth in the Word of God. We should add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. If these things be in us, and abound, we will not, according to the Greek text, be "idle" in the

knowledge that has been given to us; that is, we will be using it in keeping with the divine will, and that will is that we proclaim the truth to all the world as a witness.—II Pet. 1:4-8

Let us make no mistake in this. Let us not be misguided by human philosophy which seeks a method of getting into the kingdom without sacrifice and suffering, and decides that it is no longer the LORD's will for his people to let their light shine for the blessing of others. Let us realize that Satan, the prince of darkness, is behind all such philosophy. He confuses the truth in our minds if he can, and when he gets us to believe error, he is quite satisfied that we proclaim it far and wide. But when he finds that we are determined to hold to the purity of the truth, his next effort is to make us believe that it is wrong to preach it to others. If Satan can keep the truth shut up in our hearts, he is almost as pleased as though he had induced us to discard the truth and accept error instead.

Paul said of himself, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!" and that is just as true of every one of us today. (I Cor. 9:16) The opportunity is still ours to let our light shine. To Ezekiel the LORD said, "Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear," and that is true of us also. (Ezek. 2:5) We are not to judge the LORD's will in this matter by the results secured. The only result may be the proving of our own faithfulness to the heavenly vision. There are sure, of course, to be other results, whether we see them or not.

At times, and for our encouragement, the LORD may give us the privilege of seeing some results from our efforts. But whether he does or not, let us continue to be faithful in binding the sacrifice even to the horns of the altar. Surely, the LORD has shown us the light, so let us be faithful to it even unto death, and thus receive the "crown of life."—Rev. 2:10

■

“Where Christ Sitteth”

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

—Colossians 3:1-3

CHRIST HIMSELF WAS raised from the dead nearly two thousand years ago, and, as our text declares, now ‘sitteth on the right hand of God’; or as we read in Hebrews 12:2, “is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” In Ephesians 1:19-21, Paul again affirms the fact of Jesus’ resurrection, speaking of the “mighty power” which God “wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”

Paul stresses the importance of Jesus’ resurrection by the effective use of the word IF—“If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope

in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”—I Cor. 15:14-19

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (vs. 20), Paul affirms. This means that our preaching is not vain, that we are not false witnesses. It guarantees that those who have fallen asleep in Christ have not perished. It means that we have an “Advocate with the Father,” who has appeared in the presence of God for us, and therefore we are not still in our sins. (I John 2:1) It means that our hope in Christ is not limited to this present short span of life, but one which is “as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.”—Heb. 6:19,20

Because we have such a glorious and steadfast hope, we are not “of all men most miserable.” Indeed, we are not miserable at all, but are rejoicing in our glorious hope, even though in order to attain to its consummation it is necessary to sacrifice the flesh and its interests, and continue day by day to set our affection on things above, not on things of the earth.

Paul indicates why we would be most miserable if there were no resurrection of the dead. For then we would be found false witnesses of God, testifying to an untruth. Furthermore, he asks, “Why stand we in jeopardy every hour?” This was quite literally true in Paul’s case. Being determined that he would be faithful to the truth, and to his Lord Jesus no matter what the cost might be, he never knew when he might be called upon to endure severe suffering, or even to die. He had “fought with beasts at Ephesus,” been beaten, stoned, and imprisoned. “I die daily,” he wrote, but he was not ‘miserable’, for he knew that his Redeemer lived. Therefore, he wrote, “I protest [the no-resurrection error] by your [*Margin*, “our”] rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord.”—I Cor. 15:30-32

If we are to maintain the hope in Christ in which we rejoice, we must, like Paul, ‘die daily’ with him. Paul speaks

of this in Romans 6:3-5 as being buried with Christ by baptism into death. If we have taken the step of full consecration to the LORD, which leads to being "planted together in the likeness of his (Jesus') death," and prove faithful unto death, "we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." This will be our actual resurrection and exaltation to be with Jesus and to "see him as he is."—I John 3:1-3

But Paul speaks of a figurative resurrection which constitutes part of our present inheritance! He says "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4) It is impossible for us to understand with any degree of fullness the great change experienced by Jesus when he was raised from the dead. It was a change from the human to the divine nature; from association with fallen mankind to being with the Heavenly Father. Every aspect of his life was different—higher.

It is this reality that Paul uses to illustrate that by faith we now 'walk in newness of life'. We do not have the new life, but we hope for it; and it is the transforming power of this glorious hope that changes every aspect even of the present life. Our text speaks of it as being 'risen with Christ', and signifies the great change this should make in our lives by saying that since this is true we should 'seek those things which are above', setting our affection on things 'above, not on things on the earth'.

We might say our new way of walking is one of seeking or striving after heavenly things. By faith we are even now seated together with Christ in the heavenlies, and it is by daily seeking to have our thoughts, words, and doings conformed to this heavenly pattern that we will eventually gain an abundant entrance into the actual glories beyond the veil 'where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God'.

"Seek, and ye shall find," said Jesus. (Luke 11:9) If we are to be successful in our seeking, we must have faith to believe that God will fulfill all his good promises on our behalf. Paul wrote, "Without faith it is

(Cont'd on Page 36)

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HOQ 1250 6:15 p.m.

Peru (Spanish)

Trujillo 105.7 fm
9:30 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.

Philippines

Manila (Sat.) DZAM
1026kHz 7:15 p.m.

South Africa

Swaziland SWAZI
Commercial Radio 1400 am
Shrtwave 49m 6156 kHz 8:15 p.m.

Uruguay (Spanish)

Radio CX32 1170 kHz 9:00 a.m.

(Cont'd from Page 31)

impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. 11:6

Faith is most important in seeking those things which are above, and diligence is also essential. We will never attain unto the heavenly reward if we are half-hearted in our seeking. The psalmist wrote, "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." (Ps. 119:2) It must be with the 'whole heart'—no half-hearted seeking will suffice.

And we must do our seeking in the LORD's way. 'Blessed are they that keep his testimonies', his words of instruction, his revealed will. Enthusiasm alone is not enough. There is a zeal which is not according to knowledge. The general outline of the LORD's will in this matter is set forth by Paul in Romans 12:1,2, where we read, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

To seek those things which are above, it is essential that we renew our minds. Our fleshly minds naturally seek the things of the earth, so our minds must be renewed by the directives and promises of God in order that our affections be set on things above. This means, as Paul indicates, that as human beings we must be sacrificed—our bodies, symbolically speaking, given to be burned.

Seeking those things which are above involves a great deal more than doing the best we can to live apart from sin. Many dedicate themselves to righteous living, but continue to set their affection on the good things of the present life. These will have their reward, but it will not be a heavenly reward; for they are not seeking those things which are

above, but have been quite content with the good earthly things here below.

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expressed another essential of 'seeking'. He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." (Matt. 6:33) First, in this connection, means 'primarily'. The kingdom of God and his righteousness is to be our chief consideration, today, tomorrow, and every day—and all the time, with our 'whole heart'.

In giving us this admonition, Jesus is contrasting our proper interests as New Creatures, with the interests of those who are not setting their affection on things above. In verse 25 he says, "I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, . . . nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" The thought here in the Greek text is not to be anxious or overly concerned about our physical needs.

"For after all these things do the Gentiles seek," Jesus said. (vs. 32) The temporal things of life—food, clothing, a comfortable home, and the pleasures of this world are the chief concern of the unconsecrated, and of those who are devoted merely to righteous living. But those who are presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, and are setting their affection on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, are making the 'kingdom of God' their first consideration, and are not anxious over what measure of earthly good things may be theirs during the present life. These are glad to take the advice of David, who wrote, "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee."—Ps. 55:22

Paul wrote along a similar line, saying, "Be careful for nothing [that is, be not overanxious about anything]; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:6) Paul again wrote, "Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:5) One of the most difficult lessons every Christian has to learn is to be content with the measure of temporal

blessings the LORD supplies. The triumphant Christian, who is 'seeking first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness', will, at all times, cast all his care upon the LORD.—I Pet. 5:7

The proper relationship between seeking first the kingdom, and making proper provision for our temporal needs, is illustrated by Jesus' parable of the rich man whose "ground brought forth plentifully." (Luke 12:15-23) To illustrate that life does not consist of the abundance of things which a man possesseth, he told of this rich man, who, when he found that his barns were not large enough to store all that his fertile land had produced, "thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

"So is he," Jesus said, "that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God"—has not been laying up treasure in heaven, not seeking those things which are above. Then, in the next verse, Jesus says, "Therefore, . . . take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment."

The lesson is clear. The admonition to take no thought for the morrow means not to take the kind of thought as did the man in the parable, who, being blessed by God with a reasonable supply of fruits and goods, was not satisfied; and, instead of devoting whatever surplus his land provided for the blessing of others, decided to hoard it for himself. This man obviously set his affections altogether on temporal good things, and laid up no treasures in heaven. He did not 'seek first' the kingdom of God.

On another occasion Jesus said, "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life

shall preserve it." (Luke 17:33) Here Jesus is referring to those who respond to the call of the harvest message during the time of his second presence. In the preceding verse he says, "Remember Lot's wife." Those who lose their lives for Jesus' sake (Matt. 10:39), therefore, are those who have covenanted to die with the Master, to follow in his footsteps even unto death—those who are presenting their bodies a living sacrifice. These are the ones who are being baptized into Christ's death, and at the same time are risen to walk in newness of life, and are seeking those things which are above. For these now to seek to save their earthly lives by taking themselves off the altar of sacrifice would result in the loss of eternal life, because it would mean a repudiation of their covenant of sacrifice.

Jesus made this same remark to Peter when this impetuous apostle, not yet understanding the plan of God for his Master, endeavored to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem where his enemies were waiting to arrest him and put him to death. This was when Jesus said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men."—Mark 8:33

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16:24,25) Yes, find it with Jesus 'at the right hand of God'—but only if that life is sought by actually laying down the present life in sacrifice. This is what Jesus said on his way to Jerusalem and to the cross—it was then that he gave this admonition to his disciples. It was as though he said to them that if he now avoided death by not going to Jerusalem, as Peter advised, it would be contrary to the will of his Father, and he would die eternally.

The same is true with us. We seek the things which are above by renouncing the things which are below, and turning our backs upon them. It is a serious matter, a 'strait' and 'narrow way' in which to walk. It is more—much

more—than a philosophy to read and to study. We need the reading and the studying, but these fall short of their objective if we do not go on to perform, to carry out the terms of our consecration.

Nor does seeking the things above consist of renouncing earthly things for a time only. If we are actually to attain to the heavenly inheritance we must continue our seeking daily and hourly, and faithfully, even unto death! The reward will be only to those who "by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) Only those who through patience endure, and continue seeking to the end, shall be given the crown of life.—Rev. 2:10

On the negative side, Paul said, "Love . . . seeketh not her own." (I Cor. 13:5) Love, that great principle which prompted the Heavenly Father to give his Son to be the Redeemer, and motivated Jesus in laying down his life for us and for the world, must be the motive behind our seeking those things which are above. In our association with the brethren, and with others, we have the opportunity of determining the extent to which this divine principle of unselfishness is really ruling in our hearts.

How do we react in situations in which it may seem that others are taking advantage of us, that our 'rights' are being ignored, or perhaps trampled upon? Do we resent this, and strenuously insist that we obtain everything which we claim to be ours, irrespective of how others might be affected? If so, it might indicate that we do not yet appreciate the spirit of sacrifice as we should, or do not realize that if we would attain to the things above which we are seeking, we must willingly and gladly give up all claims to earthly advantages, foregoing these temporary benefits in order that we may attain to the heavenly riches.

"Here we have no continuing city," wrote Paul, "but we seek one to come." (Heb. 13:14) If we attain a proper sense of values, we will realize that all things temporal are of little worth compared to the "eternal weight of glory" which we are seeking. (II Cor. 4:17) What matters it, then, if someone

else attains some earthly advantage which we may think properly belongs to us. We cannot afford, as New Creatures, to spend thought and time in seeking our own in unloving ways. To do so would mean that our attention had been diverted from the more important seeking of 'those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God'.

Everyone desires to be happy, to be joyful. The LORD wants his people to be happy. He wants us to rejoice even while we are laying down our lives in sacrifice. God takes no pleasure in unhappiness. All creation was designed for his pleasure, and he wants his creatures to enjoy life and the good things of life which he has provided. Sin blighted much of the happiness of the human race, but his plan of redemption and salvation removes the blight of sin and restores man to his Edenic perfection and happiness.

And even while this plan is in the process of development, much joy is provided for those who are cooperating with the LORD. It is a great joy to be a child of the LORD, and to realize the daily fulfillment of all his good promises of grace to help in every time of need. Besides this, as it was in the case of Jesus, there is a joy set before us. This joy enabled Jesus to endure the cross and despise the shame; and for us, also, it gives strength and courage to continue seeking the things above, a seeking which involves sacrifice and death.

One of the precious promises of the Heavenly Father which meant much to Jesus is the one recorded in the 16th Psalm. In verses 8 and 9, Jesus is prophetically represented as saying, "I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." These same things may be true of us while we are seeking those things which are above. Our hearts should be glad, and we can "rejoice in the LORD alway."—Phil. 4:4

The prophecy continues to express the Master's hope: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (vs. 10) We know that

Jesus' soul, his being, was restored, brought back from *sheol*, the death condition. That is why he is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. That is why we are setting our affection on things above. That is why, even though we are laying down our lives in sacrifice, we are not 'of all men most miserable', and why we are, instead, rejoicing; for we know that because he lives, we, too, shall live!

Jesus had full confidence that his soul would not be left in hell. Therefore he said to his Father, as he was dying, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit," my life, my soul. (Luke 23:46) Jesus knew, as is recorded in Psalm 16:11, that the Heavenly Father would show him the path of life, and had, indeed, already revealed it to him. That path of life for Jesus led through death. That is the reason he would have lost his life had he endeavored to avoid death. And Jesus knew something else. He knew that in his Father's presence, his literal presence beyond the veil of death, there would be fullness of joy, and that at his right hand there were 'pleasures for evermore'. This was the joy set before the Master which helped him to endure the cross—that 'fullness of joy' in the presence of his Heavenly Father.

And this same joy is set before us. It is one of the incentives for seeking those things which are above 'where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God'. No wonder Paul spoke of this exaltation as a 'prize', the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14) But attaining this prize depends on our continuing to set our affections on things above, "not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. 3:2,3

Are we 'dead'? Are we really being planted together in the likeness of Jesus' death? Are we dying daily? (I Cor. 15:31) Are we presenting [yielding] our bodies a living sacrifice? Are we seeking to lose our lives, sacrificially? God has made every provision necessary that we may attain that for which we are seeking. It remains only for us to do our

part. If we 'seek' diligently we know that we shall 'find' the reward!

We must also continue to seek 'first' the things above, and with our 'whole heart'. Yes, and we will have need of patience in our seeking—'patient continuance in well doing'. Besides all this, we are to 'seek' in prayer. It is a glorious hope which is set before us, a hope in which Paul says we rejoice. But to realize its fulfillment we will need not only to be "patient in tribulation," but also "instant in prayer."—Rom. 5:2; 12:12

We have been begotten to this 'lively hope', or, 'hope of life', "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. 1:3,4) Yes, this rich and glorious inheritance is 'reserved', waiting for us to claim it by our worthiness in continuing faithfully, patiently, prayerfully, and wholeheartedly to 'seek those things which are above'. ■

Silence

THE HEAVENS DECLARE the mighty power of God
And the firmament His handiwork displays;
Though not a word nor sound falls on our ears,
Yet their melody through all the earth conveys
To us the wisdom and the power of God.
His wisdom speaks to us without a word.
In simple silence He His work performs.
Yet throughout all time their melody has stirred
The hearts of humble men to worship Him.
Man, with great commotion, seeks to show his strength,
And the strife and the confusion still increase.
But our great God, in simple solemn silence
Has shown to us the majesty of peace.—BJG

The Rest of Faith

A Study of Hebrews 3:1-19 and 4:1-16

THE REST OF faith is of particular interest to the Christian of this Gospel Age. The subject, as we wish to approach it, is developed by the Apostle Paul in the third and fourth chapters of Hebrews. First of all he asks us to consider the "Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (vs. 1) Then he contrasts Jesus and his house with Moses and his house.—vss. 2-6

Moses' faithfulness as a servant is vouched for in verse 5. We think of the great care which he took to see that every feature in the building of the Tabernacle was carried out to the letter. We remember, too, that Moses testified that a greater prophet than he would arise to teach the people. (Deut. 18:15) This testimony, augmented by pictures and types, was for our benefit.—Rom. 15:4

Moses was a servant in the house of his God. How much more honor to be a son, and share in the possession of the house as an heir! Christ is a Son over his own house, and Paul hastens to assure us that we are of his house—"if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—vs. 6

Most of verse 7 and on through verse 11 is a parenthesis dealing with Israel's rebellion against the LORD which barred them from Canaan. Without this parenthesis, our text reads like this: "Wherefore, take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called

To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

Paul here reiterates the very pointed admonition that being partakers of Christ is conditional upon our steadfastness 'unto the end'. He tells us plainly that it is possible to lose our confidence and hope of being included in the house of Christ. This can come about through lack of faith. Lack of faith leads to a coldness and a hardening of the heart which resists the providences and disciplines of God that are shaping us into the character-likeness of Christ.

Paul bases his admonition on the example of unbelief on the part of the children of Israel in the wilderness. In verses 15-19 he rehearses briefly their provocation of the LORD during those forty years, and its disastrous effect on those who sinned and therefore failed to enter into the Promised Land. Did not Israel provoke the LORD? Let us consider briefly some of the many incidents during that momentous forty years in the wilderness when the children of Israel provoked the LORD, and that continuously.

With the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea still vividly imprinted upon their minds, we find a murmuring arising from this great throng of people. After journeying three days into the wilderness they came to water, but it was unfit to drink. It was only natural that they should be very thirsty and desirous of water to quench their thirst. It was natural also that their disappointment should be keen when finding the water to be bitter. However, it was not the natural thing to commence complaining to Moses against the LORD. Had not the LORD just delivered them from the armed might and vengeance of the despotic army of Egypt? Could he not easily supply their temporal needs, having brought them thus far? They had no faith!

But God supplied their needs by instructing Moses to cast the branches of a certain tree into the bitter waters to make them sweet. Later they came to Elim where they were re-

refreshed from twelve wells of water, and rested under the shade of seventy palms.—Exod. 15:23-27

Following this we find Israel longing for the flesh pots of Egypt, and manifesting a lack of faith in the ability of God to supply them with food. In Exodus 16:4,5 the LORD instructs Moses in the use of the manna which he planned to send to feed the Israelites. But they complained about the manna, and wanted something more substantial to eat. The LORD provided them with an abundance of meat, even to Moses' surprise, by sending droves of quail which fell in the camp. (Exod. 16:13) God's displeasure is manifested by the plague which came upon Israel while they were eating the flesh, and many of them died.—Num. 11:31-33

Undoubtedly it was a difficult situation, one which required the exercise of faith in God to look beyond their immediate difficulties and be assured that God would bring them safely through this wilderness to the land he had promised. But their lack of faith again caused them to doubt, and to complain bitterly to Moses that they had no water. (Exod. 17:3-7) This time their needs were supplied when water gushed forth from a rock smitten by Moses. Copious supplies of life-giving water flowed from the rock, provided by their faithful God.

Three months after their deliverance from Egypt we find the Israelites encamped round about Mount Sinai. Moses was absent, being in the Mount receiving instructions from God. After many days they began to wonder what had become of their leader. They desired something tangible to worship. So they induced Aaron to make them a golden calf, which they acclaimed as the god which had brought them out of Egypt.

The narrative in Exodus 32 tells us that God would have blotted out the entire nation, but Moses interceded. Nevertheless, they were punished by God and many of those idolators were slain.

In the 12th chapter of Numbers we read of the rebellion of Miriam and Aaron against the leadership of Moses. God's

displeasure at their presumption was evidenced in Miriam's turning leprous. Moses' greatness is evidenced in his petition for mercy, which was granted, although Miriam was forced to remain outside the camp for seven days before she was clean.

Then, in the thirteenth chapter of Numbers are recounted the details of the LORD's plan to send out spies, one from each tribe, preparatory to entering the land. The LORD was letting them do all they could by themselves, but he was also seeking to prove their faith.

This proved too great a test for the faith of ten of the spies. They all reported that it was indeed a land flowing with milk and honey, and a wonderful inheritance! However, the ten reported that it would be impossible for them to conquer the people of this land. In fact, they went so far as to report that the people were "giants." (vs. 33) The meaning of this word, *Nephiyl*, translated giants (R.V., *Nephilim*), suggests 'great warriors', 'tyrants', 'bullies'. *Dr. Strong* indicates that it comes from a root meaning 'to fall'. *Professor Young* gives the meaning as 'fallen ones, fellers from *Nephilim*'. This undoubtedly caused great fear in the camp, for they would have been quite familiar with the account of the fallen angels, and the tyranny of their monstrous offspring who were drowned in the Flood.

In Numbers 14:11 God asks the question, "How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me for all the signs which I have showed among them?" This episode not only showed a lack of faith in God's ability to give them the land, but an utter lack of appreciation of God's motives and purposes in bringing them out of Egypt. For this breach they were to be punished by remaining in the wilderness for forty years—a year for each day that they spied out the land. And the males of twenty years and over were to die in the wilderness and not be allowed to enter Canaan. (vs. 23) "Surely," the LORD said, "they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it."

Strangely enough, the very next day this rebellious people had overcome their objections sufficiently to decide that they would go into the land, but it was too late. Their effort to conquer the people proved how foolish it was to attempt such a thing in their own strength; for the LORD was not with them, and they were routed with heavy loss of life.

Canaan was to have been their place of rest, but they were not then permitted to enter into that rest. "Ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety."—Deut. 12:9,10

Some 500 years after Israel had actually entered their Promised Land we hear David saying in Psalm 95:7-11, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation . . . when your fathers tempted me . . . unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."

We might well wonder why David should write this so long a time after Canaan had been entered. But we are not left in doubt, for the Apostle Paul's reasoning in Hebrews 4:7,8 brings the subject into focus. "He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, for if Joshua [*Margin*] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." In this way Paul explains that David had been speaking prophetically. Yes, God has promised a 'rest' of which the land of Canaan was a symbol, or type.

Adam was created just at the close of the Sixth Creative Day, and God declared that the work thus concluded was "very good." (Gen. 1:31) With the dawning of the great Seventh Creative Day God, "rested from all his work." (Gen. 2:2) God promised Israel a rest. Let us see how they failed to enter that rest. In Hebrews 4:2 we read that "the Gospel

[was] preached . . . unto them"—that is, the good news. This, briefly stated, was the good news that under the leadership of Moses they would inherit the land and, as chosen people, they would bless all the families of the earth.

When told to go in and possess the land, through lack of faith they refused. Canaan was designed to be their rest. Was this God's rest? No, it was only a picture. If Israel had exercised faith, they could have entered Canaan and probably would have been able eventually to enter into the true rest.

The Gospel, or good news, in substance is the same as that preached to Abraham: "In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:8) In time, the promise was enlarged to include Abraham's seed, and his natural seed, Isaac, who came through faith. He pictured the 'seed' which was to bless all nations, which seed was to be developed by faith.

Israel fully expected to become that promised seed by keeping God's Law. That this was impossible for imperfect beings was manifest in Israel's failure to keep the Law. The Apostle Paul confirms this, saying that no man is justified by the Law, and that the Law is not of faith. (Gal. 3:11-14) He continues, saying that Christ redeemed the Jews from the curse of the Law, that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, and that the promise of the Spirit might be received through faith. He also states that the "just shall live by faith." (vs. 11) We might put it another way by saying that it is only through faith in Christ's sacrificial death that we may be justified, or made right in God's eyes.

Therefore, we conclude that it is impossible to enter God's rest through one's own works. So it was that Israel could not enter by works. But a rest was promised. And we see that a remnant from Israel *did* enter into God's rest. Paul wrote, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. 11:5-7

We ask ourselves how was it that God rested from his works? It was not because of weariness, for we find in Isaiah 40:28 that the "LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth,

fainteth not, neither is weary." And it was surely not the lack of something to do. He rested in the sense that he anticipated the finished work of Christ, and left the outworking of the Seventh Creative Day to him. Therefore, we conclude that the only way to enter into God's rest is to cease from one's own works and accept the finished work of Christ. The Apostle Paul expresses it thus: "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."—Heb. 4:10

We ask, then, on what are the works of Christ based? They are based on his perfection, the keeping of God's law, and the fact that he willingly gave up his own life, which was a perfect human life, as a ransom for all. This constitutes a corresponding price for Adam. Because all in Adam die, therefore Christ has tasted death for every man. (Heb. 2:9) Further than this, the works of Christ are based upon his resurrection from the dead in order that the benefits of his ransom could be made available to mankind.

We have seen that through unbelief Israel could not enter God's rest. Failure to keep the Law also hindered them, although a remnant at the end of the Jewish Age did "enter into rest." Then the opportunity was presented to the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. So this Gospel has been preached since the First Advent unto the present day.

All throughout this Gospel Age there has been a mixture of "wheat" and "tares." (Matt. 13:24-30) Many, for a time, sought rest in the 'creed' beds. These were uncomfortable and chilly. Concerning these resting places Isaiah wrote, "The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." (Isa. 28:20) The true wheat class has found that their only genuine rest is in Christ. This has been true of all—during the Gospel Age, and in this harvest time.

In Romans 4:19-25 Abraham's faith is brought to our attention. Undoubtedly Abraham's faith was great. But it is not just the fact that he believed that commends him, but

additionally, the fact that he acted upon his faith in God's promises. This was how he attested his assurance that God's promises would come true.

When Abraham sought to make his servant, Eliezer, his heir, God told him that his own offspring would be his heir, and that his seed would be as the stars of heaven. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. (Gen. 15:2-6) Paul quotes this in Romans 4:22-25, and explains that these words were not merely for Abraham's benefit, but were spoken for ours also.

Verses 24 and 25 enlarge on the subject, and show how it is that this righteousness is imputed to us. "We believe on him [God] that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." We read in Hebrews 9:24 that he appeared "in the presence of God for us," to apply the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf.

So, if we believe in Jesus' sacrifice, and if we make a full consecration, and if we are accepted by God, we then have been justified and begotten of the Holy Spirit. The apostle continues his reasoning in Romans 5:1,2: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

Standing now in this grace, covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness, we are no longer at enmity with God, and no longer depending on our own works. Then, and only then, have we entered into God's rest. "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." This constitutes for the Christian a present and continuous rest in Christ. However, we realize that this is only a pledge, a foretaste of the final rest beyond the veil.

In Hebrews 4:11 we read: "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest." This brings to mind those who contend in the games. They must strive lawfully. (I Cor. 9:24-27; II Tim.

2:5) Having gained access to the race course we must press along the line, earnestly and zealously running for the prize of the high calling. (Phil. 3:14) We must be determined that nothing will hinder or divert us as we steadily progress toward the goal.

This 'labor' will cost us something in time and talent. Our weak flesh may cry, "Enough!" But the sacrifice must be consumed if it is to be accepted. As the poet expresses it:

"Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor once at ease sit down,
Thine arduous work will not be done
Till thou hast gained thy crown!"

Paul gives his reason for urging us to labor—"Lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief [as did Israel]." (Heb. 4:11) These words are full of meaning to us. Think of Israel, and their example of unbelief. Nor does Paul let the matter rest here. In Hebrews 3:12 he says, "Take heed, brethren," and in 4:1, "Let us therefore fear." These are warnings, danger signals, that we who have entered into God's rest now, may fall short of entering the ultimate and complete rest in glory.

How Paul magnifies the importance of faith! Faith is the basis upon which we must build a character adorned with the fruits and graces of the Spirit. Some of these are 'fortitude, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love'. And again: 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance'. (II Pet. 1:5-7; Gal. 5:22,23) We realize that of our own selves we would be unable to accomplish this transformation of character, but we are thankful to realize that, having begun a good work in us, God is able also to finish it. We have been promised all the help we need.

Coming now to verse 12, and on to the end of Hebrews 4, Paul concludes his thoughts with the encouraging assurance that those who have entered into God's rest, have every

provision made for them to receive help through their "great High Priest," and, by availing themselves of these privileges, will be able to be "more than conquerors."—Rom. 8:37

"The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword." (Heb. 4:12) The truth of God's Word is the source from which we gain eternal life. It reveals God's purposes both for the church and for all mankind. It reveals our faults and failings, and shows us how to overcome them. It is given "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—II Tim. 3:16,17

"All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13) We may hide things from others, and even from ourselves, but we cannot hide them from God, for he knows the very thoughts and intents of our hearts. It should be our constant prayer to be cleansed from secret faults, and thus be kept back from presumptuous sins. David expresses this thought beautifully: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart."—Ps. 24:3

But how can we maintain this purity of heart? How can we overcome the wiles of the Adversary, the lust of the world, and the many weaknesses of our own flesh? Are we sometimes overwhelmed and discouraged at our failures? Do we sometimes allow our eyes to leave our Savior momentarily and look upon the roaring waves, or, perhaps, think that the fiery trials are more than we can endure?

What consolation is brought to us in the following verses: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4:14,15

What comfort it brings to consider Jesus! We have been 'beheaded', and have accepted Christ instead as our Head. He knows each member of his body, and is looking after the needs of each one, no matter how small or insignificant those needs may be. He is our heavenly 'Bridegroom' and is very solicitous for the welfare of his 'bride'. He is anxiously awaiting as, one by one, they complete the adornment of their wedding gowns. Finally the marriage will take place. This will be "a marriage such as earth has never known, when bride and Bridegroom are made one, before the great white throne."

We think of the anointing which we have received in coming into the body of Christ, and of all the privileges that we enjoy as we endeavor to follow faithfully in the steps of our Beloved. And how blessed the invitation, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—vs. 16

Having received all the admonition and encouragement of the preceding verses, it is only logical that we should avail ourselves of the opportunity of coming to God in prayer. Indeed, we should feel the warmth of his relationship as a Father to his children, and should joyfully and eagerly go to him in prayer.

The word 'boldly', contains the thought of 'frankly' and 'with assurance'. We can bring our failures and our shortcomings to our Father, for we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, who pleads our cause, who intercedes on our behalf that our robes may be cleansed from every spot, stain, and wrinkle.—I John 2:1; Eph. 5:27

So then it is by faith that we enter into God's rest in Christ. It is the proving of our faith that will determine our worthiness to enter into that rest beyond the river of death. "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds." (Ps. 149:5) It has been well said, he who believes fully, rests fully.

"Oh may no earthborn cloud arise, To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."—*Hymns of Dawn, Hymn 274* ■

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

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The Dawn
East Rutherford
New Jersey 07073

"I HAVE SET the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."—Psalm 16:8

HE WHO HAS buried his own will completely in the will of the LORD can know no disappointment; but in every affair of his life he sees by faith divine appointment or supervision, and hears the Word of the LORD in all of life's affairs assuring him, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." It is one of the evidences of reaching the graduation condition of heart, when we are able to . . . take the disciplinary experience[s] meted out to us by our all-wise and all-loving LORD.

—Z. '96

IN MEMORY OF

GEORGE M. JEUCK

April 5, 1925

March 7, 1995



It is with deep regret that we report the passing of our friend and brother in the faith, George M. Jeuck, who died suddenly on Tuesday, March 7, 1995. George was a Trustee of the Dawn Bible Students Association and also served in the capacities of General Manager and Editor of the Dawn Magazine. He started working at the Dawn full-time 14 years ago. His life was fully devoted to serving the Lord, the truth and the brethren everywhere. Brother George's greatest joy was in discussing the beauty and harmony of the Scriptures as they revealed the glorious plan of God for the salvation and blessing of all mankind. We will long remember his example of faithfulness unto death. His ministry was known

throughout the world and will be missed by all. Though we sorrow, we sorrow not as others, who have no hope, and it was this same hope he gave to others in their time of need and sorrow.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends, and pray as he often prayed to his Heavenly Father, "May thy kingdom come and thy will be done" to end earth's weary night of sorrow, suffering, and death. At the time of his passing, he was about to reach the age of 70 years. ■

As pants the hart for water brooks,
So pants my soul for Thee,
Oh, when shall I behold Thy face,
When wilt Thou call for me?
How oft at night I turn my eyes
Towards my heav'nly home,
And long for that blest time, when Thou,
My Lord, shalt bid me "Come!"

I know, that those who share Thy throne
Must in Thy likeness be,
And all the Spirit's precious fruits
In them the Father see.
Lord, grant me grace, more patiently
To strive with my poor heart,
And bide Thy time to be with Thee
And see Thee as Thou art!

As pants the hart for water brooks,
So pants my soul for Thee,
Oh, when shall I behold Thy face,
When wilt Thou call for me?

— Hymns of Dawn - Appendix A
"Longing for Home"

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Two Bible Study Groups in Mexico City

Dear Brothers and Sisters: Greetings in the LORD! How good is our God, and how wonderful to have fellow believers and brothers throughout the world! We want to thank you for all that you have done to help us to proclaim the message always. (II Tim. 4:2) We received the photocopy of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" in Japanese. Yesterday I was in the Japanese coffee shop I sometimes frequent, thinking how the people there might respond. The other day I was invited to a Bible Study in French. It is in a home in an upper-class neighborhood. They invited me to share my views on the Bible. They were examining I John. Maybe God is opening up another area.

The brothers are certainly enthusiastic. (See the short note that one wrote to you, and that is added to this letter.) The key is trusting in God, and letting Him work. As for the radio stations, the closest is 13 hours away.

Though it's always good to have the information on hand. One brother has family in Guadalajara, so he is thinking of asking them to tape the show for us.

It seems like every time we write, it is to ask for something. A Bible help that you mentioned that we do not have is the Russian *Photodrama*. Would you send us three copies? Enclosed is our monthly offering to your ministry. God be with all our "gringo" brothers in the North. Sincerely in Christ on behalf of all.—Mexico

Note from the Second Bible Study Group

Dear Brothers: My English isn't very good, but I'm trying to improve it. I'm very happy with the Bible Study helps you sent us; my grandfather read Pastor Russell's publications while he was at North Carolina. Oro por ustedes y que el Señor los bendiga siempre. Yours sincerely.—Mexico

Sharing the Truth

Dawn Publications, Sirs: Please find \$2.00 for which

please send me another one of your books, "Book of Books." I have read it, and re-read it, and I think it is well written, and is the true meaning of the Bible. I want to give one to my neighbor. So thanking, and good luck. Yours.—NJ

'Devours'

The Dawn Magazine

Hello God's People: I feel happy once again to write to you. . . . I believe in the Gospel—every aspect of it with my whole heart. I am also willing to die for the sake of the truth. I cannot compromise the truth as expressed in the Bible. It is the greatest truth man ever had. No other news from the government, or anybody at all, can take the place of the Gospel, or even compare with it. It is sometimes just too good to be true, but it is, and we can never, never thank God enough for it.

Any time an opportunity arises, I seize it to tell the tremendous and stupendous good news. It just makes my spirit and my face glow! Nothing ever so captured my interest and my whole being

as this ever-new good news of the kingdom. I will ever remain grateful to you for opening my eyes to this wonderful good news. I shall live and die believing it, and pray for its fulfillment.

My youngest sister recently moved from Yugoslavia to U.S.A. Please get in touch with her. She speaks Yugoslavian fluently, having lived there for eleven years. She will tell you the rest. Thank you. I cannot repay you for your constancy in sending me *The Dawn* monthly. I devour it over and over. The Christian Life and Doctrine therein is very, very—I don't know how to say it—it just helps us to be better Christians, trying more and more to be like Christ.

Once again, I say, May God Almighty bless you and grant you to sit at the right hand of the Majesty on high to rule and reign with him. Bye. I love you always.—WA

Thank You for the Real Truth

Dear Sir: I take *The Dawn* magazine and I like it very much. It has helped me a lot.

Would you send me the booklets I have marked off? Thank you so much, and God bless you always for doing such a good job showing people the real truth about the Word of God.—MI

Found Truth at a Garage Sale

Dear Sir: I have just finished reading "*The Divine Plan of the Ages*." I can't tell you what an influence it had on me. I thank God for directing my steps, as I found it at a garage sale. Please send me all information on your books, tracts, etc., as I want to share it with my friends, especially new converts. Sincerely.—Canada

There Is Some Good News!

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I heard you years ago, and somehow lost track of you. Just happened Sunday night to be searching for some good news, and ran across you again. Enjoyed your program and I am writing for the

booklet "*Christ's Thousand-Year Kingdom*." Would enjoy other tracts if you have any. Hoping to hear from you soon. I am going to tell the rest of my family about finding you again. May you keep telling this sin-sick world that there is some good news! Thank you.—SC

Thank You Again and Again!

Dear Sirs: Thank you very much for those precious books you sent to me. I do not have enough words to thank you for helping me to learn the eternal truth about God my (our) Maker. . . . Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." Yes, I am free indeed! God made you an instrument—for that you have a rich reward in heaven. Thank you again and again. Please remember this poor brother in your prayers. Yours in the love of Christ.—Canada ■

"HAVE I NOT commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."—*Joshua 1:9*

The End of the Age

IN STUDIES IN the Scriptures, Volume III, chapters V and VI, it is pointed out that to appreciate the Gospel harvest, and in order to see the outline of the work to be done, it is necessary to notice its type carefully—the harvest at the close of the Jewish Age. This Jewish Harvest has often been thought of as closing down suddenly in 70 A.D., at the time of the destruction of the City of Jerusalem, including its glorious Temple—the very center of the religious worship of the Jews—but by carefully noting what history has to tell us about conditions in Israel at that time, it is clear that the country was not subjugated by the Romans for many years subsequent to the destruction of the city; that the Jews scattered in their cities and villages throughout Israel were still able, in spite of difficulties, to carry on their ordinary everyday affairs, which they continued to do to the best of their ability. And we may be sure the Christians among them were, as hitherto, going “everywhere preaching the Word.”—Acts 8:4

It will be remembered that after surrounding Jerusalem, the Roman Army, for some reason that has never been fully explained, withdrew from the city for a short time before its final investiture; and that then, in this short breathing space, in harmony with the counsel of the Master, his followers took their opportunity and fled to the mountains. (Luke 21:20,21) We may be sure they would not remain long in hiding there, but would continue the work of thrusting in the sickle of truth among their brethren according to the flesh as opportunity presented itself; and in this way, doubtless, a small amount of harvest work would still be done until the complete disintegration of Israel as a nation.

Looking at the harvest of the Gospel Age, we can see that it also did not suddenly close down in 1914-15 A.D.,

the close of the Times of the Gentiles, and the parallel date to 70 A.D. (See Studies in the Scriptures, Volume II, Chapter VII); although the great time of trouble began there, it has been possible to carry on a considerable amount of work in the name of the LORD. The sickle of present truth is still being used, and many of the children of the kingdom have been gathered together. The faithful have spent time feasting from the table the Lord has richly furnished during these days of his presence, and have gone 'through the gates' carrying the message to those outside of Zion, lifting up the glorious standard of restitution for the people.

Note how this twofold work is pictured by Isaiah: "Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou has laboured: but they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people."—Isa. 62:8-10

May the all-important work of sanctification continue to go forward, and so long as it is 'called day' may the work of being God's witnesses to the world not be overlooked, that the Master may have no occasion to say to us, This "ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."—Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42 ■

OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian courses. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones. We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

Sister Jean Overton, Indiana—February 8. (Correction: Age, 80).

Sister Josephine Koppinger, Detroit, MI—February 23, Age, 93.

Brother George M. Jeuck, New York, NY—March 7. Age, 69.

Sister Mary Katherine Schnee, Muncie, IN—March 22. Age, 69.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn, or by classes associated with the Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

B. Bach
Jackson, MI May 21

M. Balko, Sr.
Gary, IN May 7
Asilomar, CA 26-29

M. Balko, Jr.
Louisville, AL May 27,28

W. Blicharz
Asilomar, CA May 26-29

J.B. Brown
Buffalo, NY May 13,14
Asilomar, CA 26-29

R. Gorecki
Buffalo, NY May 13,14
Agawam, MA 21
Asilomar, CA 26-29

S.R. Jeuck
Louisville, AL May 27,28

E. Kuenzli
Louisville, AL May 27,28

Jos. Panucci
Buffalo, NY May 13,14
Asilomar, CA 26-29

G.H. Passios
Cincinnati, OH May 21

L.B. Post
Delaware Valley, PA April 30
Buffalo, NY May 13,14
Agawam, MA 21

R. Rawson
Louisville, AL May 27,28

G. Tivador
London, Ont. May 14 ■

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. In order to ensure your convention being accurately placed in these columns, please make your request IN WRITING and mail it to this address at least two or three months before the date of the convention: Convention Listing, Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

GARY AREA BIBLE STUDENTS, May 7—The SPA Banquet Center, 333 North Mineral Springs Rd., Porter, IN 46304. Contact: Mr. John Ulicni, 6703 Tyler St., Merrillville, IN 46410 for

further information.

Phone: (219) 769-5647

HARTFORD BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, May 7—Howard Johnson's, Plainville,

CT. Contact: Mrs. Daniel Slivinsky,
42 Andrew Dr., East Hartford, CT
06108
Phone: (203) 289-0116

BUFFALO, NY, May 13,14—
Holiday Inn, 5440 Camp Rd.,
Hamburg. Contact: Mr. Eugene
Buczowski, 85 Rogers Dr.,
Cheektowaga 14225
Phone: (716) 634-2163

DETROIT, MI, May 21—Red-
ford YWCA, 25940 Grand River,
Redford Township. Contact Walter
Blicharz, 19146 Bedford Rd., Bever-
ly Hills, MI 48025 for informa-
tion.

Phone: (810) 642-1553

AGAWAM, MA, May 21—
Ramada Inn, 161 Bridge St., East
Windsor, CT. For information con-
tact: Mrs. Sophie Zieliński, 21 Sil-
ver St., Agawam 01001
Phone: (413) 786-1216

**ASILOMAR CONVENTION,
May 26-29—**Pacific Grove, CA.
For reservations, contact Mr. Tom
Marshall, 1089 Bluebell Dr.,
#1108, Livermore, CA 94550 be-
fore April 24th, the cut-off date.
Phone: (510) 443-0567

**LOUISVILLE, AL, May
27,28—**5th Annual Convention.
May 27th will be at Blue Springs
State Park, Hwy. 10; May 28th will
be at Deloney's Restaurant, Hwy.
231 No., Ozark, AL. For motel and
other information, contact: Virgil
Strickland, Rt. 1, Box 1, Louisville
36048
Phone: (334) 266-5454

WATERBURY, CT, June 3,4—
The Litchfield Firehouse, Litch-
field, CT. For programs and

directions, contact: Mrs. Anthony
Tsimonis, Sec'y, c/o Associated Bi-
ble Students, P.O. Box 1494, Wa-
terbury 06721-1494

**CHICAGO BIBLE STUDENTS
CONVENTION, May 27-29—**
Elk Grove High School, 500 W. Elk
Grove Blvd, Elk Grove, IL. For in-
formation contact Joy Kandel, 802
Fairmont Ct., Des Plaines, IL
60018.

Phone: (708) 298-6579

**GREECE AND THE SEVEN
CHURCHES CONVENTION,
June 5-19, 1995—**Contact:
Mrs. Mary Mali, 638 Pequot Ave-
nue, New London, CT 06320
Phone: (203) 447-2872

**ALLENTOWN, PA, June
9,10,11—**Moravian College,
Bethlehem, PA. Contact: Mrs.
Margaret Young, P.O. Box 1672,
Allentown 18105
Phone: (610) 867-5418

**PORTLAND, OR, June 23-
26—**Collins Retreat Center,
32867 S.E. Highway 211, be-
tween Sandy and Eagle Creek, OR
97022. Phone: (503) 637-6411.
For information, contact: Mrs.
Carlton Chandler, Sec'y, 12215
S.E. 106 Ave., Portland 97266.

**BIBLE STUDENTS ANNUAL
GENERAL CONVENTION,
July 29-August 3, 1995—**
Grand Rapids, MI. For information
please write: General Convention
Registration, 1425 Lachman
Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA
90272
Phone: (310) 454-5248 ■