

STUDY XIV

SUNDRY EARTHLY OBLIGATIONS OF THE NEW CREATION

"Provide Things Honest in the Sight of All Men"--"Owe no Man Anything"
 --"Lend, Hoping for Nothing Again"--Christian Courtesy--
 "Take no Thought for the Morrow"--"My Goal is Christ, and Christ
 Alone"--"It is Easier for a Camel to go Through the Eye of a Needle,
 Than for a Rich Man to Enter into the Kingdom of God"--Insurance--
 Organizations for Mutual Benefit, etc.--Conscientious Meddling--
 "Blessing God and Cursing Men"--Social Obligations--"Honor All
 Men"--Shall the New Creation Take Part in Public Elections?--The
 New Creature and Moral Reforms--Wearing of Costly Apparel--Let
 us Wait for the Adornment of "Glory, Honor and Immortality"

"Provide Things Honest in the Sight of All Men"
--Rom. 12:17--

WHILE the New Creatures are declared to be dead to the world, and alive toward God through Jesus Christ our Lord, the metaphor applies wholly to the transformed hopes and aims and ambitions. While the new mind is still compelled to operate through the human body, awaiting the new body in the First Resurrection, it must recognize certain responsibilities toward fellowmen--toward the world. As it has responsibilities toward the earthly family and toward "the household of faith" in respect to temporal matters, and these, instead of being slackened or lessened, are increased by the transforming of the mind, so also it is in respect to certain duties toward fellowmen.

All mankind should recognize the principle of justice, of righteousness, in their dealings with each other; but the New Creature, because of receiving special instructions upon these principles of divine Law in the School of Christ, should be much more alert than others in respect to the

exercise of these qualities in the affairs of daily life. Is it proper, is it right, that all men should provide things decent and honest in the sight of their fellow-creatures? Assuredly this is so; and assuredly, therefore, the responsibilities of the New Creature in these directions are by his advanced position increased. Are other men expected to be honest, truthful, upright, honorable, generous? The Lord's people surely might be expected to have still keener instincts along all these lines, and to be striving daily to measure up to the perfect standard in thought and word and conduct.

"Owe no man anything but to love one another," is the divine rule, as expressed by the Apostle. (*Rom. 13:8*) It would be well if all the world knew of this rule and followed it closely, and we know that in due time just this rule will be rigidly enforced--during the Millennial age. But the New Creation has this as its rule now, and however others may fail to recognize it and to follow it, the Lord's people should obey this instruction implicitly. Even to natural Israel, the house of servants, the Lord laid down the injunction that if faithful to him they should be lenders, not borrowers (*Deut. 15:6*), and this principle commends itself to every person possessed of good judgment as being the very essence of wisdom --wisdom which it would be well, were it possible, to apply to the world--wisdom which the world recognizes, but which comparatively few either of the Lord's people or of the world strenuously endeavor to follow as an invariable rule of life.

In other words, every member of the New Creation should, as respects earthly things, live within his means. If he can earn but a dollar a day he should not for a moment think of spending more than that, except upon the direst necessity, but should adapt his conditions accordingly, until there be a change to more favorable circumstances. Recognizing that the Lord's providential care is over him and all his affairs, he should, after arranging as wisely as he knows how respecting his temporal matters, conclude that these as well as his spiritual affairs have been subject to divine

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supervision, and that the Lord designed a blessing for him in connection with these conditions. He should, therefore, be thoroughly content with them, however trying they may be--waiting patiently on the Lord for such relief as divine love and wisdom may bring in due time. If the income be a liberal one, moderation should be his rule of conduct in this as in all things. "Let your moderation be known unto

all men." Economy is a part of the divine arrangement, as exemplified by our Lord and the apostles, and particularly illustrated in the matter of the saving of the fragments by order of him who had power to create out of nothing food for a multitude.

In proportion as the means at our disposal are limited, all expenditures should be curtailed and brought, not only down to the income, but a little less--so that no matter how little we earn, a certain proportion may be laid aside, either for our own future necessities, or as a thank-offering to the Lord, or, as the Apostle suggests, that we might have to give to those who are in still more needy circumstances. Let it be remembered always that trust in the Lord implies contentment; and that this means restfulness of heart. Under these conditions bread and water, or potatoes and salt, will taste better and yield better results than far richer food partaken of in a different spirit. Trust will always imply thankfulness too, and, hence, the child of God living on the plainest of fare should continually overflow with gratitude to the Giver of all Good, with full reliance in his wisdom in all the affairs of life. This would not mean indifference to progress, if the door to that progress and greater prosperity were a righteous door--an honorable means of bettering our condition. Finding such a "door" before us, we should thankfully accept it as being of divine providence, and as possibly leading on to still further lessons from our great Teacher.

The injunction, "Owe no man anything but to love one another," implies that if we have at any time inadvertently, and contrary to this divine wisdom, become indebted to others, we should in every reasonable and honorable way

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seek to cancel that indebtedness--to pay our debts. If, however, the debts were incurred in a business way, the creditors knowing at the time that they were running more or less risk and running this risk with a view to making profits; and if the debts were the result of legitimate business failure, and had become "outlawed"--and particularly, if they were contracted before the change of nature, before becoming a New Creature, it would not be wrong for the New Creature to avail himself of what are known as bankruptcy provisions, or to take advantage of the law, which provides that a debt or judgment becomes null and void after five years, unless renewed in Court, or by some individual promise.

A Scriptural precedent for such a course is found in the

Law given to typical Israel, respecting remission of debts on the seventh-year Sabbath, and a still fuller remission of all obligations on the fiftieth year of Jubilee. The world has recognized the wisdom of those divine arrangements, and many nations have confirmed them in their civil laws. New Creatures taking advantage of these earthly arrangements, in accord with the divine will, may feel restful as respects such debts, unless in the providence of God they should subsequently be blessed with an abundance, when, undoubtedly, the Golden Rule would dictate to them the propriety of paying off all indebtedness, regardless of its extinguishment under the laws.

If, however, the debt were not a business one, but an obligation of friendship, a loan of money or of credit, on which the friend expected and received no gain or profit, the case would be a totally different one. Such a debt should be considered as continuing so long as life would last, and endeavors to make it good should always have an important bearing upon the affairs of the debtor. But, as before pointed out, after becoming a member of the New Creation, under guidance of the holy Spirit and its Word, the Scriptures, and under the direction of the spirit of a sound mind, none of the New Creation should become debtors,

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but should consider it the Lord's providence that they live quite within their income. This injunction to "Owe no man anything" would not necessarily apply to the placing of a mortgage upon one's property for supposedly a less amount than its real value. This would not be borrowing in the forbidden sense, but merely the making of a temporary sale of a portion of the equity involved, holding the opportunity to redeem it again.

Widows and orphans are not responsible for the debts of the former head of the family, neither according to human nor divine law. Goods sold to a husband or father are sold on his own responsibility and honesty, and others cannot be held for his debts except as they make themselves personally responsible by direct or implied agreement. His debts had a prior lien upon his estate (except the family's portion reserved by law); but there at his death the matter ends, unless some member of the family voluntarily assumes the obligations. We mention this because we have learned of instances in which poor widows and orphans have felt themselves obligated by divine if not by human law to pay the debts of the husband and father, and have been kept in

distress for years endeavoring so to do.

The Lord's counsel to his people on the other side of the question is equally explicit. If they see their brethren have need they are to do good and to "lend, hoping for nothing again"--without thought of gaining similar or other favors in return. We must, however, understand this injunction to "lend" to a brother in harmony with the other injunction that we should not borrow; and, hence, the implication would be that the brother possessed means and would be able to repay, but that temporarily he had need, and was able to give some kind of a mortgage or security to the one lending. But such lending, to assist a brother in necessity, should be done freely and without hope of reward--without stipulating for interest (usury), but merely for the return of the principal within the specified time. It should be purely an accommodation, an expression of brotherly love.

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If the brother be not circumstanced so that he could repay or give security for the money, the loan should not be made, but, instead, a gift--to whatever extent the giver felt himself able to exercise charity and in proportion to the necessities of the brother. The brother might engage to pay back, but it should be insisted upon that it is a gift, unless subsequently the brother's affairs should decidedly change, and he should be abundantly able to return the gift, in which case he certainly should have the desire of heart so to do. Even then, if the giver were well able to afford it, he might say to the brother, "I cannot feel happy to take back the gift; therefore, I entreat you, pass it on to someone else, whom you may find in need, now or at some future time." The matter would be entirely different, however, if the brother or any other person wished to borrow money with a view to extending his business, and with the intention of making profit. To loan the money to such an one, taking ample security, and requiring interest would be thoroughly legitimate; and such interest would not be "usury," in the oppressive or wrong sense, but would be in harmony with what the Lord enjoined in his parable when he said, "Thou oughtest to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury [interest]." *Matt. 25:27*

In full accord with these injunctions, the Scriptures give us another, which might well be heeded, and always to profit, not only by the New Creation, but also by the world

in general. The injunction reads, "A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend." (*Prov. 17:18*) According to this suggestion, sureties and securities for others, indorsements of notes, etc., would be barred, and wise it would be for all of the Lord's people to follow this rule carefully. Even in the most urgent case imaginable, in which there might be almost absolute necessity for going upon the bond of a brother, care should be exercised that no obligation is taken that could not be met without serious disaster. If the bond

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were for a sum that one would be willing to lend to the brother, or to give to him in case of necessity, then the bond or security or indorsement would be allowable, but not otherwise --never to the jeopardy of one's own credit, nor to the risk of one's own business, nor to the impoverishment of one's own family. Compare *Prov. 22:26; 11:15; 6:1-5*.

There is a kind of petty borrowing and lending practiced by many, especially in respect to household articles, soap, sugar, tubs, tools, etc., that deserves consideration here. The New Creatures, under the control of the spirit of a sound mind, must deprecate in their hearts such petty annoyances; so much so that they will be sure so to regulate their own affairs and wants as to make such borrowing an extremely rare matter--a matter of absolute necessity in case of sickness or other extremity. It should be a part of the determination of all the Lord's saints to put other people to as little trouble as possible. If, therefore, through neglect of proper attention to their affairs, they are short of butter for a meal, they should prefer to do without it rather than to annoy a neighbor and to set a bad example. If they have only one smoothing iron, and cannot afford to purchase another, they would best abide by the consequences, and use the one only.

Those who cultivate such strict regulations in respect to their own affairs will naturally feel more annoyed than would others if a neighbor comes to them to borrow. Nevertheless, the Lord's people are to be lenders, not borrowers; and our advice would be that in all reasonable moderation the Lord's people should gain a notoriety of peculiarity in both these respects--that they would be always willing to lend, and that heartily, with cheerfulness and goodwill, and a desire to please and accommodate, to the extent that they could afford to lose--and always unwilling to borrow. Such persons would admittedly be considered "good neighbors,"

whether they were thought "peculiar people" as respects their devotion to the Lord and his Word or not. True, the borrowers might not always return the article, and it might

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cost trouble to go after it; or, in the case of borrowing food, they might never return it. We should reflect, however, that if they thus borrowed and consumed and failed to return food, they would be less likely to come again for more. If circumstances would permit, we would prefer never to ask the return of a borrowed article. We would rather consider these favorable opportunities for making friends with the "mammon of unrighteousness"--good opportunities for sacrificing trivial earthly interests that we might, through these, obtain a greater moral and spiritual influence with our neighbors.

While considering this subject we might mention another, closely related to it in a general way, viz., the habit of some of considering themselves at liberty to intrude upon their friends as visitors--borrowing the neighbor's *time*. It is a part of the generous spirit of love to be hospitable, and all of the Lord's people should cultivate this disposition on every suitable occasion, as one that is pleasing to the Lord and that will be helpful to their own spiritual growth. (*Heb. 13:2*) They should be pleased to entertain friends, neighbors, for a meal or for a night, etc., as their circumstances may permit: a heart desire to entertain should always be present, whether opportunity for the exercise of that desire be found or not. Hospitality does not signify lavish expenditure beyond one's means, nor that better should be provided for a guest than for one's own family. It does signify, however, a willingness to share such things as we have with others.

But let us look at the other side of the question. The Lord's consecrated people of the New Creation should never be intruders. They should be sure that they have a positive invitation and welcome before they accept hospitalities for a meal or for a night. How beautiful an illustration of this proper principle we have in the case of our Lord, walking with the two disciples to Emmaus! It was his desire to go with them into their home, and to share their evening meal, that he might confer additional blessing upon them. Nevertheless, when they reached their home, "he made as

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though he would go further," and waited until they had urged, or constrained him, before he consented to tarry with them. This was not a deception, nor would it be deceptive on our part to do similarly. Our Lord would not have remained with them unless they had urged him to do so, nor should we stay with any except such as give us a hearty welcome, nor remain longer than the hearty welcome might continue, whatever our circumstances.

The idea which seems to prevail in the minds of some, that they are at liberty to "sit down upon" natural relatives or spiritual relatives, is a great mistake. No such right prevails. We have the right to give and to be generous, but are not authorized to request or require such things from others. They have the right to give or to withhold that which is their own, that of which they are stewards. As to how much the New Creatures should permit themselves to be imposed upon by mistaken brethren or relatives after the flesh would depend upon circumstances, largely upon the physical and financial conditions of the visitor. However, in justice to himself, and in justice also to the visitor who has the unsound mind upon this question, and who purposes to make his visit a visitation, the entertainer should kindly but plainly say--"I ought perhaps to tell you that it will not be convenient for me to have you with us longer than--"; or another good way in dealing with such people is to tell them at the beginning of their visit that it will be convenient to have them until a certain date, or to invite them definitely for a meal or a day or a week, as the case may be-- indicating clearly the extent of the invitation and not leaving it to conjecture. Such a course seems absolutely necessary in the interest of the home, the family purse, one's own time, the Lord's service, etc., as well as proper and helpful to the large number of people who have unsound judgments along this line. But it is not necessary for us either to think or speak unkindly to or of these. They may perhaps have fallen more in this particular than we or some others, and we perhaps by nature were more fallen than they in other particulars. In any event we should think kindly, generously,

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respecting them, and all the more resolve that we ourselves will most thoroughly avoid the objectionable course.

"Take No Thought for the Morrow"

--Matt. 6:34,19,20--

Our Lord's declaration quoted above, and his other declaration, "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven," have, we think, been seriously misunderstood by many of his earnest and well-meaning followers. Some have concluded that the Lord meant that they should live "from hand to mouth," and be utterly regardless of the future. We see, on the contrary that our heavenly Father has set us no such example; that he continually takes thought for us, and has arranged the seasons, the grains, vegetables and fruits in their order. We see also that he has intended that we should recognize similar principles, and has so arranged nature that it is necessary for us to plant if we would subsequently eat, and to weave if we would have wearing apparel, and to prepare in advance the oil which would give light in the night. This same principle applies to all of life's affairs, and we should reject the thought that our Lord Jesus intended to contradict or overthrow this divine arrangement, as shown in all nature.

What, then, did our Lord mean? We answer that in the original of the first text the thought is, "Take no anxious [burdensome] care for the morrow"; "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The Lord's people are not to be *anxious* about the future. They are to be, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." While planting and sowing and weeding and hoeing, they are by faith to recognize that all of their affairs are subject to divine supervision, and that God has promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love him. They should so thoroughly apply the precious promises of divine care that their hearts would be entirely free from anxiety.

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We should recognize a wide difference between carelessness and anxious care. Had our Lord been careless, extravagant, wasteful, thoughtless, respecting the morrow, he would not have told his disciples to gather up the fragments that remained after the feeding of the multitudes; but he did illustrate in that very incident the propriety of taking thought for the next meal, for the next day. But it was not an anxious thought that he commended. The disciples were

to use that which had been put into their hands, and not to waste any of it. But if their supply were exhausted through no fault of theirs, and if they had no means of replenishing it, they should trust the Lord so implicitly as to shut out anxiety, though not to remit their energy. This same thought is illustrated in the case of Joseph in Egypt, where, under divine direction, he laid up treasures of wheat during seven plentiful years, and thus made provision for the following seven years of famine.

Neither does the second text imply carelessness in respect to the daily affairs of life--the interests of the present life, proper provision for our families, etc. What, then, does it signify? It means that nothing of an earthly kind should become our *treasure*--that we should esteem above all others the heavenly treasure. Upon it our hearts should be centered, and upon it we should continually feast our minds; thus rich, we should have the spiritual rest by faith, trusting the divine promises. The world knows none of these exceeding great and precious things which the New Creatures have by faith. And, as the hymn expresses it,

**"Each heart will seek and love its own;
My goal is Christ, and Christ alone."**

In choosing Christ we are choosing not only the glory, honor and immortality promised to those who are his, but we are choosing also the sufferings of this present time, the special trials and testings and experiences promised to those who walk in his footsteps, as a necessary education and preparation for the glories to come. Moreover, all who are thus seeking Christ, all who have thus made full consecration of themselves to the Lord, have nothing of an

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earthly kind that they should call their own. When they were of the earth, earthy, they counted their earthly interests as personal possessions; but when they became the Lord's they gave themselves, with all that they possessed, to him. Houses, lands, children, husband, wife, brothers, sisters --all were devoted, consecrated to the Lord. None of these therefore, can now be the treasures of the New Creation.

This does not mean that a man may not love his wife, or the wife her husband--greatly appreciating each other. It does not mean that they may not love their children and highly appreciate their qualities of heart and mind. It does

not mean that they may not still love and appreciate the beauties of Nature. It does not mean that they may not possess a house or own an animal. But it does mean that none of these earthly possessions can any longer be their *treasures*, or in any sense of the word stand in competition with the Lord, whom they have accepted as "the chiefest amongst ten thousand and the one altogether lovely."

Money is not to be loved, revered, worshiped: we are not to be its slaves or servants. We have given our allegiance as sons and as servants to the Almighty Creator, and money is one of his servants and tools, and should thus be regarded by us who are stewards of so much of it as, in divine providence, may come under our control.

But do we not remember the Lord's words to the young man, who came to him saying, "What lack I yet?" and to whom Jesus replied, "If thou wouldst be perfect, go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up thy cross and follow me; and he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." (*Matt. 19:16-22*) Does not this teach us the necessity for all the Lord's people becoming poor? Yes, we answer: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye*

*The large cities of the East in olden times had great gates which were closed at sundown, and not permitted to be opened until morning, lest

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than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of heaven." (*Matt. 19:24*) The rich have temptations in the good things of this present life, which tend to attract their hearts and become their idols and their treasures. They are therefore less favorably situated in this respect than the poor, who have little of this world's goods to set their hearts upon, and who are the more inclined to hear with joy the good tidings of divine grace, the great riches which the Lord has in reservation for his faithful. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that none could possess this world's goods without abusing them, worshiping them, idolizing them, considering them their treasures. It would be an equal mistake to suppose that those who lack earthly riches cannot worship them and make treasures of them. Who has not known or heard of poor people who evidently worshiped wealth, craved it, struggled continually for it, and were ever discontented because unable to lay hands upon that which their hearts grasped as a treasure?

All who come to the Lord, whether rich or poor in respect to this world's goods, must come with the understanding of a full consecration--a full sacrifice of their hearts, their wills, and all that they possess--else they will not be accepted. The poor man who comes to the Lord must give up the idols of his *imagination* and *ambition*, his covetousness for earthly wealth which he has not yet attained. The rich man coming to the Lord must come, likewise, with a full surrender of his will, giving up his plans and schemes of an earthly kind, to which he was previously devoting the best of life's energies: he must sacrifice, not only what he possesses, but all for which he hoped, at which he aimed and which he was ambitious to secure--all must be laid upon the Lord's altar or he cannot be his disciple.

an enemy should take advantage and make an attack. But they had small gates which were guarded, and through which a man might enter and might even bring in his camel, by taking off the load and permitting the animal to crawl in on its knees. These small gates were called "needles' eyes." Thus a rich man may gain access to the Kingdom, but not encumbered with earthly riches or treasures. These must be laid off.

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The rich young man might have understood our Lord's words better had he been in the right attitude of mind; for we believe that the Lord would have explained matters to him further. If he had said, Lord, I accept the conditions; I surrender my all to you, as God's representative. How shall I proceed to carry out your instructions? Shall I sell my flocks and herds and lands and houses, and take the gross sum thus received, and call together the poor, and toss the money into the air, and let them scramble for it, or how should I proceed? Please give me further instructions.

We can fancy the Lord saying to him, You have now reached the point to which I desired you to come, and I will explain my injunction more particularly. You have now consecrated your *all* to God, making it subject to his will--to be used according to your understanding of what his will is, and you are asking me respecting his will. I will tell you: his will is that you should yourself become his steward, not merely to keep the property, but his steward in spending it, in using it as well, as wisely, as you know how. And I suggest that you begin by taking the money which you have in bank and using it. You may, if you choose, begin here, with my apostles and followers. See what good you can do to them. As you use up that money, sell a house or a flock of

sheep or a drove of cattle, and thus proceed to use the means which God has placed in your control--becoming his steward, expecting that having made a consecration of all to him, he will ultimately call for an account. Then if you shall be able to show that you have used that which you consecrated to him as wisely and as thoroughly as you knew how, you may expect to hear the blessed words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

A consecration of our all to the Lord does not mean that all of our possessions should be used exclusively in religious work. As the Lord's stewards we are to seek continually to know what would please him, obtaining our instructions from his Word. There we are taught to glorify him; and in

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seeking to glorify him we are to endeavor to use, not only our voices and pens, but all of our talents, including our money or property talent. Since we are the Lord's, all obligations resting against us are obligations resting against the time and property which we have consecrated. For instance, to have a wife means to have an obligation to her of reasonable, proper attention and maintenance; and similarly children are mortgages upon whatever we possess of property or time or talent.

It is God's will that we should recognize these mortgages, and that we should day by day meet their requirements in a reasonable manner--not forgetting that we are expected not to be wasteful of the Lord's means, but to seek to turn as much as possible of it into such channels as would be specially useful in the promotion of religious truth--the spread of the good tidings of great joy--as representing our highest conception of good things for the groaning creation. The point we make is that the care of the wife and children, or aged parents or others properly dependent upon us, is recognized of the Lord as a proper use of a portion of what we have consecrated to him. But we are not to permit extravagance or wastefulness in these directions to interfere with the use of our means more directly in what is to us the chief work of life--the proclamation of the Gospel, the good tidings of the Kingdom.

Not only are we not to rob our families of things needful for their proper care, but the Scriptures instruct us that it is a part of our duty to make provision for them, looking down to some extent to the future. Hark to the message through the wise man, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider

her ways and be wise." (*Prov. 6:6*) We find the ant laying up a good supply of nourishment for its prospective young; and so the Apostle tells us, parents ought to lay up for their children. (*2 Cor. 12:14*) According to the natural disposition and tendency of our selfish, fallen natures, probably fewer have need for admonition along this line than have need of advice against going to an extreme in the contrary

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direction. The thought of the Scriptures on the subject is expressed again in the Apostle's words, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men"; and again, "He that provideth not for his own...hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." *Rom. 12:17; 1 Tim. 5:8*

The thought would appear to be that every parent owes it to his child to give him more of a start in life than merely the imperfect dying little body born into the world. Having brought children into the world, it becomes the duty of parents to see to their reasonable and proper establishment in it. This includes not only the dispensing of food and raiment during childhood and youth, but also the provision of intellectual and moral instructions to which we have already referred; and all this means laying up, laying aside from personal consumption, in the interest of the children. Seeing the uncertainties of life, it would not be an unreasonable application of the Scriptural injunction for the parent to have something laid up for the necessities of his family in the event of his death before they had reached maturity. It is not our thought that the Apostle meant that parents should seek to lay up fortunes for their children to quarrel over and to be injured by. The child fairly well born and who receives a reasonable education and guidance to maturity, is well off, has a rich legacy in himself; and the parent who has made such provision for his children has every reason to feel that he has been ruled in the matter by the sound mind, the holy Spirit, the right disposition, approved by the Lord, even though he leave no property to his family, or not more than a shelter or home. Such a man has discharged his stewardship and such children will be sure in the end to appreciate his faithfulness.

Organizations for Mutual Benefit, etc.

We are living in a day of organization, and it must be admitted that some of these have been and are truly wise and beneficial arrangements. Insurance companies of every kind are, of course, on a commercial footing, not, strictly speaking, philanthropic. They are endeavors on the part of

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humanity to bridge over the uncertainties and difficulties of the present life--to make provision ahead for death and its calamitous results in the affairs of dependent ones. We need not go into descriptions or details respecting the various kinds of insurance, but may say at once that it is purely a matter of business judgment, and not a religious question, whether or not the Lord's people shall avail themselves of insurance opportunities.

We have known circumstances in which we consider that the father of a family did wisely in keeping an insurance policy for the benefit of his wife and children. Especially is this a wise course where the wife is not in sympathy with Present Truth and the husband's views respecting the near future, and when she desires insurance as a protection and as a rest and relief to her mind. If the husband's judgment in any considerable degree coincides with that of his wife, we think he would do well to maintain such insurance. We are not advocating insurance, and as for the writer, he carries none. We are merely pointing out that nothing in the Scriptures is designed to govern or regulate the conduct of New Creatures in this respect, and that each must use his own judgment in harmony with his own peculiar conditions in deciding the matter.

According to our expectations the stress of the great time of trouble will be on us soon, somewhere between 1910 and 1912--culminating with the end of the "Times of the Gentiles," October, 1914.*

The beginning of the severity of the trouble is not distinctly marked in the Scriptures, and is rather conjectural. We infer that so great a trouble, so world-wide a catastrophe, could scarcely be accomplished in less than three years, and that if it lasted much more than three years "no flesh would be saved." In harmony with these anticipations we expect that when the financial storm shall sweep over

*See Vol. II, pp. 76-78. Accordingly the culmination of the mustering forces came in the Autumn of 1914 with the outbreak of the great European

war--a stage in the overthrow of Satan's Empire.

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Christendom, business and banks and insurance and property values will all go down together; that this, indeed, will constitute a serious feature of the trouble, carrying dismay and chagrin to hearts which have nothing else to rest upon--no heavenly treasures.

It is very reasonable to assume that what are called the fraternal insurance societies will fall before the regular companies, because the former are without capital, and depend upon assessments; and because these assessments will become the more onerous as the membership of the societies not only ceases to increase, but, under pressing conditions, will dwindle. The failure of these various associations will, undoubtedly, dash the hopes of many, and make them reckless respecting all earthly prospects. Each, therefore, must decide for himself his wisest course as a steward of whatever property or income he may have; but none of the New Creation, controlled and guided by faith in the Lord, will feel such a trepidation in respect to the future as would bring fear to their hearts; nor will this class place such confidence in any human agency, protection or assistance as would make them feel dependent upon it as their treasure, and heartbroken in the event of its failure.

This brings before us the whole question of orders, societies, etc., and what privileges the New Creation has in connection with such organizations. Is it right for them to be members of these societies? We answer that while Church associations are purely religious, and labor and beneficial organizations in general are purely secular, there are still other orders which combine the religious and the secular features. As we understand the matter, for instance, the Free Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, etc., perform certain rites and ceremonies of a religious kind. Let it be understood that we are not waging any warfare upon those who hold membership in these various orders, even as we are not waging warfare against the various sectarian religious systems. We place upon one level all of those which have any religious ceremonies, teachings, etc., and consider

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them all as parts of Babylon, some quarters or wards of which are cleaner, and others less clean, but all, nevertheless, full of confusion, error--contrary to the divine intention,

as displayed in the organization of the primitive Church and the instructions, by word and example, given to it by the inspired Founder, and his twelve apostles.

We admonish the New Creation to have nothing whatever to do with any of these semi-religious societies, clubs, orders, churches; but to "Come out from amongst them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." (*2 Cor. 6:17*) Their things, their worship, their teachings, their doctrines, are unclean to us, though they may not be unclean to themselves. The eyes of our understanding have been opened, and now to us all things appear in a new light, so that things which we once loved now we hate, and things which we once hated now we love.

But as concerns other orders and societies, which contain nothing of a religious character, worship, teaching, doctrine, practice, but are merely mutual-benefit insurance societies, and which attach signs and passwords merely as a diversion; or as respects other societies of workingmen, trades unions for mutual benefit and protection against injustice and for the maintenance of reasonable wages--we have nothing to say against these. They all claim to be organized along lines of justice, such as we could approve. They all claim to have no intention of violating the laws, human or divine. We see, therefore, no valid objection that could be raised against these, if for any reason the New Creature found it to be either necessary or expedient to become associated with them. Our own choice and our advice to others, so far as it will practicably apply to their cases, would be to stand *free* from all human organizations, united only to the Lord and to those who have his Spirit; but we well know the stress under which labor organizations came into being, and that if it were not for their existence in all probability the wages of the workingmen would be lower than they are, and their general conditions worse.

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Yet, while we feel a general sympathy with the object of these associations, we cannot indorse all the methods sometimes pursued, for all must admit that they frequently use the power of organization in a tyrannical manner. We must sympathize with their general purpose, viz.: a resistance to the pressure sure to attend the accumulation of wealth, and the general tendencies under such circumstances, in the hands of the selfish, to crowd the poor to the point of resistance. Our advice to the brethren living in communities where labor organizations are in power, and upholding

wages, would be that they voluntarily contribute to the expenses of the organization the same amount they would if they were members, and with the same regularity, and that in general they obey the commands of the order, unless they be contrary to their consciences; but that if possible they avoid membership, explaining their position to some extent at the time of proffering their share in the assessments. This would make manifest to all that the desire to be free from membership was not a selfish desire to shirk a responsibility for the expenses incidental to the preservation of the favorable conditions under which labor operates.

If, however, nothing short of regular membership will be accepted, we know of no command of the Scriptures or other reason why they should abstain from membership--especially if membership be made a condition upon which their daily bread would depend. Let them join under such circumstances, and pay their dues regularly, but avoid attendance at meetings unless at such times as they have reason to believe they could give a word in season that might be helpful in the proper direction of the interests of the order, in harmony with peace and righteousness. In the event of a strike, let them obey the order to withdraw, yet take no part whatever in anything that would be riotous or contrary to the rights and liberties of others; and let this be thoroughly known to the officers of the society, so that they would not think of requiring such service.

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Conscientious Meddling

"Busybodying in other men's matters" is severely reproved by the Apostle, as wholly inconsistent with the new minds of the New Creation. (*1 Tim. 5:13; 1 Pet. 4:15*) A busybody is one who busies himself in the affairs of others, with which he has properly nothing whatever to do. Even the "children of this world" are wise enough in their generation to discern that in the brief span of present life a person of reasonably sound mind has quite sufficient to occupy him in attending to his own business properly; and that if he should give sufficient attention to the business of others to be thoroughly competent to advise them and meddle in their concerns he would surely be neglecting to some extent his own affairs. Much more should the New Creatures begotten of the Lord to the spirit of a sound mind, realize this truth, and additionally realize that they have still less time

than the world for meddling in the affairs of others, their time being not their own, because of their full consecration of time, talent, influence, all to the Lord and *his* service.

Such, even if lacking a naturally sound mind on this subject, will be constrained in the right direction by the injunctions of the Scriptures, and by the realization that the time is short for the fulfilment of their covenanted sacrifice. They should also realize that the Golden Rule, required of the New Creation, prohibits everything akin to busyboding. Assuredly they would not appreciate having others meddle in their business, and should be equally careful to do to others as they would be done by. The Apostle realized, nevertheless, that the reverse of this is the general worldly spirit, and, hence, admonishes the saints to study, to practice, to learn, along this line. His words are, "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business." *1 Thess. 4:11*

This natural disposition to be careful about the affairs of others, and to lend a hand in correcting them, and in picking motes out of a brother's eye, to the neglect of the beam in one's own eye, as the Lord illustrated the matter (*Matt. 7:3-5*),

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sometimes attacks the New Creature in a peculiar form. He fancies that it is his "*duty*" to advise, to pick, to investigate, to chide, to reprove. As he turns the matter over in his mind he convinces himself that not to do so would be sin; and thus he becomes what we might designate a conscientious busybody, or meddler--one whose meddlesomeness is made doubly strong and aggressive by a misinformed and misdirected conscience. These, often sincere and good people, veritable New Creatures, are hindered by this flaw in all that they attempt to do in the Lord's service. Each should take himself in hand, and learn to apply the rules of justice and love already pointed out. He should educate his conscience to discriminate between brotherly duty and busyboding; and so far as our observation goes the majority of the Lord's people, as well as of the world, would find themselves doing a great deal less chiding, rebuking, faultfinding and picking, after coming to appreciate the rules of justice and of love, as combined in the Golden Rule and applied to the affairs of life and their intercourse with others.

It is safe to inquire respecting any matter suggesting itself along these lines--Is it any of my business? In our intercourse with the world we will generally find upon careful examination that it is not our business to chide or reprove

or rebuke them. We have been called of the Lord, and have turned aside from the course of the world to follow in the narrow path; *that* is our business. We should desire the world to let us alone, that we may follow the Lord; and correspondingly, we should let the world's concerns alone, addressing ourselves and our Gospel message to him that "hath an ear to hear." The world, not having been called of the Lord, and not having come into the "narrow way," has a right to choose respecting its own way, and has a right to expect that we will not interfere, as we do not wish to be interfered with. This will not hinder the fact that our light will be shining, and thus we will indirectly be exercising a continued influence upon the world, even though we do not

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reprove or otherwise meddle in the affairs of others. Where the matter is one of business, in which we are financially concerned, it, of course, will not be meddling with other people's business, but minding our own business, to give proper attention to such a matter. Neither is it meddling for the parent to have a knowledge and direction in respect to all the transpiring interests of the family and home. Yet even here the personal rights of each member of the family should be considered and conserved. The husband and father of the family being recognized as its head and chief in authority, should use that authority in loving moderation and wise consideration. The individuality of the wife, her tastes and preferences, should have his consideration, and as his representative she should be qualified with full power and authority in her own special domain as his helpmate and homekeeper; and in his absence she should represent his authority fully in respect to all the affairs of the family. The children also, according to age, should be given a reasonable degree of privacy and individuality in their affairs, the parent merely exercising his authority and supervision in such connections as would minister to the order and comfort of the home, and to the proper development of its members in matters mental, moral and physical. Children should be early taught not to pick at each other, nor to meddle with each other's belongings, but to respect each other's rights and to do kindly and generously each to the other according to the Golden Rule.

Nowhere is this admonition against busybodying more important to be remembered than in the Church. Brethren should speedily learn, from the Word as well as from precept and example of the elders, that it is not the divine intention

that they should meddle in each other's business nor discuss each other; but that here, as elsewhere, the divine rule applies, "Speak evil of no man." Busybodying-- thinking and talking about the private affairs of others, with which we have no direct concern--leads to evil speaking and backbiting, and engenders anger, malice, hatred,

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strife, and various works of the flesh and of the devil, as the Apostle points out. (*Col. 3:5-10*) Thus it often is that little seeds of slander are planted and that great roots of bitterness develop, whereby many are defiled. All who have the new mind surely recognize the banefulness of this evil, and all of them should be models in their homes and neighborhoods. The worldly mind can realize that murder and robbery are wrong, but it requires a higher conception of justice to appreciate the spirit of the divine Law--that slander is an assassination of character, and that stealing a neighbor's good name under any pretext is robbery. The worldly-minded grasp this matter to some extent, and their sentiments are represented in the poet's words: "He who steals my purse steals trash;...but he who filches my good name steals that which not enriches him, but leaves me poor indeed."

"Blessing God and Cursing Men"

No wonder the Apostle James terms the tongue an unruly member, full of deadly poison! No wonder he declares that it is the most difficult member of our bodies to govern! No wonder he says that it sets on fire the course of nature! (*James, Chap. iii*) Who has not had experience along these lines? Who does not know that at least one-half the difficulties of life are traceable to unruly tongues; that hasty and impetuous words have involved wars costing millions of money and hundreds of thousands of lives; that they are also at the foundation of one-half the lawsuits, and more than one-half of the domestic troubles which have affected our race for the past six thousand years! The Apostle declares respecting the tongue, "Therewith bless [praise] we God, and therewith curse [injure, defame, blight] we men, made in the image of God. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." (Verse 9) The Christian who merely has attained to the standard of not stealing from his neighbor, or not murdering him but who commits depredations upon that neighbor with his tongue--wounding or slaying or

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stealing his reputation, his good name--is a Christian who has made very little progress in the right way, and who is still far from the Kingdom of heaven condition.

All know how difficult a matter it is to control the tongue, even after we realize its vicious disposition in our fallen nature. We, therefore, call attention to the only proper method of restraining or curbing the tongue, viz., through the heart. The inspired Word declares that "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." This being true, it implies that when we have a great deal of difficulty with our tongues, there is a great deal that is not altogether right about our hearts; and that in proportion as we get our hearts right we will have the less difficulty in controlling our tongues. The lips which continually speak scornfully of others indicate a proud, haughty, domineering, self-conscious condition of the heart. The lips which continually speak evil of others either directly or by insinuation, indicate that the heart back of the lips is not pure, not filled with the Lord's spirit of love--for "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor," not even in thought. It "thinketh no evil." It would not permit itself to surmise evil respecting him. It will give him the benefit of every doubt, and rather surmise the favorable than the unfavorable.

Self-love is usually strong enough in all mankind to hinder the tongue from speaking anything to its own injury; and proper love, unselfish, that would love the neighbor as himself, would be as loath to speak to the detriment of one's neighbor or brother, or even to cast a reflection against his conduct, as it would be unwilling to take such a course against itself. We see then, from whatever direction we look at the subject, that the matter of prime importance with the New Creation is the attainment of perfect love in our hearts. This toward God would stimulate us to the more zeal and energy and self-sacrifice in cooperating in the divine service, the service of the Truth; and toward men it would stimulate us not only to act justly and lovingly, but to think and speak graciously of all so far as possible. This is

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the holy Spirit, for which our Redeemer taught us that we should pray, and respecting which he declared that our Heavenly Father is more willing to give it to us than are

earthly parents to give earthly good gifts to their children; and sincerity in praying for this spirit of holiness, spirit of love, implies earnest desire and striving that in thought and word and deed love may be shed abroad through all the avenues of our being. So shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, and be accounted worthy of his love and of all the precious things he has promised and has in reservation for those who love him.

Social Obligations

The New Creation, so long as identified with these mortal bodies, has through them a social contact with natural men, and certain social responsibilities. The new mind naturally craves fellowship with other new minds, and in proportion as development is made in graces of the Truth it finds itself more and more out of touch with worldly associations, aims, ambitions, literature and topics of conversation. With many the question arises, To what extent should the New Creatures who have reckoned themselves dead to earthly matters, interests, etc., still keep up association with their friends according to the flesh--the unconsecrated. This is a matter which deserves the serious and careful attention of each individual; no two are circumstanced exactly alike, and no advice that could be given would fit all cases.

The Apostle advises that we do not company with evildoers, with those whose practices we recognize as being impure; that we have our companionship in harmony with the new mind. Such a course unquestionably will be to our advantage, because, first, such companionship will not continually encourage our fallen appetites, and natural, degraded tendencies; and, secondly, because it will be the more helpful in our endeavors to follow the Apostle's injunction and to think about and talk about and practice

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"whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." *Phil. 4:8*

However, we should of course feel an interest in those related to us by ties of blood more than in mankind in general. So, then, if the Spirit of the Lord leads and prompts us to be gracious and kind toward humanity in general, it would imply that our sentiments toward our relatives

should be specially considered, and be, to the extent of our opportunities, helpful. Nevertheless, it would not be wise, according to our judgment, nor would it be in harmony with the instructions of the Scriptures, nor in accord with the examples which they set before us of our Lord's conduct and the conduct of the apostles, for us to extend a very special fellowship to our earthly relatives; or to receive them or treat them better than, or even as well as, we would treat the household of faith. We here bar such close relationships as would have a demand upon us in accord with the Apostle's words, "He that provideth not for *his own*,...hath denied the faith." (*1 Tim. 5:8*) In general we are to apply the Apostle's words, "Do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith." Next to the household of faith should come our more distant relatives.

It evidently was the intention of our Lord to draw together his followers as a new family, as a new household, the "household of faith." Hence, we find the repeated injunction and encouragement for mutual fellowship, mutual helpfulness, and regular association; with the promise that where two or three meet in the Lord's name he would be specially present with them, to grant a blessing; and that his people should not forget the assembling of themselves together. Our Lord's course was in full accord with this giving of special attention to the household of faith, for we find that in celebrating the last Passover Supper, which was to be kept by each family apart (*Ex. 12:1-21*), the Lord met with his twelve apostles as a separate family--separate from

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all of their connections and his. We find the same thought in his words when informed that his mother and brethren were outside, desirous of speaking to him. He answered and said, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."
Matt. 12:47-50

Following this divine example, therefore, we are to expect to find our affections and interests more particularly drawn toward the fellow-members of "the body of Christ," associates in the New Creation. This, however, must not be understood as nullifying in any measure the strictest proprieties between the sexes in the New Creation; nor does it imply that the unbelieving husband or wife is to be neglected that time and fellowship may be given to those of the new mind. On the contrary, the obligation of each is

toward the mate--to see to it that no proper comfort, privilege or company is withheld. This, however, would not imply a submission to tyranny, such as would make no reasonable provision for the following of the divine command, "Forget not the assembling of yourselves together,...and so much the more as ye see the day drawing on." **Heb. 10:25**

"Honor All Men"

"As free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bond-servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the King." "Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear [reverence] to whom fear; honor to whom honor; owe no man anything but love." 1 Pet. 2:16,17; Rom. 13:7,8

The New Creature, freed from the rivalries and ambitions of the will of the flesh, and inspired by the generous and gracious impulses of the holy Spirit, has no occasion for pride or covetous rivalry which would hinder the proper appreciation of good qualities of heart or mind in others. He should be glad to recognize and acknowledge fully and freely the earthly rights and claims of others--his own rights and claims of an earthly kind having been renounced in favor of the spiritual, the heavenly. Such would naturally be

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the most sincere in their recognition of the great of this world, and most obedient to the laws and the requirements of law, except where these would be found in conflict with the heavenly demands and commands. Few if any earthly rulers in our day will find fault with the recognition of a supreme Creator and a supreme allegiance to his commands. Hence, the New Creation should be found amongst the most law-abiding of the present time--not agitators, not quarrelsome, not faultfinders. True, they see, even more clearly than do others, grounds for faultfinding--they see imperfections in all of the present arrangements, based upon the law of selfishness. But they see, also, through the eyes of their understanding, enlightened by the divine Word, that human agitation and revolution is quite powerless to bring about the needed change; that ten times the best that humanity could be esteemed capable of accomplishing would still be far from the perfection which the Lord points out to us, and encourages us to believe he will bring to pass in due time, under the ministration of his Kingdom--that condition in which God's will shall be done

on earth as it is done in heaven.

Realizing the impotence of the human effort, the New Creature has a spirit of soundness of mind in respect to present conditions which others, who see less than he does, do not possess. He can see that even the worst form of human government, even the most arbitrary misuse of power and authority in the preservation of law and order, is better far than lawlessness and anarchy would be. He has learned, too, that the great Jehovah is interested in these matters, and that his time and way are the only wise and adequate ones for bringing to pass the desired results. The New Creature, therefore, is patient, cheerful, hopeful. As the Apostle James expresses it, "Be patient, brethren....The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (*James 5:7,8*) His Kingdom will soon bring righteousness and blessing to the whole world of mankind.

The New Creature hears also the Lord's message, "Fret not thyself because of evildoers"--in due time they shall be

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cut off. (*Psa. 37:1,2*) Hence, while others may consider it important to discuss the various features of politics, good government, finance, etc., he realizes, on the contrary, that God has foreseen the present situation, and that the decision already has been made against present selfish institutions: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN--Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." (*Dan. 5:25-28*) He perceives that God's judgment in the matter, as expressed in the Scriptures, is correct and unalterable; and he waits patiently for the Lord to bring about the transformation of matters according to his divine will and gracious promises. Even though he perceives that this will mean great trouble upon the world, the New Creature rests himself in the divine promises, and "leaves in Christ's hand the keys of tomorrow." He realizes that his words or thoughts or deeds could not change the ultimate result, and his heart rests by faith in the wisdom and power of God. Speaking of the New Creation in connection with the troublous time impending, the Prophet has aptly said, "She [Zion] shall not be moved"--her confidence and trust and faith are well established, not in ignorance and credulity, but in the living and abiding Word of God. *Psa. 46:5*

Nor does it seem to the New Creation to be either necessary or prudent to endeavor to alarm the world respecting coming distress. He remembers, first of all, that the Lord has specifically declared, "None of the wicked shall understand."

(Dan. 12:10) He remembers, too, that the poor, groaning creation has quite sufficient to bear in its daily allotments, without anticipating the coming troubles, which it could not avert; and that "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." While, therefore, they will not shun "to declare the whole counsel of God" to those who give any evidence of having ears to hear, they will wisely and properly avoid wasting energies and arousing the anger of those who have no appreciation of the Lord and of his Word. They will not cast their pearls before swine, but the wisdom which cometh from above will be in them--first pure, then

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peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits. *James 3:17*

Honoring men, respecting them according to their character or office, and obeying the laws, does not necessarily mean a participation with the world in the functions of government. A law has been proposed that would compel all men to vote. Whenever that law shall be passed, the New Creatures, becoming subject to it, should render obedience, and that without murmur. And in exercising this requirement they should use their best judgment and vote for those whom they consider to be the best nominees. Meantime, however, while there is no such demand made upon them, our advice would be that they maintain a strict neutrality in respect to politics, and avoid voting altogether. Our reasons are these:

(1) We could not hope to find on any electoral ticket persons thoroughly competent for office, according to our standards of judgment.

(2) We could not hope that our votes would have any appreciable influence upon the results of the election anyway.

(3) Those of the New Creation who engage in politics and its various arguments find not only their time consumed thereby, but also their energies and their means--all of which are consecrated to the Lord, to heavenly things, to promulgating the good tidings of great joy. And not only so, but their minds will necessarily be occupied with these political interests to such a degree as to hinder considerably their private meditations on the better things--their communion and fellowship with the Lord in spirit.

(4) Those who vote for a man or a party become more or less obligated to support the results of the election, if necessary with gun and sword. And while it is true that every citizen

may, under the laws, be called upon to defend with sword and gun the laws and institutions under which he lives, nevertheless, in taking an active part in the elections, one assumes more particularly a moral obligation and responsibility for the results and general course of the government

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which he has thus assisted in making. Our preferable position, therefore--the position most honorable to the Lord, toward society and toward ourselves--would be that which the Scriptures indicate, the position of aliens. (*Psa. 39:12; I Pet. 2:11*) Aliens must be obedient to the laws; so must we. Aliens must pay taxes according to the laws; so must we. Aliens may look for protection under the laws; so may we. But aliens would not feel compelled to fight against their own King, the allegiance which they recognize primarily; and we would prefer to be in the same position, so far as possible, for are not we "translated out of the kingdom of this world into the Kingdom of God's dear Son"--in its embryotic condition? *Col. 1:13*

Are not we subjects of the great King? And are not all the kingdoms of this world more or less identified with "the prince of this world," and his law of selfishness? Are not we, therefore, strangers and pilgrims here, and to some extent aliens and foreigners? It is eminently proper that we should love and appreciate every good law and all the servants of earthly laws, and rejoice that quite the majority of the New Creation live under the highest forms of civil government to be found in the world today, and appreciate this as a divine favor and blessing. Hence, we neither traduce our native country, its rulers, or its laws; but this does not mean that we must fight for these with carnal weapons, nor that we must increase our responsibilities by voting for them.

True, government may not always exempt those opposed to war from participating in it, although a very gracious provision of this kind has in the past been made for some who, like ourselves, believe war to be unrighteous; viz., the Friends or Quakers, exempted from military duty under specially generous laws. We may be required to do military service whether we vote or not, however; and if required we would be obliged to obey the powers that be, and should consider that the Lord's providence had permitted the conscription and that he was able to overrule it to the good of ourselves or others. In such event we would consider it not

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amiss to make a partial explanation to the proper officers, and to request a transference to the medical or hospital department, where our services could be used with the full consent of our consciences--but even if compelled to serve in the ranks and to fire our guns we need not feel compelled to shoot a fellow-creature.

The New Creature and Moral Reforms

Every member of the New Creation must of necessity sympathize with morality, righteousness, purity, goodness of every kind. He will desire to be pure not only in heart, but as this progresses it will surely lead him to be cleanly in his person and habits, and this will include, not only the outward dress but also his mouth. Yet such will not here make the mistake which the world makes, of considering what he puts into his mouth more defiling than the words which come out of it. Purity of heart will lead to purity and truth on his lips, and in turn to carefulness respecting what he shall eat, what he shall drink, and wherewithal he shall be clothed--to the intent that he may glorify God in his body and spirit, which are the Lord's. It is not for us to put upon others fetters and bondages not found in the Word of God. Each member of the New Creation is to realize as fully as possible that his consecration vow touches his every act of life. If, therefore, he is disposed to gluttony or drunkenness or filthy habits of any kind, it is for him to consider carefully and prayerfully if in all things he is glorifying the Lord and using his influence to the largest extent possible before his fellowmen. We venture the suggestion that very few of the New Creation will consider that they glorify God in either eating or drinking what would in any degree interfere with the best exercise of their mental, moral and spiritual functions. Surely the majority will realize that at very best our powers and talents and faculties are sadly weakened through the fall, and need strengthening instead of undermining.

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Wearing of Costly Apparel

We might argue with considerable force that nothing is too good for a true, faithful, noble child of God, who has consecrated life and all to the divine service. We might reason also that without doubt the angels of heaven and all of

the heavenly arrangements are splendid and glorious in their appearance, and hence, that splendor represents the divine mind and will respecting God's people. Viewing the matter from this standpoint, we might at first be inclined to say that the members of the New Creation might properly adorn their mortal bodies with gold and jewels and costly array most lavishly; but before so deciding let us look at the other side of the question--at the reasons why the New Creatures should *not* adorn their mortal bodies lavishly, extravagantly:

(1) Extravagant personal adornment naturally leads to more or less of pride; and we all know that a love of display, a love of appearing well before others, is a peculiar temptation to our fallen flesh, and very unfavorable to the cultivation of the spirit of meekness and humility. Hence, anything that would minister to pride and hinder the development of humility would be contrary to the interests of the New Creation.

(2) The vast majority of the human family are hindered from any luxurious outward adornment by poverty, and so long as controlled by the natural mind they are sure to look enviously upon the rich, and especially upon those making ostentatious display of wealth. The spirit of love, therefore, would prompt the New Creation to consider the conditions and sentiments of others--not to provoke them to covetousness, envy, etc., nor to make their lives and lots seem bitter in comparison.

(3) Every member of the New Creation has made a consecration of his all to the Lord and to his service, and to use whatever may come to him in the way of this world's goods as not abusing it, but in accordance with the pattern of him who has become our Redeemer and Leader and Lord. The

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pattern set is that of *sacrifice*--not only of influence and time, but also of means, wealth, etc. "He who was rich, for our sakes became poor." Every member of the New Creation, therefore, in proportion as he appreciates his covenant and seeks to live up to its conditions, can find better use for the money intrusted to his stewardship than in extravagant adornment, which might not only injure himself but provoke others injuriously. He will want to make every dollar useful so far as possible in the Lord's service.

We do well here, perhaps, to call attention to the fact that the consecration which would not permit us to expend money for jewelry, or gorgeous or extravagant apparel,

would not, as a rule, be any more faithfully used as stewards if investing it in stocks, bonds, real estate, etc., instead of wearing it upon our persons or lavishing it upon our homes. Money is valuable for the use to which we can put it, and each member of the New Creation possessing wealth should consider carefully the responsibilities of the stewardship, and be prompt to use it according to his judgment of the divine will. He should remember that all the tendencies of the fallen nature are toward selfishness, and that therefore the new mind must battle with this disposition in the flesh and must overcome it, if he would win the prize.

If a worldly man of high principles, who declares that he is not a Christian, but that if he has any religion at all he is a Buddhist, sets forth the maxim that it is "a disgrace for any man to die rich," how much more should the members of the New Creation so feel--that it would be a shame for them, having made consecration of their all to the Lord, if they wasted consecrated money extravagantly upon their own persons, or hoarded it when they see so many opportunities in life for using this talent advantageously! The whole creation is groaning, is travailing in pain, as the Apostle declares; and, as the Master explained, the poor we have always with us. Undoubtedly, all who have good impulses will find numerous opportunities for benevolences, benefactions in a worldly way and in temporal matters.

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How much more may the New Creation realize opportunities for wise use of their stewardship, and moderation in respect to their personal affairs, that they may use the opportunities which they see everywhere about them of dispensing the spiritual bounties which the Lord has so freely bestowed upon them. Peradventure they might be enabled through this channel to carry to others the *robes* of Christ's righteousness, and the *bread* which cometh down from heaven; that through this stewardship they might the more effectively show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, letting that light shine forth the more clearly. Undoubtedly it is in order to give his people the opportunity of serving in this matter, and showing their devotion and faithfulness as stewards, that the Lord leaves his cause in such condition as to appeal continually to his consecrated ones to deny themselves and take up their cross and follow him whom God hath sent forth to be our exemplar.

We are not in this urging that any should beggar themselves and make themselves dependent upon the charity of others by giving away their all in the Lord's service, leaving not even the seed from which future returns may be expected. Nor are we urging that sacrifices be carried to such an extreme as would cause the Lord's people to appear peculiar, shabby, stingy. To our understanding proper dressing is that which is neat, appropriate to the surroundings and conditions, unobtrusive to the eye and in reasonable accord with the financial means. Surely the New Creation should be ensamples for the world along these lines. They should be particular not to dress nor attempt to dress beyond what their circumstances would permit, not to make a show of wealth which they do not possess, and indeed, so far from dressing and living up to the full measure of one's ability--wages, income, etc.--the Lord's people are to live within their means, not only that they may have a provision ahead for the ordinary necessities of life, but also that they may be prepared to exercise the Godlike qualities of benevolence and charity toward others in necessity.