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The Power of the Spirit

(Luke 24:49; 2 Tim. 1:7.) (Convention Address.)

HERE we have the Lord's promise of power. Power is the ability to perform an action; it is a force, or energy, which, when exerted can cause a great change in many directions and in many spheres of life upon which it is focused.

This power or energy proceeds from one grand centre, and may influence certain objects and circumstances. It is invisible, silent,' but potential. It may be present but is detected only by visible signs, actions or sounds, and was so fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4. "There came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind . . . There appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire. . . They were filled with the holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues." We also read—"The powers of the heavens (Christendom) shall be shaken," (Matt. 24:29), for God shall send among them an energy of delusion, and a consuming destruction.

The Christian's conflict is "against the powers of darkness ... spiritual wickedness in the heaven-lies." (Eph. 6:12.)

In view of this invisible and formidable evil power, it is needless to say we would be completely overcome by the powers and rulers of this dark world if we attempted to match these in our own, human strength. (1 John 5:19.) Ever since the fall of man there exists a deadly conflict between light and darkness, truth and error; each power has its representatives and agencies, and the energy of this conflict encircles the globe.

It should be evident that great preparations are necessary in order to overthrow all those powers which are detrimental to the best interests of the human family, and the Creator's plan will eventually, and effectively, give to all angels and men a great exhibition of the power of truth and righteousness in contrast with the powers of sin, corruption, deceit and death, mankind also gaining valuable experiences thereby: This world and its circumstances are also serving as a testing ground for those now being called to the heavenly kingdom.

We are all probably aware, through knowledge and experience, that as consecrated Christians we have the favour and privilege extended to us from the Lord to co-operate with Him in this work, as the Scriptures say—"We are labourers together with God." (1 Cor. 3:9.) God also hath made us "able ministers of the New Covenant," (2 Cor. 3:6), in preparation for the age to come. But already in this life each individual

Christian is a channel, or agency through whom God conveys His power to produce visible results to beholders. To the righteously disposed the effect is a drawing influence toward righteousness, truth and love.

There is an example of this in the experiences of godly Naomi and Ruth.—"And Ruth said (unto Naomi), Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." (Ruth 1.16, 17.)

However, the mighty working of the spirit within the Christian is a rebuke to the evilly disposed, and the worst is revealed in them, drawing out hatred, opposition, even bitter words,— "Thou hast a devil and art mad." And the Apostle Paul could testify from experience—"For we are unto God a sweet savour (fragrance) of Christ, to them that are saved, and to them that are perishing. To the one we are savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life; and for these things who is qualified." (2 Cor. 2:15, 16.) Who is qualified? Who is competent? Only those who have yielded their lives to God, and He in turn has empowered them with His holy spirit. Our Lord is an example. After His consecration and temptation in the wilderness, we read,—"And Jesus returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about." (Luke 4:14.)

During His earthly ministry of 3 years the Lord was gradually preparing His chosen Apostles for the time when they would be a power in the world during His absence. They were finally brought to the time and place mentioned in our text,—"Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Then, and only then, would they be fully equipped to carry the Gospel message to all nations; only then would they be a force to match the fury, cunning and deception of the powers of darkness, headed by our wily foe, Satan.

Perhaps there is a lesson for us here too,—"Tarry ye." Great things are sometimes accomplished by waiting, and great disaster and disappointments are sometimes experienced through not waiting. There is an instance of this in the life of King Saul, King of Israel. He was instructed by Samuel, the prophet, to wait at Gilgal until Samuel arrived there to,offer burnt offering and peace offerings. "Seven days shalt thou tarry until I come to thee and show thee what thou shalt do." (1 Sam. 10:8-13.) The seventh day Saul became impatient, an army of Philistines was threatening Israel.

The people were deserting him; he could wait no longer for Samuel to arrive, but rashly offered the burnt offering and peace offerings himself. This was barely completed when Samuel arrives and reproves him.—"Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandments of the Lord which he commanded thee. Now thy kingdom shall not continue." Disobedience is weakness and leads to disaster.

On the other hand we have the example of patient waiting in the life of Joseph. In Gen. 37:5-11 he tells of a dream. He and his eleven brothers were binding sheaves in the field and the sheaves stood upright; eleven sheaves bowed down to his sheaf. He waited many years to see the fulfilment of his dream. He passed through experiences which seemed the very reverse of his dream. His brothers hated him and sold him as a slave; he was taken to Egypt arid suffered unjustly in the house of Potiphar, being cast into prison and was apparently forgotten by all except the Lord. But he waited in patience and was greatly rewarded. He rose to prominence in Egypt and became rich and strong in character, a power for righteousness and a pillar of strength to his brethren.

Moses too tried to make an impression upon his brethren in Egypt while still in Pharaoh's house. On one occasion he defended his kinsman and slew an Egyptian. Next day he tried to makepeace between two contending Hebrews. "Wilt thou kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday," was the retort from one of

them. (Exod. 2:11-21.) Moses feared and fled from Egypt and became a shepherd in the land of Midian for 40 years. These experiences prepared him for the great work of delivering the Hebrews. Having become distrustful of his own ability, it is said he became the meekest man in all the earth, and yet was a great power for righteousness, a leader and law-giver under the control of the Lord. “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” (Lam. 3:25, 26.)

Don’t you think that experiences come to us sometimes and we wish we had waited upon the Lord? When we go further along the Christian way, and when perhaps our enthusiasm is not running quite so high, we look back, we take an afterview. Perhaps we have grown older and wiser, more matured through the success and failures in the straight and narrow way. We remember some things with pleasure and comfort, not only concerning ourselves. We are glad for the sacrifice, effort and energy given in the struggle which has resulted in some development of the Christian graces, and we recall with pleasure the time and inconveniences involved in order to impart some of the Divine consolation to others also.

Other things we recall, the thought lingers on how much happier, better and more spiritual our life might have been had we avoided, as in some instances we might easily have done, certain complications, conflicts and issues which further back seemed mightily important and of great consequence. Perhaps we thought our particular point was so very essential that we must override all opposition, and we went at it, and into it, hot and strong, to impress the truth and right of our opinion. Perhaps now after years, as we take an afterview, it wasn’t very necessary, not of very great consequence these empty victories, for life has many empty victories. However, we are grateful that these are much less now that we have become New Creatures in Christ. But the thing that lingers in our minds is the regret that these should .have occurred, and there is the chagrin that there might have been a better approach to, instead of sacrificing a possible friend. No, perhaps we are not sorry that we stood out firmly in defence of a conviction—yes; we must be true to convictions,—but sorry that we imagined it was necessary to go to such lengths in pursuit of the end in view, which were so barren of real spiritual gain.

For these fruitless contests seem hardly to have convinced the opponents, and as experience and time mellows the character we grudge the time and energy we put into it. We wish we had waited, for every one to his own Master stands or falls, and the Lord is able to quietly and effectively reveal necessary truths in His own time and way to others, proving to us also, at the same time, the ineffectiveness of the hammerings of our own might.

Time and experience gradually convince us that it is not the energy of the flesh and its reasonings which gain the victories, but the power of the spirit; not more self-effort but more life and light is what we need ourselves. Then, as the prophet Isaiah says, “The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever; and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” (Isa. 32:17, 18.) A very soothing promise, isn’t it? It’s an unction of the spirit.

There are some experiences in, which we are involved, when in later times we wished we had tarried before we acted—waited before we spoke, waited before we made that decision—"Wait, my soul, upon the Lord.” “In quietness and confidence shall be your strength,” and without fail, you shall be invested with power from on high. “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” (Isa. 40:31.)

To receive power from the source of supply, you know there must be good, connections. Have you examined the connections—faith. hope and love—lately? Are they loose? Has anyone tampered with them? for there is one ever ready to sabotage them. Satan, subtle with thousands of years of experience in his work, is more than a match for us, but “greater is he that is for us. than all that be against us.” Have we thought about God’s greatness? How vast, how effective, how penetrating and how searching. “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art

there; if I make my bed in hell (sheol), behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. . . Even the night shall be light about me; yea, the darkness hideth not from thee." (Psa. 139:7-12.) "0 the depth of the wisdom. and knowledge of God." Does our faith believe this fact? Do we lean upon His might? Or do we trust in the arm of flesh? It will fail you, for Satan is more than a match for any of us, and all of us.

You cannot fight Satan, but you can resist him unto death. This has been demonstrated by experience. There is a vision given in Revelation (Rev. 11) which prophetically forecasts this Christian experience. Described in symbolic language, the beast waged war against God's witnesses and overcame them; they lay dead in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. They were killed—silenced, inactive—their enemies rejoiced, but after 3- days the spirit of God entered into them; and they be came active. One lesson of this vision is that special intervention of divine power was necessary on their behalf. Since that time Bibles by the millions have come into possession of the people, and Christians can possess, .read and study God's Word without fear of being put to death. It is not we who gained the victory but God. Greater is He that is for us, than all that be against us.

The reception of power depends upon good connections. In machinery, the train with the locomotive; the mechanism with the engine; the electrical machine with the power house. In the body, the arm with the socket; the brain with the heart. In the Christian's life, the followers of Christ with the spirit of Jesus, as He illustrated it,—"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me." (John 15:4.) If we wish to receive the constant flow of the power of the spirit we must remember this depends upon our obedience, as Jesus said—"If ye keep my commandments."

There are some illustrations in the Scriptures on this point. We read of King Saul frequently,— "The spirit of the Lord came upon him," but later we read the pathetic sentence,—"The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul." (1 Sam. 16:14.) Between these two phrases occurs a story of disobedience. There is a similar reference to Samson in Judges 14-16. "The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him." Then an act of disobedience, and unaware of his weakness and desolation we read—"He wist not that the Lord was departed from him." Do you think the same is true to-day? Perhaps we have known some who were mightily used of the Lord. But now; something has happened, they wist not that the Lord has departed from them.

There is another lesson written for our learning in Matt. 17:14-20. The disciples were given power over all manner of disease, even to casting out devils. A father brought his son, a lunatic, to be cured by them, but they could not cast out the evil spirit. They enquired of Jesus why they were powerless in this instance; His reply was--Because of your unbelief." Unbelief interrupted the flow of power; how often has this been the cause of the lack of power. Loose connections with God was the cause. Let us see to it that we do not get out of touch with the source of power —"Quench not the spirit."

'If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed," the Lord continues, "ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder' place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you." Yes, mountains of difficulties can be overcome by the power of faith, even the laws of nature have been halted and rendered powerless by faith, in some instances. You will recall in the Old Testament where the three Hebrews were cast into the fiery furnace and not even the smell of fire was upon their garments. Faith connected with God quenched the volume of fire. (Dan. 3:26, 27.) The faith of Daniel stopped the mouths of lions. (Dan. 6:20-22.) Let us look well to our faith, if we would have power with God.

We will not have such physical deliverances out of danger -as was sometimes granted to the ancient prophets, but then, we are blessed with greater knowledge than the ancients. We now see the reason why the righteous are afflicted, tempted and persecuted. These faithful examples of the past are recorded that

we might learn from them for our encouragement, spiritual stimulation and strengthening of cheerful endurance, so that the “new creature,” begotten in us through the truth, may be perfected.

The power of the spirit is also exhibited in that never dying quality—love. “Love never faileth.” It is a principle wrought in us by a knowledge and intimate acquaintance of the One who first loved us. Our Lord said, “To know God is life eternal.” Knowledge is essential; not a mere theory about God, what He does or what He will do, or of His times and seasons, nor is it skill in interpreting the Word.: Knowledge is like wood piled up in a fireplace; it needs a spark of living fire. The knowledge which the Apostle Paul had acquired was kindled into a burning flame, consuming him, and all things which he once valued, upon the altar of sacrifice. It was that experimental knowledge, the excellency of that knowledge of Jesus Christ, for whom Paul says, “I have suffered the loss of all things,”—living in the power of this knowledge he counted all other things of no value.

The power of earthly wisdom, human might, riches of this world, is vanity, but if we glory in that knowledge and understanding of our great God and Father which is acquired by personal acquaintance and fellowship with Him, and by observing the exhibition of His loving kindness, judgment and righteousness especially toward those who are His own, then we will experience no disappointment. The effectual workings of His power upon vessels of mercy produce evidence of His skill and care. His power, the power of His spirit, breaks the power of the flesh over the individual; no other power has the same effect, nor produces the same results. Those dead in trespasses and sin are quickened to life. Grace and peace is multiplied unto them through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, and His divine power gives them all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him. (2 Pet. 1:2, 3.)

The Apostle Paul in Gal. 5:19-25 contrasts the operation of the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit. In verse 22 he says, “The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (self control) .” This is really an analysis of love. Love is revolutionary; it changes us. It levels all class distinctions; it is intensely practical; it looks for something to do; it studies how to say the most helpful thing; it wants to learn the will of its Lover. Bible study is love reading its Lover’s letters.

We note in verse 22 of Gal. 5 the first three qualities—love, joy, peace—are emotions within. The remaining six — longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (faithfulness), meekness, self control — are outward toward others; they become, when active, evidence to others of the spirit of God within. The climax is reached in the last, temperance or self control. What a mighty power this is, as we are reminded in another place, “He that ruleth his own spirit, is greater than he that taketh a city.”

Our Lord, whether in pleasant and peaceful environments, among friends, in the presence of the cunning, deceit and reviling of His enemies, or the certainty of a cruel and shameful death, never lost His self control—self mastery. Self praise cannot exist in such a character. Why? Because He depended upon a higher power to bring forth His righteousness as the light, and His justice as the noonday. “The works that I do,” said Jesus, “are not mine but of Him that sent me.” Yes, Jesus’ life was a perfect demonstration of the power of the spirit.

The fruit of the spirit is the result of the power of God dwelling in our earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of ourselves. But if the fruit is not produced in the life, or its outline is seen but dimly, then probably the obstruction is self will—selfishnessthe will of the flesh. As verse 17 says—”For the flesh desires against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” We know this is true, and desires of the flesh and the desires of the spirit are continually in conflict, and this is manifest often, as stated in verse 26, in vainglorious strife, provoking or challenging each other, envying one another. If we have envy to

combat, let us turn it to good account and envy those qualities of love we see in Jesus until we possess them ourselves. If we must strive, let us strive to lay hold upon the incorruptible crown. If we must correct, discipline and contend, let it be chiefly against the old man, the old disposition in us.

Ambition, holy ambition, certainly is good; sanctified zeal is essential in running successfully our racecourse. There is abundant scope for the exercise of our energy in this, and in so doing, we shall be living in the spirit and walking in the spirit, and this will influence our brethren and provoke to, love and good works.

The Jews, the Apostle Paul says, were very zealous of the Law, but not according to knowledge; they had not learned from experience and observation how the best results are obtained. To them there was only one way of observing the Law, hence they missed the spirit of it, and of course the consequences followed to their great disadvantage. This is a point we have to watch too; that is, becoming over zealous for the outward form, appearance and ceremonies, which soon merges into strife and disputes, with loss of spirituality an absence of that quietness and confidence which imparts spiritual strength. “But I am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye are also full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another,” and this, through the power of the holy spirit.

While place we seek, or place we shun.
The soul finds happiness in none,
But with our God to lead the way,
‘Tis equal joy to go or stay.

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Bible Studies

REFERENCE to the method of conducting Bible studies has been made in these columns in past times, but as the co-operation given by all members of a Bible Class has much to do with the benefits and blessings received by each member, it is felt that further suggestions will not be out of place.

It is still very noticeable that the tendency of chairmen generally is to speak too much when conducting a Bible Class. This may result from various causes, one of which is, that the members of a class may not be sufficiently alert in giving their thoughts, thus leaving too, much time for the chairman who feels that he must speak to prevent a lull in the meeting. Another reason may be that the chairman becomes so absorbeed in a subject at times that he leaves little opportunity for members to take part. This is noticeable at some Conventions when there is much in a study to be brought out in a limited time, but this tendency should be overcome by class leaders, thus preventing a habit of giving short addresses, so to speak, after each remark by a class member. It is certainly necessary that the chairman direct or lead the thoughts of the class along the lines of the particular subject, and not just allow the thoughts to drift about aimlessly; but over-leading or speaking could indicate some selfishness on the part of the class leader as though his thoughts were all-important and must be presented at all costs. In the case of new classes, of course, the leader will be required to say more, but with established gatherings of the Lord's people the procedure should be quite different.

In introducing a study the leader should seek to be brief and to the point in giving a review of the previous lesson, and should then seek to draw out the thoughts from the members in the gathering. The members have their responsibility in being prepared to take part, which means that the lesson should be well studied at home; this is a most important point for profitable Bible study in class. Lengthy expressions are not required; the most helpful remarks are usually short and directly on the subject, with Scriptural support.

Class members can assist greatly by keeping id the subject under discussion; this is really essential to make a Bible study the blessing it should be to all, and makes the task of the leader so much easier. Above all the Lord's spirit should be in-yoked so that the guidance and blessing from above may be fully realised by all, the one desire being to be built up by the truths of God's Word to His praise.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) on the four days, Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 11th to 14th, in the Builders' and Contractors' Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide. A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to join the members in Adelaide for these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further information is obtainable from the Secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide.

Passover Memorial 1952

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 8th April. After sundown on this date will be the appropriate time to observe this Memorial in remembrance of Christ our Passover Lamb.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by the middle of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services

Melbourne.—Tuesday 8th April at 8 p.m., at 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Near Glenferrie Station; few. doors south of Burwood Road.)

Adelaide.— Tuesday, 8th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Stow Hall, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at 233 Liverpool Road, South Strathfield. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.

Perth.—Tuesday, 8th April at 7.45 p.m. For location of Service, apply to Secretary, Mr. W. L. Price, "Illawarra.- Karragullen, W.A.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way--mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney—Schaffer's Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming.. from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.

My bark is wafted to the strand
By Breath Divine;
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine.

The Test of Discipleship

(Convention Address.)

"If any mail be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. " (2 *COR. 5:17.)*

WE may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion, but this does not mean that we are not converted. Christ said to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit." Like the invisible wind, the effects of which are plainly seen and felt, is the spirit of God upon the human heart. The power which no human eye can see begets a new life in us and we become new creatures. While the work of the spirit is silent and unseen, its effects are manifest. If the heart has been renewed by the spirit of God, the life will bear witness to that fact. While we must not trust at all to ourselves or our good works, our lives will show whether the grace of God is dwelling within us; a change will be seen in our character, habits, and pursuits. The contrast will be clear and decided between what they have been and what they are.

The character is shown not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of habitual words and acts. The love of influence and the desire for the praise of others may produce a well ordered life. Selfrespect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart, too, may perform generous actions. By what means, then, shall it be decided whose side we are on? We may ask the questions, Who has our heart? With whom are our thoughts? Of whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are Christ's, our thoughts are with Him and our best thoughts are of Him. We love to follow in His footsteps, do His will and please Him in all things.

Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will, bring forth the fruit of the spirit, which we find recorded in Gal. 5:22, 23. Paul says, "But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peacei, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and he continues in the following verses, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." We will follow in the Lord's steps by faith, reflect His character, and purify ourselves even as He is pure. The proud and haughty become meek and lowly in heart; the vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside. Christians will seek no the "outward adorning," but that which comes of a meek and quiet spirit.

When we come to Christ and become partakers of His grace, love springs up in the heart. Every burden is light, for the yoke that Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed covered in darkness, becomes bright with beams from the Lord of heaven.

Love is of God, and love to God was the controlling power in our Saviour's life; it was His delight to do the will of God, and the beauty of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. The unconsecrated heart has not this love and therefore cannot pass it on. It is only to be found in the heart where Jesus reigns. (See 1 John 4:7-21.) Love controls our character and this in turn helps us to govern our passions, subdue enmity and enriches our affections. This love kept within us sweetens our lives, and those about us can see that we are indeed followers of Christ.

There are two things against which Christians especially need to guard. The first, already mentioned, is that of looking to our own works to bring ourselves into harmony with God. If we are trying to become holy by our own works in keeping God's law, we are attempting the impossible. All that we can do without Christ is tainted with selfishness. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy. The second thing to guard against is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping God's

commandments; that is, that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption. But we need to realise that obedience is not just an outward act; it is the service of love. God's laws are an expression of His very nature; they are full of the great principle of love. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in our hearts, the law of God will be carried out in the life. Obedience, then, through service and love is the true sign of discipleship.

We read in 1 John 5:3—"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments"; again in 1 John 2:4 the Apostle says—"He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him." Instead of releasing man from obedience, faith and faith only makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. We do not earn salvation by our obedience, for salvation is the free gift of God to be received by faith, but obedience is the fruit of faith. That so-called faith in Christ which professes to release men from the obligation of obedience to God is not faith, but presumption. "By grace are ye saved through faith," said Paul to the Ephesian church: and in James' Epistle we read, "But faith if it bath not works is dead."

The conditions for gaining eternal life are now just what they always have been; just what was required in Paradise before the fall of our first parents—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any conditions short of this, then the happiness of the whole of humanity would be in danger; the way would be open for sin with all its consequences. It was possible for Adam before the fall to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law, but he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen, and we cannot make ourselves righteous — we cannot perfectly obey a holy law.

Having no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God, Christ made a way out for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life; He died for us, and now He offers to cover our sins and give us His righteousness. Christ's character stands in place of our character, and we are accepted before God just as if we had not sinned. Christ also changes the heart; He abides in our hearts by faith, and the complete surrender of our will to Him enables us to say with Paul—"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of 'God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.)

So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ which is given to us. When we speak of faith we do not mean the kind that merely believes the existence of God's power without acting on that belief. The Scripture says "the devils also believe and tremble," but this is not faith. Where there is not only a belief in God's Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love, and purifies the whole being.

The closer we come to Jesus the more faulty we will appear in our own eyes, for our vision will be clearer, and our imperfect nature will be seen in contrast to Christ's perfect life. If our life is changed by the grace of Christ we will admire His beautiful character, but if we do not see our own shortcomings we have failed to see the excellence of Christ. The more our need drives us to Him and His Word, the more we shall see of His character, and the more fully we shall reflect His image.

The richest quality of love is sacrifice, and the noblest credential of any work is the spirit which has laid every selfish interest down at Jesus'feet, and counts all things loss for Christ; which holds its money, its friendships, its life, all subservient to the Master S claim, and, living a dying life, at last gives life itself as a willing offering to Him who gave ' His life for *US.* In this selfish and luxurious age, it is the rarest quality fount but it- is the most needed as the end approaches.—Selected

The Way to Accept a Favour

A young woman who was secretary to the head of a college, when returning to her lodgings, slipped on the steps and sprained her ankle. She managed to reach her room, but was quite unable to go out and get something for her supper, and was delighted when the girl who had the room next to hers came in to see what she could do.

“Please let me go out and get you something to eat,” she begged.

“That is most kind of you,” said the secretary. “My purse is on the table.”

“No,” said her neighbour; “I want to get the things myself and come in and have supper with you here “

“How delightful!” said the secretary, “We will have a real party !”

So, instead of protesting, she let her friend give the “party.” She praised the food and thanked her for the supper.

A few days later there was an afternoon tea at the college, to which the secretary invited her new friend. She explained why she came with a crutch, and told of the other girl’s kindness to her, and of the impromptu supper-party and how she had enjoyed it.

We should accept favours, not grudgingly, not awkwardly, but graciously and appreciatively; then watch for the first opportunity to bless the giver in return, with gratitude and love.

Sympathy

The look of sympathy, the gentle word,
Spoken so low that only angels heard;
The secret act of pure self-sacrifice,
Unseen by men, but marked by angels’ eyes
These are not lost.

The kindly plan’ devised for others’ good,
So seldom guessed, but little understood;
The quiet, steadfast love that strove to win
Some wanderers from the ways of sin
These are not lost.

—R. Metcalfe.

Correspondence.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—Would you kindly forward to the above address one copy of “Hope Beyond the Grave” and one of “God and Reason.”

Enclosed is a small token to cover cost of postage and I wish to say how grateful I am for your broadcasts, how helpful they have been, and I feel much “richer” in soul for the light thrown on God’s Word. Once again my grateful thanks and best wishes. Yours very sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—As a regular listener to your very helpful session, which give me much refreshing thoughts of spirituality, may I ask you to forward me a few copes of your literature, as outlined in this morning’s Talk, which I would be happy to pass on to my friends.

Wishing your session God’s richest blessings, which it richly deserves. Yours in the Lord.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I am very interested in your Radio Talks and wonder if you could possibly enlighten me’ on the subject of the sabbath. The Seventh Day, Advents say that Saturday is the day we must keep and seem to be able to prove from the Bible. If you could help me in my bewilderment I shall be most grateful indeed.

Wishing you success in your good work. Yours most faithfully.

(The booklet “What is the Christian’s Sabbath” deals with this subject most helpfully and in considerable detail; its findings are most conclusive and satisfying, being based on the Bible alone. Of 32 pages, this booklet is supplied at 9d. each.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Sirs—I am a very regular listener to your wonderful session on 2KY; truly a feature to hear each week. I would be delighted if you could let me have your printed literature dealing with yesterday’s subject.

Hoping to hear your programme many more times in the future. Many thanks.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—Will you kindly send me the literature you spoke of in today’s broadcast through station 2KY, and any other you can spare. I look forward to your broadcast which is given in such a manner that one can easily take it in. Thanking you and with every good wish. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Greetings in the precious name of Jesus. Please find enclosed a postal note for 10/- for the undermentioned books—’’Tabernacle Shadows,” “Our Lord’s Great Prophecy” and “The Plan of God—in Brief.” Please use the change towards your work.

Also I am enclosing a photo of a back-dated “Peoples Paper” which shows in the background a chart. I was wondering if you had a small one or any booklet with it in, as I would be very grateful for a copy. Yours in the service of Christ.

(The book “The Divine Plan of the Ages” contains the abovementioned chart, and gives a full explanation of it and the main truths of the Bible in a most helpful way. Of 350 pages, these books are supplied in strong cloth binding, pocket size, at 5/- each.—B.B. Institute.)

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you be so kind as to send me your broadcast on the Kingdom and

Satan, broadcast over 2KY yesterday morning.

We never listen to 2KY, but while trying to get the time yesterday I stumbled on your Talk, and my husband and I were greatly helped by it, and intend listening to you every week. Keep up the good work and may God bless you both. Yours very sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you kindly forward me a copy of your very interesting Talk, which was broadcast Sunday morning. You certainly make your points very clear, and I would like to take a copy to my friends and tell them of your session. Thanking you in anticipation; yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Would love very much to have a copy of the "Coming Dictator." Thanks very much for your most useful Talks from Sunday to Sunday; may you be long blessed to do so. Wishing you the best and thanking you very much. I am; yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Would you please forward me your notes on the last days, and the end of the world on which you spoke this Sunday morning. They will help me very much to speak to a friend at work, with whom I have been discussing the subject. Thanking you; I remain; Yours in Christ.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 N. Sundays 10 a.m. Sydney, 2KY, 294 N. ., 8.15 a.m.

Perth, SKY, 227 „ 4.45 p.m.