



Volume XXIX. No. 10 MELBOURNE, 1st OCTOBER, 1946 Price—Threepence

Let Us Draw Near.

“Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Heb. 10:22.

NOT to sinners is this invitation addressed. The invitation to them is a very different one, viz., Repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus obtain the remission of your sins, and then you will be in the attitude to receive the invitation, Draw near to God. The Apostle is addressing the brethren, and not sinners, and urges them, saying, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness (courage, confidence, privilege) to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way . . . let us draw near.”

The Apostle’s words carry our attention to Israel’s Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the spiritual things which it illustrated. The Court, entered through the gate, signified the state or condition of the justified, who must pass the altar, representing Christ’s sacrifice for sins; secondly, approach the Laver of water for cleansing from defilements; and then be ready to pass under the first vail into the apartment of the tabernacle called “The Holy.” This “Holy” apartment represented the state or condition of God’s consecrated people (typified by Israel’s priests), while yet in the flesh, and had its golden candlestick for their enlightenment, its table of shewbread, representing their privilege of fellowship with God—drawing near to Him in prayer, praise and communion. The next step beyond the “Holy” was the “Most Holy,” representing heaven itself; but this could be entered only from the “Holy,” and by passing under the Second Vail, which represented the actual death of the priest, even as the First Vail represented the reckoned death or consecration. The Apostle has this same thought in mind when elsewhere he mentions the consecrated Royal Priesthood as “seated together with Christ in heavenly places”—in the heavenly condition, the condition represented by the first apartment or “Holy” of the tabernacle and of the temple.

Privileges Of The Royal Priesthood.

It is in reference to this proposition to advance from the “Court” condition of justification into the “Holy” or heavenly or spirit-begotten condition, reached through consecration (and the closest possible approach to God) that the Apostle urges, “Let us draw near.” His language implies that there may properly be a diffidence on our part in respect of this privilege. We might properly hesitate to expect to have communion, fellowship, close approach to the great Creator, realising that by nature we are imperfect, “children of wrath, even as others,” and that in whatever degree we differ from others and are accounted worthy of such a privilege of drawing near to God it is not on account of personal worth on our part, but on account of God’s grace bestowed upon us through Jesus our Lord. The Apostle therefore speaks to

believers in an encouraging voice: “Let us draw near;” let us have courage to draw near; let us have faith in God, who has made us such gracious arrangements and promises.

The Apostle intimates that a close approach to God cannot be effected, except we have first a “full assurance of faith.” Only those who trust the Lord implicitly, “as a little child” (Luke 18:17) would trust its earthly parent, can expect to progress and have the courage, the confidence, necessary to approach God in this very intimate manner; and the desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in the justified believer’s heart, else he will never go on and attain to this his privilege. And this desire to draw near to God is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before he fulfils to such His engagement that they shall be filled, satisfied—Matt. 5:6.

Satisfaction will not be attained fully in the present life, though the believer who progresses and draws nearer and nearer to God will have more and more of this satisfaction to the end of his journey in the present life, receiving the full measure of satisfaction in righteousness, and perfection on the other side of the veil. Similarly, in our drawing near to God we may continue to draw nearer and nearer to Him, as we obtain deeper experience in His grace, growing also in knowledge and love in the present life; but the full attainment of our privilege of drawing near to God will not be reached until we shall have passed the Second Veil—passed through death, and been changed from human to spirit beings, and have entered into heaven itself, the perfect heavenly condition. There and then we shall be fully at one with the heavenly Father, and with our Lord Jesus, having drawn near to the full extent of the invitation and to the full of the opportunities granted us in the new and living way, the narrow way of life, consecrated for us, through the veil, by our Lord’s death as our ransom price.

There are, however, certain conditions specified as necessary to progress along these lines. As no one can draw near to God except by attaining a “full assurance of faith,” neither can he have a full assurance of faith unless he have his “heart sprinkled from a consciousness of evil,” for, as the Apostle elsewhere declares, “If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart” -1 John 3:20. We may be sure that if our course as new creatures is condemned by our own consciences it would also be condemned by God. Whoever, therefore, would make progress in drawing near to God must seek continually to have a “conscience void of offence towards God and man,” (Acts 24:16)—a conscience that is clear, that can say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to God, in harmony with my covenant of self-sacrifice, and I am striving to do that which would be approved also by righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be royal priests, to offer themselves as living sacrifices in the Lord’s service, and to draw near to Him in the name and under the merit of the great High Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus.

Having Our Hearts Sprinkled.

How very much is implied in this expression, “Having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil.” It not only means that we are to avoid sin, and to take heed that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts are acceptable to the Lord, but it means additionally that our hearts, having covenanted self-sacrifice, shall be able to look up to the Lord confidently and realise His blessing and approval, because of the honest, earnest efforts on our part to comply with the terms of our consecration. But since we cannot fully comply with the terms ourselves, it is requisite that we shall apply to ourselves by faith the merit of the precious blood of Christ, the blood of sprinkling, the blood of consecration, and that we shall realise that our acceptance is only in the Beloved One.

Washed With Pure Water.

The expression, “Having our bodies washed with pure water,” figuratively represents the continued process of “cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the

reverence of the Lord,” elsewhere enjoined by the Apostle-2 Cor. 7:1. By nature we are all imperfect, sullied, more or less depraved; and our devotion to the Lord is manifested, first, by our full acceptance and full assurance of faith in the merits of Christ’s sacrifice; and secondly, by our earnest efforts to put away from our flesh, as we have already put away from our hearts, all things defiling and displeasing in the Lord’s sight: that thus we may more and more become copies of His dear Son. This “washing of water through the Word” is elsewhere represented (Eph. 5:26) in a similar manner as being a part of the duty and privilege of all of the Lord’s people throughout the remainder of their earthly lives. We can see how beautiful is the illustration here used, that the Word of God, like water, is purifying, cleansing; as the Apostle declares, speaking of the Christian’s good hopes in the precious promises once delivered to the saints, “He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He (who called him) is pure.”-1 John 3:3.

As it is necessary to a thorough cleansing of our natural bodies that we should wash with “pure water,” so much the more is it necessary to this cleansing of which the Apostle speaks, the cleansing of our moral characters, that we should have the pure water of divine truth, and not the muddy and polluted teachings of the adversary, or of those whom he has blinded. As we look about us upon the many streams of Babylon—the various sectarian theologies which profess to be the truth—we find that although there is something of truth in them all, yet it is sadly mixed with error, and inadequate to the thorough cleansing from filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, or of the perfecting in holiness which the Lord requires. For instance, false ideas of God and of His character and His plan are incentives to those who so believe to copy these misrepresentations and perversions of justice and love, and are well calculated to develop a low standard of character, because the low standard which they set for themselves and other fellow-mortals is really higher than that which they ascribe to the Creator.

How important, then, is the truth, and how much meaning we find in our dear Redeemer’s prayer to the Father on our behalf, “Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth.” Let us not attempt to sanctify ourselves through any other washing than this; let us not be satisfied with anything short of the “pure water,” the Word of God, the pure truth.

“Ye Are Complete In Him.”—Col. 2:10.

Now view the class described by the Apostle: they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus accepted with the Father through the Beloved One. More than this, to them has been opened up the narrow way to life, consecrated, made possible, through the sacrifice offered by our great High Priest. They are invited to become under priests, sharers both of the sufferings and also later on, if faithful, sharers of the glories of Jesus, the Chief Priest of this order. As a means of attaining the glorious end of their calling they are to cleanse themselves from defilement, and for their use in this respect the Word of God has been provided: it is at once a mirror to show them their blemishes, and water wherewith to cleanse themselves—the stimulus for the correction of life being the exceeding great and precious promises set before them in the Scriptures. Their hearts, justified by faith, and honest before God, are fully consecrated to Him and to His service, and are to be so kept continually by obedience to the best of their knowledge and opportunities, and by the blood of sprinkling which covers unintentional errors and failures. This is the class that is called to be associated with the Lord in His kingdom. They are styled His brethren, the royal priesthood, the bride, the Lamb’s wife, and various other names representing their near and dear relationship to the heavenly Father. All of these who are faithful to the end of the racecourse are to be made partakers of the divine nature, with its glory, honour and immortality.

But let us not deceive ourselves in this matter of having hearts that do not condemn us; let us remember that our covenant was unto sacrifice, and not unto self-preservation; that it was a covenant to lay our all upon the altar—time, influence, means of every kind, and that we agreed with our Lord that we would reckon this our reasonable service.

Do our hearts condemn us in this matter, or do they justify us? Do we feel that we are doing all in our power to serve the Lord and His truth and our brethren? If so, let us rejoice, and let us continue in the same way, patiently hoping for the glorious results promised to the faithful. But if our hearts condemn us, let us not be discouraged, but, on the contrary, remember that this is a part of the cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit necessary to our preparation for the kingdom, and let us afresh bind our sacrifices to the altar (Psa. 118:27), and be more and more zealous in expending our little all in the service of Him who loved us and who bought us with His own precious blood. Thus doing, it will be our privilege day by day to draw nearer and nearer to the "Most Holy," and thus finishing our course with joy we shall have share in the first resurrection, awakening in our Lord's likeness. —2 Cor. 5:14-15; Rom. 6:5; 1 John 3:2; Psa. 17:15.

The Propriety of Fasting.

"When ye fast be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance."—Matt. 6:16.

IN this text our Lord is not expressing any disapprobation of fasting; quite to the contrary; He is endorsing it as a propriety. Undoubtedly it is better for the health to fast somewhat at times rather than to eat to satisfaction. The Master's comment, according to the context, seems to be based upon the improper conduct of the Pharisees. The fasting was supposed to be good not only for physical health, but also for mental and spiritual health. The Pharisees, professing to be very holy, made manifest their holiness by fasting, subordinating the flesh that they might be spiritually strengthened.

Our Lord does not dispute the propriety of such a course, but it was the wrong spirit that He condemned. For when the Pharisees fasted, many of them did it to be seen of men, in order to seem holy and given over to spiritual things. Hence our Lord's suggestion that when His disciples fast they should not be as the hypocrites, whose fasting and long faces were to show men their piety. In the same connection our Lord proceeds to say that when His disciples fast they should do the very reverse; that they should anoint their heads and be as cheerful as possible.

We can see the philosophy of this course. If their fasting had brought them nearer to the Heavenly Father it should have made them more gracious and luminous. It should have had a happifying effect which would have shown itself in the countenance. The thing reprimanded, then, was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who assumed a sadness of countenance to be seen of men. They delighted to have people say, "What a holy man! He has fasted so much! He is always thinking about holy things and, in order to do this, he is even denying himself the necessities of life. He is a very holy man!"

The followers of the Lord are to practice such fasting as will be seen of the Lord and not of men. The Father, who knows the heart, will appreciate our efforts to draw near to Him and will grant our desire. But these things should be hidden to the outside world and known only to God; and the joy of the Lord should be manifest in the countenance.

Holiness Of The Heart Not A Mere Outward Form.

Our Lord's frequent reference to the Pharisees, no doubt, was in part owing to the fact that the Pharisees were a very large and influential class; and in part because their name signified that they were the holy people. Hence, when our Lord was teaching special obedience to God, the question in the minds of the people would be, "Is He not a Pharisee, and do not the Pharisees teach all these things?"

So it became necessary for our Lord Jesus to show wherein some of these things that the Pharisees practiced were not proofs of their special nearness to God, and that they were not leaders to holiness, but

that it was very evident that

many of the Pharisees were hypocritical. Their holiness had become a mere form; it had degenerated into a custom— as the Scriptures say, a “Drawing near to the Lord with their lips, while their hearts were far from Him,” and thinking merely of the general attitude they had toward the world, the people in general.

We remember that there were some very noble Pharisees —Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, who buried our Lord, and St. Paul, who tells us that he was a Pharisee. But evidently the greater part of them had made broad their phylacteries and were more anxious in respect of what men would think of them than what the Lord would think of -them. Perhaps some of the hypocrisies of the Pharisees have been practiced since by some in the Monastic Order, where they wished to show their special separation from the world by the wearing of a peculiar garb, by a special cut of the hair, by seclusion, etc. There is danger along this line in the observance of the Lenten season by some of the Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans. But it may not be hypocritical with all.

In many respects it would be a very good thing for all the Lord’s people to follow the Lenten custom of fasting, doing so with as little outward demonstration as possible, practicing it as unto the Lord, without considering it a thing to be mentioned, without attracting attention, but merely as a privilege. The Lenten season represents the forty-day period of our Lord’s experiences just preceding the crucifixion. We might enter sympathetically into this matter and think of the trying experiences that were upon the Master when He knew that He was drawing near to the time of His death. As we try to think of Him it will enable us better to realize what a privilege it is to endure hardship as good soldiers for the sake of His Message.

Fasting is specially commendable to the Lord’s people at times when they find themselves lacking in spirituality and exposed to severe temptations from the world, the flesh and the Devil; for, by impoverishing the physical force and vitality, it may assist the full-blooded and impulsive to self-control in every direction. We may believe that a majority of Christians would be helped by occasional fasting— by a very plain diet, if not total abstinence, for a season. But fastings to be seen and known of men, or to be esteemed in our own minds as marks of piety on our part, would be injurious indeed and would lead to spiritual pride and hypocrisy, which would far outweigh any advantage to us in the way of self-restraint.

Formal Prayer.

“I often say my prayers:
But do I always pray?
And do the wishes of my heart
Go with the Words I say?

I may as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone,
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone;

For words without the heart
The Lord will never hear,
Nor will He to those lips attend
Whose prayers are not sincere.”

New Edition of “Where are the Dead?”

A new edition of this helpful booklet, which has been a means of great enlightenment for many years, is now just off the press. Conveying the Scriptural hope for all departed members of the human race, it is still one of the best pieces of literature for witnessing to the Gospel of Christ. Supplied at 4d. per single copy, or 3/- per dozen, post paid.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

(Monthly) 3/- (70 cents) per annum. post paid,

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

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

Love Not the World.

IN the text, “Love not the world,” (1 John 2:15) we do not understand the term “world” to mean either the human race or the planet on which we live. The thought of the text seems to be more particularly the present order of things, for the Greek word here translated world is “kosmos,” signifying arrangement. We are to appreciate the beauties of nature. We are to love the human family, whom God also loves, though not in the sense in which He loves the Church of Christ. We read, “God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16.

St. John cannot therefore be understood to refer to the world of mankind, when he says, “Love not the world.”

For them we should have sympathy similar to that which the Heavenly Father has for the fallen race. The Scriptures inform us that the present order, or arrangement, of things on earth is entirely out of harmony with God’s will, or purpose; for the world is ruled by selfishness. The Divine arrangement is that love shall be the rule among God’s creatures. “God is love. . . He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.”—1 John 4:8, 16.

The world operates along lines different from those of love. Each one strives selfishly to heap together treasure for himself, even if meantime his neighbour goes destitute. Many live in luxury, while realizing that there are others who lack the necessities of life. Many seek for power to control men, not with the thought of their uplift, but with a view to using them for selfish ends and motives. This spirit of selfishness belongs to the present order of things. We see it in operation everywhere.

The spirit of the world lays hold of all the forces of nature and seeks to control these, to adapt them to its own selfish interests. It is true that much good has resulted indirectly from this spirit of selfishness. For instance, a man with a great amount of the vain-glorious spirit may for his own selfish purposes benefit others. A general might have so much pride in his service that in order to win praise for himself he would care for his soldiers and have them well dressed. Some of our great captains of industry have done the

world good service, and incidentally have blessed many, while carrying out their own designs.

Selfishness The Spirit Of The World.

If all of the great worldly enterprises were undertaken with a view to the betterment of mankind, the spirit of these would not be selfish. We know, indeed, that much is done to help those who are needy, and that where there is a motive of this kind, it is often misinterpreted and misjudged to be selfish. But “the Lord looketh on the heart.” (1 Sam. 16:7.) Those who have the selfish heart, the selfish intentions, will continue to love the things of the world. In proportion as such may be shown that there is a new order of affairs coming, in that proportion the selfish-minded will not be in sympathy with the change of dispensation.

If a man’ conducts a large enterprise for the benefit of those who would have opportunity to share such blessings, that man would rejoice that there is a better time coming. A man who would truly rejoice to have a better arrangement of affairs, would not have the spirit that dominates in the present order of things. He would have the spirit of God, the spirit of Love, the spirit that will dominate the New Order of things, that will control during the thousand years of Christ’s reign.

Many are in the attitude of mind which would say, “My employer is rich. Whenever I get the opportunity to help myself to some of his money, I will do so and get as much as possible.” Such people love the present order of things, whether they be rich or poor. A great many poor love the things of this world, and hope some day to get their share.

There are people who say, “Oh, I do not love the world and its selfish spirit! From the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am opposed to it. Sometimes I say to my husband, ‘This is a very selfish world, John.’ Then he replies, ‘Yes, Mary, it is. Everywhere people are seeking for everything that will gratify self and selfish desires. But while you condemn the ways of the world, yet you delight in the good things of life provided by my industry —the automobile, the pleasant home, etc.’ And I must acknowledge that he is right. I fear that I could not be happy without them.” Such a person certainly loves the things of the world, even while making good use of them.

It seems to be a serious charge to say that any one who is in that attitude of mind which loves the world and the things belonging to it, has not the love of the Father in him. We do not understand, however, that such a one has no love for the Father or that the Father has no love for him. The Apostle seems to be addressing this message to the Church. Those who have been adopted into God’s family must continue to love Him or they would not be counted as members of that class.

What, then, is the full import of this expression—”The Love of the Father is not in him”? To us it would mean that the Love of the Father had not gotten full control of his heart, and this would mean that ultimately—unless he should gain a victory over his selfish disposition—he would not be accepted as a son.

Everywhere about us is this spirit of selfishness. Every child of God should be on guard against it and against willingness to participate in the things of this world. We should strive to be in that condition which is pleasing to the Father. We are to try to rid ourselves of the spirit of the world and to be filled with the spirit of the Father. This would not mean that we are not to appreciate beautiful things, or that we are not to like to see others striving to benefit the world; but that we should not be satisfied with any of these things, so far as we are concerned.

Two Kinds Of Motives.

Whatever talents we possess we should use for the good of humanity in any kind of work that would be for the glory of God. Even a good work could be engaged in from the spirit of the world rather than from the spirit of God; that is, it might be done for what we could get from others in the way of money, honour or influence; or, on the other hand, it might be for the good we desired to do for others.

The highest of all services is that of the ministry of the Word of God. Even this noble service might be pursued from either of two motives—the Love of the Father or the love of self. Apparently there are some engaged in the ministry purely for the sake of the loaves and fishes, for the honourable position it gives them in the world, or because they do not know of anything that would serve them better.

Again, there are those, no doubt, who have entered the ministry, not for selfish reasons, but because they desire to serve God, to serve the Truth, to serve His people. The Lord alone knows what has induced any one to enter the ministry. But since we are living in the day that will try every man's work, God will prove what sort it is—will show what motive is behind the deed.

Those who are serving merely from the Worldly spirit will be vexed with everything that is making for Truth; and in proportion as their earthly interests suffer, they will be angry. Those who are of the right spirit, however, will rejoice in everything that will be helpful to humanity, in everything that is to the glory of God, in everything that will make the Bible more easily understood.

In fact, we may suppose that the real testing, so far as the Church is concerned, is the making manifest whether we love the world — the things of the present time — or whether we love God supremely. As time goes on, it will be even more impossible to harmonize the spirit of love and the spirit of selfishness. Those who love God will be fully out of harmony with the spirit of the present evil world.

“Love not the world !
He in whose heart the love
Of vanity has found a place, shuts out
The enduring world above.

“Love not the world!
However fair it seem;
Who loveth this vain world—
the love of God Abideth not in him.”

Christmas Convention.

The brethren in Melbourne wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held (D.V.) over the Christmas season, and they extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to attend. This early announcement is for the benefit of interstate and country visitors who may be making arrangements to attend. Communications respecting the Convention should be sent to the Class Secretary, Mr. J. Hiam, 44 Heath Ave., Oakleigh, S.E.12, Melbourne.

FRANK & ERNEST BIBLE TALKS Of Interest and Help to All.
Vic., Tas. and N.S.W. Time. Sundays Geelong, 3GL, 222 Metres 10 a.m.
Bendigo, 3B0, 309 Metres 10 a.m.
Sydney, 2KY, 294 Metres - 8.15 a.m.
Hobart, 7HT, 278 Metres 10.15 a.m.
Launceston, 7EX, 300 Metres 10.15 a.m.
Western Australian Time. Sundays
Perth, 6KY, 227 Metres 10.15 a.m.
Choose Your Nearest Station.

SUBJECTS FOR OCTOBER 6th October—"As Angels of Light."
13th October—"A Vision of the Kingdom." 20th October—"Judgment of the Dead." 27th October—
"Restitution." 3rd November—"When There is No Peace."
SUBJECTS FOR OCTOBER 2 KY ONLY 6th October—"Hope for the Unsaved Dead." 13th October—
"The Binding of Satan."
20th October—"Prayers of Soldiers' Mothers." 27th October—"One Government."
3rd November—"Paradise and the Thief."

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE,
Ermington Place, Kew, E 4, Melbourne, Vic., Aust.

The Permission of Evil.

EVIL is that which produces unhappiness; anything which either directly or remotely causes suffering of any kind.—Webster. This subject, therefore, not only inquires regarding human ailments, sorrows, pains, weaknesses and death, but goes beyond all these to consider their primary cause—sin—and its remedy. Since sin is the cause of evil, its removal is the only method of permanently curing the malady.

No difficulty, perhaps, more frequently presents itself to the inquiring mind than the questions: Why did God permit the present reign of evil? Why did He permit Satan to present the temptation to our first parents, after having created them perfect and upright? Or why did He allow the forbidden tree to have a place among the good? Despite all attempts to turn it aside, the question will obtrude itself—Could not God have prevented all possibility of man's fall?

The difficulty undoubtedly arises from a; failure to comprehend the plan of God. God could have prevented the entrance of sin, but the fact that He did not should be sufficient proof to us that its present permission is designed ultimately to work out some greater good. God's plans, seen in their completeness, will prove the wisdom of the course pursued. Some inquire, Could not God, with whom all things are possible, have interfered in season to prevent the full accomplishment of Satan's design? Doubtless He could; but such interference would have prevented the accomplishment of His own purposes. His purpose was to make manifest the perfection, majesty and righteous authority of His law, and to prove both to men and to angels the evil consequences resulting from its violation. Besides, in their very nature, some things are impossible even with God, as the Scriptures state. It is "impossible for God

to lie" (Heb. 6:18). "He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:13). He cannot do wrong, and therefore He could not choose any but the wisest and best plan for introducing His creatures into life, even though our short-sighted vision might for a time fail to discern the hidden springs of infinite wisdom.

The Scriptures declare that all things were created for the Lord's pleasure (Rev. 4:11) — without doubt, for the pleasure of dispensing His blessings, and of exercising the attributes of His glorious being. And though, in the working out of His benevolent designs, He permits evil and evil doers for a time to play an active part, yet it is not for evil's sake, not because He is in league with sin; for he declares that He is "not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness." (Psa. 5:4.) Though opposed to evil in every sense, God permits (i.e., does not hinder) it for a time, because His wisdom sees a way in which it may be made a lasting and valuable lesson to His creatures.

It is a self-evident truth that for every right principle there is a corresponding wrong principle; as, for instance, truth and falsity, love- and hatred, justice and injustice. We distinguish these opposite principles as right and wrong, by their effects when put in action. That principle the result of which, when active, is beneficial and productive of ultimate order, harmony and happiness, we call a right principle; and the opposite, which is productive of discord, unhappiness and destruction, we call a wrong principle. The results of these principles in action we call good and evil; and the intelligent being, capable of discerning the right principle from the wrong, and voluntarily governed by one or the other, we call virtuous or sinful.

This faculty of discerning between right and wrong principles is called the moral sense, or conscience. It is by this moral sense which God has given to man that we are able to judge of God and to recognize that He is good. It is to this moral sense that God always appeals to prove His righteousness or justice; and by the same moral sense Adam could discern sin, or unrighteousness, to be evil, even before he knew all its consequences. The lower orders of God's creatures are not endowed with this moral sense. A dog has some intelligence, but not to this degree, though he may learn that certain actions bring the approval and reward of his master, and certain others his disapproval. He might steal or take life, but would not be termed a sinner; or he might protect property and life, but would not be called virtuous —because he is ignorant of the moral quality of his actions.

God could have made mankind devoid of ability to discern between right and wrong, or able only to discern and to do right; but to have made him so would have been to make merely a living machine, and certainly not a mental image of his Creator. Or He might have made man perfect and a free agent, as He did, and have guarded him from Satan's temptation. In that case, man's experience being limited to good, he would have been continually liable to suggestions of evil from without, or to ambitions from within, which, would have made the everlasting future uncertain, and an outbreak of disobedience and disorder might always have been a possibility besides which, good would never have been so highly appreciated except by its contrast with evil.

God first made His creatures acquainted with good, surrounding them with it in Eden; and afterward, as a penalty for disobedience, He gave them a severe knowledge of evil. Expelled from Eden and deprived of fellowship with Himself, God let them experience sickness, pain and death, that they might thus forever know evil and the inexpediency and exceeding sinfulness of sin.

By a comparison of results they came to an appreciation and proper estimate of both; "And the Lord said, Behold, man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." (Gen. 3:22.) In this their posterity share, except that they first obtain their knowledge of evil, and cannot fully realize what good is until they experience it in the Millennium, as a result of their redemption by Him who will then be their Judge and King.

The moral sense, or judgment of right and wrong, and the liberty to use it, which Adam possessed, were important features of his likeness to God. The law of right and wrong was written in his natural constitution. It was part of his nature, just as it is a part of the divine nature. But let us not forget that this image or likeness of God, this originally law-inscribed nature of man, has lost much of its clear outline

through the erasing, degrading influence of sin; hence it is not now what it was in the first man. Ability to love implies ability to hate; hence we may reason that the Creator could not make man in His own likeness, with power to love and to do right, without the corresponding ability to hate and to do wrong. This liberty of choice, termed free moral agency, or free will, is a part of man's original endowment; and this, together with the full measure of his mental and moral faculties, constituted him an image of his Creator. To-day, after nearly 6,000 years of degradation, so much of the original likeness has been erased by sin that we are not free, being bound, to a greater or less extent, by sin and its entailments, so that sin is now more easy and therefore more agreeable to the fallen race than is righteousness.

That God could have given Adam such a vivid impression of the many evil results of sin as would have deterred him from it, we need not question, but we believe that God foresaw that an actual experience of the evil would be the surest and most lasting lesson to serve man eternally; and for that reason God did not prevent but permitted man to take his choice, and to feel the consequences of evil. Had opportunity to sin never been permitted, man could not have resisted it, consequently there would have been neither virtue nor merit in his right-doing. God seeketh such to worship Him as worship in spirit and in truth. He desires intelligent and willing obedience rather than ignorant mechanical service. He already had in operation inanimate mechanical agencies accomplishing His will, but His design was to make a nobler thing, an intelligent creature in His own likeness, a lord for earth, whose loyalty and righteousness would be based upon an appreciation of right and wrong, of good and evil.

The principles of right and wrong, as principles, have always existed, and must always exist; and all perfect, intelligent creatures in God's likeness must be free to choose either, though the right principle only will forever continue to be active. The Scriptures inform us that when the activity of the evil principle has been permitted long enough to accomplish God's purpose, it will forever cease to be active, and that all who continue to submit to its control shall forever cease to exist. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26; Heb. 2:14.) Right-doing and right-doers, only, shall continue forever.

God not only foresaw that, having given man freedom of choice, he would, through lack of full appreciation of sin and its results, accept it, but He also saw that, becoming acquainted with it, he would still choose it, because that acquaintance would so impair his moral nature that evil would gradually become more agreeable and more desirable to him than good. Still, God designed to permit evil, because, having the remedy provided for man's release from its consequences, He saw that the result would be to lead him, through experience, to a full appreciation of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin" and of the matchless brilliancy of virtue in contrast with it—thus teaching him the more to love and honour his Creator, who is the source and fountain of all goodness, and forever to shun that which brought so much woe and misery. So the final result will be greater love for God, and greater hatred of all that is opposed to His will, and consequently the firm establishment in everlasting righteousness of all such as shall profit by the lessons God is now teaching through the permission of sin and correlative evils. However, a wide distinction should be observed between the indisputable fact that God has permitted sin, and the serious error of some which charges God with being the author and instigator of sin. The latter view is both blasphemous and contradictory to the facts presented in the Scriptures. Those who fall into this error generally do so in an attempt to find another plan of salvation than that which God has provided through the sacrifice of Christ as our ransom-price. If they succeed in convincing themselves and others that God is responsible for all sin and wickedness and crime, and that man as an innocent tool in His hands was forced into sin, then they have cleared the way for the theory that not a sacrifice for our sins, nor mercy in any form, was needed, but simply and only JUSTICE. Thus, too, they lay a foundation for another part of their false theory, viz., universalism, claiming that as God caused all the sin and wickedness and crime in all, He will also cause the deliverance of all mankind from sin and death. And reasoning that God willed and caused the sin, and that none could resist Him, so they claim that when He shall will righteousness all will likewise be powerless to resist Him. But in all such reasonings, man's noblest quality, liberty of will or choice, the most striking feature of his likeness to his Creator, is entirely set aside; and man is

theoretically degraded to a mere machine which acts only as it is acted upon. If this were the case, man, instead of being the lord of earth, would be inferior even to insects; for they undoubtedly have a will or power of choice. Even the little ant has been given a power of will which man, though by his greater power he may oppose and thwart, cannot destroy.

Many have imbibed the erroneous idea that God placed our race on trial for life with the alternative of eternal torture, whereas nothing of the kind is even hinted at in the penalty. The favour or blessing of God to His obedient children is life—continuous life, free from pain, sickness and every other element of decay and death. Adam was given this blessing in the full measure, but was warned that he would be deprived of this “gift” if he failed to render obedience to God—“In the day that thou eatest thereof, dying, thou shalt die.” He knew nothing of a life in torment, as the penalty of sin. Life everlasting is nowhere promised to any but the obedient. Life is God’s gift, and death, the opposite of life, is the penalty He prescribes.

God assures us that as condemnation passed upon all in Adam, so He has arranged for a new head, father or life-giver for the race, into whom all may be transferred by faith; and that as all in Adam shared the curse of death, so all in Christ will share the blessing of life, being justified by faith in His blood. (Rom. 5:12,18,19.) Thus seen, the death of Jesus, the undefiled, the sinless one, was a complete settlement toward God of the sin of Adam. As one man had sinned, and all in him had shared his curse, his penalty, so Jesus, having paid the penalty of that one sinner, bought not only Adam, but all of his posterity—all men—who by heredity shared his weaknesses and sins and the penalty of these—death. Our Lord, “the man Christ Jesus,” Himself unblemished, approved, and with a perfect seed or race in Him, unborn, likewise untainted with sin, gave His all of human life and title as the full ransom-price for Adam and the race or seed in him when sentenced.

And thus it is written: “As all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive.” Corrected translation, 1 Cor. 15:22.

Those who can appreciate this feature of God’s plan, which, by condemning all in one representative, opened the way for the ransom and restitution of all by one Redeemer, will find in it the solution of many perplexities. They will see that the condemnation of all in one was the reverse of an injury: it was a great favour to all when taken in connection with God’s plan for providing justification for all through another one’s sacrifice. Evil will be forever extinguished when God’s purpose in permitting it shall have been accomplished, and when the benefits of the ransom are made coextensive with the penalty of sin. It is impossible, however, to appreciate rightly this feature of the plan of God without a full recognition of the sinfulness of sin, the nature of its penalty—death, the importance and value of the ransom which our Lord Jesus gave, and the positive and complete restoration of the individual to favourable conditions, conditions under which he will have full and ample trial, before being adjudged worthy of the reward (lasting life), or of the penalty (lasting death).

In view of the great plan of redemption, and the consequent “restitution of all things,” through Christ, we can see that blessings result through the permission of evil which, probably, could not otherwise have been so fully realized.

It seems clear that substantially the same law of God which is now over mankind, obedience to which has the reward of life, and disobedience the reward of death, must ultimately govern all of God’s intelligent creatures; and that law, as our Lord defined it, is briefly comprehended in the one word, Love. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” (Luke 10:27.) Ultimately, when the purposes of God shall have been accomplished, the glory of the divine character will be manifest to all intelligent creatures.