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Things That Alone Count.

(Convention Address)

WHAT are the “things that alone count,” or the “things that belong to our peace?” St. Paul in Ephesians 4:1-3 gives us the answer to this pertinent and reasonable question. Addressing the faithful in Christ Jesus, He said, —“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.” How? “With all lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love ; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”

Thus it is that the great Apostle of the Lamb is revealing those “things that alone count” in the character of our Christian walk, which lead to the peace of a good conscience, rich with the fruits of a Christian life, rich in faith, hope, and love.

If we do not have these things that accompany salvation, as revealed by the writer of Hebrews 6:9, we shall be at the last found “poor, naked, blind and miserable.” Oh, how we sometimes mistake the “things that alone count,” and we pass them by.

We sing in one of our well-known hymns,—“Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed.” It is the offering of our desires to our Great God and Father, who we believe can and does hear us, and who is able to respond and make full provision for all our needs. So in that surrender of self, in consecration to His will, in that childlike confidence and faith in Infinite Love and Goodness, we tell to God our innermost desires. Then, too, we must learn that “prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness.”

St. Paul, speaking under the power of the holy spirit, said to his Christian brethren, “covet (or desire) earnestly the best gifts,” and continued, “and yet show I unto you a more excellent way,” a way that will count at the last, for all else will vanish away.—1 Cor. 12:31; 13:13.

Thus, the Apostle reveals that gifts are good, but only if ministered in love; benevolence is good, but not apart from love. Yea, there are other values, but this one is supreme, and the fountain of all perfection and excellency. Thus, it is noteworthy that love is better than our present incomplete knowledge, and greater than even faith and hope. Why? Because it is the end and design of the Almighty God and Creator of all things. Love is His brightest glory, and the revelation of it leads to the desire for a fuller fellowship, and fellowship to a deeper love and appreciation toward all those who are seeking the “things that alone count,” in the Christian walk and experience—a moving on to a richer unfolding of the things of the spirit. A life so lived here and now will be the “earnest” of that to come. Surely a child of God needs but one thing to be able to live as a child ; it is to be filled with the spirit of Christ.

Let us again and again return to our love chapter, for therein St. Paul proceeds to enumerate the things that really count now in this our day of visitation—a day of grace and truth wherein by the will of God is laid a deep foundation of a strong character, rich in spiritual things.

Again we find another servant of God and an Apostle of Jesus Christ bringing to the attention of God’s people the “things that alone count,” saying, “If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet. 1:8.) St. Peter, continuing in the 9th verse unfolds a

momentous fact and at the same time sounds a solemn warning to every ear that has been touched by the blood of Christ. Peter tells us frankly that “he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins,”—his former way of life. May it deepen in our hearts the sense of our utter weakness and the matchless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Himself said He was that he was the door to the Father’s love. In John. 10:9 we read, “I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved.” That was equivalent to saying, “I am the only way whereby lost sinners may come to God and obtain salvation”; in other words, the only way of entrance and admission into God’s sheepfold.

The Philippian church had given St. Paul unalloyed gladness, and so, writing to these lovers of the same love, he asks them now to fulfil his joy, to make his cup brim to overflowing; and at the same time he sets forth the “things that alone count,” the things that belong to their peace.

It was the prayer and desire of the Apostle to see the Christian virtues fully developed among them until they had become a pure church, in heart and mind, ruled not by selfishness but love. The great Apostle opened his heart unto them, saying, “God is my witness how I yearn for you, for all of you, with a heart which is one with the Messiah Jesus! And this is my prayer, that your love may rise higher and higher, to its fullest development in recognition of the truth, and in a comprehensive grasp of its application, thus furnishing you with a sure test of what is true excellence, so that you may remain untainted by error, un stumbling amidst obstacles, till the Day of Messiah’s appearing, bearing the while a full harvest of righteousness, attained through Jesus our Messiah, and redounding to the glory and praise of God.” (Phil. 1:8-11. Way’s translation.) Let us remember that true Christian fellowship can be enjoyed only in the light. This fellowship consists in real enjoyment of Christ. As our one object, our common portion, it is joint consecration of heart and soul to that blessed One who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood and brought us into the light of God’s presence, there to walk with Him and with one another.

Fellowship cannot be had by a (*) heartless traffic in certain favorite doctrines which we receive to hold in common. Nor is it a sympathy or agreement with those who think and see and feel with us in some favorite theory

(*) This statement respecting a “heartless traffic in certain favorite doctrines” is not to be misunderstood as lessening the value and importance of doctrines when accepted and used in the spirit of Christ. See John 17:17. -B.B. Institute.)

or dogma. It is something quite different from all this. It is delighting in Christ in common with all those who are walking in the light—Christ known and enjoyed through the holy spirit. What a privilege to delight in the One in whom God delights. It is our desire to have this grand and all-important line of truth fully impressed upon our hearts and minds—to see it impressed upon the hearts and minds of all God’s people, for it lies at the very base of all true Christianity and forms an integral part of the truth of the Gospel. Christ is the Touchstone by which all is to be tested, and according to our attitude to Him, we judge and condemn ourselves.

St. Paul, speaking words of caution to his Philippian brethren, whom he dearly loved, said, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory ; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself.” (Phil. 2:3.) In other words, let your life as members of one commonwealth, the Body of Christ, be worthy of the glad tidings of the Messiah, standing firm, animated by one spirit—the spirit of love. All true progress must be along the lines laid down by Christ our Head. Hence, the first unalterable words of the Saviour regarding discipleship are,—“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” The world with its tinsel and glitter, the false pretensions of countless things, are of no value. Compare them with the things that alone count, things that make for eternal peace and happiness, and we shall clearly see that outside of Christ all is dross.

Now is the day of salvation. It is the Christian’s day-- of visitation, and if we go with Him, make our home in the things of the spirit, we will not at the end of the way have any vain regrets.

We know that strife and love cannot mix. No body of men can be bound together permanently on the principles of strife and vainglory. Why ? Because they are disintegrating principles. They have no place or value, and when viewed in the light of eternity, they cannot be among those things that belong to our peace. Therefore, if we are Christ’s, we must have Christ formed in us; we must have the mind of Christ in us, and we must rule our lives by the new motive, “Love one another.” Only in that way lies peace; only in that way lies the purest joy in all its excellence; only in that way can we be pleasing to God and enjoy spiritual kinship with the Lord Jesus Christ and the members of His body.

God summons us to a new way of life, and our hearts tell us that the things that belong to our peace are not the things that the world is striving for. Rather, let us keep in mind that between the Christ-life and the world-life there can be no compromise. “We cannot serve God and Mammon” at the same time. If we would find rest, we must learn of Him who was meek and lowly in heart. (Matt. 11:29.)

The one work of Christ on earth was to glorify the Father, to reveal what a glorious God He is. It was His avowed purpose that the world should know that He loved the Father and came to do the Father's will. Thus, the greatest teacher of all time reveals that living to God's glory on earth is the gate to living with Him in God's glory in heaven. Some one has rightly said, "The love of Christ is the great instrument of sanctification because it begets in us a desire and passion to do God's will and to keep His commandments." "Ye are complete in him."—Col. 2:10.

Paul most clearly reveals in his Epistle to the Philippian church that Christ is the believer's strength and joy, and he exhorts them to unity that they be of the same mind in the Lord ; then he proceeds to point out the things that make for peace: "Finally, brethren, 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, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 4:8.) Thus, the apostle brings to our attention that our love of God and Christ puts a new light on life, and enables us to see what are the things of importance to the Christian. It is a call to us for a truer self-scrutiny lest we, too, may be despising or neglecting the time of our visitation.

Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount plainly discloses to His apostles the things that alone count, and He prefaced these things with the words, "Blessed are." Jesus not only strikes nine notes of joy but also a note of Divine approval. A well known Christian writer in his exposition of the Sermon on the Mount said,—"We have here not the lines of a code but the lineaments of character." This character is unattainable by effort but is wrought in the believer by the spirit.

St. Paul clearly points out this fact in Gal. 2:21, saying, "I do not set aside the gift of God, for if righteousness were through a ritual, then Christ died to no purpose." Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians clearly shows that Christian character is produced by the holy spirit, not by self-effort. It is the outworking of the new life in Christ Jesus our Lord. We are exhorted to "work out our salvation with great carefulness, because it is God who is working in us by his spirit to cause us to will and to do his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12, 13.) Since it is by the power of the spirit that we have our new life, the harvest of the spirit's sowing, the apostle declares, will be love, gladness, heart-peace, forbearance, kindness, benevolence, trustfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These are the things that alone count—that make for peace.

After having announced that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, the Master sought to impress upon the hearts of His disciples the principles of that kingdom. He revealed one important aspect of it in the words, "Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:3.) How great the value of this counsel ! And how important that we hold it in our hearts and learn of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart." It teaches us what will be the nature and distinction of the heavenly kingdom, for "whosoever shall humble himself as this little child shall be exalted." (Matt. 18:3.) Thus Jesus, the meek and lowly One, calls us to learn of Him the path to God and the heavenly kingdom. Self-abasement alone will be exalted.

In the Beatitudes, with which the Sermon on the Mount opens, especially verses 3-11, the Lord Jesus clearly and definitely reveals what the believers of this Gospel are to be in themselves. He points out that the Christian life consists of being poor in spirit, in mourning, in being meek, in hungering and thirsting after righteousness, in being merciful, pure in heart, in being peace makers, persecuted for righteousness' sake, when they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake.

After laying the emphasis on "for my sake," the Lord Jesus proceeds to describe the effect of such living upon the world, saying, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "Ye are the light of the world." (Matt. 5:13-16.) History shows that real Christian character has been indeed "the salt of the earth," and "light of the world." Keeping this end in view, do not be unthinking Christians, but try to comprehend what is the Lord's will. In other words, keep in mind that a Christian believer by his new life in Christ Jesus is light, and as such he must order his life, for the fruit of light appears in every form of goodness, righteousness, and truth. Did not the Great Teacher say, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16.) The Son of God gives all honor to the Father.

The wise Master-Teacher gathers up and emphasizes the outstanding things, things that count, saying, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matt. 10:22.) This is coupled with the assurance that theirs shall be an appropriate reward. But, on the other hand, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20.) Thus, the Master points to the fact that entrance into the kingdom of heaven will not be upon the basis of legal righteousness, but upon that which far exceeds it—a love of righteousness.. We must go beyond the outward form, or we will not enter that kingdom of love in which we "love our enemies and do good to them that despitefully use us." God has called His people through Christ Jesus to wage a new warfare, on a new plane, and with new weapons. He calls us to the overcoming of evil, of hate, of the world, and the only way this is possible is by using the higher weapons of love, restraint, good will, and the spirit of forgiveness. If we fail here in the things that alone count, we fail as Christians.

Having viewed in the Sermon on the Mount, first, what the believers are to be in themselves; second, what they are to be to the world ; we now come to the third thing which is of great importance, namely, what they are to be in their relationship to God: “Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” (Matt. 5:48.) This word perfect implies full development, growth into maturity of godliness. St. Paul expressed it in these words: “Till we all come into the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:13.) That work will not be complete until the image of Christ is engraved upon the heart and we are changed by the work of the spirit, transformed into the image of His Son. What we are in ourselves, what we are to the world, and what we are in our relationship to God, determines life for us. They determine what we are to be in the future. Unless we seek and strive after the things that alone count, we shall not hear that “Well done, thou good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things ; I will make thee ruler over many things ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” (Matt. 25:21.)

Let us, therefore, regard each passing moment as having a specific character and definite purpose. Let us realise to the utmost, the solemnity of each moment of our Christian life as a whole, for we are to utilize the time because “the days are evil.” Let us bring intellect and conscience to bear upon all our ways. Let us seek to know God’s will, and be willing to pay the price.

It is true there are many minor purposes, but the great end is to form ourselves, with the help of God, “according to the pattern showed” to us in the Sermon on the Mount, in order that it may lead us on to the higher purpose of being changed from the image of the earthly into the image of the heavenly.

The first three beatitudes uncover the aggressive attitudes of life. They show God’s invasion of us, taking away our self-sufficiency, our very self-life, getting us ready for the most amazing offensive of love that the world has ever seen. For we read, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,” in order that every one exercising faith in Him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life. (John 3:16.) “That tender love is timeless,” having no beginning, because He is God, therefore, no end and no decay.

As surely as the magnet when applied to a dish of sand into which some metal filings have been thrown will draw every little bit of these filings out, so surely will the magnet of His love draw out of earth’s humanity the ones who feel its impulse and its preciousness. It first means we must be knit to God by the Son of His love, separated from evil—separated by the power of His received love; for the root idea of holiness is not moral character, goodness, and of action, but it is separation from the world and consecration to God. Yielding to and answering that love, so that it separates us for Himself, is that which alone counts, peace of mind, security, and leads to happy submission, and He assures us that never will He “forget” any of our works.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ begins with the demand of self-renunciation—”poor in spirit” —and ends in the fulness of the “new life.” He who walks amidst the candlesticks will see that each little lamp is fed according to its capacity and need. We must hold up our emptiness and nothingness to Him, and He will fill it with His fulness. Thus by His grace, out of this nothingness we will grow strong in faith, giving God all the praise and glory.

But let us remember at the same time that the highest glory of the creature is in being only a vessel to receive and enjoy and show forth the glory of God, by simple reliance upon Christ, conscious of our deep need, and believingly waiting upon Him. Yes, it is the displacement of self by the enthronement of God. Where God is all, self becomes nothing. This fact is revealed by the very first words of the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord Jesus therein revealed to His early disciples and to us the open gate through which alone we enter the kingdom of heaven, saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Moffatt says, “Blessed are those who feel poor in spirit”—not in material things, but rather, recognizing that we have nothing in ourselves and being conscious of our spiritual need. It is simply the sense of entire nothingness which comes when we see how truly God is all in all. It is not something which we bring to Him, but the nothingness that makes room for God to work in us His good pleasure.

It was God’s good pleasure to give a set of new commands (laws) unto the children of Israel, “for the law came by Moses.” To them it contained the things that alone counted to them—things which made for peace, happiness and life. Love of ease and unbelief kept them from marching on and obtaining the heights of the fulness of God’s promised blessings. Israel failed sadly—failed under law and government—hence, instead of life and blessing, there has been judgment and dispersion. Thanks to our God, in spite of Israel’s unfaithfulness, all Israel shall be saved and restored and blessed on the ground of God’s oath-bound covenant to Abraham and his seed.

Through their failure, “grace and truth came by Jesus” to us Gentiles. So let us cherish our opportunities and seek the things of the spirit. It is for us to determine that we shall make our trials, whether little or great, a means to draw us nearer to God.

We must let Christ, “the wisdom of God,” choose our path, and at last we shall lift our praises to “Him that is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”

In Christ all fulness dwells, from Him proceeds
All that fall’n man, poor, wretched, guilty needs.
In Him the contrite, bruised in spirit, find
Whate’er can heal the sorrows of the mind—
Forgiving love, that saves from blank despair,
Rich grace, that banishes each anxious care,
Soft pity, that relieves the bursting sigh,
And truth, revealing joys that never die.

Thrice happy they, who to His Word attend,
His favor seek, and on His strength depend.
‘Tis theirs to know His heart-consoling voice,
To share His smile, and in His name rejoice.
To them, reclaimed in mercy from the fall
And heav’nward marching, Christ is all in all:

In want, their treasure—in distress, their stay—
In gloom, their day-spring—vigor, in decay—
’Mid foes, their guard—in solitude, their guest—
In storms, their hiding place—in toils, their rest—
In bonds, their freedom—their relief, in pain—
In life, their glory—and in all things gain.

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Quietly Minding One's Own Business.

"But we beseech you brethren . . . that ye study to be quiet, and do your own business." —1 Thes. 4:10, 11.

THERE is a quietness that appertains to sloth and indolence, but this evidently is not what the apostle means in our text ; for elsewhere he urges us to be "not slothful in business" (Rom. 12:11). There is another quietness that appertains to peace—a composure which is the opposite of nervousness, giddiness and childishness. This condition we believe to be that which the apostle had in mind. The Lord's people are to study, to have a mind that is well balanced. This composure is not natural to the majority of people, and is, therefore, something to be studied and attained. We are in the school of Christ to learn such lessons.

This desirable quietness represents the graces of the holy spirit — meekness, gentleness, patience, and brotherly kindness. While we are to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Rom. 12:11), we are also to be obedient to the instructions of the holy spirit, in meekness, quietness, and love. We are to endeavour to take a proper estimate of the affairs of life, and not to allow trivial things to excite us. This course, if faithfully pursued, tends to produce a quietness of spirit.

To mind one's own business is a very important lesson to learn. Surely every Christian has observed that much of the trouble in the world results from interference one with another. In every difficulty, one or both of the persons involved failed to mind his own business. Some people are always seeking to find fault with others, and seem to think they are commissioned to correct the whole world. We find no authority given in the Bible for such a course.

A busybody is a person who meddles with the affairs of others with which he properly has nothing whatever to do. Sometimes he fancies that it is his duty to advise, criticise, investigate, chide and reprove others. The Golden Rule will prove a great help in deciding what is one's duty in any case. This commandment of the Lord prohibits everything akin to busy-bodying. Each member of the New Creation should educate his conscience to discriminate between brotherly love and busybodying, and should learn to apply the rules of justice and love to every act, word, and thought, so far as in him lies.

Where a matter is one in which we are personally concerned, however, we shall not be meddling with other people's affairs, but minding our own business when we give it proper attention. There are times, places and circumstances which the Bible points out as proper for correction, reproof, etc. A parent may correct a child ; a teacher, a pupil. It is not meddling for a parent to have knowledge and direction of all that is going on in the house, nor for the teacher to be in touch with the affairs of the school. The personal rights of the members of a family or of a school should never be lost sight of, however. A householder and those who are serving a house come under the same rule as do parent and child, teacher and pupil. One of the greatest lessons of life is to learn that one who spends considerable time in correcting others, even though it be properly done and well, is prone to forget himself. One's first duty is to bring himself into harmony with the Divine arrangement, and to keep himself there.

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“ . . . and Peter.”

(A Story of the Tenderness of Jesus)

IN the grey light of an early dawn three women approached timidly to a rock-hewn vault on an errand of love. They had come, as early as the Sabbath laws and the darkness of night allowed, to complete a work performed in haste before the Sabbath day began. When the One they loved and followed had been lowered from the Cross and borne to His quiet resting-place, these ministering souls had enfolded in the winding-sheets some small supply of aromatic spice. The near approach of the day of rest had cut short the embalming work, and the body of the Lord had been laid aside and left until the law permitted this service to the dead to be resumed. (Luke 23:56.) With astonishment they found the sealing stone removed; by whom, or how, they did not know. Peering into the dark recess, they thought to see the swathed recumbent form of their beloved Lord, upon which, with busy hands, they hoped at length to complete the needed work. Entering within, they found not the body of the Lord, although the grave-clothes lay in their place.

To their surprise a living angel from on high replaced the holy dead, whose radiant form struck wonderment and awe into their hearts.

Sensing their fear, the angel spoke, and told them that their Master was alive again, just as He had told them in earlier days. “Go tell these things to His disciples, and Peter, and tell them He will see them in Galilee.” “. . . and Peter! . . .” “To His disciples and Peter . . .” as though, for his grievous sin, Peter would think he had now no right to esteem himself the Lord’s disciple.

These were the angel’s words, but they revealed the Master’s love. He who told the angel to say that He proposed to meet them in Galilee was He from whom those two comforting words had come. Jesus did not forget the broken anguished heart which wept so sorely at its fall. Jesus had known His man prior to those searching days. “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” said Jesus to His then braggart friend. (Luke 22:32.) *Jesus* knew His man, even though he failed and fell, and knew how to soothe and heal his broken heart.

But the Lord did more than that. Somewhere before that first day was done, the Lord had found Peter alone, and disclosed Himself to Peter’s tearstained eyes. “He was seen of Cephas.” (1 Cor. 15:5.) “The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to Simon,” replied “the eleven,” (Luke 24:34), to the returned ones from Emmaus.

What passed between the Lord and the stricken penitent is veiled in sacred obscurity, but who can doubt that no words of chiding or reproof passed from the Master’s lips, but words of soothing tenderness that fell like healing balm on Peter’s wounded heart.

“. . . and Peter!” Let us write it now “and John! . . . and Mary! . . . and Frank! . . . and Harriett! . . . and . . .!”—every one who in times of strain has failed and fallen to the dust. It needs not to have been Peter’s grievous sin, but each one’s own particular slip—that rapier word! that chilling glance! that wounding act ! that seeming wrong! sad sequence of a moment’s lack of thought.

When the chastened heart, in retrospect, looks back upon its hasty fall, let it remember that a watchful eye has seen it all, and in assuring answer to its tears will say again, “. . . and Peter” “. . . and John” “. . . and Harriett” “and . . . and .

. . .” And so He keeps His “own” by His own word, in His own way. (Reprinted from “Bible Study Monthly”, England.)

The Two Parts of the Work of Redemption.

THE statement of the Law is very positive—"The man that doeth these things shall live by them." Whoever keeps God's commands will live in them and will receive everlasting life as a reward for keeping them. (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) In making the promise of life to the Jews, God did not tell them in what manner He would arrange for its fulfilment. As a matter of fact, although the Jews did not understand the types of the Law Covenant, God had showed how the keeping of that Covenant would give everlasting life; namely, through sacrifice.

In His great Plan of the Ages, God had already provided a Redeemer. (Eph. 1:4). It was, therefore, in view of this provision of Divine grace that the promise of life through keeping the Law could be made. But in *giving* the Law Covenant, God did not omit the great atonement sacrifice, which was the type of the work of Redemption.

That our Lord had some understanding with the Heavenly Father before He was made flesh is self-evident; for His change of nature is represented as a voluntary act on His part. (Phil. 2:8.) He took not upon Himself the nature of angels, but that of the seed of Abraham. He had an object in taking upon Himself the nature of Abraham's descendants. He did so "for the joy that was set before Him." (Heb. 12:2.) This expression implies that He had some knowledge of the nature of the work which He had come to accomplish.

This knowledge which our Lord possessed in His pre-human condition did not include the understanding of all the various types of which He was to be the Antitype, but evidently He knew that this stooping from the heavenly to the earthly nature was a means to an end, which was to be accomplished when He became a man. In order to take this great step, it was necessary for Him to have absolute confidence that the Father would not wish Him to do anything which would be to His injury, but to the contrary, something which would do Him good. So great was His faith in the Father that He wished to do the Father's will at any cost.

The first step toward the achievement of the Father's will was the taking of a nature lower than any on the spirit plane—the human. Then, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:8.) He did not humble Himself before He became a man, but afterwards. As a boy He inquired of the Doctors of the Law what time would be appropriate for Him to enter upon His ministry. Evidently satisfied by His investigation that there was nothing to be done at that time, He returned to His home with His mother and her husband, and was subject to them until He was thirty years old.—Luke 2:51.

At thirty years of age, Jesus offered Himself at Jordan, where He went for no other purpose than to make His consecration. He knew that He had come into the world to be man's Redeemer; that God's will concerning His work of redemption was written in the types and shadows of the Scriptures, and that this will was altogether outside of the moral part of the Law, for it was not obligatory on one who would keep the Law. He also knew that to do this work of redemption He must present Himself in sacrifice. (Psa. 50:5.) Gladly He offered Himself, saying, "Lo, I come. . . . to do Thy will, O My God."

In the Atonement Day offering, our Lord's consecration is pictured by the High Priest when he smote the bullock and killed it. Here we have in the type a picture of our Lord, who was represented by both bullock and priest. The new mind, the new will, the New Creature, offered up the flesh. It was not that He offered up Himself as man's Redeemer; He presented Himself a sacrifice—not to mankind, not to Satan, not to the world, but unto God. He was so loyal that He was ready to sacrifice to the Father everything which He possessed; He was permitted to prove His loyalty and faithfulness even unto death.

As a result of His obedience unto death, even the shameful death of the cross, our Lord was raised from the dead and given the very highest nature—the Divine. In due time He will be permitted to offer the merit of His sacrifice as a Ransom-price for the sins of the whole world, and thus He will become the world's Redeemer.

This word Redeemer is quite broad. It signifies one who obtains control of something and brings it back to a former condition in a legal and satisfactory manner. Our Lord began to do this work. He has accomplished the first part, which in due time will become a satisfactory price for the sins of the world. He has already been highly exalted and thus qualified for the great office of Mediator between God and men. He is waiting merely until the members of His Body be joined to Him and made participators of His glory, and then the work of Restitution for mankind will begin.

Our Lord will be a thousand years in doing the second part of this work of redeeming. At the close of the thousand years the work will have been finished. Now He is the Redeemer, the Restorer, not because He has done the work, but because He has the power and authority to do it. At the close of the thousand years He will be the One who will have accomplished this work of Restitution, and the name Redeemer will be His forever, even though the work of redeeming

will be in the past.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates how clearly our Lord understood the terms and conditions upon which He would please the Father after coming into the world. We are, therefore, not to dogmatise on the subject. But it is probable that He did not know all the experiences through which He would pass while in the flesh, and that some of these were afterwards revealed to Him, as we read that when He came up out of the water, after His baptism, the heavens—the higher things, the spiritual —were opened to Him. (Matt. 3:16.) Thenceforth He was able to appreciate the deeper features of God's Plan.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the secretary—Mr. J. B. Warn, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

“Israel in History and Prophecy” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

CHILDREN'S HYMNS

A new booklet of hymns suitable for children, now numbering 73, as well as numerous choruses, has been compiled by one of our friends, and copies are now available at 1/6 each, post paid.

The Scriptures teach us the best way of living, the noblest way of suffering, and the most comfortable way of dying.—Flavel.

Correspondence.

U.S.A.

Sept. 13th, 1963.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brother—Loving greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus. It has been my desire to write you for some time now, to advise you of our receipt of the book, “The Bible Teachings on the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin Offering, Atonement,” to thank you for your good letter, and to express our appreciation to you for your labor of love in serving us so well and so promptly in sending the book. . . .

My wife, Sister _____, and I have seen

copies of this book and were loaned a copy by Brother..... of the San Francisco Ecclesia. One copy that we saw

had been printed in Australia. Realising how scarce they are we decided to write you dear brethren thinking possibly your supply might be larger. And now we see how the Lord has overruled. . . .

Thank you also for the “Peoples Papers.” My wife called my attention to the article “Undenominational Denominations” beginning on page 4 of your current issue, in which you give a brief resume of the beginning of the Truth work in Australia and its continuance. We appreciate the faithfulness of our brethren and are trying also to be faithful. Last evening Sister and I were putting out a few tracts in the cars at two of the large shopping centers here, hoping to attract a little attention to the Frank & Ernest programme. Our Father is still finding a grain of wheat here and there, and some of the world are at least somewhat comforted by the true “gospel,” and will rejoice in their season.

Brother-Sr. is serving the brethren in Great Britain, France and Switzerland this summer. Dad and Mother were both with Bro. Russell at the Bethel and are both still rejoicing in the Truth.

Sister and I symbolized our consecration in 1942 and are “running for the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Thank you again. Greet the brethren for us. Let us pray for one another and continue to rejoice in the prospect of HIS glorious kingdom and the privilege of sharing in the rewarding work of blessing all the families of the earth together with our Lord and Head. By His grace,—

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.