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Why We Never Go to Shows or Football.

THIS SUBJECT was first brought to mind some years ago as the result of a visit one Sunday afternoon to our Bible Class in Melbourne by a reporter of one of our Melbourne newspapers. During the Bible Study it was evident that our visitor was taking an intelligent interest in the proceedings, and at the close of the meeting asked a number of questions respecting our beliefs and understanding of the Christian life.

A weekly article was appearing in the particular newspaper as a result of this reporter attending the various churches and other gatherings week by week. When his report on our Bible Class appeared in the newspaper some weeks later, without any suggestion on our part, it was entitled — “They Never Go to Shows or Football.” The reporter’s summing up of our conduct as respects The world and its pleasures could not have been better expressed, and it was felt that his choice of a heading in presenting some details about our gatherings was quite a good witness in itself.

It has been thought well to take up this subject again as being a very important one, because what we do with the full time at our disposal for the complete seven days each week, will determine, in the end, whether we are really faithful followers of our Lord, and what kind of an example we are upon the people with whom we live, or with whom we come in contact.

Firstly, in taking our subject — “Why We Never Go to Shows or Football,” — it will be evident that the “We” represents the truly consecrated followers of Christ — it stands for real Christians. In this connection it is important to remember that as “Christ” was the title given to our Lord Jesus from the time of begetting of the holy spirit at His baptism, so the name “Christian” applies correctly only to His anointed followers — those also begotten of the holy spirit.

It is very helpful to note the appropriate steps which are necessary to take in gaining the great favor of membership in God’s family of spirit-begotten sons, and the Scriptures are very clear and revealing in this respect. For instance, it is important to note that coming to Jesus is one thing, but coming after Jesus is quite another. Our Lord declared — “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” (John 6:44.) This drawing or prompting by the Father of those in right heart condition to come to Jesus is for the purpose of their receiving justification by faith, Thus coming to Jesus, full of faith that He is their personal Saviour, and accepting Him as such, these have the assurance — “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1) This is truly an important and essential beginning for all followers of the Master.

We see a further and, equally important step indicated by the invitation of Jesus to His disciples, when He declares — “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.”

(Matt. 16:24.) To come after Jesus in the manner stated, —to deny self and take up the cross — appeals only to a comparatively few of those who have come to Jesus. Because it calls for sacrifice, not many respond; but there is no compulsion for those who cannot appreciate the privilege of accepting this greatest of all invitations ever offered to mankind. Explaining this invitation to discipleship in the full sense, in more detail, our Lord's words to the Jews who felt the heavy burden of trying to keep the law of Moses were — “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt. 11:28-30.)

The Apostle Paul contrasted the house of servants under Moses, with the house of sons under Christ, when he declared — “And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant . . . But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” (Heb. 3:5, 6.)

We become members in the house of sons only by taking the Lord's yoke upon us — being yoked in sacrifice, gladly yielding up our lives to His service — as shown so clearly by the apostle in Rom. 12:1 — “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service.”

Who, that has been drawn of God to Jesus, and has accepted Him as their personal Saviour, becoming justified by faith, and who appreciates this amazing invitation to walk in the steps of Christ by full consecration, could fail to accept it whole-heartedly, rejoicingly? When it is realised that this invitation is possible only “by the mercies of God”, the response of the truly appreciative will surely be — “Take my life and may it be, Lord, acceptable to Thee.” What a wonderful proposition it is to know that our lives may really be “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,” through the merit of our dear Redeemer.

The words of the lovely Consecration Hymn seem so fitting to express the desires of our innermost being, as we yield ourselves fully and completely to the Lord to be used in His service, even unto death. It seems appropriate, then, in presenting our lives to God as individuals, that we consider each of our members as comprising a part of our being to be laid on the altar, a living sacrifice, — my heart, my hands, my feet, my voice, my lips, my silver and my gold, my moments and my days, my intellect, my love, myself.

“Take my will and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.” How expressive of one who feels he delights to take the Lord as his Head and Guide in every avenue of life, just as our Lord felt towards the Heavenly Father — “I come to do Thy will, O God.” In Revelation 20:4 we have revealed the true attitude of the overcoming saints, who gladly give up their own wills that they may do only the Lord's will. — “I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,
Accept this *gift* to-day, for Jesus' sake.
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;
But here I bring, within my trembling hand,
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small;
And Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield mine all.

“Take my heart, it is Thine own; thus in me Thyself enthrone.” Truly it has been stated that the heart is the centre of the affections; therefore, our heart, yielded fully to the Lord would give no divided service, but full and complete in every particular. Speaking for the Lord, the writer of Proverbs declared — “My

son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” (Prov. 23:26.) Yes, indeed; and Paul’s words are so appealing — “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.” And further -- “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.” (2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.) How important it is for the followers of the Master to always realise — “Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price.”

“Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.” Yes, truly, as another hymn writer declared, “Let my hands perform His bidding,” for our Lord on one occasion stated — “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, ‘is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62.) From the Psalmist we also read — “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.” And again -- “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” (Psa. 24:3, 4; 141:2.)

“Beautiful hands, are they that do
The work of the noble, kind and true.”

“Take my feet and let them be swift on errands, Lord for Thee.” “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom. 10:15.) What a favor to run with the glad message of the gospel of peace. And while it may be our heart’s desire to — “Let my feet run in His ways” that may not always be accomplished and so we have the helpful exhortation from the Apostle — “Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” Being properly equipped, with “Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,” is essential to be able to perform that service worthy of our Lord. (Heb. 12:13, 14; Eph. 6:15.) The instructions which Jesus gave to His disciples as He sent them out in His service are also most important to us today

“And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, peace be to this house (if not literally, then, in prayer). And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again.” (Luke 10:5, 6.) “If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.” (Gal. 5:25.)

“Take my voice and let it bring honor always to my king.” It is surely a great privilege to use our voices in the interest of the Lord’s cause, — “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” From the same apostle we read — “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.) From the Revelator we learn of the triumphant chorus which expresses the happiness of all the faithful over-comers during this harvest of the Gospel Age — “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast . . . stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” (Rev. 15:2, 3.) By using their voices to honor the Lord in this life, this class will prove worthy to continue the same in the heavenly kingdom. (See Rev. 14:1-5.) “In their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.” See also Psa. 40:1-3

“He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our Lord.”

“Take my lips and let them be moved with messages from Thee.” The faithful apostle helps us in this matter — “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to

answer every man.” (Col. 4:6.) The Psalmist also adds his testimony — “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.” “Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in thy name . . . And my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.” (Psa. 19:14; 63:3-6.) From Paul, further, we read — “Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 15:5, 6.) What a privilege it is to — “Let my lips speak forth His praise.”

“Take my silver and my gold; nothing, Lord, would I withhold.” The words of Jesus seem so appropriate — “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt. 6:19-21.) And again — “Make to yourselves friends of the mammon (riches) of unrighteousness; that, when it fails, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much . . . No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Luke 16:9-13.)

“Take my moments and my days; let them flow in constant praise.” How important it is that the Christian’s time be used faithfully in the service of the Lord, even the moments each passing day. Paul’s exhortation is most timely for us today, — “See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” (Eph. 5:15-17.) “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Yes, we must seek to redeem, buy back, some time for direct service to God — as much as can be from the necessary daily round and common task. In other words, the Lord’s people are to see that no time is wasted in worldly pleasures and frivolities, and that from the indirect service of God some time may be redeemed for direct service to our Lord and Master. “Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” (Rom. 13:11, 12.)

“Take my intellect and use every power as Thou shalt choose.” In asking the Lord to take our intellect and use our best powers, He expects us to co-operate with Him and become more and more acquainted with the truths of His word, as He declared — “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. The servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8:31, 32, 35, 36.) From the Apostle Paul we also read — “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth, not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.” “Set your affection (mind, intellect) on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:15; Col. 3:2, 3.) (See also Rev. 7:2, 3.)

“Take my love, my God; I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.” Our love that we ask the Lord to take may be very imperfect, but when rendered to Him it will increase and abound as the days go by. What a standard Paul presents to us in 1 Cor. 13:4-8 — “Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.” No, indeed Love is the filling from one’s own Another’s cup.

Love is a daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;
And asks not "Must I give?" but "May I sacrifice?"

"Take myself — I wish to be ever, only, all for Thee." This surely expresses the rendering of our all to the Lord, just as the lovely words of the hymn likewise present the sentiments of our heart "Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus, I've lost sight of all beside."

There is truly no comparison possible when once we have become attached to our Lord and Saviour by those ties that bind our hearts in Christian love. So, with the Apostle we do, indeed, "Give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meat to be partakers (sharers) of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1:12, 13.) Having tasted that the Lord is truly gracious, how could anyone so blessed use consecrated time and talent attending worldly shows or football?

How clearly did the Apostle John express the matter — "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15, 16.)

It matters not if we do not need to "go" to shows — whether they were one mile or more; whether they were next door, or the next room, it would make no difference to God's people. We may be thought narrow-minded, but that is to be expected, seeing that we are walking in the 'narrow way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' (Matt. 7:14.) The words of the hymn give a true assessment of values

"O! what are all earth's gilded toys,
Compared with heaven's eternal joys?
Or even to the feast now spread,
For pilgrims through the desert led?"

The words of Paul in 1 Cor. 13:11 could also apply in this connection — "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man (in Christ), I put away childish things." "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Faithful when with tears thine eyes are dim,
Faithful when Joy's cup o'erflows its brim;
Faithful when God seems to veil His face,
Faithful when He crowns thy work with grace.
Faithful, though thy loved ones turn aside,
Lips that praised thee once, in harshness chide;
Faithful, though success enwreathes thy brow,
Faithful, should the world before thee bow.
Faithful till hath fled life's fleeting breath,
Eager hands lie folded still in death.
"Faithful unto death!" Lord, day by day,
Help me thus to keep the narrow way!
Strengthen me to bear the scorn and shame—
Portion of all those who take Thy name.

“Faithful unto death!” When all is done, Cross is changed to Crown, the victory won, Let me hear Thee say, O blessed Lord, “Child, come enter into thy reward! Faithful thou hast been, come share with Me Glory, Honor, Immortality!”

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

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Appreciation of Booklet.

THE following has been received from one of our brethren and is gladly made known for the benefit of all readers of our “Peoples Paper.”

Recently, I have been looking at the teachings concerning Christ’s Second Advent, and have found the booklet “Christ’s Return —His Revealing and Manifestation,” published by the Berean Bible Institute, most interesting and helpful.

Those of your readers who have seen this booklet would be greatly helped by the perusal of its pages, I am sure. It deals with some of our Lord’s parables which illustrate various aspects of His second coming. The “Young Nobleman” of Luke 19th chapter, also the “Virgins” parable of Matt. 25th chapter are examined, showing that our Lord would be present for some time unknown to the world of mankind in general, and known only to His watching servants.

The thought of the secret presence of Christ may be a new one to many Christians, but it seems to me to be the correct Scriptural teaching, as indicated also by the meaning of the Greek word “parousia” used by our Lord in Matt. 24:27, 37, 39 etc., in answer to the disciples’ question in Matt. 24:3. “Parousia” means “presence” (see Diaglott) as of one who has arrived, not “coming” as in the Authorized Version, which applies to one who is on the way. How we rejoice in this thought of our Lord’s “parousia” (presence) as the Chief Reaper of the Harvest, and in the thought of the near approach of His Kingdom.

Copies of this booklet “Christ Return — His Revealing and Manifestation” are supplied at 1/- per copy, post paid, or free to those unable to purchase. Apply **to- BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE,**

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Gentleness.

(Contributed Article)

“Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy right hand hath holden me tip, and thy gentleness hath made me great.” (Psa. 18:35.)

DAVID, in one of his psalms, is telling us that something entirely apart from himself had made him great — “Thy gentleness.” We cannot wonder over the psalmist’s greatness for the Almighty was his Counsellor and promoting his cause.

Jehovah never failed in manifestations of love and gentleness in His dealings with His typical people, wandering and rebellious Israel, forever disobeying and repenting, forever falling short of the ideal set before them by the prophets whom God raised up to lead and teach them, and always living far beneath the privileges which they might have enjoyed under the gracious provisions of so great a theocracy.

Times without number God had rescued them from most desperate situations, given them glorious victories over their enemies and brought them safely into places of rest and quietness; yes, “beside still waters.” Like as a father, the Lord had pitied Israel, and because Israel feared Him and was striving in her exceedingly human way to obey Him, God was gentle, compassionate, merciful. • He bore with her backslidings, not appearing to mark every failure, but encouraging the feeble attempts which she made to please Him. Every chastisement was given because He loved His people with, divine and fatherly love. He felt every stroke of the rod His hand applied, and in pity He removed their afflictions as they had learned in some measure the lessons He sought to inculcate.

We recall, too, the tenderness that King David displayed as he fled before his wicked son, Absalom, who, with an army of insurrectionists, was following his father, intent upon his destruction. David had numbered the people who had passed over Jordan with him and divided them into three companies, each company under a captain. With unspeakable sadness the king said, “I will surely go forth with you myself, also.” That broken-hearted father could not endure the thought of his men fighting against his beloved son, knowing their intent to kill him. But the people with David would not allow him to go. “And the king stood by the gate side of Mahanaim, and commanded, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom; and all the people heard.” (2 Sam. 18:1-6) What pathos, heartache and humiliation the father’s words displayed. He had shown that he had learned a good lesson from God’s dealings with himself and his people.

We remember the gentleness of our Saviour at His first advent, how His heart overflowed with love and compassion toward the people. We recall the two blind men sitting by the wayside and when they heard that Jesus passed by, they cried out, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.” (Matt. 20:31-34.) “And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him,

If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.” (Mark 1:40-42.)

When Judas escorted a crowd of men, officers and soldiers, with torches and weapons to arrest Jesus, our Lord, knowing all things, went forth and said unto them, “Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.” (John 18:4, 5,

8.) This remarkable composure and courage, the calm, quiet poise of mind and heart under such cruel circumstances is nothing short of amazing to us. And when impetuous Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, Jesus gently said, "Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him." (Luke 22:51).

It was undoubtedly because of the trust and confidence Jesus had in His Father, with entire submission to the Father's will for Himself, that He maintained such gentleness, meekness and quiet unperturbed spirit, unruffled in every experience. Consider Him, too, before Pilate; when questioned concerning Himself, "He answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly." Then Pilate said, "Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." (Matt. 27:14; John 19:10, 11.) Jesus knew that His Father's unlimited power was at His bidding; twelve legions of angels were at His disposal had He so desired it that way, but He chose rather the shameful humiliation, the bitter anguish of the cross, knowing that His Father's way was best. Yes, His gentleness had indeed made Jesus the great One that trod this earth.

Also regarding the little called-out class that the Father is developing and proving now, the feet members of His Gospel Age house of sons, how gently has He led these, for "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them. that reverence him." When we consider how the Lord has led us in our individual lives we are amazed how gently He has led us. step by step to the position wherein we now stand. How gently He has dealt with us in our weaknesses, our short comings; how often have we repeated the same errors, and how often we have had to go to Him. through Jesus to receive cleansing and help and encouragement. Yes, and how gently He has chastised us and pointed us to the wonderful example of our Saviour, and said, "This. is the way, walk ye in it." Yes, as David puts it in Psa. 86:15 — "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."

Jesus also exhorts all those who are sincerely striving to follow Him; He tells us in John 13:34 — "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

The Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Tim. 2:24 — "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all, apt to teach, patient," and. this is to apply to us as brethren and sisters in_ Christ. Further, we are instructed in Col. 3:12 — "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forgiving one another; even as Christ forgave - you, so also do ye." In doing this, in helpful, kindly deeds, one to another, we are keeping Christ's commandment, and also showing to our Heavenly Father our love to Him, for it is. written — "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." (1 John 4:20.) Also we are becoming a little more like Jesus in the gentle acts we do, for he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him and He in him, for this is the great objective of it all — to be like Jesus and to see Him as He is, to be called the. sons of God. It may not seem very much, but it is the little things that mean so much in our loving Heavenly Father's eyes; so, be kind to one another, be gentle, be loving. Yes, Thy gentleness can indeed make us great.

Keeping the Faith.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”-2 Tim.4:7.

WAS there ever a nobler soldier of the Cross than St. Paul — the Redeemer alone excepted? Soldiers of fortune and patriots have indeed left their marks in the world and on the pages of history, but not one of them has left so indelible a mark as St. Paul. The motive power influencing others has generally been selfishness, but the motive power of the Christian is the reverse — love. Others hazarded and laid down their lives in self-interest, or in the interest of their kin or tongue. St. Paul, copying his Master, laid down his life for Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, to assist in gathering the “elect” to be the Bride of Christ — that ultimately through the glorified King and His glorified Bride, all the families of the earth may receive the blessings which God waits to give through Abraham’s Seed. — Gal. 3:29.

‘ God is seeking only for heroes now. By and by He will deal with the remainder, helpfully. The “elect” must all be courageous, “conformed to the image of His Son” — heroes. Hence the promise to the Church is “to him that over- cometh.” And let us remember that scripturally considered this character which the Lord seeks may be developed in very humble stations; no matter how low, all may develop the overcoming qualities which the Lord will reward. (1 Cor. 1:26-29.)

When writing the words of our text St. Paul realised that the close of his career was near — his course was finished. He recognised as a Christian that he had certain lessons to learn in the School of Christ and this was a part of his course of preparation for joint-heirship with Christ in the glories of the Messianic Kingdom. The course included not merely theory, but also practice. He not only theoretically learned about Christ, but experimentally. He became a partaker with Him in the sufferings of the present time. And sympathetically he was permitted to enter into a large degree of knowledge of the “mystery” of the Divine Plan hidden from the world.

Not only had his own course of instruction been a thorough one, but he had been given a post-graduate course as an ambassador for his Lord and Redeemer and as an apostle for the brethren, the Church. Moreover, he recognised the fact that all such as become members of the Body of Christ are so directly under the divine supervision and regulations that their times are in God’s hand — all of their affairs of life, temporal and spiritual. As the Master’s death could not occur “until His hour was come,” so likewise it is with His consecrated members.

He had kept the faith and the faith had kept him. Many do not realise how important are knowledge and a correct faith. “My people perish for lack of knowledge” is the Lord’s testimony. And their faith can keep pace only with their knowledge, for faith must have a basis. A correct life depends greatly upon a correct faith. Why did our forefathers burn one another at the stakes in a diabolical manner? because they were governed by error. False doctrines, styled by the Apostle “doctrines of devils,” had been presented to them and they had believed them. And the legitimate outcome of the wrong belief, the wrong faith, was wrong doing. Believing that God purposed the torture of His creatures ‘for centuries in purgatory or for countless millions of years in eternal torment, they copied the misconception of the Almighty in their lives, to our horror.

But St. Paul had kept the faith — the true faith once delivered unto the saints — faith in the Redeemer’s sacrifice; faith in its application on our behalf; faith in our justification by the Father on that account; faith in the glorious promises of God’s Word; faith in the Lord and faith in the brethren. Surely it meant something to keep the faith — especially when we realise that our great adversary, Satan, is on the alert continually to take it from us or turn or twist it to our loss or injury.

The crown mentioned, the Apostle had seen for many years, with the eye of his faith, as a part of the

Lord's promise. He had, absolute confidence in the Lord and in the promise he had received from Him. That crown had been his cause of rejoicing for many years, not because of pride or ambition, but because of love and benevolence. He would love to receive that crown because it would be the mark of Divine appreciation and love for him; and a mark of his faithfulness. He esteemed it because it would afford him untold opportunity of blessing his fellowmen in association with his Lord and the brethren on the plane of glory during the Millennium.

He hoped for this crown, but did not hope to receive it at death. He knew the Bible teaching on the subject of the resurrection—that this was his God's provision for the communication of His blessing, first for the Church, and subsequently for the world. He knew and taught that there would be "a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15.) He desired to have a share with his Redeemer in all of His glorious Kingdom work, and he knew that it could not begin until the completion of this Gospel Age, when all the elect Church, as members of the Bride of Christ, would share in "His resurrection," to glory, honour, immortality and glorious Kingdom privileges. — Phil. 3:10, 11.

It was for this reason that he proceeded to declare that the crown was laid up for him—awaiting him—not at death, but at the time of his resurrection. That crown the Lord would give to him and to all others in the attitude of heart to appreciate His revelation at the Second Advent—"that day." True, not many at the present time love His appearing. The majority, not only of the world, but also of Christians, seeking but not finding in pleasures, riches and honours of men, have certain ambitions along these lines which they would like to satisfy first, and then possibly they might be willing for the Lord to establish His Kingdom. But, no! by the time their lives have been spent in such pursuits they are usually thoroughly disappointed and bewildered and generally further than ever from seeking the Kingdom.

None but the faithful will receive this crown. Thank God, the remainder will not be tortured, but, on the contrary, will be blessed by their crowned brethren, from whom, as the Christ of God, will go the blessings of restitution through the agency of the Messianic Kingdom. Eventually all the blind eyes of understanding will be opened—eventually all will see the great Messiah, though invisible to the natural sight. Then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.

St. Paul closes his exhortation by reciting that in his trial before Nero some in whom he had full confidence had forsaken him, and he concludes that the Lord, nevertheless, stood with him and strengthened him, and that he had every confidence in His care to the end of the way.

Tracts Available.

The article—"Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ's Return?" which appeared in last month's "Peoples Paper" will be available shortly in tract form. Friends who can use these to good advantage are invited to procure these tracts which are supplied free from the Tract Fund. Various other tracts also available.

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid: orders may be placed by quoting numbers. as follows-

- (1) -Just for To-day,”
- (2) “One Here and There.
- (3) ‘How Readest Thou?,”
- (4) “The New Leaf,
- (5) “The The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope--Love,
- (6) Drop a Pebble in the Water,”
- (7) “My Bible and I,”
- (8) “Love’s Victory,”
- (9) “The Touch of the Master’s Hand,-
- (10) -Some Worthy Attainments,
- (11) “Come Unto Me,”
- (12) “Somewhere the Light is Shining,”
- (13) “The Secret of His Presence.”
- (14) “Watching and Praying,”
- (15) “Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,-
- (16) “Not Seeing, Yet Believing,-
- (17) “Hitherto and Henceforth,”
- (12) “The Lord My Shepherd,”
- (13) “Into His Marvellous Light,”
- (14) “Right was The Pathway,”
- (15) “This is My Will for Thee.-
- (16) “Are Ye Able?”

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 Waymoath Street.--Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

“Daily Heavenly Manna.”—A new supply of this helpful book is in stock. In good, strong binding, with birthday recording pages, this one dollar edition is priced at 10/6

Revised Standard Version.—A new edition of this Bible is now available in strong cloth binding at 19/9, plus 1/3 postage.