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## In Your Faith Supply Virtue.

(Convention Address)

“Yea, and for this very cause, adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue” (2 Pet. 1:5, Rev Ver)

THE connection of these words with the preceding is more accurately rendered by the translation of the Revised Version, which for “besides this” substitutes “for this very cause.” That is to say, the exhortations of our text, and of subsequent verses, are all based upon the bestowment on us of “exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”

These radiant words, which seem to carry us far away into a dreamland of ecstasy, are bolted together in the closest manner, with the homeliest duty of diligent self-culture. A fanatic would have said—“We are partakers of the divine nature, therefore we are absolved from toil.” Peter says—“We are partakers of the divine nature, therefore let us fully appreciate our privileges, and yield ourselves in hearty obedience, in co-operation with the heavenly call.”

That is plain common sense at all events, and may assure us that we are not listening to a mystical dreamer with his head in the clouds, when we listen to this writer, telling us that the holy spirit of God is dwelling in and working within the consecrated Christian’s heart.

We have here in this and the subsequent verses, seven of the prominent Christian graces. We will consider, for a few moments, the first of these which the Apostle Peter called “virtue.” Consider first what is this virtue. Now, virtue is not a common word in the New Testament. It belongs to another dialect altogether. It is taken from the language of philosophers and moralists, rather than of evangelists and Apostles. What those call virtue the New Testament calls righteousness; and on the single occasion in which the Apostle Paul uses the word, he puts it, as it were, in inverted commas, as belonging to another order of thinking than his own. He says, “If there be any virtue . . . think on these things.”

The Apostle Peter uses the word three times in his letters; twice in regard to God, and only this once in regard to man. We can scarcely apply the expression in its ordinary sense to the excellences of the divine nature; and here the word cannot be intended to bear its usual generic meaning, if for no other reason, because it is followed immediately by a number of special virtues; and, however little systematical the Galilean fisherman may have been in stating this list of graces, we can scarcely suppose him to start with a word that swallows up all the rest, and immediately afterwards to add a number of specific forms of it. That would be as if one were to say—“There were a crowd of men, and Frenchmen, and Germans, and Englishmen.” If for no other reason than that, we must take this word as meaning some special form of moral excellence, which may stand in line along with its companions.

No better suggestion has been made than that which takes as meaning a certain manly energy, vigour, and firmness of disposition, which is the first outcome of Christian faith, and may well be the first aim of Christian effort. Now, that strength of nature, firm tenacity of character will, at bottom, be neither more or less than a good, strong will; for a man’s strength is the strength of his will. That being understood, we may ask ourselves for a moment what are the shapes in which this strength, this manly energy, will manifest itself?

There should flow from faith a tenacious vigour which masters circumstances, and does not let them work with us as they please. True, the ship can only be carried by the wind and currents, but, equally true, if there be a strong hand on the tiller, and the canvas be wisely set, she can sail almost in the wind’s eye; and two vessels, under the impulse of precisely the same atmospheric and marine conditions, can head and move in almost opposite directions.

Circumstances do make us, but it depends on us what they make us.

The virtue of our text will manifest itself first, in determining what outward things are to do for us, and then in bending them and coercing them, even whilst we submit to them. Man governs Nature by obeying it, and he obeys it in order to govern it. We obey circumstances in order to harness them to our car. Though they supply the force, the guidance lies in the hand that holds the reins and pulls the bit. The strength of the Christian man will manifest itself in ruling outward things, and making them subservient, whether they be sorrowful or joyful, to the highest end of all, even his larger possession of the spirit of courage, the spirit of love and of a sound mind—the spirit of sonship—the spirit of CHRIST.

In like manner, the virtue meant by our text will manifest itself in the rigid subjugation, by the energy of a strong will, of our own inclinations, desires, tastes, passions, and the like, which all seek to assert themselves, and which the more mightily and ungoverned they work, the weaker a man is. A strong passion means a weak man; and a strong will means passions weakened, and all desires and impulses tamed and taught to know the master's hand when it lifts the rod and bids, or if needful beats, the beast that is in us all into quietness and submission. There is no strength, worth calling by the name, in any man who has not the power of weakening and silencing his worse and lower self.

This manly energy, which all Christians are bade in the very first place to cultivate, will teach us independence of other people. As you are strong that you may, and in proportion as you do, master circumstances and give the law to your nature, so wise strength will show itself in, and will be increased by, letting other people go their way. Let them find their own fashions of life and of work; be independent of their praise or blame, whilst profiting by their criticisms; learn not to live upon their smiles; dare to be voices and not echoes, and to take your commandments, not from the habits of your fellow men or your associates, but from the lips which alone have power to command, and whose approval is praise indeed.

In the control of outward things, in the management and mastery of ourselves, and in independence of the judgments and practices of the world, the Christian man's faith should blossom into a virtue which is manly energy enlightened by knowledge, and softened by gentleness, and able to control and resist.

Strength of will and determined purpose of heart to do the whole will of God is absolutely essential, and no child of God will gain anything worth while unless he has that virtue well and strongly developed. For there is so much more in our circumstances of life to draw us wrong than to draw us right, that unless we have this divinely-given strength we are sure to go wrong. A feeble constitution with low vitality catches any disease that is going, whilst a strong one passes with impunity through the infected air. If we leave our field gates open, the wild cattle are sure to come in and trample down our crops, and eat up all the tender herbage that is there. As one of the poets expresses it

“Who keeps no guard upon himself is slack,  
And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.”

For peace there is needed strength; for service there is needed this virtue. For all work is warfare in this world, and no man does good service for his fellows or for his Master, except on condition of battling with and overcoming opposing selfishness and slothfulness in the strength which the Lord supplies. Christians must fight in the strength of the Lord in order to do effective work, and unless we have this manly energy and virtue, we shall be lazy workmen in the Master's fields.

The gentle Christ is the pattern of this manly force, as of everything else that is lovely and of good report. All that the world adores as power looks weak, hysterical, and strained by the side of the calm gentleness of that life which bears no trace of effort, and yet is mightier than all besides. He is Power, because He is Love. The might of meekness and the omnipotence of gentleness are taught us in Jesus Christ. “Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass.” The trampling of the warhorse is vulgar and weak beside that slowpaced persistent march of the King, whose goings are from everlasting. “In thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness.” “Be strong and quit yourselves like men”; and that you may “let all things be done with love.”

Now, let us observe that the root of this virtue, or energy, is in faith. The Revised Version, to which we again appeal, improves our translation by reading, instead of “add to,” “supply in.” That is to say, virtue, is not to be piled upon “faith,” and “knowledge” upon “virtue,” and so on, as if they were unrelated graces, put on the top one of another, like bricks upon a wall. It is not to faith that virtue is to be added, but it is in faith that virtue is to be found. The germ, the root, the vital point from which is developed virtue and all that follows is Faith.

The great series of Christian graces here is a case of growth or development, one after another springing from the primary Christian characteristic of faith in Jesus Christ, which Implicitly contains them all. Each link in the chain

grows out of that which precedes, and leads forward to that which follows.

The thought that underlies this exhortation is that a Christian man's faith in Christ is the productive root of all goodness of character. That is not because of anything in faith itself, but altogether because of that on which faith lays hold. We do not for a moment mean to say that these beauties of character which follow in these verses cannot be produced without faith. That would not be true; but if they ever are, they are of a more imperfect form than they might be if they were rooted in the soil of Christian confidence in Jesus Christ. If they are ever produced, as undoubtedly they are, independently of that exercise of Christian faith, they lack at once their best security, their most vital power, and their highest consecration. Apart from that, let us take this thought home to ourselves, that the New Testament knows nothing of a faith the only effect of which is to obtain pardon, and that, unless what we call our trust in Jesus Christ is working in our lives all manner of fair and noble things, there is something seriously, if not fatally, wrong. Trust in Christ is the opening of the sluices, and if the sluices are open, depend upon it, the Water of Life will come in. Faith is that condition of our possessing all things lovely and of good report; because faith opens the door for the entrance of God Himself, and where God comes His holy spirit brings all manner of rich spiritual blessings of peace and joy and love and holy fellowship.

If any have the notion that faith is mainly concerned in laying hold of a certain provision by which we may escape the wrath of God and obtain forgiveness, let them widen their notions of what faith is, and what it is for. If any, on the other hand, are saying that the system of redemption, by Jesus Christ is not in accord with the highest morality because it substitutes faith for character, let them revise their thoughts and understand this, that Christianity does not substitute faith for character, but that it puts faith as the foundation of character, and demands that every man who professes that he has trust in Jesus Christ shall show his faith by his works. A faith which does not grow into virtue and knowledge and all the other links in this chain is, if not dead, at least ready to perish. If it has not vitality enough to fruit, there is but little difference between its enfeebled vital force and absolute death. Let us consider this matter carefully.

Still further, need it be said that the exercise of confidence in God, as revealed to us in Jesus Christ, has a direct tendency to produce this strong form of character of which our text speaks? Trust will always make a person strong. As long as there is confidence, there is power; as long as there is trust, there is peace and vigour. That is why our adversary, Satan, goes about trying to destroy our faith. He will try to make us doubt God. He will try to break down our confidence in the faithfulness and integrity of our brethren. He is the accuser of the brethren. We must withstand the evil one; we must "resist the devil, steadfast in the faith."

Faith, as communion with God, will bring strength. For, when we get close to Him, then all the tumult of life dies into silence, as the city noises were dulled to the ear of the priest in the Holy Place. Faith, as the realization of the Unseen, will bring strength; for in the measure in which we walk in the light of that solemn, certain, blessed future, in that measure will its sun put out the fire in our chambers and dim the glories of our artificial lights. O, hold fast by Jesus Christ, commune with God day by day, realise that great future as we call it, but which we had better call the enwrapping, unseen present, and strength will be yours to resist—"to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." (Eph. 6:13.)

Lastly, a word as to the cultivation of this virtue by our own effort. Again, we invite attention to a preferred rendering of the text. "Giving all diligence" might be more accurately rendered as the Revised Version has it—"adding on your part all diligence." The original word is a very graphic and picturesque one. It means, "bringing in by the side of," when fully and though clumsily, yet accurately translated. Bringing in your diligence by the side of what? By the side of that "partaking of the divine nature," which has just been mentioned. God's gift does not make my effort unnecessary, but rather requires and demands it as its completion and consequence.

This is not the time to talk about the great and wide subject of the relation and co-operation of the divine gift and the human effort in man's salvation. The whole matter may be looked at from the one point of view or from the other. You may so fix attention on the divine element as to lose sight of the human; you may so fix attention on the human as to lose sight of the divine. It is like some complicated pattern, where, as you focus the eye, you can persuade yourself that you see white on a black ground, or black on a white ground.

Our text takes the divine element as first and fundamental, and does not say—"God does, therefore you need not"; nor does it say, "Shut your eyes and open your mouths, and take what drops into them." But it does say that it is God that worketh in, therefore do you work out; and inasmuch as you are partakers of the divine nature, see that you "give all diligence"—a commonplace virtue—on your part, to work into your characters, and to work out in your conduct, whatsoever of the divine beauty or purity has passed from Him to you. Someone has said that man's salvation is one hundred per cent. God's provision; and we say, yes, that is true; but if the salvation freely provided for you and me is to be effective, it will require a one hundred per cent. effort on our part. We are required to love the Lord with all our heart, and mind and being and strength. God will prove us to see whether we love Him with our whole heart.

The general principle, then, is plain; the special application of it here, as to the manner in which, and the degree to which, the weakest of us—weak by natural disposition, and weak by circumstances—may make ourselves strong by laying hold of the divine strength, and cultivating that strength, needs not many words. The best way by which we can give diligence to make ourselves strong, is by cultivating and nurturing the faith which strengthens. Let us get into the habit of thinking about Jesus Christ all through our days; let the word of Christ dwell in us richly; let us get the habit of bringing mind and heart and will under the dominion of the spirit of God's Word, not only on certain days and special occasions; not only at our times of prayer, but all through our common-place work and trivial duties, and we will find His strength more and more controlling and subduing and strengthening our minds and characters. It is by "beholding and reflecting as in a glass the glory of the Lord," that we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.)

This heavenly strength can be obtained in larger measure, too, by the simple process of habitually acting as if we possessed it; that is, we must claim by faith the grace and strength so freely offered to us by our blessed Lord. (See Mark 11:22-24.) We must "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." By the Lord's grace we may cultivate the habit of subduing and suppressing the desires of our lower natures; and of cultivating and fostering the heavenly desires and of setting our minds on the things above. We can stop our ears to men's voices; and we can acquire the habit of mastering and coercing circumstances. The will gets dominion by asserting its dominion, and "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:4, 5.)

We can accustom the lower parts of our nature to go quietly in harness, and break them in, through faith in the Lord, if we will. Our Saviour said—"Without Me ye can do nothing," and the Apostle Paul said—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

There are probably no better ways of developing this strenuous vigour from faith than these two. First, live near to the source of it in earnest prayer and watchfulness—"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." (Isa. 40:31.) Then let us exercise the little that we have, and it will grow by exercise. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might," and "Put on the whole armour of God." (Eph. 6:10, 11.)

Let us keep close to the food which the Lord has especially provided for us at this time of His presence. The six

Volumes of Scripture Studies, provided by divine grace, are a veritable mine of heavenly truth, beautifully and simply stated. Let us not under-value the help they contain. Let us fill our minds and hearts with God's thoughts by keeping close to His Word and by using the helps to its understanding.

If we are not watchful, the influences of the world will crowd out and hinder the influence of God's holy spirit, and our development in heavenly grace and truth will be hindered. O, how earnestly *we* need to watch and pray, and put on the whole armour of God, so that we may gain that heavenly strength and grace of Christlike character necessary for us to be over-comers in the great fight against our three-fold enemy, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Our Lord, in His prayer for His followers, said—"Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth"; and again, "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." (John 6:28, 29.) "The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:17.) "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (1 John 5:4.)

Increase our faith, beloved Lord!  
For Thou alone canst give  
The faith that takes Thee at Thy Word,  
The faith by which we live.

Increase our faith! So weak are we  
That we both may and must  
Commit our very faith to Thee,

Entrust to Thee our trust.  
Increase our faith! For there is yet  
Much land to be possessed;  
And by no other strength we get  
Our heritage of rest.

Increase our faith! On this broad shield  
All fiery darts be caught;  
We must be victors in the field  
Where Thou for us hast fought.

Increase our faith, that we may claim  
Each starry promise sure,  
And always triumph in Thy name,  
And to the end endure.

Increase our faith, O Lord, we pray,  
That we may not depart  
From Thy commands, but all obey  
With free and loyal heart.

Increase our faith—increase it still—  
From heavenward hour to hour,  
And in us gloriously “fulfil  
The work of faith with power.”

Increase our faith, that never dim  
Or trembling it may be,  
Crowned with the “perfect peace” of him “  
Whose mind is stayed on Thee.”

Increase our faith, for Thou hast prayed  
That it should never fail;  
Our steadfast anchorage is made  
With Thee, within the veil.

Increase our faith, that unto Thee  
More fruit may still abound;  
That it may grow “exceedingly”,  
And to Thy praise be found.

Increase our faith, O Saviour dear,  
By Thy sweet sovereign grace,  
Till, changing faith for vision clear,  
We see Thee face to face!

F. R. Havergal.

## Pilgrim Way Ended.

Friends who have attended the meetings in Sydney over some years past will remember Sister Brien, of Guildford, who finished the pilgrim way in February last. Our dear Sister had rejoiced in the truth for upwards of twenty-five years, and had truly made it her own as was manifest by her devoted love for the Lord and the brethren, as well as for His Word.

One of our brethren has written as follows —"The passing of our dear Sister Brien will be a great loss to us, and more so to the members of her earthly family, but her trials are over and she will have entered into her reward. I would like to emphasize Sister's quiet and submissive spirit, and her evident trust in all the precious promises contained in God's Word. It was always a pleasure to behold Sister's smiling face, and her readiness to help those who met in the name of the Lord. We could all learn from the attitude our dear Sister Brien showed so well; that is, to put ourselves in the background and never to show the spirit of opposition or intolerance."

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## Convention News.

THE Convention held at Adelaide, S.A., during the four days of the Easter season was much blessed of the Lord, and those privileged to attend expressed their thankfulness and appreciation of the good things provided by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. It is always a pleasure to meet with those of "like precious faith," and especially at Convention seasons when special blessings are bestowed upon consecrated and truth-hungry hearts. It was a pleasure to welcome to our midst visiting brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, Victoria; also two brethren from far away Queensland, as well as from the country town of Murray Bridge, South Australia.

Much thanksgiving and praise is offered to our loving Heavenly Father for the privilege of attending this Convention, and being able, by His grace, to participate in the special blessings bestowed. What "riches of grace" has been extended to those who have been called of God to the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ. As we contemplate the honor bestowed upon us, how we should be humbled with the thought of our littleness and personal unworthiness. The grace (unmerited favor) of God is endless, and cannot be computed. The wealth of the grace of God towards us in Christ is unsearchable, but as we try to discover some of the bounties of His love, encouraged by the promises of His Word, and the leadings of His holy spirit, we are led to fountains of grace and truth, and we exclaim with the Psalmist —"With Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light." Yes, and He "makes us to drink of the river of His pleasures."

The portions of Scripture which were chosen for Bible Studies were as follows—Heb. 12:1-7; Rev. 11:15-19; 1 Pet. 1:13-19; and Col. 3:1-10. These inspired messages from the faithful Apostles were a means of comfort and encouragement to us as we endeavoured to receive the instructions with obedient hearts; and thus to be "doers of the Word and not hearers only."

The various addresses from the brethren were helpful as each one endeavoured to encourage and build us up in "our most holy faith." The topics for these addresses were—"Rainbow Signs"; "Humanity Deluded by Demon Doctrines"; "The Stone That The Builders Rejected"; "Prayer"; "We Have An Inheritance"; "Great Decisions"; "The Bible Teaching on Pentecost and The Trinity"; "Lesson and Blessing from Shortcomings"; "Except the Lord Build the House"; and "In Your Faith Supply Virtue."

It was a pleasure to receive messages of Christian love and Greeting from various Ecclesias and also from individual brethren; and it was good to be reminded that these dear brethren were remembering us in prayer for God's blessing upon our gatherings in His name. Some of our members were unable to attend the meetings because of physical disability, and these were especially remembered in our prayers that the Lord's sustaining grace may support and bless them in the narrow way that leads to life.

The Praise and Testimony meetings afforded opportunity to tell of God's goodness and favor, and of the lessons and experiences along the way, as also did the "Hymns We Like and Why" session. At the closing session the message to the brethren was chosen and is found in 1 Pet. 1:13 and Rom. 15:13.

The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast and singing of the beautiful hymns "Blest be the tie that binds our

hearts in Christian Love” and “God be with you till we meet again,” followed by the concluding prayer of thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for all mercies and blessings received, and requesting His continued favor and blessing upon our way in the days that lie before us.

## Convention Notes.

Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention are now available free from this office.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocca binding, is now available at 60/-. Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

“**The Divine Plan of the Ages**”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

“**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.

## Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE memorial of Christ’s death was gladly celebrated by the brethren of the Melbourne Class on the evening of April 21st, in response to the request of our dear Saviour that this be observed “in remembrance of Him.” Though some members were absent through sickness, the attendance was very good, and a blessed time was experienced with the Lord’s presence in our midst.

Our studies prior to the anniversary of our Lord’s death proved very helpful in impressing the graciousness of the sacrifice of our dear Redeemer in becoming the antitypical Passover Lamb, so that the “firstborns unto God,” being “passed over” during this Gospel Age, may then be associated with Christ in delivering the “groaning creation from the bondage of corruption” in the new day of the Millennial Age.

During our service some lovely hymns were sung, prayers were offered in thanksgiving to God and especially on behalf of the Lord’s people likewise observing the Memorial Supper throughout the world, Bible readings from Mark 14:12-46; John 18:12-40; 19:1-30 were used, and an address was given showing the privilege of the Lord’s people in appropriating the merit of Christ, that they may then “present their bodies a living sacrifice” in the steps of the Master. The partaking of the emblems thus signified our “remembrance of Christ,” our justification through faith in His sacrificial death, and also our willingness to be broken with Him and have our life poured out as we continue our daily pilgrimage by His grace and strength.

Geelong, Vic.

It isn’t your position which makes you unhappy, but your disposition.

On Tuesday evening, April 21st, friends of our fellowship met once again to remember our Lord in the manner He requested during His last night upon earth. The quiet, solemn service of suitable hymns, prayer, Bible readings (John 17:1-12, 24-26; 18:1-14, 28-40; 19:1-30; 1 Cor. 11:26-32), and a short address ended with the partaking of the emblems. We esteemed it a privilege to be able to show our love for the Lord in this way.

In our pre-studies to the Memorial season many good lessons were reimpresed concerning both the primary and secondary (deeper) significance in partaking of both the bread and the cup. Journeying out of Egypt, Israel of old complained at the bitter waters, but God directed them to a certain tree, which, when happy, or cast in made the water sweet. The tree which makes our bitter sweet is the understanding we gain concerning our Heavenly Father’s purpose in us, as we become associated with His Son.

These Memorial observances are like breaking our “alabaster boxes” to show our love and appreciation of Him who has done so much for us, and serves to deepen or increase that oneness with the Father and His Son, and with each other, for which our Saviour prayed just prior to His crucifixion.

Adelaide.

The Adelaide Class found it a very sweet and blessed privilege once again to keep the Memorial of our dear Redeemer's death for us. All our hopes of life and blessing, both present and future, are dependent upon the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What an example He left for His Church, of meek and humble submission to the most severe and awful suffering connected with His apprehension, examination and crucifixion.

What an honor and privilege is given to His Church, His Body, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake. And what a glorious outcome will be the result, when, in due time He sees "the travail of His soul," and is "satisfied" with the blessing of all the families of the earth, in the glorious "times of restitution of all things," now so near at hand.

"In the cross of Christ we glory,

Towering o'er the wrecks of time;

All the light of sacred story

Gathers round its head sublime."

Perth.

A gathering of 15 brethren remembered our Lord's death and kept the Memorial as He instituted it on that fateful night of His betrayal and subsequent crucifixion.

The chairman led our minds through our Lord's closing earthly scenes when He completed the laying down of His perfect human life. The bread of life was broken for mankind and the blood of cleansing was given that all may have an opportunity of life eternal.

With grateful hearts the earnest brethren partook of the emblems in memory of our Lord's supreme sacrifice, being reminded again of being "dead" with Christ, and that we were prepared to complete our "covenant of sacrifice" with our Lord who is the Head of the Body, and we members in particular of that honored Body. "For we being many are one bread, and one body." (1 Cor. 10:17.)

Sydney.

The Sydney observance of the Memorial was duly celebrated at Strathfield on Tuesday, 21st April. Although comparatively few were present undoubtedly a rich blessing was the result. The presiding Brother ably conducted the service, and the address given by another Brother, dealing with the type and antitype, was very good. Happy the day, when, with our Lord, we will be able to drink anew the wine in the kingdom.

"A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—  
The brighter dawning of that glorious day.  
Blest Saviour, make our spirit's vision clearer,  
And guide, O guide us in the shining way!"

## Advocate and Mediator Contrasted.

THE fact that the church is “the mystery of God” has become clearer within the last fifty years. We know that Christ and the church are separate and distinct from the world in every particular. They are neither under the Law Covenant, nor under the New Law Covenant, but are a peculiar people, called, sanctified, developed under a special covenant by themselves. This the Scripture styles the Covenant of Sacrifice. “Gather My saints (holy ones) together unto me (saith the Lord) those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.”—Psalm 50:5. This special class of saints, or holy ones, who make the covenant of sacrifice have as their Head the Lord Jesus Himself. When this company shall have completed their covenant by sacrifice, this present age will end.

Moses, of the Law Covenant given to Israel, represented specially that Law Covenant, which will be given to the world through the antitype of Moses—the Christ. In other words, the Mediator of the Law Covenant was one man, but the Mediator of the New Law Covenant of the Millennial Age is the New Man, of which Jesus is the Head, and the apostle declares that the members are made up of those elected both from Jews and Gentiles. From the time of Jesus down, the Mediator of the New Covenant has been in process of selection, and “the better sacrifices” as the basis for the New Covenant have been in process of offering.

During this Gospel Age Jesus has not exercised His office as Mediator for the world, and the world has no relationship with God, but still lies in the wicked one. The Mediator Himself has been in process of development. As the apostle declares, God raised up Jesus first, and since has been raising up the church, and soon will finish the raising up. It is this Mediator or Prophet of whom St. Peter speaks in Acts 3:22, 23. (See also 1 Tim. 2:5, 6). No mediating can be done until the Mediator of “many members” has qualified for the office. The qualification consists of sacrificing according to the Covenant of Sacrifice. The Christ, Head and Body are, therefore, the Mediator for the world in a prospective sense, in the same sense as Jesus the Babe could be spoken of as the Saviour, and the King. He is only now becoming the King, and has yet saved only a few of His people.

There is a wide distinction between the work of a mediator and the work of an advocate. The great Mediator between God and man—the Christ of glory—will fill His mediatorial office for a thousand, years, and complete it only by the end of that time, when He will deliver over to the Father, fully reconciled, all who can be brought into harmony with the Divine arrangement.

The work of an advocate is different, and, according to the Bible, relates only to the work which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of the church during this age. The church will need no advocate in the future. The world has no advocate now. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. It is Jesus individually, who is the Advocate for us — “the church, His body.” He advocates our cause, first of all, by imputing to us the merit of His sacrifice, thus making us presentable in the Father’s presence and acceptable as sons of God. Because of this advocacy, we have received the holy spirit, and are new creatures in Christ. As new creatures we still need our Advocate, because we cannot do the things that we would perfectly. We have imperfections of the flesh, which as new creatures we cannot fully control. Hence *we* need a Throne of Grace and an Advocate, through Whom we may maintain our present relationship with the Father, and thus not be condemned with the world.

# Character Development.

A GREAT thing to develop in life is character. This is the peculiar quality which distinguishes one man from another, or something that permeates his whole being, prompting him and guiding him in all things. Character is structural, and may be likened to a house, the building of which demands many things, first design. Successful characters are never developed haphazardly, they always show a sequential purpose and plan in the mind. The seed of character is thought. If we sow a thought we reap a word; if we sow a word we reap an action; if we sow an action we reap a habit; if we sow a habit we reap a character. Therefore, it is essential that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, think of these things.

One of the outstanding charming values of Christianity is that it presents to us a perfect character design. A flawless example of whom Pilate had to say, "I find no fault in Him at all." No sensible man will neglect that perfect life, that pattern character. Having decided on the design, there is the site to consider, though perhaps not to choose. Only a few can choose the site of their activities, the place where they can live and work, but the beauty of character-building is that it is often done best under the least helpful conditions, just as the sweetest flowers are sometimes tucked away in some hidden cranny, so sweet and lovely characters abound that are unnoticed and unknown except to that Omniscience that knows exactly where all His jewels are. The site for your character is where you are.

Then there is the foundation, and that generally is made of materials that are subsequently and permanently covered up. Have you ever considered all those hidden things in the foundations of great structures; well, it is the same in character. If you are only going to be interested in that part others can see, well you will only have a flimsy and superficial structure of character. Attend to those deep, strong secret principles that underlie all successful lives and give them substantial basis. Then you will proceed to lay the bricks of godliness, devotion, purity, prayerfulness, kindness, patience, gentleness, tact, honesty, industry, diligence, straightforwardness, ambition, discretion, commonsense, and so on, and all these cemented together with a sunny disposition and a courageous faith will go far to produce a building greater and of more value than any material structure, for, after all, a character is of more value than a cathedral, and even a palace may be eclipsed by a personality.—Selected.

## FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. , 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. p, 4.45 p.m.

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