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The Present Truth.

“Hold fast that which thou hast.” (Rev. 3:11) .

THE Lord's people find it is appropriate from time to time to consider progress and prospects, and to review conditions. We are not concerned with things social, political or national, excepting as we can recognise in these connections the fulfilment of Prophecy. ' It requires no great power of discernment to those acquainted with the Scriptures to note how perfectly the present-day conditions fulfil what has been foretold by the Lord, His Apostles and the Prophets nearly and over 2000 years ago. We may say in the words of the historian Rollins, who viewed the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy in the events he was recording: “Can any reasonable man who makes use of his understanding ascribe such a prediction either to mere chance or to the conjectures of human prudence and sagacity? Can any light but that „Which proceeds from God Himself penetrate. in this manner, into the darkness of futurity and point out the events of it in so exact and circumstantial a manner?” In this connection we need only mention one or two passages as instances:—Daniel 1 2:4 2 Pet. 3:2-4; 2 Tim. 3:1 -7 ; Luke 17:26-30, etc. The state of the world today becomes more and more “as it was in the days of Lot” in Sodom, and “as it was. in the days of Noah” before the Flood, and there can be no doubt that a greater calamity on the human race is impending.

Our particular thought, however, is in connection with the present truth and the privileges, prospects and dangers which exist at this time.

There is quite prevalent a notion that it matters little what one believes, and that there should be no divisions on account of differences in faith. There are even those who have understood present truth, who underestimate the value of “the things we have received and know of whom we have received them,” and seem ready to compromise for the sake of preserving unity.

In the past our fathers so valued their convictions of truth that they preferred death rather than betray their faith. The question arises, who is right, who is the more pleasing in the sight of God — those who love unity by compromising truth or those who in Christian spirit must stand firm 'or truth at the expense of unity?

We readily concede that quite often differences are magnified and extremes are taken and bitter

separations have taken place which were quite unnecessary, and indeed even when divisions are unavoidable, bitterness can never be excused. However we may differ, even on the most fundamental principles of Christian faith, Christian love should so prevail that there could be no unkindness, but simply a committing the whole matter to the Lord with the prayer that He may open the blind eyes and, If He will, lead us again into the unity of the faith and happy bonds of fellowship.

We need, however, to remember that the Christian religion is not a flexible, compromising one. system established and governed by men may make changes to meet circumstances, both in their principles and methods, but the principles of Christ - established at Pentecost are fixed and no authority on earth can change them. Many authorities have, however, sought to accommodate Christianity to times and circumstances, and have brought in many antiChristian teachings so, that the creeds and dogmas of the churches to-day very greatly misrepresent God and His great plan of salvation. The downfall of the church was not through faithful men and women maintaining an attitude of loyalty to truth and righteousness, though history records many such noble characters. The downfall of the church came about because there were not sufficient unflinching defenders of the faith once delivered to the saints, and because the majority sought conformity with the world and undervalued the truth.

Particularly in this day is the spirit of compromise abounding. It is the Laodicean spirit that is neither hot nor cold, and says, do not trouble about doctrine, only let us join together in one great confederacy.

There is a spirit which is quite prevalent, to let down the standards of truth and ethics. It has: indeed wrought havoc in the churches, so that they have become altogether worldly and indifferent to the true spirit of the truth and consecration, as taught by the Lord and His Apostles. The adversary would seek in the same way to “quench the spirit” among those who have become awake to the “present truth” (those things which have been revealed by the opening up of the Scriptures as “meat in due season” or truths specially applicable in our day). It is no doubt these matters pertaining to our Lord’s Second Presence, the harvest work, the closing down of the present age, etc., that we are exhorted to “Hold fast that no man take thy crown.”

The questions arise as to what does a true Christian really need to believe? What are the essentials of our faith?

What is it that we must “Hold fast.” Does it mean only that we preserve a clear knowledge of truth,, or does it not imply “walking in the light”?

What, then, constitutes a Christian. The Bible shows how in due time “God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,” and how under the New Covenant and its great Mediator all the willing and obedient will be assisted to work out their justification to life and works of obedience and righteousness. The New Testament just as clearly shows that the Divine purpose for this Gospel Age, or “The Kingdom of Heaven” Age, as the Lord designated it, is to select a spiritual class to be joint heirs with Christ, to reign with Him in the coming Kingdom Age, when the wider opportunity will come to all mankind. . That will be when the Church or Bride of Christ will be complete, and “the spirit and the Bride will say, come, and whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely.”

This class of “Priests and Kings”—The Church —is dealt with quite differently, in its selection, from the way the rest of mankind will be in the next age. That will be an age of works, justification by works. This is an age of faith, justification by faith, and that faith is the gift of God. (Eph. 2:8). Our Lord declared, “No man cometh unto Me except it be given him of My Father”; “No man cometh unto the Son of Man except the Father draw him.”

The first essential, then, is that we be invited. How are we invited or drawn? It is through the Word, as the

Lord intimated in His prayer, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe through their word.”

(John 17:20.) So it is God who invites those who may be joint heirs with His Son, by bringing His Word to their attention, and by His holy spirit He grants the faculty of faith. There is the conviction of sin, and the longing to be at peace with God and to be righteous. Then in true penitence, faith in Calvary’s atoning sacrifice lifts the load of sin and we find peace and rest. What a great favour this is, first to be called of God and then instead of being slowly justified by works under the New Covenant of the next age to be at once “Justified by faith and at peace with God.” This particular arrangement of grace is in order that we may be able, through the merit of our Redeemer “to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.” This is the second step of Romans 5:1, 2, after being justified by faith through our Lord. Jesus Christ, “By whom also we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and now rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”

Following this step of consecration, we receive the begetting of the holy spirit—the spirit of sonship—and God calls us His sons. This holy spirit begets in each one a new mind, a new heart, a new creature, so that though the human being is laid upon the altar of sacrifice to be done to death, for “as many as have been baptised into Christ have been baptised into His death” (Rom. 6:3) ; yet a new life is begun, a spiritual life, and as new creatures we have become Christians in the full sense.

As Christians, then, we have so far these essentials—The favour of having been called of God. The gift of faith. Justification through the exercise of that faith. The holy spirit of sonship through the further step of faith— consecration. The wonderful hope of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Having reached to these things are there no other essentials for the Christian? We would answer that the new creature needs nourishing. If we fail to feed upon the Lord’s Word, if we fail to drink of that water of life which is provided for us, we shall fail to develop and probably soon lose our faith and our hope. We must go on from these first principles and learn to appreciate the deep things of the Word. We remember how St. Paul felt that it was useless to try and explain the deeper things to the Hebrews because they had not exercised their minds along the lines of truth. They had stunted their growth, they were still babies feeding on milk, when they ought to have been able to teach others.

How essential is the present truth as it is revealed from God’s Word. The Word of God is the instrument not only for calling the saints, but also for supplying grace and strength and enabling them to meet the difficulties of the way.

It unfolds its precious truths as “meat in due season” to meet the needs of the Christian in his own day. It is then very essential that we understand present truth—the Word of God—as it opens up, in order that our Shield is bright and strong, our Helmet of hope is firmly fixed, the Breastplate of righteousness properly adjusted, that our feet be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, our loins be girt about with truth and that we may be able to wield the Sword of the Spirit, and be overcomers in the “good fight of faith.”

How important is the truth. It is the means by which we are sanctified and strengthened to run our course. Just as truth helps, so error hinders.

How far may we differ from one another in respect of truth without interfering with our fellowship? The fact of differing on what we may call non-essentials provides opportunities for the exercise of brotherly kindness in respecting the opinions of others though not endorsing them.

It is quite a different matter when we come to deal with the clear lines of faith and hope, or truths which

are Divinely revealed for the purpose of accomplishing some particular feature of work in connection with God's great plan. It would indeed be presumption to say that such truths were of so little importance that it did not matter whether or not we believed them. We would also find it impossible to enjoy the same helpful fellowship with those who denied

or belittled these things as we could with those who appreciated them, and who were seeking to faithfully sound forth the message and conform their lives to it.

It is quite understandable that those who do not know present truth, who do not recognise That we are living in "the days of the Son of Man," and the harvest time of the age, etc., should think such things are non-essentials. They cannot see the present truth to be essentials if they do not recognise that the harvest work is in progress, and that the separating of the "wheat" from the "tares" is taking place. They cannot value the truths now revealed as we do, who realise the presence of the Lord as "Reaper," and that He is now reckoning with His people respecting the use of their talents and their structure building of character and teachings, and that the present truth is indeed the feast which He promised to the faithful watchers in Luke 12:37 and Rev. 3:20. What may seem non-essential to some may be very essential to others, for it is the "present truth" which is doing the harvest work. On the one hand it sanctifies and prepares the Bride class for the great consummation of her hopes, and on the other hand it separates those who from some cause or other seem unable to understand it.

The "present truth," or "meat in due season," or the unfoldings of truths respecting the Divine Plan, the second presence of Christ, the Harvest, the gathering of the saints and the consummation of the age, etc., appear to be essential to those to whom they have been revealed, if they will make their calling and election sure. Those who lightly esteem such things will surely fail in the use of their talents.

Similar conditions existed at the first advent of our Lord. New truths were sent forth. Many were inclined to say that such matters were all right and might be true, but they should not be carried too far, they were not essential, they could still hold on to the Law ceremonies and synagogue gatherings. The then "present truth" was, however, essential to such as the Lord was calling, and it did its work of separating the "wheat" from the "chaff."

Let us not undervalue the things which God has revealed to us, which have opened our eyes to see the wideness of His purposes and shown us that we are at the end of the age and living in "the days of the Son of Man," and that "as in the days of Noah" preceding the deluge, so now a great calamity is pending, which will end this dispensation, after which the new age will commence when Christ shall be King over all the earth.

These things we are exhorted to "hold fast" in the message to the Philadelphian Church (Rev. 3:10, 11). "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly, hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown."

We are living in a day of such a variety of confused teachings. We are forewarned of the many deceptions that were to come, so that even if it were possible the very elect would be deceived. Peter says that there would be false teachers and that many would follow their pernicious ways, by reason of which the way of truth would be evil spoken of. Paul admonishes, "Be not carried about by strange doctrines, for it is good that the heart be established with grace." The church is called "the pillar and ground of the truth." It is her responsibility to preserve the truth in its purity, to guard it and to let it shine. Our Lord declared, "To this end came I into the world that I should bear witness to the truth," and it is for those who will follow Him to do His work, and to be among those who are "beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God."

Many are the injunctions of the Apostles respecting this matter of "Holding fast the form of sound words" and the truths which God has revealed in His Word. The following are some texts showing our responsibility regarding knowledge Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 2:14-18; 2 Tim.2:23-26; 2 Tim. 3:13, 14; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4; 1 John 2:20-24; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 7-11; 1 Tim. 1:3-6; 1 Tim. 4:16; 1 Tim. 6:20, 21 (Diaglott).

That, however, is not all we must "hold fast." There is the possibility of holding fast the form of sound words, of having a correct understanding of the main features of the truth, even of being "virgins" and of understanding "present truth," and yet to fail to be prepared, and so fail to enter the marriage chamber.

A clear head is a good thing to have, but if the knowledge does not go down to the understanding heart, it fails in its intended purpose of sanctification, and we should prove to be but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. The trials of our day will not only try the doctrines but will test our faith, our hope, our love and our loyalty to God and to one another as members in Christ.

Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid in Christ Jesus. There is no standing before God apart from His Son, our Saviour, but having this foundation, we must build thereon, What must we build?

We must build 'our doctrine and see that all our teachings are in line with the foundation we must also build character. We must hold fast our foundation, our faith in the great Ransom for all. We must hold fast our consecration, our love to God in operation; we must bind the sacrifice with cords to the altar. We must "hold fast the confidence of our hope firm to the end." We must keep on the whole armour of God and continue the good fight of faith. We must preserve our zeal for the Lord's cause.

There is everything in this day to discourage us. Some have trials and temptations in one way, some in another. Maybe the failure of brethren whom we had highly esteemed in the Lord is apt to discourage us. Sometimes in contact with the world we meet plausible arguments against the truth by agnostics or scientists, and if we trusted to our own wisdom and strength to save us we might go down, but let us hold fast the Word of God. If we cannot understand everything, we do understand enough of God's wisdom, justice, love and power, which we have exemplified in His dealings with Israel and explained in His Word and experienced in our own lives, so that we can reasonably trust where we cannot quite understand. Even our Lord Jesus was tested in this way. He could not understand why the light of the Father's countenance should be withdrawn just at the moment when, more than any other, He needed the assurance of His favour and presence. We must nerve ourselves and seek to grow in grace that we too may reach that condition of heart that can say, "Yea, though He slay me yet will I trust Him."

Probably all can look back upon trials and temptations and trace the kind hand that has overruled for our protection, guidance and provision, and thus tracing the way God has led us shall we not hold fast the confidence of our faith firm to the end?

Let us hold fast our love to the Lord. If we love God we will also love those begotten of Him, and it will be painful indeed to us to even think evil of a fellow member. We would shun listening to reproaches against brethren, we would be loyal to God and defend His children and each member in the body of Christ would be loyal to one another.

That loyalty, however, will be secondary to our loyalty to God and His Word and the doctrine we have proved to be true. It may be necessary for us to withdraw even from those we love in Christ, if they 'teach things which we believe to be contrary to the truths that we have been by God's grace entrusted with, to preserve and to proclaim.

While we may thus sometimes find separations unavoidable, there is never any occasion to be unkind. We

may have to speak plainly against wrong teachings or practices, but we are not to condemn nor cease to love those who think differently. As long as they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind, by His own blood, and profess consecration to God, we may still think of them as brethren, though they may be erring brethren.

Let us hold fast our faith, our hope, our love, our doctrine, which includes “present truth.” “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them.” How important it is that we hold fast that which we have proved to be an unfolding of God’s Word—”Meat in due season.” If we begin to let slip this or that truth, other truths will likely soon be lost, and “if the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness?” “Hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown.” (Rev. 3:11.)

Notice.

Will our friends kindly note that the office of the Berean Bible Institute is expected to be closed for correspondence, etc., from the 19th September until after the weekend 11th and 12th October-next.

Only a word for the Master,

Lovingly, quietly said

Only a word! Yet the Master heard,

And some fainting souls were fed. —Charlotte Murray.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

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The Ministry of Comfort.

“The Lord hath anointed . . . to comfort all that mourn; to appoint them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.”—Isaiah 61:1-3.

OUR text is surely good tidings in a very broad and a very deep sense. Its message is one of “comfort,” not only, to Zion, the consecrated Church, but to all that mourn; and as mentally we cast our eyes over the world we are deeply impressed with the thought that the vast majority of mankind are in mourning. As the Apostle expresses it: “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.” There are undoubtedly a few who are full, satisfied, and who mourn for nothing, and who, therefore, under these conditions, are excluded from any share in this. promised blessing; but they are exceptions to the rule. Some of them are wealthy in this world’s goods, and feel they have need of nothing and are kept busy with their efforts to enjoy themselves. There are others of the same full class who, though not wealthy, have a very self-satisfied feeling as respects their moral status; they do not realise themselves as sinners; they do not realise their daily imperfections nor their need of a Saviour, and are not mourning for anything, and not, therefore, in the way to be comforted with any of the comforting assurances and promises and provisions, which the Lord has made for those who mourn.

So far as the world is concerned, our Lord’s ministry of comfort to them is chiefly a future work. We rejoice, however, that the time is sure to come when all that mourn, all the “groaning creation,” shall be brought under the blessed influences and provisions of the Messianic Kingdom, and shall there come to know the consolations which God has provided in Christ—the balm for every trouble, every wound, the cure for every blight, every sin, and every imperfection, and their privilege of profiting by these to the fullest -measure by giving themselves unreservedly into the care of the Good Physician. But the poor world, blinded and deceived by the god of this world as respects the character and plan of Jehovah, can neither see, hear, nor appreciate now the wonderful provisions made for them, and hence they cannot receive the blessing, the consolation, the comfort now, but must wait for it until the establishment of the Lord’s Kingdom, the binding of Satan, and the opening of their understanding with the eye salve of truth.

But as respects Zion, the consecrated Church, this comfort is now her privilege, and all the children of Zion need to be comforted. First of all they need the comforting knowledge that their sins are forgiven, and that they are no longer strangers and aliens and foreigners, but children of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they suffer with Him. They need to be comforted, too, with the assurance of the Lord’s Word, that our God is very sympathetic, “very pitiful,” and that if anyone be overtaken in a fault, that he may be restored, and “not be utterly cast down.” If the children of Zion had no such consolations as these, they surely would be utterly discouraged, disheartened, and faint by the way; hence the Lord has provided these comforting assurances, pointing out to them that, having begun a good work in them, He is desirous of completing it, if they will permit Him to do so, and that to this end they must abide in Christ by faith, coupled with obedience to the extent of their ability. What Christian is there who has not shared these consolations, these comforts, and what Christian has not needed them, and realised without them he would long since have been undone?

The Scriptures point out to us that our comfort comes through fellowship with the Heavenly Father, and with our Lord Jesus; we are comforted not by believing that they are ignorant of our weaknesses and shortcomings, nor that they have a low standard of righteousness and a sinful basis of friendship, but quite to the contrary of all this they comfort us with the assurance that although our every imperfection is known to the Lord, He is yet very sympathetic, very merciful; and that, having provided in the great sacrifice at

Calvary a full propitiation (satisfaction) for all sins, the Lord is very pleased to apply on behalf of each of His true children, in full measure, the riches of grace necessary to the covering and offsetting of every unintentional, unapproved error and failure. What comfort is here! What consolation! What privileges of fellowship with the Father and the Son!

And this comfort, the Scriptures assure us, comes to us through the holy spirit—it is the channel, and hence indeed called the Comforter. (John 14:26.) Those who have it may have the comfort, and those who do not have it may not have this comfort, this consolation. It is only as we receive the spirit and the mind of the Lord, His disposition, that we are able to understand and appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of His love and compassion and provision for us, and to be comforted thereby.

Nevertheless, this comfort of the holy spirit (the channel of divine favour) reaches us through the Scriptures as the medium or sub-channel through which the knowledge of God's grace and the comfort of all knowledge reaches us; in the Apostle's language, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4.)

Yet while this comfort is of the Father, through the Son, by the holy spirit, communicated though the Scriptures, we are informed that in great measure it is communicated by the members of the body of Christ one to another, as the Apostle, for instance, after relating certain features of the divine plan respecting the deliverance of the Church says, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4:18.) Similarly the Apostle declares that he sent Timothy to the Church at Colosse, that he might comfort their hearts. This, of course, signifies that he was to draw their attention to the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord's Word, and that thus they might drink in the holy spirit of all the promises, and that thus they might be comforted, and not only with respect to the things promised, but with respect to the loving compassion and sympathy of Him Who promises them.

Writing to the Thessalonians, the Apostle says that he sent Timothy "to establish you and to comfort you concerning your faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto, for verily, when we were with you we told you we should suffer tribulation even as it came to pass, and ye know.

For this cause when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith lest by some means the tempter had tempted you." (1 Thess. 3:2-5.) Here again it is evident that the comforting signifies and implies establishment in the faith once delivered to the saints, that all the terms and conditions of our covenant should be clearly held in mind, and that the promises of reward at the end of the journey might serve to comfort, strengthen and establish the children of Zion in their endurance of the tribulations as good soldiers. This comfort again was of the Lord, through the holy spirit, through the agency of Paul, and Timothy. Again, the same Apostle, speaking in the same strain, says, "Wherefore, comfort yourselves together and edify one another, even as also ye do." (1 Thess. 5:11.)

All of the Lord's people need to remember that in proportion as they are ambassadors of the Lord, and His representatives, it will be their privilege not only by and by in the Kingdom to "comfort all that mourn," and to be trees of righteousness, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22:2.) But they should remember that in the present life they have a ministry of comfort, to perform also towards all who mourn in Zion, towards all of the Lord's people who are in any tribulation, physical or mental disquiet, disease." And they should remember, too, that just in proportion as they are filled with this spirit now, it is their privilege to bind up the broken-hearted and comfort the mourning ones. No one can have this spirit of helpfulness, this disposition to comfort and to strengthen, and to edify and to up-build the household of faith, except he have in considerable measure the spirit of love, of truth, and the spirit of the Lord; and in proportion as each one seeks to cultivate this privilege of brotherly helpfulness in comforting

and upbuilding and strengthening, in that same proportion he will find the spirit of love developing and abounding in his own heart, and that his likeness to the Lord Jesus, the Head of the body, is becoming more pronounced from day to day, and from year to year.

Finally, in view of What we have seen respecting the Lord's goodness towards- His people, and the method by which He comforts them through the holy spirit, the Scriptures, and the brethren, let us note one of Apostle's expressions respecting the great comfort and consolation which God has provided for His consecrated, faithful people, saying:

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort them, which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 1:3, 4.)

So then, all of our lessons and experiences in life in connection with trials and difficulties if we are rightly exercised by them, should bring us larger experiences in the Lord's comfort, through the gracious promises of His Word, and the spirit of the same; and should make us the more capable and efficient agents and representatives of the Lord, His Word, and His spirit in communicating comfort to others in their trials and difficulties.

Darkest night

"Darkest night will always come before the morning,

Silver linings shine on God's side of the cloud;

All your journey He has promised to be with you,

Nought has come to you but what His love allowed.

"Have faith in God. The sun will shine,

Though dark the clouds may be to-day;

His heart has planned your path and mine;

Have faith in God, have faith always."

Beware of a half-truth; you may have got hold of the wrong half.

Question Box.

Question:

One of the commandments the Lord gave to Israel through Moses, states—”The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment; for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.”—Deut. 22:5. Should this commandment be understood as a guide for Christians today?

Answer:

It would seem that all the instruction God gave to His typical people, Israel, was really important and was intended to keep them as pure and healthy physically and morally as possible under the reign of sin and death. It is very evident, then, that the Lord’s command, as stated above, was intended to impress upon the men and women of Israel that their own sex must be considered very sacred, that they must not think loosely or act in a way that would make their sex cheap in the eyes of the opposite sex. The fact that the commandment states that all who act contrary are abomination to the Lord, shows that it was a serious matter and must be so regarded by all Israel.

What shall we say of spiritual Israelites today; could they adopt a lower standard than natural Israelites? Surely not; rather should true Christians to-day have a higher estimation of their place in the Church of Christ, the Body of Christ, than did the natural Israelites have of their position as God’s natural people. As God has set the members in the Body as it has pleased Him (1 Cor. 12:18) , the brethren to perform the public ministry and represent their Lord and Head, and the sisters to undertake the quieter and supporting work in the Church and represent the Church as a whole, who would wish to present a wrong example and witness for God by wearing apparel belonging to the opposite sex? Surely no one who wished to please the Lord and represent His cause in all modesty and wise gentleness of which the world is sorely in need to-day.

It was in the days of Noah that loose conditions in the world developed into such a corrupt state that God found it necessary to send the Flood to destroy all except Noah and his family. Now, in the end of the Gospel Age, we are living at the time which our Lord stated would be similar to the days of Noah. (Matt. 24:37-39.) Young people to-day, and some not so young, especially in the larger cities of the world, are causing concern to those in authority because of their loose morals. Christians come in contact with worldly conditions, and it is part of their daily discipline to “keep themselves unspotted from the world.” Familiarity with the worldly ways tends to lower the standard of Christians if they are not fully alert; however, the power of the Lord overcomes the world and its spirit in the hearts of those who have really submitted their lives to His service. They will esteem it a privilege to belong to those of whom our Lord prayed to the Father—”They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” (John 17:16, 17.) And Paul’s exhortation to Timothy is also appropriate for Christians to-day: “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conduct, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (1 Tim. 4:12.)

A Tried Prescription.

On one occasion a clever physician, who was an unbeliever, said to a Christian: "I am surprised that such an intelligent man as you should believe an old fable like Christianity."

"Well," said the Christian, "suppose, years ago, somebody had given you a prescription for pulmonary consumption, and you had tried it, and been cured of that terrible disease. Suppose you had used that prescription in your practice ever since, and never knew it to fail. What would you say of the man who refused to believe in it.?"

"I should say he was a fool," replied the physician.

"Twenty-five years ago," said the Christian, "I tried the power of God's grace. It made a different man of me. All these years I have preached salvation to others, and have never known it to fail. I have seen it make the proud man humble, the drunken man temperate, the profane man pure in speech, the dishonest man true. Rich and poor, learned and unlearned, old and young, have alike been healed of their diseases.'

"You've caught me fairly; I have been a fool," was the admission of the sceptic.

There are many who scoff at Christianity, but they cannot deny its power for good.—Selected.

Posting "Peoples Paper"

Some of our readers of "Peoples Paper" are not yet acquainted with the mailing of two copies of the "Paper" together each two months, and sometimes think their copies are going astray. However, the high postage rate now operating makes this arrangement necessary, and it is hoped all our friends will now understand. It should not be expected that copies of "Peoples Paper" will always arrive early in the second month, but rather during the month of issue of the later one of the two copies mailed together.

Christian Way Ended.

On the afternoon of 22nd July last, one of the younger members of our truth friends, in the person of Sister Pocock (nee Sister Thelma Charlton) of Canberra, finished the Christian way.

Our young Sister had been brought up in the good influence of the truth in the home circle and after coming to years of discretion had consecrated her life to walk in the steps of Christ. With a physical disability from childhood she had many trials during her Christian walk which, however, were no doubt tempered and relieved by the influence of the truth in her heart. We are glad to know that all these trials are now over, and trust that our dear Sister Girlie, as she was known to her nearer truth friends, has received the Lord's approval and blessedness in the heavenly reward, by His grace.

Sincere sympathy is extended to Brother Pocock and other dear relatives in their sad bereavement. Especially is the loss felt by Sister Charlton and Sister Grant, inasmuch as only five months previously our dear Brother Charlton had finished the Christian way. However, in visiting the Charlton home again at the time of sorrow, it was a joy to realise that the Lord's grace and blessing was again manifest in a very marked degree in the hearts of these dear Sisters, enabling them to accept the Lord's will so fully, as expressed by our Sister Charlton in a letter—"Many things have happened since you were here, some bright spots and some sombre ones, but we are trying hard to keep ever so close to our Lord and Master. We will try and readjust ourselves to the changed conditions and we feel the Lord will help us, because He has never forsaken us yet, and we do want to accept His will in all things, even to have Him 'more intimately nigh than e'en the sweetest earthly tie.' "

The Flight of Time.—From Two Standpoints.

To those whose hopes and aims are of this life it is a sad thought, so quickly the time flies and so little is done. So many things they hoped for and expected to accomplish and to have, are still undone and are becoming more difficult and doubtful of attainment, and hope and interest gradually sink into a resigned disappointment, or worse still into bitterness.

How different with us—the Lord's people. All we value most is still in the future and yearly growing nearer; it is certain and sure. Based upon the eternal promises, there is no possibility of disappointment so long as we ourselves are true and faithful. The passing time we can smile at so long as we try to do our best each passing day, and even when we fail to do as well as we wish, we need not grieve but remember our unwilling faults are covered, and so rejoice and press on.

God's Will Is Best

“God's will is best: faith's vision may be darkened,
And tangling influence our feet arrest;
Yet to our cry for guidance
One has hearkened:
God's will is best.

“We raise our tear-dimmed eyes with eager longing,
To pierce the clouds that crown the mountain's crest;
And watch the chill mists round the pathway thronging,
With hearts distrest.

“God's will is best—oh! tired heart and weary:
Each footfall finds you nearer to your rest;
And God prints on your pathway, lone and dreary,
'God's will is best.'

“Why seek to know the secrets of the morrow;
Or what new dangers may your way infest?
'Tis Providence apportions joy or sorrow
To be your guest.

“God's will is best—seek not to do God's planning:
Nor of the future make untrusting quest:
He only of your whole life has the scanning;
God's will is best.

“Enough for mortal feet the step before them;
Enough, for mortal hands, life's next behest;
Enough to know Immortal Love is o'er them;
God's will is best.

“God's will is best—your first dawn may be over;
Life's noon be past, its sun low in the west,
And night full nigh; but Heaven's morn will discover
God's will is best.”

Bible Study Meetings.

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

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

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

Perth.—9 Howard Street, Perth.—Sundays. 3 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.

moments as they go

Buy up the moments as they go,

Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure;

Sow peace, and reap its harvest bright;

Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,

And find the harvest-home of light.

Our love to Jesus Christ is no other but the reflex of His on us.—Leighton.

“Gentle words fall lightly, but they have great weight.”—Anon.

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

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. Perth, 6KY, 227 N.

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