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Pride -- Its Manifestations.

(Based on notes by Brother B. H. Barton)

PRIDE is a poisonous manifestation of selfishness. It is, as someone has well said, selfishness gone to seed. Every Christian should be on the alert to resist the encroachments of pride, because to whatever extent it is permitted to influence our thoughts and actions, it will blight our peace and joy in the Lord, and distort our every outlook in keeping with its own ugly form.

One of the manifestations of pride is that of undue self-esteem. Paul speaks of it as thinking more highly of one's self than is warranted—than one ought to think. Self-esteem manifests itself in many and unsuspecting ways. It may prevent one from accepting the truth from a humble source; and by the truth we mean not only the doctrines relating to the divine plan, but details of truth on any and all subjects. It is so easy for any of us to be wrong, even in the everyday things of life, that we should be willing to be corrected no matter from what source the correction may come.

If a person hesitates to seek advice for fear that it may reveal his own lack of knowledge, it is a sign of pride. In the world, the men and women who are the most successful are those who seek the advice of others, especially in fields with which they are not too well-informed themselves. This is still more applicable in the Christian life. Our understanding of the truth of God's Word is less likely to be complete if we are unwilling to take into consideration the viewpoints of others of like precious faith. This is the reason it is so essential that we meet together for mutual study, and fellowship.

Undue contention in presenting our views may be a manifestation of pride. The truth is such a bulwark of strength against error, that we do not need to be contentious in its use. To be over-concerned about a point may indicate that what we are presenting is partly our own view, rather than God's, and our pride is causing us to be contentious in its presentation. If such be the case, then pride will cause us to be very reluctant to change our opinion; that is, to admit that we are wrong even when the truth is apparent.

The self-esteem manifestation of pride also may cause us to resent reproof, even though the reproof may have been deserved and necessary. On the other hand, a Christian who is properly humble before the Lord and before his brethren will not resent reproof even though it may not be merited. Elders of ecclesias should be specially on guard along this line; for, unless they are, pride may ruin their usefulness as servants of the brethren. If an elder resents having his thoughts called into question by even the humblest member of the ecclesia, it is a sign of undue self-esteem, and he should take the matter in hand before he is slain by the monster.

Elders are the servants of the Lord's people, and it is not fitting for servants to resent questioning by those whom they serve. If there is any doubt in the mind of a brother or sister as to where one of their servants, or would-be servants, stands with respect to doctrine and practice, it behoves that servant to display the greatest of patience and painstaking care to make his position clear. A refusal to do this may represent a lack of true humility before the Lord and before the brethren.

Self-esteem also sometimes manifests itself in the habit of interrupting others when they are talking. This may not always be the cause for rudeness. Sometimes it is just a plain case of nervousness. But if we find ourselves constantly interrupting others in order that we may talk ourselves, it could easily be that we, inwardly think that what we have to say is more important than what that other person is saying. Such would represent undue self-esteem.

A willingness to listen to others is one of the evidences of true humility, and is of prime importance to our growth in grace and knowledge. The lowliest saints of God, from the standpoint of education and ability, may often express thoughts which are golden nuggets of truth, more valuable, perhaps, than a whole discourse by one more talented. If we are not listening when these thoughts are expressed, we lose them; hence we lose the blessings that would accrue from them.

If we are not humble enough to listen to our brethren, we could easily become proud enough not to listen to the

Lord. God speaks to us through His Word. If we go to **His** Word merely to find that which will bolster up an idea which we have developed in our own minds, it means that we are not truly listening to the Lord, but misusing His Word to satisfy the desires of our own self-esteem. Let us be on the alert, dear brethren, to note the slightest manifestation of pride along this line, and in prayer before the Lord, ask Him to help us to be free from it.

Social Pride

Social distinctions among the brethren are, thank God, pretty well broken down, but the spirit of pride which was responsible for fastening the un-Godlike theory of class distinctions upon the unhappy world is still liable to manifest itself among the brethren. We may, for example, find ourselves seeking the fellowship of only the better educated and talented among the brethren, and ignoring those we consider not to be of "our kind." If we find any such tendency to be influencing us, we may be sure that the grace of God has not yet taken as full control of our lives as it should. There is also danger that we may develop what might be called a spiritual class distinction complex. That is, we may wish to fellowship with only those whom we consider to be as well developed spiritually as we consider ourselves to be. Sometimes a fear is expressed that newly interested brethren coming into the ecclesia, may spoil our deep fellowship. This is to our shame, and is unlike the spirit manifested by the Master. If we feel that we are well developed spiritually, let us rejoice in whatever privileges we may **have in** helping others to the same condition. **If we** do not rejoice in thus helping the weak, **it is** a very good sign that our own development is not as rounded out as it should be.

While it is true that Jesus seemed to love some of His apostles more affectionately than others, this doesn't mean that He didn't love them all and was not glad for every opportunity He had of being with them all, and serving them.

In our truth association there will be those to whom we are drawn more than to others, but this doesn't mean that we should ignore any of the brethren, and not rejoice in every privilege we have of being with them and enjoying their fellowship. There should be no cliques among God's people —"all ye are

brethren.”

Approbateness

Too great a desire to be well thought of by the brethren may manifest itself in various ways. One may hesitate to speak, read, or pray in meetings. To the on-lookers this may seem to be a display of humility; yet, actually, it could be on account of fearing criticism if a mistake is made. We might decide that it is better not to give a testimony at all than to give a poor one, which could give the brethren the thought that we are not very good at giving testimonies. Thus pride in a very subtle form, would be ruling our hearts.

We may have an ambition to lead. The apostle says that one who desires the office of a bishop, or elder, desires a good thing. To have a desire to bless others through leading meetings, etc., is not in itself an evidence of pride; but it does expose the brethren to the dangers of pride. We can check on ourselves in this connection by noting our own attitude when others are speaking or leading meetings. Do we feel like staying away from meetings if we are not leading? Or, if present, are we uneasy and not paying attention to what is being said; all the while thinking to ourselves that we could bring out the thoughts much better than is being done? If thus we muse, let us beware — pride is gaining the ascendancy and, if encouraged, will cause our downfall.

Along this same line, pride will hinder us from rendering faithful service unless we can be foremost in affairs. One who is truly humble will be just as happy to serve as a deacon as he is to serve as an elder. Indeed, he will be happy to serve in every way possible even though the ecclesia does not recognise his service or confer any office upon him. For some reason the idea of preaching has taken on altogether too important an aspect in the minds of many of the Lord’s people, with the result that, at times, brethren may get the idea that if they can’t be foremost in the **service** along this line they are being neglected and ostracised. If we find ourselves feeling that way about it, let us beware.

From the Lord’s standpoint, the brother or sister who serves *faithfully* even in obscure ways and who does not, therefore, receive the praise of the brethren, is just as honorable as those who are out at the forefront, perhaps more so; at least, there is less danger that such service is rendered in part because of the expressions of appreciation by the fellow-workers. It is most proper that we afford every encouragement to those who serve, but how nice it would be to accord those who serve unheralded and unsung a little more attention along this line. They deserve it; and if they continue to be faithful in that which is least, surely rich blessings will be theirs in the *Kingdom*, whether or not we recognise and appreciate their services.

Another possible manifestation of pride is the disposition to talk too much about one’s humility, as though the friends wouldn’t know we were humble unless we told them. Humility doesn’t need to be advertised. Like the fragrance of a beautiful rose, its presence is manifested without the necessity of special attention being called to it. The rose does not need to say, How sweet is my perfume; nor does a truly humble Christian need to call attention to his humility.

If we discover, then, that we are fearful the brethren will not recognise our humility, and feel that we have to call their attention to it, it is a sign that we have more approbateness than we thought. Of course, no brother or sister would actually say to others, See how humble I am! No, the flesh finds more clever ways of advertising its feigned humility than that. A brother might get upon the platform to speak and open his discourse by *saying* that he didn’t understand why he was there, for there were others who could serve so much better. The chances are that if the brother really felt that way about it, he would have seen to it that he wasn’t there. This might not necessarily be the case, but it could be, so deceitful is the human heart, and so desperately wicked. True humility will cause one to serve as well as possible in whatever position

in the Lord's providences he may find himself, without making apologies, excuses, and explanations.

Another habit which may represent the spirit of approbateness is that of constantly referring to what "I said," or "I did." "Brother so and so asked me such and such, and my answer was thus and so," is an attitude *we* will do well to avoid. Deep down in our hearts the referring to matters of this kind may be a desire to let the friends know that we are very brilliant, and in such high standing with the Lord that our advice in spiritual matters is constantly sought. We say it "might" display something of this kind. In any case, it is well to be on guard.

Another good test of humility is to note our attitude when others get credit which may properly belong to us. An interesting thought concerning some passage of Scripture may be under discussion. The thought may be based upon a suggestion that came from us. Do we "itch" to let the brethren know this; or are we happy in the knowledge that they are being blessed as a result of our efforts? Right along this line it is well to scrutinize the motives of our every word and deed. In our association with the brethren opportunities are constantly arising for rendering a little assistance here and there, by kind words and deeds. If, **when** we do these things, we look to see whether or not they were noticed by the brethren, it means that a little bit of pride is still left in our hearts. "Playing to the gallery," as the thought is expressed in modern language, will never get us into the Kingdom.

Along the line of seeking approval from the friends for what we do, is the other test of our own attitude **is** when someone else is complimented and we are ignored. Do we resent this instead of rejoicing in it? This is a heartsearching test, yet by it we are able to measure our growth in humility and to determine whether or not we have reached the point where we are able to actually esteem others as being better than ourselves, and are therefore glad to see them put forward.—Phil. **2:3**.

Although the habit of "foolish jesting" is generally looked upon by brethren as a waste of time, yet it *could* manifest a spirit of approbateness in that one may seek to draw attention to himself and his brilliance through his ability to make the brethren laugh. **In** such an event the motive behind the jesting would be a whole more detrimental to the brother than the jesting itself. A humorous play on words, if wholesome and harmless, may help to relieve nerve tension, but if prompted by approbateness, it will do serious injury to any Christian indulging in it.

Just as one may hold back from giving a testimony for fear of making a mistake and thus having his pride injured; so a Christian may seek to give a very eloquent testimony in order to display his ability. Here again approbateness would be displayed. To make sure that love, zeal, thankfulness, sincerity, etc., are the motives that prompt us in speaking, it is well to ask ourselves such questions as, Is it my desire to speak only for the Lord? Am I truly seeking to be clothed in humility? Am I depending wholly on the Lord's strength to help me speak? Do I really sense my own weakness?

Pride may also be manifested in our characters by a reluctance to distribute truth literature for fear our friends and neighbors might see us, and on account of it not think so well of us. Then again, does pride in any way hinder us from firmly, freely, and gladly acknowledging our belief in Present Truth no matter who may ask us. Or, are we just a little bit ashamed of being a "Millennial Dawnist"? Are we reluctant about being seen associating with the truth people; or do we rather own them as our friends wherever and whenever we may be seen with them? In these ways also we may check to determine the degree to which pride rules our hearts.

Accomplishments

Success in life, whether connected directly or indirectly with the Lord's service, proves a test to our humility. If we have, by God's grace, learned to do something real well, how anxious are we to display our ability? Do we become fretful and assume a persecuted attitude, when we imagine someone is holding us back? If so, it is well to realise that it is probably the Lord that is holding us back until we have learned well the lesson of humility. In all such matters it is important to remember that there are really no secondary causes so far as our relationship with the Lord is concerned. If our ambitions or plans are frustrated, let us not blame this brother or that sister, but realise that all the brethren on earth, whether true or false, could not keep from us that which the Lord wishes us to enjoy.

When we maintain this proper viewpoint of our relationship to the Lord, and of His watch-care over our highest spiritual interest, we will be greatly helped along the road to true humility. If our ambitions are checked we will search our hearts, and enquire of the Lord for the reason why; instead of blaming the brethren and becoming embittered toward them. Perhaps the brethren may be wrong in their dealings with us; if so, that's something for the Lord to deal with. Of this we can be sure, that our own position in the matter could only be possible through the Lord's permission. And our faith in His watch-care should enable us to believe that He will permit nothing to happen in our lives but what will be for our highest spiritual welfare. In this let us rejoice.

The same viewpoint holds true even though our brethren in Christ may not be involved. In the business world, at our work in the factory or the office, we may seem to be held back from doing things which we aspire to do, and which we believe we have the ability to do. If this be the case, let's not blame our competitor, our foreman, our office manager, or our fellow-worker. Let us rather, as in our association with the brethren, seek to ascertain what lesson the Lord may have for us in our experiences. If they accomplish nothing more than to keep us humble before the Lord, they are very valuable indeed. But if we become embittered toward those whom we imagine to be responsible, we have failed in the test.

Some of us may have imaginary accomplishments, and these cause more trouble than real accomplishments. Real accomplishments often represent years of patient toil and trials and tests in the school of Christ, hence the cost a attainment is a counterbalance to keep the Christian humble who has attained. On the other hand, mushroom-like development of ability, even if it is real ability, is frequently not accompanied by development along other lines, hence one in such a position needs to be especially on guard. But if one's attainments are only imaginary, then the danger is truly great. Such an one may prove to be a great trial to many of the Lord's people. Seemingly there is always someone to sponsor the cause of a brother who imagines he is being persecuted by the brethren, and thus his pride is further encouraged, and his overcoming made the harder.

We have all heard the fable of the bird which tried to make an impression by wearing borrowed feathers. We may be tempted to do this along spiritual lines. We may reason that we wish to serve the truth in the best way possible, hence use the material of others, letting on to the brethren that it is our own. The friends may say, as they have said of various ones in the past, "What a talented brother !" The friends, no doubt, received a blessing, but the brother's blessing would have been greater had he presented his own, though inferior outline; or else, told the brethren the source of the thoughts he was presenting. The point in this is, that the desire to **get** ahead among the brethren, which is a form of pride, may lead, also, to mild forms of deception.

We can check the attitude of our hearts along this line by carefully scrutinizing the motive of everything we say and do. For example, it is always commendable to quote the Bible in proof of what we believe, whether it be from the platform, or in private conversation, but there is a possibility of quoting long passages of Scripture merely for the purpose of parading our knowledge before the friends. Let us watch ourselves along this line, and make sure that all we say and do is with the motive of glorifying the Lord, and not to display self.

Spiritual Achievements

It is well to examine ourselves to discover what progress we have made in overcoming pride. Along this line, here are a few thoughts for prayerful consideration:

Are we truly glad to express approval of any grace of the spirit we see manifested in others; feeling at the same time that we have not reached such a high attainment ourselves?

Are we always looking for superior qualities in others, and happy to acknowledge them when suitable opportunity offers?—Phil. 2:3.

Have we learned to measure ourselves, not by ourselves, but by the perfect standard, Christ Jesus?—2 Cor. 10:12.

Are we humble enough not to fear that the brethren will think we are not humble?

Are we truly glad to take a back seat while others take a leading part in the service?

Are we patient and gentle in defending the truth?

Do we rejoice when various doctrines of the truth are repeated for the benefit of learners, even though we know them ourselves?

Are we able to enter whole-heartedly into the comments and prayers of others, even of the least talented, and not to rankle with the feeling that we could do it so much better ourselves?

Have we developed beyond the point where we are resting on the laurels of past service, but instead, are rejoicing in the golden opportunities of the present?

In this whole lesson of pride, Jesus is our pattern. He had all knowledge, all ability—earthly and heavenly — yet He said that His teachings were not His but His Father's. He said that He could do nothing of Himself, but only as the Father helped Him. His words, Jesus claimed, were not His own, but the Father's. In view of this wonderful example of humility, how should we walk who once were sinners, enemies of God, and without any spiritual knowledge, wisdom or ability?

May we indeed remember that before honor, goes humility (Prov. 15:33, 18:12); before destruction is pride (Prov. 16:18,19); and that pride is so displeasing to God that it is classed with murder, bearing false witness, and with lying. (Prov. 6:16,17.) Let us then endeavor to be clothed with humility, and being adorned with this and other graces of the spirit, be truly “meet for the Master's use.” (Reprinted from “The Dawn,” 1942.)

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A Saviour, Christ, The Lord

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord.” (Luke 2:11).

IN recording the birth of Jesus, the Scriptures are most careful to point out to us that He was not begotten after the usual manner—that He had no earthly father, but was begotten by •the holy spirit. The necessity for this is manifest. The father is the life-giver, the mother is the nourishes, of the offspring. If Jesus had received His life from a human father it would have been tainted, impaired, under condemnation of death, as is that of all others. This would have frustrated any work on His part as the world’s Redeemer, because no imperfect man could have redeemed a perfect one, as the Psalmist declares.—Psa. 49:7.

In order for Jesus to be able to give His life a redemption price for father Adam’s life (and for the life of his race, forfeited by disobedience), it was necessary that He be perfect, sinless; as we read, “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” And again, “A body hast Thou prepared Me,” for the suffering of death.

It is not enough, then, that we recognise Jesus as good, well-intentioned in mind. We must see in Him human perfection sufficient as a sacrifice to offset the forfeited life of the first perfect man, Adam. And we must see also that He was begotten from above—that the holy spark of life in Him as the babe was a transferred life-principle from a pre-existent condition, mentioned by our Lord when He prayed, “Glorify Thou Me with the glory that I had with Thee before the world was.” St. Paul explains to us that “He was rich and for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich.”

Few babes in all Judea or in all the world were born in a more humble place than Jesus. Joseph and Mary had gone to their native city, Bethlehem, for tax registration, under the imperial edict. The little city was crowded with others on similar errand. And so it came that Jesus was born in an out-house of the inn, where Joseph and Mary had been compelled to lodge for the night. Ah! we cannot wonder that it is difficult for many to understand why our Heavenly Father sent forth His Son for our redemption under such ignominious conditions! Only those who have the spirit of the Divine Plan, through the begetting of the holy spirit, can see the wherefore.

The Message of the angels was surely an inspired one, fully in harmony with God’s promise to Abraham — only an enlarged statement of the same—the same “all people” to be blessed — and it still meant great joy; but now, two thousand years later, the Message pointed out the very Individual through whom the good tidings would have fulfilment —the Babe of Bethlehem.

The angelic announcement, “Fear not,” is interesting. All humanity realise that they are sinners and naturally have forebodings. They find it difficult to believe that God is really gracious and loving. The gods of the heathen nations are ferocious. unloving and unlovable. But the God of all Grace, the Father of Mercies, Is a God of Love, who delights to use His Divine power for the blessing and uplifting of His erring children. Therefore He was peculiar in sending the Message of good “tidings of great joy unto all people,” as well as sending His Only Begotten Son at great cost to be man’s Redeemer—that He might be just and still be the Justifier of those who believe—Rom. 3:26.

The message declared that a Saviour had been born—the Anointed, the Lord. He was to be the antitypical Moses, the antitypical Aaron, the antitypical Melchisedec, the anti-typical David. In addition to the qualities pictured in these various typical characters, He was, also, the Son of the Highest. He was to be the Saviour—the Deliverer—the Mediator of the New Covenant, so long looked for, hoped for, prayed for.

There is a special force or meaning in the word Saviour — it signifies life-giver. The Syriac version is the one in which the Saviour is translated life-giver; and Syriac was, likely, the language spoken by Jesus and others of Palestine at that time. And is there not a special fitness or appropriateness in this name life-giver? What had man lost and what would he wish to have back? The Scriptures answer that Adam lost life and came under the penalty, “Dying, thou shalt die.” He did not lose heavenly life, for he never possessed it. He lost earthly life, an Eden home, human perfection. And Jesus declared that He “came to seek and recover that which was lost.”—Matt. 18:11.

Hence, as we have seen, He was provided with a perfect, human life, that “He by the grace of God might taste death for every man,” and that by thus suffering, the Just for the unjust, the penalty of the sinner, He might become the purchaser or the Redeemer of Adam and all his race, with a full right to restore to perfect life and to all that was lost as many as would receive it at His hand—thankfully. Throughout His entire Messianic reign of a thousand years He will be the world’s Life-Giver, raising the willing and obedient up out of sin and death conditions to perfection and everlasting life and earthly, human blessings.

But our Lord also does a work for the Church, the “elect,” His bride and joint-heir in the kingdom, and this blessing to the Church begins before the setting up of His kingdom. The Church, “were by nature children of wrath even as others,” but they are not to be restored to what was lost. The offer to them is that they shall become copies of the Redeemer and lay down their lives, walking in His footsteps, and that He will make up for all their deficiencies and that thus the father of Mercies will bring them like their Lord to the divine nature, will assist them in making their “calling and election sure” to the heavenly state which God has promised them, for “if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him; if we die with Him, we shall also live with Him.”-2 Tim. 2:11,12.

In verse 14 we have a kind of Hallelujah chorus or angelic response to the Message of the angel already given.

A heavenly host sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” How grand! How inspiring! But we see not yet this glorious condition achieved. The proper glory to God is not yet rendered on earth as it is in heaven. Nor does peace yet wave her banner, even over so-called Christendom.

What is the matter? Ah, said the Apostle, that is a secret, a mystery, hidden from past Ages and Dispensations!

The mystery is that God not only intends to have Jesus for His Anointed One, to rule and bless the world, but He has foreordained also a company of footstep followers to be with Him and share His work, and this entire Gospel Age has been devoted to the work of selecting this class, variously called the Body of Christ and the “espoused virgin,” which eventually, at the Second Coming of the Lord, is to become “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife” and joint-heir.

It is for this that the Apostle declares that the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now — waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God—the revelation of Jesus and His Bride in the glory of the Kingdom for the blessing of natural Israel and all the families of the earth with knowledge and assistance, that the willing and obedient may be recovered to the image and likeness of God and to everlasting life on the restored earth.

Pilgrimage Ended

A RECENT issue of the Murray Bridge, S.A., newspaper reported the passing of our dear Brother Faehrmann as follows:

“A well loved Murray Bridge identity whose life was characterized by painstaking tradesmanship and Christian ideals died recently in the person of Mr. August Charles Faehrmann. He was 76 years of age, and had spent 57 years as a Murray Bridge resident. He and his brother were associated with their father in his business as a wheelwright, and the name of Faehrmann was closely identified with the early trading of the town.

“The subject of this review worked on many homes and other buildings in Murray Bridge, and his brisk efficiency kept his services much in demand. He was an earnest student of the Bible, and its teachings governed practically all his actions.”

It was in 1918 that the light of God’s Plan came to Brother Faehrmann, and he gladly received the message and responded to the heavenly call in fulness of consecration to God. For many years our Brother visited the Adelaide Class periodically, and his helpful addresses were an encouragement to us all. Our Brother took pleasure in sacrificing the **good** things of this life to serve the interest of the higher things.

Brother Faehrmann will be missed by those who knew him; nevertheless, we rejoice in his faithfulness to the Lord, the truth, and the brethren, and in the thought that he has now entered into the wonderful reward of the faithful overcomers. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” (Rev. 14:13.)

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.

An Accuser Silenced.

Two fellow-travellers were seated together in a railway carriage engaged in earnest conversation. It was of a religious nature, and one of them, a skeptic, was evidently seeking to excuse his skepticism, by expatiating on the various evils which afflict Christendom. He was detailing, with manifest pleasure, the hypocrisy and the craft and the covetousness and the divisions found in the professing Church, and then he pointed to some of the leaders as the most markedly corrupt of the whole.

In front of them sat a Christian who was compelled to hear all this. Had he felt the accusations to be false, he might have suffered them, as a part of the hatred the world bears towards Christ, and been truly happy in so suffering; but he knew them to be true— too true to be concealed from the most charitable mind, so all he could do was to bow his head and bear the deserved reproach.

Soon, however, the accuser, anxious to extend the circle of his audience, addressed this fellow-passenger in front of him.

“I see you are quick to detect evil,” answered the Christian, “and you read character pretty well. You have been uncovering here the abominable things which have turned Christendom into a wreck, and are fast ripening it for the judgment of God. You have spared none but given all a, good measure. Now I am a Christian, and I love the Lord Jesus and His people. Not a word shall I offer in defence, but I here solemnly challenge you to speak the first word against the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.”

The skeptic was surprised He seemed almost frightened, and sheepishly replied, “Well, no; I couldn’t find fault with Him. He was perfect.”

“Just so,” said the Christian, “and therefore was my heart attracted to Him; and the more I look at Him, the more I found I wasn’t like Him at all, but only a poor, sinful, guilty man. But tell me yourself if I haven’t a right to be happy and to love Him when I found out that He had died for me; that on the cross He had fully paid all my debt, and thus cleared me of all guilt? Ever since then I truly love Him, and all the evil which professed followers of His may do, cannot turn me away from Him. My salvation hangs on what He has done, and not on what they are doing.”— Horatius Bonar.

Question Box'

Question.—Col. 1:24 — Fill up that which is behind.” What is the meaning of “that which is behind”? Were not all Christ’s sufferings perfect and finished at the Cross?

Answer.—The actual personal sufferings of Christ Jesus, of course, ended on Calvary’s Hill; but the sufferings of the Church, the members of Christ, are not yet completed. It has pleased God to invite a “little flock” to first “suffer” with Christ and then “reign” with Him. (Compare Isaiah 53:7 and Rom. 8:36.) The reward of such exaltation to the Divine nature and to reign in kingdom power was contingent upon first proving loyal and perfect in obedience under great suffering and humiliation. As it was with our Lord, so it is with each member in Christ. “The servant is not above his lord.” First the cup of suffering and then there will be the cup of joy in the Kingdom. “Are ye able to drink of My cup and to be baptized with My baptism,” said Jesus to the two disciples who would sit on His right and on His left in the Kingdom. Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is His body. The body members must, like the great Head, learn perfect obedience under similar experiences, and prove loyal and true before they receive the great reward of joint heirship. He was “tempted in all points like as we are.”

The Church is a very special class which the Father has given to the Son. The prayer of Jesus (John 17:11) was, “Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.”

So great is the oneness between Christ the Head and the members of the Church which is His body, and the Apostle

says, “All things are yours for ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.” The little hymn has put it beautifully

“I am His and He is mine
For ever and for ever.”

Whatever happens to the members of His body is as to the Lord Himself (Act 26:14), and not until every member of the Body has completed the Christian narrow way, finished the way of the Cross and drunk to the dregs the cup of humiliation and pain, will the sufferings of Christ be ended and the Body be complete in glory. So then, it was the sufferings of the Church, the body of Christ, which were left over, and of which Paul could say, “I rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of

Christ, in my flesh, for His Body’s sake, which is the Church.”

“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death.” (Rom. 6:3.) **CLARIFICATION.**

In the October issue of “Peoples Paper,” page 3, first column, second paragraph, a mistake appeared with reference to John 7:7. It was stated that Jesus was here speaking to His disciples, whereas they were His brethren, or kinsmen, as is clearly shown by **verse 6**— “For neither did his brethren (kinsmen) **believe is** him.”

Booklet for January’s “Peoples Paper.”

The booklet “How Are the Dead Raised Up ?—With What Body Do They Come?” is taking the place of January, 1960, “Peoples Paper,” and copies are being posted out with this issue.

