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## Evil-Speaking...Busy-Bodying...Truth-Hiding

“Speak evil of no man.” (Titus 3:2). “Let none of you suffer as a busybody in other men S matters.” (1 Peter 3:16.)

“Speaking the truth in love.” Eph. 4:16).

ALL Christians who have made advancement in the development of the graces and fruits of the Lord’s Spirit accept as true the texts of Scripture quoted. They cheerfully admit the correctness of the points these texts set forth, and agree that it is their duty and the duty of all Christian people to very carefully, very rigidly follow these divine instructions.

But, strange to say, it appears that in the majority of minds the reasoning faculties become more or less entangled so that very wrong constructions are put upon the words of heavenly wisdom.. One peculiar feature connected with the matter is that some of the Lord’s dear people, sincerely desirous of doing His will and nought else, after making blunders and getting into a great mess of trouble, fail to discern wherein they have erred; hence with them the experience has brought no lesson, and instead of being helps and bright-shining lights they are stumbling-blocks to a considerable degree and thus offset largely the good they desire to do, or perhaps really do accomplish. It will be clearly understood, then, that the object of this dissertation is not to hurt, wound, offend, but to assist the members of the body of Christ to accomplish more fully the essence of their covenant with the Lord and the desire of their hearts.

What is Evil Speaking?

We answer: That to speak anything that is derogatory respecting another, to tell things uncomplimentary of them is evil speaking. Some have the impression that evil speaking is lying and consider that speaking the truth is always in order. This is a misconception. The speaking of anything that is prejudicial to the character of another, whether it be truth or falsehood, is evil speaking in the proper acceptance of that term. The Lord’s spirit, as well as His Word, forbids evil speaking because the Lord’s spirit is the spirit of love and kindness, and evil speaking, true or false, is repudiated by love, is contrary to love, is born of some evil motive, either busy-bodying or gossiping, or, worse still, malice, envy or strife, and all of these the Apostle designates in his list of “the works of the devil.”

It is said that there are “exceptions to every rule,” and so there are to this one. There is an exception noted in the Scriptures, namely, that if the trespass be of sufficient importance and likely to break our fellowship with the offender we may go to him and discuss the matter with him alone—not with a view of

judging him, condemning him, etc., but with the object of helping the brother out of some view of matters or course of Conduct that seems to us to be wrong, sinful, contrary to the Word of God. Before going to him or her, we are to make self-' examination to see that we are not in a fault-finding mood, and that the matter is one that really concerns us, either in our personal relationship to the brother or in our mutual relationship to the members of the church of Christ, whose interest we believe might be injured by the brother's course. We should go kindly and with the hope in our hearts that the matter which seemed strange and in violation of God's Word might prove upon explanation to be nothing of the kind.

We are to go hoping that in any event the Lord will bless our mission, not to the injury of the brother or sister, but to his or her comfort, succour, deliverance from what we believe to be a wrong course. It is only after we have taken this step and the wrong course is persisted in, either to our injury or to the injury of the church—only then are we permitted to speak to another of the thing which we consider to be an evil. Even then the speaking must be done in the presence of the accused, that he may have the fullest opportunity to present his views of the matter, as set forth in the Scriptures in Matt. 18:15-17 and explained in detail in Scripture Studies, Vol. 6. If it were not so pitiable and so grievous an error it would be amusing to note how some conscientious brethren and sisters dodge this matter of evil speaking and seemingly its point entirely. For instance, one of these may say to another, "I have just heard something about Sister C which shocked me fearfully. I do not know what to think about it. I should like to have your advice, but of course I could not tell you what the matter is, for that would be evil speaking, which, as the Lord's follower, I would not be privileged to speak and you would not be privileged to hear." Poor sheep! Such seem not to discern that they are at the time engaged in the very worst kind of evil speaking. In nine cases out of ten, if they would tell all that they knew, the impression upon their auditor would not be as bad as the one given. This serious error, which is doing so much harm in the whole world and amongst the Lord's people, is an evidence of two things: (1) A lack of reasoning power, (2) a lack of the spirit of love.

We are trying in this article to correct the first defect and to help some to reason more correctly; but it is not ours to help them over the second defect, their lack of love, which really lies at the foundation of the wrong. If they had loved the sister of whom they heard the evil report, they would never have breathed a word of it to another soul, but would have gone directly to the condemned one in love and with a hope that the report was false, and would have told her, as a friend and as the spirit of love would prompt, all that they had heard or seen or misunderstood, and would have assured her that they hoped there was some explanation of it; but in no event should any hint of the matter escape them.

"Suffering as a Busy-body."

There are generally two sides to a matter. In nearly every instance in which one person violates the command, "Speak evil of no man," assistance is rendered by the one to whom the evil is told. He or she "draws the matter out" by questions or hints or suggestions or looks of interest 'or encouraging comments, etc. Undoubtedly such a hearer of evil is, in the Lord's sight, equally guilty with the speaker of the evil. The difficulty with both is that they lack the spirit of love, which the Apostle refers to, saying, "Love thinketh no evil," but "covereth a multitude of faults." The first intimation that something scandalous or unkind is about to be said respecting another should lead us to shrink back and feel the fear and realise that the Adversary is near to assist in any evil work. The wise course, as already seen, would be to say promptly, "My dear Sister or Brother, excuse me, but are not you and I both the Lord's children, and can we not please God better and advance our own spiritual welfare more by giving heed to His Word and developing in our own hearts and minds the spirit of love, instead of back-biting and devouring one another? Let us think of each other's good traits, good qualities, as the Apostle would have us do." If such a proper course lose you the friendship of anyone it will be to your advantage, for if he or she were right-minded such kindly treatment would be helpful, and you would be at once advised that they fully agree with you and are also striving in the same direction.

How often have we heard people say, “Yes, indeed, I wish that I had never heard it! It has caused me a deal of trouble and suffering.” These are the people mentioned by the Apostle—who are suffering as busy-bodies in other men’s matters, contrary to the divine direction and the spirit of love. They are getting their deserts, and the chances are that they will do spiritual injury to themselves and also do spiritual injury to others through their busy-bodying. Few of us have time to attend to all of the affairs of the world and still give proper attention to our own. “Sweep before your own door” has become a proverb, the intimation being that those who pay great attention to their neighbours’ affairs are neglecting home duties and responsibilities and that they are likely to get themselves into trouble in so doing: The Christian of advanced experience emphasises the fact that he has quite a sufficiency of knowledge of evil in himself and his environment without making special search for the weaknesses and blemishes of others. There are some so constituted that it is second nature for them to attempt to regulate everybody else according to their own ideals and standards, forgetful of the fact stated by the Apostle, “To his own Master every servant stands or falls.” Our limitations respecting what we may or may not do by way of interference in the affairs of others are very many. Our Lord addressed busy-bodies when He suggested that they were like the man who went to his neighbour and desired to help him to get a mote out of his eye, without being aware of the fact that he had a whole beam in his own eye. Jesus said to such, “First pluck out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pluck out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.” Luke 6:42.

#### A Truth-telling Obligation.

We have already pointed out that it is not permissible even to tell the truth where it would be slanderous or injurious or calculated to bring dishonour to our neighbour; that to tell the truth under such circumstances would be evil speaking from the Scriptural standpoint and forbidden, not only by the Word of the Lord, but by the spirit of love for the brethren, and that it would be wrong even to listen to such a statement, and that rather the one attempting such evil-speaking should be in love rebuked and helped to overcome the weakness. But there is a truth-telling that is in harmony with love. If a scandal-monger and back-biter and slanderer and evil-speaker has disclosed some matter to us, it is our duty not to repeat the matter and not even to hint of it to others, but it is our duty to tell the matter and all that we know about it to the one who has been slandered, vilified, spoken against. Why is it our duty to do this? We answer, that the same spirit of love that would prompt us not to speak derogatively of another to others should prompt us to tell the aggrieved one the facts: (1) It will put him on his guard and assist him in overtaking the falsehood or misrepresentation, and all lovers of truth and righteousness should be glad to assist in such a manner. (2) It would be very helpful, doubtless, to the slanderers, evil-speakers; a practical lesson would thus be brought home to them, and they might learn before it was too late for learning, that they are still cultivating the works of the flesh and the devil, which must be eradicated from their hearts before they would be ready for the glorious change of the First Resurrection and a share with Christ in glory, honour and immortality. (3) This course would be profitable to ourselves because it would assist in developing in each true courage on the side of right, on the side of truth, the Lord’s side, and against the side of the devil, the side of slander and evil speaking.

Strange to say, something in our crooked heads or something of the Adversary’s deception at times leads some of the Lord’s true people into a very wrong course in respect of this matter. For instance, a case came under our observation recently which illustrates this: Mr. A communicated “lovingly” some slanderous information to Mrs. B respecting Mrs. C. Mrs. B “lovingly” heard the awful news and then communicated with Mrs. D, saying that she had heard some awful things about Mrs. C and was greatly distressed thereby. Mrs. D, intimately acquainted with Mrs. C, assured Mrs. B that there was certainly no foundation for the evil speaking. Mrs. B said that she would like to tell Mrs. C the whole of it, but dared not do so, as it would be evil speaking. Mrs. D urged that in any event Mrs. B should go to Mrs. C and tell her the evil things that had been spoken about her and give her the name of her traducer, so that she

might go to him in harmony with Matt. 18:15-17; but dear Mrs. B was horrified at the suggestion and declared that not for her life would she be so untrue to Mr. A, and thus “speak evil” of him.

Now notice the mistakes made all through these transactions: (1) Mr. A began the matter as a back-biter, speaking evil of Mrs. C. (2) Mrs. B in listening to that and not rebuking it promptly and before allowing it to proceed, was a partaker in the guilt. (3) Mrs. B became a slanderer and evil-speaker and back-biter on her own account when she communicated the slander in vague terms to Mrs. D. It matters not that she did not go into details\_ She gave the bad impression, possibly a much worse impression than if she had told all that had been told to her. (4) Mrs. D was possibly at fault also in listening at all to the slanders, but she took the right course in attempting the defence of one who had not been heard, and in urging that the whole matter be taken at once to Mrs. C that she might know of the evil that was being done her in the robbery of her good name by Mr. A. (5) Mrs. B’s suggestion that she would be “evil-speaking” in taking this open, above-board course shows that she laboured under serious misapprehension of the points of equity. She was partaker with the thief in his robbery of a reputation. (Psa. 50:18.) The reputation of another had been stolen and she was helping to secrete the thief. Yet, as we say, the delusions of our twisted minds and the cunning of the Adversary get some of the Lord’s people into these difficulties so that they take unwittingly the side of the Adversary, who puts light for darkness and darkness for light. Mrs. B “would not for the world” expose Mr.

A, believing that in so doing she would be “evil-speaking.” What sophistry! The very opposite of the truth! That was the one and only time she should have told the matter, apologising at the same time for her own share in the sin. The person against whom the evil was spoken is the one and the only one to whom it should have been mentioned at all, and as for Mr. A, if it turned out to be discreditable to him and he lost some of his prestige thereby, it might mean the greatest blessing that ever came to him and might recover him from the snare of the Adversary, which, if not recovered from, would most assuredly hinder his entrance into the kingdom.

#### Another Practical Illustration

Here is another instance which came under our observation and which illustrates the awful danger of this pernicious principle of “evil speaking,” slandering, back-biting and the subtle forms it may take and the great danger to be accomplished.

Mrs. V took offence at Mr. W. (It matters not for this illustration whether there was ground for the offence or not.) Being very conscientious she felt that she could not tell the circumstance to her friends; and indeed probably another consideration weighed in this matter. She felt that to tell the truth would not serve her purposes, as many would doubtless consider that the wrong and blame belonged to herself. Under the Adversary’s guidance, of which doubtless she was unconscious, she began to slander Mr. W. in a pantomime way—by looking hurt, acting offended and disconsolate. As she foreknew, this led her friends to question her: What is your trouble? Indirectly and with apparent unwillingness she intimated that Mr. W was the source of her grief, but that it was too deep for her to mention and that she was too noble to speak evil even with a cause. Promptly her friends, X, Y and Z, took the bait, rallied to her support and, true to human nature, struggled to see which could be the chief busy-body. Incidentally we point out that they should have remembered the Scriptures cited at the head of this article and should have given Mrs. V the Scriptural advice: Go to Mr. W. and deal with him along the lines of Matt. 18:15-17. They should not have picked, meddled, busy-bodied; and, in violating this divine rule, they suffered the consequences. These well-meaning busy-bodies, X, Y and Z, began the system of “investigation,” declaring to their own hearts and to each other that it was the love of God alone which was prompting them to help a poor Sister. We will not question the honesty of their claim, but content ourselves with pointing out that their love was not properly exercised along Scriptural lines. They began with Mrs. V—Did Mr. W do this or so? Mrs. V’s conscience would not allow her to say “Yes,” because their surmise

had quite overshot the mark of any grievance she could have claimed. But she was in the humour to crave sympathy and to forward her designs of bringing contumely upon Mr. W; hence she merely sighed and looked sad and refused to answer Yes or No. The busy-bodies, X, Y and Z, held a consultation and concluded that the reason she did not answer their question was that her trouble was far worse than anything of which they had dreamed. Again they approached Mrs. V with sympathy and condolences, telling her that they knew now that it was worse than she had first suggested and that they had concluded that it must be something even worse than they could even imagine or suggest.

Mrs. V was somewhat shocked that her method of slander by insinuation and silence had succeeded far beyond her original intention. But she felt that she could not go back on the matter now and tell the sympathisers, X, Y and Z, the plain, simple truth, because then they would forever lose confidence in her and discern that by her methods she deceived them. Thus from step to step Mrs. V became involved and her conscience injured until finally she felt that her only course to preserve her standing with her friends, X, Y and Z, was to take the position that their worst insinuations respecting Mr. W were well founded. Her conscience squirmed for a time, but love of sympathy and of the esteem of others and the fear that the truth would cause the loss of these, bound her hand and foot to the falsehood which she had acted, and slander which she had suggested by action, insinuation and silence. The result was that for a time all four of these ladies were in great danger of losing the truth and going into outer darkness.

How promptly all of that evil condition could have been nipped in the bud.. When Mrs. V was overtaken in the fault and began to slander Mr. W. by intimation, her friends, X, Y and Z, should have remembered the Apostle's words: "Ye that are spiritual restore such an one in a spirit of meekness, remembering yourselves also, lest ye should be tempted." (Gal. 6:1.) If Mrs. V had refused to be restored and continued her process of villification by conduct, these friends, acting along the lines of the Golden Rule, should have gone to Mr. W and told him of the matter, Mrs. V's conduct, insinuations, etc. What a great help this proper Golden-Rule course would have been to Mrs. V, Mr. W and the three friends! How it would have saved them from the Adversary's snare, which for a time enwrapped them and caused them a spiritual blight.

Don't, Tell or You are a Tell-tale.

Mark those persons who request you to keep secrets from those to whom they properly belong. We do not mean by this that there are no proper secrets in business, in the family, etc.; but we do mean that if anyone has a tale to tell us derogatory to another, and first attempts to bind our reason and judgment with a vow of secrecy, it is time for us to be on guard against that person, and to tell him or her in no uncertain terms that we believe that such an attempt to bind our conscience and judgment in advance is belittling to us and ignoble to him. Let us tell such in kindly terms that their ways are Ways of darkness, whether they are aware of the fact or not; and that we decline to be a companion in the dark ways which their language intimates, and that we advise them to come out of the dark into more honest methods and practices. Let us tell them this in such a manner as will wound them as little as possible, but in such a manner as will settle it for all time as between them and us that we do not wish to have their dark secrets—we do not wish to be sharers in their slanders and back-biting and "evil-speaking" and thieving of reputation.

Fear of being called a tell-tale has been the Adversary's method for secreting wrongs these many years, and not infrequently it is used as a lash to hinder "overcomers" from doing their duty. They must overcome this, and must learn that it is a sin not to tell the truth to the right person for fear of offending a slanderer, equally as wrong as to tell a slander to the wrong person.

This is a part of the overcoming, the victory which love and justice gain in our hearts. We must learn to pay no attention to the world's false standards and sneers of "telltale" and pay every attention to the divine standard, the Golden Rule. It is the duty of every clerk or employee to make known to his

employer any matter of consequence seriously affecting his interests, either financial or moral, as according to the Golden Rule he would wish that employer to do to him if their situation in life were reversed. It is the duty of every one hearing slander and defamation of a friend's reputation to give that friend the fullest information respecting the matter, just as much as under common law it would be his duty to report the matter if he were a witness to a theft of material goods. Fear of consequences must not hinder our faithfulness to this divine principle, this Golden Rule.

Let us fix it in our minds as an inviolable element of the Golden Rule by which we are bound, that if evil speakings come to our knowledge without our being in any sense a party to them or able to prevent them, we will always and promptly bring the matter to the attention of the brother or sister or person whose name or reputation is traduced, and will tell that person all that has been heard and the name of our informant, and everything else that will enable him or her to pursue the traducer, according to the instructions in Matt. 18:15-17. Whoever fails to see this, the proper course of a Christian, fails to appreciate, we think, the Golden Rule, which is binding upon all the disciples of Christ. (R- 4281).

#### PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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## Convention News.

IT is a pleasure to report a very profitable season of Christian fellowship and study throughout the four days of Convention arranged by the Melbourne Class, and held in this city over the Christmas period. The constant thought of the brethren was that of thanksgiving to the Lord for the blessings received throughout the special gatherings.

While travel difficulties prevented larger numbers of visitors attending, members were gladly welcomed from Canberra and various parts of Victoria, and from the general expression it was evident that all enjoyed the gatherings very much, in the highest sense.

The friends were appropriately welcomed on the opening day, and a helpful Bible Study Was conducted during each day of the gatherings, the passages of Scripture taken for these studies being as follows:— Psa. 31:19-24; Matt. 10:34-42; Rev. 14:13-16, and 1 Pet. 4:12-17. The consideration of these Scriptures was the means of refreshing the minds of the friends on the truth generally, with mutual profit to all.

Addresses given during the Convention served to encourage and exhort all in the Christian way, and a number from the public were present at the session arranged especially for these, with apparent good being done. The subjects for the addresses were as follows:—"We have left all and followed Thee," "Romans 15:4," "God's Plan of the Ages," "Consider the Lilies," "Be Ye Perfect, as your Father in Heaven is Perfect," and "Worshipping the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness." Thoughts from these addresses will appear in the pages of "Peoples Paper" so that readers may also receive something from the Convention.

On the morning of the third day of Convention the brethren gathered to witness a Brother symbol his consecration to the Lord, in the waters of baptism. This was a solemn yet joyous occasion for all, and served once again to remind the friends of their own vows of consecration—what it really means to walk in the footsteps of Christ, by His grace. The prayers of all were offered especially on behalf of this newly consecrated member, as well as for all who have likewise taken up their cross to follow Christ, even unto

death.

A Question. Meeting and Fellowship Meetings provided additional opportunities for exchange of thoughts on various subjects, as also for praise and testimony to the Lord's goodness and for expressing good resolves to continue in the Christian pathway as formerly, by the favour and strength of the Lord.

The helpful messages with appropriate Scriptures received from various Classes and individual friends were much appreciated, and the message from the Convention to all our brethren, with warm Christian love from all assembled, is found in Matt. 10:37-39.

The Love Feast and singing of our two well known and beautiful hymns, "Blest be the tie that binds," and "God be with you till we meet again," with concluding prayer for God's blessing upon all His dear people, brought this season of helpful refreshing to a close.

Passover Memorial 1944.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death, according to the Jewish calendar, falls this year on the evening of April 6th. Thursday evening, April 6th, after sundown, will therefore be the appropriate time to celebrate the Memorial in remembrance of Christ our Passover Lamb.

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.

Please note the times and meeting places in current issues of "People's Papers" as changes are sometimes necessary.

Melbourne.—Excelsior House, 17 Elizabeth Street (3rd Floor)—Sunday. 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. — Thursday, 19 Erming-ton Place, Kew, E.4, 7.45 p.m.

Adelaide.—11 A.O.B. Rooms, Flinders Street—Sunday, 3 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Perth.—Druids' Chambers, 459 Hay Street Batt—Sunday. 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney.—75 Liverpool Street (few doors from George Street).L—Sunday, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m.

# We Have Left All and Followed Thee.

(Mark 10:28). (Convention Address).

THE words of our text are stirring words, laden with significance, being uttered by the Apostle Peter. They command our interest and admiration; indeed, they are so far reaching and embrace so much, being worthy of deep meditation. We are constrained to admire Peter, for it required something more than mere adventure to impel him to thus express himself so sincerely.

What Peter said and did, in leaving all and following Jesus, was not exclusive to him and the Apostles; many others, both then and now, heard the same words, "Follow Me," and some, like Peter, said, "Yes, I will leave all and follow Thee." The record reads that Peter continued to follow the Lord, faithfully and courageously, mostly through adversity, to the end of his life and for which he would receive the crown of life immortal.

Looking back over God's plan as revealed in the Scriptures, we find that at the time of creation He purposed, in His due time, to select a New Creation to which very rich favours and blessings would be bestowed; upon a few only of earth's billions, and this few He called His elect, whom He purposed would dwell with Him in His spiritual throne.

It is our purpose here to distinguish between the very elect and those who are not of this, special company. Very wonderful indeed was the world's creation, yet the New Creation is superior in every way. It is the peculiarity of this New Creation that mystifies the world, and it is the same peculiarity and distinctiveness that adorns its beauty and glory before the eye of faith in the believer, for he knows it was God's purpose from the beginning to select out from the world a limited number of people to be called saints, under His only begotten Son, to become joint-heirs with Christ in His glory, honour and immortality, and in the great work of blessing mankind with restitution. This limited company God calls His very elect.

The nature and manner of their faithfulness that constitutes this class New Creatures is most important; they hear the invitation and recognise the voice "Follow Me." The conditions are brief but comprehensive — surrender and complete sacrifice of will, including all earthly desires, hopes and ambitions and only God's will accepted, honoured and fulfilled; this, not for a season, but for the whole of the lifetime. All these conditions are fully and clearly understood; they realise they are making a covenant of complete self-sacrifice, in harmony with the conditions laid down by God. They mean all they say, and God accepts their consecration vow of faithfulness, that they may run for the prize He has promised to all who run faithfully and diligently.

Their justification is a soul stirring experience, laden with assurance; a load is lifted and gone, anxieties give place to a beautiful peace of mind. So wonderful is this experience, that to say trials and suffering may follow causes neither fear nor doubt; they are filled with the spirit and it would be a joy even to suffer. Nay, nothing could now separate them from Him who has so lavishly filled their hearts with the good things they now enjoy, and their faith in God's promises grows stronger and stronger. Their love is deep and warm, their zeal all aflame; even the adversary stands back, knowing he would be rebuffed, but he also knows the weakness of human nature, and both how, and when, to move, so as to find the unsuspecting believers unprepared, when, as by a seeming coincidence, an old cherished desire is flung across their path, with all its old attractions and looks of innocence, causing an instant pause and surprise.

It holds their attention till an uncontrollable desire seems to overpower them, and they succumb just like Peter, who could not believe it possible that he would fail. Sincerely he repented and the Lord forgave him; it was both an experience and a lesson to Peter of immense value, as subsequent events clearly show.

So also to the justified believer, his fall is identical with that of Peter's, through weakness of the flesh, and his recovery also is identical—sincere repentance, and an humble appeal to God, through Jesus Christ, for forgiveness, help, strength and guidance to keep the narrow way.

It is all important he keeps in mind that of himself he can do nothing to safeguard his footsteps; his one and only hope for safety lies in constant prayer and faith in the promises of God, set out in His Word, saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee"; "I will never leave nor forsake thee," etc. What blessed assurances, and if that believer remains faithful unto death, he is received as one of the "very elect," obtaining the promise made to him when he vowed to leave all and follow Christ, this promise being the crown of life, the divine nature, in joint-heirship with Christ in the heavenly Kingdom.

Having identified the very elect, let us distinguish those Christians who do not attain to that honoured place, and discover their course and reward. Like the very elect, they too were called; they knew from whence it came, they listened and heard the conditions which they weighed well, and fully and carefully considered and then unhesitatingly accepted. Clearly understanding the importance of their decision they made a vow unto God to accept the conditions in their entirety. God accepted their consecrated vow as sincere and genuine and justified them for a full place in the race along the narrow way leading to the heavenly prize, which He has promised to all those who continue to run faithfully to the vows of consecration.

And so for a time they did run well, but alas, something hindered them; just here a distinction is manifested. First, the very best love is being divided, just a little is withdrawn and placed elsewhere, but once begun the evil affections rapidly and sedulously grow, and ere long the first love has perished and a new lover, the old man, receives all and those who were once the elect of God have forfeited the prize; they have broken their vow, not under compulsion in any way, but solely by their own actions.

No doubt the adversary played a large part in this calamity, suggesting at first these were quite genuine in what they undertook to do, but not thinking the conditions were so exacting as to include such trifles, as some say it does;

it appears some people go to extremes and think others should do the same. After all, it is not what anyone thinks or says; the conditions were clearly explained and everyone fully understood them and made their vow accordingly.

There are some in various Ecclesias who have ceased to allow their light to shine as it once shone; neither saint nor sinner see their light as they used to see it, and though their justified state may still be declared we do not judge them; it is for Him alone who is judge of all things. But realising all that is connected with failure to keep our vow complete, and fearing the signs of failure in seeing the oft-fading leaf of the vine, we appeal, yea, we exhort the brethren, not to be deceived. Former holiness or present formal holiness avails nothing.

Probably some, if not all those who fail to keep their vows, comfort themselves with the thought—I did my best and even if I do not attain to the chief prize I will get a less valuable prize on some other plane, like the Great Multitude, or the rest of the world, and as all these conditions and awards are wonderful and good, I am sure to be satisfied. This delusion cannot be too clearly and boldly explained, and the true position realised before it is too late.

Along these lines is the teaching of Universal Salvation, which is being pressed into the forefront by some friends, claiming that eventually all the human race will return to God and become reconciled, so that none will be lost. The arguments are based upon certain passages of Scripture misinterpreted, hence misrepresented and setting at nought other plain Scriptural teachings. If this teaching of Universal

Salvation is allowed to go unchallenged and become largely accepted, some of the elect may no longer concern themselves regarding the solemn vow they made, or continue running for the first prize, just pleasing and consoling themselves, under this new teaching, that everything will work out all right in the end. This fallacy cannot be too forcibly combatted, for it is a snare of the devil, cunningly laid in the sweet domain of God's dear children by those whose teaching is not of the spirit of truth, but of the spirit of error. Further, this teaching nullifies the teaching of second death, for if all are eventually restored and reconciled to God, none being lost, for what purpose is second death so frequently and impressively stated in Scripture?

Possibly some may feel offended and think we are extreme, in presenting such a picture and expressed in such language, but as holders of truth and messengers thereof, how can we hide it under a bushel? It is the deep, sincere love we have for the brethren that creates our great interest in them, and reading as we do, that if one who has once tasted of the heavenly gifts, falls away, it is impossible to restore such a one, seeing they have crucified unto themselves the Son of God afresh. There can be no parleying in this all important matter, and if a professing believer is offended because of such plain speaking, he demonstrates the great need for such serious warning.

Apathy is another sure sign of growing indifference; it is a germ of destruction, eating deep into the vitals of our life, and if not checked and destroyed, it will sooner or later destroy us. Beloved brethren, have we been unconscious of our dear Master's agony in the garden? Nay, we have not been with Him in His loneliness and grief; maybe we have been engrossed in material things and had little time for anything else. Have we given lukewarm service and love, no zeal, no demonstration of deep joy of being made holy and acceptable unto God? The Psalmist had a like experience but he thought upon his ways, found he was going the wrong way, and turned his feet unto God's testimonies. He did the only right thing, and brethren, so ought we.

## Pilgrimage Ended.

The following word was received from Perth, W.A., early last month—"Our elderly Brother Scott of Swanbourne, who had been ailing for some time, took a sudden change for the worse a few days ago and passed away. He was a fine Brother and well grounded in the truth, being respected and loved by the friends, and has been greatly missed since he was unable to attend the meetings. We rejoice in the Lord to know his pilgrim way is ended, and he has entered into his reward."

## Correspondence.

Victoria.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Sirs—I wish to thank you very much for all the literature you have kindly sent to me, also for the book “The Plan of God in Brief” which I’ve commenced to read and find most interesting and instructive, especially when looking up the Scripture references. Your talk last Sunday on “The Last Days” I think was one of the most interesting I’ve heard. It makes one feel how wonderful God’s Plan will be, and what glorious days lie ahead.

Am enclosing a postal note for 10/- as a small contribution to the good work you are doing.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have just been listening to your broadcast and find you both very helpful. Keep the good work up, we need you so much, and please forward your booklet on the Soul to this address.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Your letter and leaflets I was pleased to receive during the week and read of your work; also I was pleased to hear you from 3GL this morning on “Hope for the War-Stricken.” I would be pleased to receive a copy of the books “Divine Plan of the Ages,” “Foregleams of the Golden Age,” also “Some of the Parables” and “Plan of God in Brief.” Also I am subscribing to “Peoples Paper” for twelve months.

I will enclose a postal note for 1 and the change you may place to your broadcasting expense or whatever may be in need. Thanking you and may God bless your witness.

Dears Sirs—I have been a student of the Bible for many years, belonging to no religious organization or sect. I was brought up a Methodist but found their teaching wrong. I have listened lately to some of your addresses, and our views on these coincide. . . Kindly forward to me a few pamphlets such as “Some of the Parables” and “Hope Beyond the Grave.” Postal note 5/- donation enclosed.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Christian Friends—Thank you for weekly Dialogue copies, also for booklets received. I am very interested in the Scripture studies; I liked the booklet “The Greatest of These is Love,” the Christian life being so well portrayed in that sermon. I find great consolation in reading from “Daily Heavenly Manna.” Hoping you will continue in your broadcasts; they are getting more interesting every week. Enclosed 1/3 in stamps for a few more booklets similar to one mentioned, if you have any to spare. Hope to send small contribution to your wireless fund soon. With kindest regards and best wishes for the success of your Christian work.

South Australia.

To Frank and Ernest—Please send to above address the booklets mentioned in your address this morning on “What is the Soul?” I believe your interpretation to be right and pray that your address may be blessed to help many to see the truth of Scripture. in these days when so many are being deceived by New Thought and other Spiritualistic teachings.

Sir—Today I heard over 5AD the Biblical Dialogue by Frank and Ernest and regard it as very essential and beneficial to the community. I notice you will post the Dialogues to those requesting the same, also booklets. I will deem it a favour if you will post the same to me as I feel it is very helpful.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Thanks for all reading matter you have sent me; enclosed find 5/-; please send

me “Foregleams of the Golden Age.” Can you please explain to me what our Lord meant when He said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit,” and when He said, “Let the dead bury their dead,” also in what form will the dead come forth from the grave when they hear His voice? Thanking you in anticipation.

(See Question Box in next issue for answers to questions B.B.I.) .

Berean Bible Institute—Dear Sir—Very pleased to be able to hear your Sunday morning Bible Talks through Station 5AD, and I might mention that several neighbours have come along and have been very keen to hear those interesting discussions, which are delivered so well.

Your “Peoples Papers” have arrived regularly and always interesting and inspiring; there are many I know who find much help and guidance within its pages. Please find enclosed 10/- subscription and remainder towards your General Fund. Hoping you will be able to see your way clear to keep the Sunday morning addresses going, which I know are doing so much good. Thanking you.

Dear Sir—Being an earnest admirer of late of your Sunday radio talks, I would be so grateful if you could oblige me with a copy of last Sunday’s broadcast, entitled “The Third Heavens.” Hoping you have every success in this work which you have undertaken and may God give you grace to be able to continue it.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Friends—I was listening in Sunday morning to your address and just thought it lovely, but being a bit hard of hearing did not catch all, and my eyes are failing me. You said you would send address along; well indeed I would like to read it, or hear it again. I think Paul’s writing on the third heavens just lovely; I wish to God more would take up the reading of the grand Old Book. I would like to send more stamps but these are all I have, but will send later on. God bless you all.

Dear Sir—I “listened in” with great interest to your broadcast over station 5AD this morning and am writing for a copy of today’s talk and also booklet on the resurrection. I wonder if it would be too much to ask for the same to be sent to friends of mine whom I know are puzzled and worried these days, and whom I feel would be helped by the same. I would like to enclose some stamps to help defray expenses. Thanking you in anticipation,

N. S. Wales.

Dear Friends—I would like to receive your Frank and Ernest Dialogues each month with “Peoples Paper” please, because I cannot pick up the stations you broadcast over too well; other N.S.W. and Qld. stations clash with 3GL and 3SH here, so you will see it is not easy to pick out full text of broadcast. I would like to receive copy of each, as I consider them very helpful and enlightening. I would also like booklets “God and Reason,” “The Offerings for Sin,” “Corning Back from Hell Soon,” “Why Sin, Death and Evil are Permitted.”

I cannot thank you enough for lovely lot of literature, books and Bible I received from you some time ago; I find them most helpful in the study of the Word of God. I would like you to send copies of “Peoples Paper” and some Dialogues and free literature to a friend of mine—as I feel he would be very pleased to have and study them. May God bless you and your glorious work. Yours truly, in His service.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have been an interested listener to your Sunday morning talks over 2WG and sorry that you will not be continuing same over this station. As I will not be able to pick them up over other stations I would like you to post same to me. Thanking you.

(The weekly Dialogues are gladly posted to all desiring same—B.B.I.) .

West Australia.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Sirs—I was much taken with your talk this evening on the air and am writing to ask you to please post me some of your books or papers to read and then I can pass them on to my friends. Thank you.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Sirs—It gives me great pleasure to hear your religious views broadcast each Sunday.

One feels strengthened and uplifted by the message they give. I look forward to the further talks with great interest. Wishing you every success.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Sirs—We have been listening to your sessions on Sundays since you started but last Sunday we were unable to do so and feel would like a copy of same in accordance with your invitation given out each week. We think your talks interesting and enlightening and much needed explanations of many matters not readily understood in the Bible by many people.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Fellow Christians—I have just read the book “Foregleams of the Golden Age” and enjoyed it very much. A friend gave me the book years ago but I have not had time to read it through properly until a fortnight ago, when I had to stay, in bed three days, so it turned out a blessing in disguise. The book cleared up such a lot of things I did not fully understand. .. I was pleased to read in your book that you publish booklets; they are such a great help in the Christian life. I should like some to give to the neighbours around here; there are some who love, but who have not much light as they only attend the Anglican service. I should like to be able to give about eight of them copies of “Foregleams of the Golden Age” but I am lending it round.

I would like to get the “Peoples Paper” but will not be able to send the 3/- for another three weeks. . . I just happened to notice the session you give on the radio on Sunday, and listened and enjoyed it very much. So I am addressing this letter to the station, instead of to Melbourne; it will be much quicker. I shall listen each Sunday when I can. . .do so want to be among the Bride class. With Christian greetings.