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The Lord is my Light and my Salvation

In the first six verses of this Psalm we find expressions of strong confidence in God—the language of faith and assurance. During his long and varied career David passed through certain experiences which caused him to feel deeply his need of the Lord's help. On more than one occasion he was in danger of losing his life at the hands of his enemies; but he put his trust fully in the Lord, and never was that trust betrayed—never did the Lord forsake him.

The Psalm, therefore, is the heartfelt expression of the feelings of David; and it also expresses the sentiments of every member of the Body of Christ.

As we read the Psalms we find they are full of expressions of praise. The Psalmist had much for which to thank God and to rejoice in, but he had not the same reason for thankfulness and rejoicing as have the Lord's people of this Gospel Dispensation. David never experienced the lifting of the Adamic condemnation to death, but the Church have passed from under that death sentence, and have been lifted up and blessed with a full knowledge of God's plan.

David is a good example to us along the lines of patient waiting upon the Lord. He had a strong faith in God and had learned how to wait for the Lord's time to lead and guide him in respect of all his doings. In this he showed reverence for God. David had been anointed by Samuel to be king over Israel, yet it was quite a few years before he was actually crowned and recognised as king. During the period of his waiting he never sought to take the kingdom to himself; he waited patiently for the Lord's time. Even when King Saul sought to take David's life, and cruelly hunted him in the madness of his anger, yet how graciously David acted in the face of the opposition of Saul. (See 1 Sam., 26th chapter.) Only a truly god-fearing man would act as David acted toward Saul.

In verse 1 we have the expression, "The Lord is my light and my salvation." What does the Psalmist mean by this?

In what way was Jehovah a Light to David? As all are aware, light is that by which we see objects distinctly. The light of the sun enables us to discern the form, distance, magnitude and relation of objects, and prevents the perplexities and dangers which result from a state of darkness. Light is therefore put for knowledge, for whatever enables us to discern our duty, and the path of safety, and that saves us from -the 'evils of ignorance and error. Everywhere in -the Bible light is the emblem of knowledge, purity and truth, as darkness is the emblem of ignorance, error, sin and wretchedness. The Lord was David's "Light" because he endeavoured to walk in harmony with God's - Word. (Psa. 119:3340, 97, 105.)

David sought earnestly to do the will of God, and took pleasure in meditating in the law of the Lord. The antitypical - David class—the Body 'of Christ—are Much more favoured than David was, in respect of opportunities for knowing the Lord and understanding His ways. What a privilege is ours to have in the Gospels the record of the life of Christ, therein revealed as our Saviour. The Apostle John speaks of our Lord as the "light of men." (jno. 1:4.)- "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men"; also verse 9, "He was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"; and verse 14, "The Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory -as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Truly then the Church of this Gospel Age can say: "The Lord is my light and my salvation." The knowledge of the Divine Plan of the Ages, which—God has graciously given us, enables us to Understand just how our salvation has been arranged through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; and how we are called to walk in His steps and share 'in His sufferings, being first justified through faith in His

blood.

The Psalmist says (Psa. 119:130): "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" ; - and bow thankful we are 'that our Heavenly Father has given us ears to hear -His Word, and opened our eyes -of understanding to see something of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ."

Our Lord said (Jno. 8:12): "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"; and again (Jno. 12:46), "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on

Me should not abide in darkness." In these words of our Lord we see clearly the value and necessity -of faith and obedience.- We must first of all believe • on Him, and there we must follow Him (our faith must lead to action), if we would have the light of life to shine continually upon us. How important is this matter of faith. We must learn to trust the Lord with all our heart, like David did, and then we will be able to say, "The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" How thankful we are that God gives strength to His people—that He has become the strength of our life, and our portion forever. In Psa. 28:6-8 we read: "Blessed be the Lord, because He hath heard the voice of my supplications. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise Him. The Lord is their strength, and He is the saving strength of His anointed." It was because David trusted the Lord with all His heart that he found help and strength, and deliverance from evil. And so it will be with us to-day, if we find at any time that we are lacking in strength and courage, and likely to suffer defeat, let us examine ourselves. Have we neglected to use our shield of faith; or have we been careless or heedless of the Lord's instructions along the lines of watchfulness and prayer? The Lord has promised to give strength to His people; but in order to receive help from God, we must believe His word and draw near to Him in prayer. Thus opening our hearts to God, He will draw near to us. In Nahum 1:7 we read, "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him"; and in Isaiah 26:4, "Trusty in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." In Eph. 6:10 the Apostle urges us: "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." We can go forward with courage and confidence, trusting fully in the Lord, for He "is the strength of my life" and we have nothing to fear.

Verses 2-3.—These verses show that David had his enemies to fight even as have the members of the Church. . In the 17th chapter of 1st Samuel we have the account of the slaying of the lion and the bear; also David's victory over the giant Goliath the Philistine. (See 1 Sam. 17:32-37.) As David himself is a type of the Church, so -the enemies of David—the lion, the bear and the giant, may represent the enemies of the church—the world, the flesh and the devil. What was the secret of David's success over his enemies? Was it not his faith in God? While all the best and strongest men of Israel were terror-stricken at the sight of Goliath, David showed not the least sign of fear. Putting aside the cumbersome armour offered him by King Saul, David took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones out of the brook, and taking his sling in his hand, he, approached the Philistine.

Goliath scoffed at the sight of a mere lad approaching him; but David was full of faith and courage and confidence in God. In his words were: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand." The stone was sent with such accuracy that it found its mark,--and -the proud and boastful -giant was brought low, and Israel was delivered from the fear of the Philistines.

The Lord's people of to-day still have their battles to fight, but what a help it will be to us if we meet the oppositions in the same spirit as David met his. "If an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; if war should arise against me, even then will I have trust." (Leeser's translation.) It was the power of God's spirit that gave David the victory; and the same Holy Spirit will also give us the victory over all fear, if only our faith and trust is staved upon God. He is our strength, and He will give grace to help in every time of need. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Verse 4.—David desired one thing of the Lord—"To dwell in the house of the Lord, and to behold His beauty." David loved the typical tabernacle of God, and the desire of his heart was to build a temple, a more permanent structure for the Lord. (See 1 Chron. 28:2-3, 6-10, 20; 1 Chron. 29:10-19.) If David could so rejoice in the construction of the earthly temple, how much more may we rejoice in the construction of the antitypical temple. (Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Pet. 2:5.) The thought that God has called us and chosen us to be of that temple class should stimulate us to run faithfully and zealously the race before us. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God." (Rev. 2:12.)

In His Word we have the beauty of the Lord revealed to us, and His holy spirit has enlightened our minds to enable us to behold the glorious character of our God. Surely the one thing that he desired above all else is that we may be found living near to the Lord, and -beholding His beauty of holiness. In Phil:3:13 Paul says: "This one thing I do"-- in order that he might eventually be a member of the house of the Lord. "To enquire in His temple" seems to mean that we

might have the help and enlightenment of God's Word. When Israel was perplexed or in doubt about a matter, there was the opportunity of inquiring of the Lord, through the priests; and very often the Lord communicated His will through His prophets. So we have our Lord Jesus, our High Priest through whom we can approach God in prayer, and we have the written Word of the Lord which will serve to guide us in times when we are undecided how to act. 'We are to trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not to our own understanding. We must lie willing to -be guided -by the Word and its underlying principles, and we will need to empty our hearts of all selfishness which would prevent us from seeing and following the wisdom from above. "To inquire in His temple" may also indicate that we have the privilege of asking the advice and help of other members of the Body at times when the pathway before us is not clear. Surely it is a great blessing to have the help and love of the brethren—the fellow-members of the Lord's temple. How greatly then we are favoured: We have the privilege of the throne of grace. We can come with confidence in every time of need. We have the fellowship and love of the brethren; and the light of God's precious Word to guide us in the paths of righteousness and truth. His Word assures us, "The meek will He guide in judgment; the meek will He teach His way." (Psa. 25:9.) "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." (Psa. 32:8.)

Verse 5.—"In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me." David realised the protection of the Lord, and like him we, too, are hidden in the secret place of consecration. Nothing can by any means harm the Lord's consecrated ones. He that is for us is mightier than all that be against us. Our Lord knows how to cause all things to work together for good to those who love God.

The fourth chapter of second Corinthians shows us how Paul appreciated the privilege of dwelling in the secret place of full consecration, He was fully given up to do the will of God; he was engaged in the work of the ministry of reconciliation; making known to all who have ears to hear the glad message of salvation through faith in Christ, and the opportunity that is now open to believers, to take up the cross and follow in the steps of Jesus. Yet Paul had his full share of difficulties, but he had learned how to rejoice in them. There were times when he was troubled on every side, as he says in 2 Cor. 1:5, "For when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears." He was perplexed, and persecuted, and cast down, yet He realised that he was not forsaken—he was hidden in the secret place of God's tabernacle—the place of full consecration; and therefore, while bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, the life of Jesus was being manifested also in his daily life.

May it be then that we, like Paul, and also like David of old, have that abiding trust in God that will enable us to, look forward through the clouds and shadows that may threaten to overwhelm us, and have that peace and rest that comes as a result of our full submission to the will of God.

"Thy will be done! I will not fear
The way provided by Thy love ;
Though clouds and darkness shroud me here,
I know that all is bright above."

Like Paul we, too, should press on with courage and rejoicing, even though the outward man perish—the human hopes die; yet if we are faithful, how great will be our reward; the inward man—the hidden man of the heart—will be renewed and strengthened day by day; in every time of trouble we will be hidden in the pavilion of God; we will be established upon a rock—a sure foundation.

Verse 6.—Surely then our head shall be lifted up above our enemies round about us; will, triumph over all oppositions through God's grace to us in Christ. Isa. 54:

God's favour to David awakened in his heart 'the spirit of thankfulness; so it does in the hearts of God's true people to-day. David was moved, to offer sacrifices of joy to God; so our offerings, our sacrifices to God should be rendered gladly, When David went to purchase the threshing-floor of Araunah, the man, knowing that King David intended to make an altar and sacrifice to God, offered to give him, the threshing-floor, and also bullocks for the sacrifice and wood for the fire. But David would not accept it as a gift. He said, "Nay; but will surely buy it of thee at a price; neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing." (2 Sam.. 24:24.) Like David, our offerings to the Lord should be something that -costs us a sacrifice. • - (To be continued.)

GOD'S PERFECT PEACE.

“Like a river glorious is God’s perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.

Perfect; yet it floweth fuller every day;
Perfect; yet it groweth deeper all the way.

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

“Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;

Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there,

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

“Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love.

We may trust Him solely, all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.”

“THAT MUCH.”

A little girl who was in hospital recovering from a severe operation, was visited by her mother every day. The mother noticed that the child was careful to keep her handkerchief in a place where she could easily get it. There was nothing strange about that, but her mother also observed that whenever the nurse brought her a clean handkerchief the little girl would transfer to it something that was tied up in the corner of the other one. At length the mother gently asked the child what she was guarding so carefully. With tears in her eyes, the little sufferer answered, “I found it in the drawer at home, and I wanted that much with me.”

The mother untied the knot, and found rolled up in the handkerchief part of a leaf from the Bible containing the text,
“Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am! thy God.”

The child wanted “that much” with her to take to the operating-room; she could hold “that much” in her hand when the dressings were made and the stitches taken out, and it meant, oh, so much to her !

Oh, for the faith and trust of a little child!

“PEOPLES PAPER.

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute, at National Bank Chamber, 226. Glenferrie Rd.,

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(Monthly) 2/6 per annum, post paid,

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings Strictly . accord. with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

COOPERATION ‘IN’ THE CAUSE OF TRUTH.

EACH year the twelve months’ work of the:Berean Biblical Institute closes with the month of .April, and we desire at this time to present the Tract Fund Account for 1932-33,;also reference to the work which has. been a joy and privilege to engage in with the willing and loving co-operation of the brethren generally.

‘Throughout the year there has been cause for much thankfulness to our loving Heavenly Father, for while certain difficulties and trials have not been absent, these have been so small in comparison with the blessings received. We trust that the dear friends in all places can likewise testify to a full realisation of the Lord’s goodness as they have endeavoured to “seek first the kingdom of God “ and serve His cause in spirit and in truth.

The work done (luring the past year has not been great; We are- not of those claiming “many wonderful Works,” yet we trust it has been of benefit to the brethren and others coming’ to a knowledge and appreciation of the truth. , •

There are those in very lonely places who write, saying that they find the monthly visits -’of the “People’s Paper” a blessing and encouragement to press along ‘the narrow way, which is now all the more beset with various hindrances and difficulties. Other readers, though having. more opportunities of personal fellowship in the classes and small home gatherings, also express appreciation of the “Paper” with its articles contributed by the brethren in various parts. We assure each and all dear friends of our love and sympathy and earnest desire for their highest spiritual welfare, and trust that, though the way may be “narrow is and rough,” -they may ‘find in- all hard. experiences’ such evidence of- the overruling care of the Lord that these will just be ‘ the Means of adding to their faith the necessary virtues to obtain “an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The subscriptions to the “People’s, Paper” remain about the same, so that the deficiency in its cost of printing. and posting, as in former- years, requires to be made up by the Tract Fund. The efforts on. the part of those brethren who endeavour to obtain new subscribers are much. appreciated, and. maybe other. readers have interested friends who would like to receive the “Paper” regularly. Back issues are gladly supplied to- all who can make good use of them, and any -desiring the “Peoples Paper, but. are unable:. to provide the subscription, a card to that effect will be sufficient each year. The assistance to the Tract Fund manifests again the willing and loving sacrifices of the dear friends to help on the work,- and the endeavour is to use this provision-to the best of our ability in the cause of truth. While the .expense for the year is not quite covered, we are thankful. to have been able to fulfil all inquiries and requests for the free literature, etc. Many thousands of tracts of a nature likely to create interest in the glad message of salvation have gone here and there to willing workers and we believe have been faithfully distributed. The responses to this witness may seem small, and yet we realise that we are still living in the day of small things, and quite a few nice cases of interest have been found during. the year by the message of hope making impression in the heart. However, another method that was particularly mentioned last year as being a profitable means of witnessing has again brought good results, mid that is, by inserting coupons in suitable newspapers Offering literature free on the sure Bible teachings of the Lord’s provision for all mankind in their distress and perplexity. Quite a number have been brought to a knowledge of the truth in this way, and it is encouraging to have - the co-operation of the brethren along this line, as they make use of the papers in their localities likely to bring .the best results. More could possibly be done in this direction, for although the chief object with each and all must be to “seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,” to “make straight paths for our feet,” and assist those of our brethren in the same, there is much joy and blessing in finding others who may be just waiting for the message the Lord may be pleased to give them.

From time to time enquiries are received regarding the price of tracts for distribution, and opportunity is taken of mentioning that the arrangements of the past are still carried on, we believe with the best results all round. That is, that the Tract Funds, comprising the voluntary contributions towards the work, provide the literature for general distribution, so that each and al: who are willing may feel free to co-operate as they have opportunity. Some may have talents in one direction, others in another, and as all are combined the best results should surely -be attained, It is for

each one rejoicing in the light of the truth to determine the best way of serving the cause in co-operation with other members 'of like mind and desire. Quantities of tracts are now available on the topics, "Two Distinct Salvations" and "Why Sorrow, Sin, Death and Evil. are Permitted"; also a limited number with other titles. We are very glad to hear •from all who may desire to assist in some way the work of thrusting in the sickle of truth while there is yet opportunity. •

May the dear brethren everywhere feel encouraged to press along the pilgrim way as they realise the Lord's blessings of the past and present, and meditate upon the many promises and assurances of grace and strength for every time of need. "He that dwelled', in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow' of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress', my God; in Hint will I trust.":We ask again at this time for the prayers of the brethren upon the work, that all may be done to the praise and glory of the Lord. 2 Thes. 3: I.

TRACT FUND ACCOUNT

To Balance Carried Forward	£1116 9
„ Donations Received ..	11917 0
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By Advertising Free Literature	£13113 9
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Free Tracts and Deficiency "People's Paper"	£313 3
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General Expenses (Office, etc.)	7010 2
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Correspondence.

South Australia,

April, 1933. Dear Christian Friend's,—

I write to thank you very much for the loan of the book "Divine Plan of the Ages," also the other papers, which I find most interesting and helpful. I shall read "The Plan" most carefully. It is indeed a revelation, as I have blundered along for 20 years enquiring into the beliefs of several different sects, only to come to the conclusion last year that through faulty translation of the Bible and traditions and alterations of the different churches, we were in a complete fog. My thought was just this: "If I only knew the truth I would follow it"; but I don't think I could ever be good enough to be one of the elect, although I do feel that I have been called, not once, but many times, and I truly believe in the Bible as God's Word, and have been baptised because I found we were told to do so.

Thanking you for your kind assistance, for I feel that I have been very greedy in asking for so many papers, but I want to know all I can learn about the truth.

Yours gratefully, Alb

New South Wales, 18/-1/33. The Secretary.

Dear Friend,—

I wish you to forward for twelve months a monthly copy of "People's Paper." With the first, kindly send a copy of the tract, "Why Evil is Permitted." You sent me one some time ago and I thought it the most beautiful pamphlet I ever read. I lent it, to lose it, as it so happened. I would like to know what you would charge for a hundred of them to distribute here.

Your sincere Brother in Christ, A.Q.

South Australia, 12th May, 1933. Berean) Biblical. Institute, 1-

Dear Friend,—

I am sorry for neglecting to forward my subscription. Please find enclosed 5/—2/6 subscription and a little contribution.

I have been reading some of Pastor Russell's books: I have a loan of them from a German friend. They are wonderful books and a great help. I would like to get them in English so that I could lend them to others. Please let me know the price: And may God bless and prosper your work.

Yours sincerely, F.I).

New South Wales, 13/5/33.

Dear Brother,—

Greetings in our dear Lord's name. Sorry for delay in sending a small donation towards helping in the good work. Enclosed is a cheque for I had intended sending it before now, but delayed. - I would like you to send me some more tracts and "P.P.," particularly the last one. I thought it was very good, showing the two salvations, etc. I was just wondering whether it 'would be wise to go over the whole of with the tracts; what do you think about it yourself? I would take charge of • the tracts and see that they were delivered as best we could, if thought advisable. We have a small class meeting in my house every Thursday- evening in which Bro. and others take part, but perhaps we could get a small hall to meet in if other.; were sufficiently interested to come. If thought advisable, we could put a rubber stamp address on the tracts.

It. would take a good many tracts to go over and surrounding suburbs.-

In case above was decided. upon, could we get tracts enough to do it with.? Will be glad to know what you think of it, brother, and let me know.

Please renew my "Herald," also "P.P." I would like a copy of "Some of the Parables" and the book by the two Germans, entitled "Cleansing of the Sanctuary." Trusting you are quite well and with best wishes, I remain,

Your Brother 'by His grace, C.I.

[It is indeed good to be zealous in spreading the message of truth at every opportunity, to be "instant in season and out of season." and quantities of tracts may be had for distribution as wisely as possible.. Reference to the work along this line will be found in this issue under the heading, "Co-operation in the Cause of Truth."]

TRULY BEAUTIFUL.

Beautiful hands are they that do
The work of the noble, good and true,
Busy for them the long day through;
Beautiful faces—they that wear

The light of a pleasing spirit there,
It matters little if dark or fair;
And truly beautiful in God's sight,
Are the precious souls who love the right.

There is a sweet joy which comes to us through sorrow.—Spurgeon.

The Spirit of a Sound Mind.

(Convention Address)

THE Christian Church is not being chosen from the most talented of the human race; in fact, we are assured by the Apostles that “not many wise are called,” and the Lord’s words were, “I thank Thee, O Father, that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes.” Though Some may. tie naturally endowed with more wisdom than others, it is quite certain that none can run the heavenly way without the gift of the Holy Spirit—the spirit of a sound mind—the wisdom from above.

One thing is clear: the Lord does not select the: members in Christ because of mental ability, but because of the heart condition—the heart that is kind, that is humble, that is likely to prove loyal and faithful under the trials and testing which will be sure to come during the course of preparation for so high a station.

Some troubles have originated even, through those whose kind dispositions have not been controlled by the spirit of a sound mind. Instead of acting, along the lines of true principle and justice, the tender heart. may have sided ‘With the erring one. The spirit of a sound mind enable: >-, one to view matters from all. sides, and decides and nets on the principles of justice and love.

All Christians receive a measure of the Holy Spirit, which is manifested by the development of the spirit of a sound mind; and one who has been long in the way ought to discern: good and evil and he wise in counsel. The spirit of d sound mind enables one to understand God’s great purposes and to comprehend more of the breadth and length and height and depth of His love. So we come to appreciate the divine wisdom, the beauty in the balancing of justice, righteousness and love in all God’s plans and ways. One can then depend upon the good promises of His care, protection and providence, and appreciate the purpose God has in permitting the trials and hard things we sometimes experience. The result is a restful peace while working together with God—co-operating with Him—in producing the character likeness of Christ in us, as well as in serving His cause and His dear people.

HOW IT IS DEVELOPED.

Like all Christian graces, the spirit of a sound mind is developed by exercise and application of the truth—”Thy Word is truth”; “The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..” God appeals to our minds; He commends His love to us, inviting us to “come, let us reason together,” to consider our ways and to apply our hearts unto wisdom. When we heard the glad message that revealed to us a God of love, we turned in reverence to Him, and as we took the steps of repentance and faith and found peace through justification and consecration, we began to understand even, why evil has been permitted, and now see wisdom and love as well as justice in the great Divine Plan. Life was changed for us, the Bible became a new book, we continued to see new beauties and obtained a more intelligent view of life. Instead M. the spirit of fear—dread—our hearts responded to God’s love and became restful, joyful, and peaceful, and we inure and more realised the reasonableness of having made a full surrender to God. (-Rom. -12:1.)

It was then that we received the Holy Spirit and could understand spiritual things. We had to make, a revaluation of - things—make new estimates. “Things that were gain to me I counted loss for Christ.” Things which we had been ignorant of, then became to us of greater value than anything earth could supply; “Yea, (says Paul) I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of: Christ”; and so this heavenly wisdom—the spirit of a sound mind—is given unto us in order that we may prove wise stewards respecting all our talents and walk worthy of the name of Christ. It will assist us to balance our weaknesses and to make allowances for the frailties of others, in the home, in business, in contact with, the world, as well. as in Christian fellowship:

A CORRECTIVE OF WEAKNESSES.

All have some talents and these require to be exercised wisely. For instance, sympathy may be unwisely expressed and do more harm than good; human wisdom might .lead to a course unwise from a spiritual .view-, point, and so the spirit of a sound mind must control, Then, how necessary to control the gift of speech. Where one is fluent, what endless harm can be done by an uncontrolled tongue. Sometimes, too, though per; haps no great injury is inflicted, lengthy speeches in classes only waste time and becloud the subject under, consideration instead of elucidating the matter. So, also, with the gift of, song; while we may ever make melody in our’ hearts, we might be enjoying our own voices while being a nuisance to others near by.

Even in the talent of prayer, as in telling the glad message of truth, the spirit of a sound mind should direct so that our words may be in season. There arc times when long prayers are a great trial to others., Generally, for lengthy prayer we should enter our own rooms and “when we have closed the door pray to our Father in secret.” Short prayers in public or in class will generally serve the cause better than long ones. As indicated by the Master, long prayers contain vain

repetitions (Matt. 6:5-7). The thought should be to voice the desires of those present. Particularly at the close of a meeting, unless it be some very exceptional case, the prayer should be: brief. Not always what may appear best for us, is what is really best for others.

With respect to class matters, we should not 'be too insistent upon what we think best; we may be mistaken, and even regarding the meaning of 'a. Scripture, while clinging to our view until reason is satisfied, Where: no vital truth or principle is at stake we should, having expressed our view allow the matter to pass, recognising that it is the chairman's privilege to conclude the discussion. We should prefer' others rather • than please ourselves in all things where truth and principle will allow. Let us ever be careful to lean on the Lord's Word and not on our own understanding. The Word is the source whence we may develop the spirit of a sound mind.

The spirit of a sound mind should enable us to recognise our own failings and shortcomings, and make us ready to prefer others when we notice that they are strong where we are weak; So we find plenty to do, as another has beautifully stated it, in "meekly, earnestly striving to stem the tide' of human imperfections and weakness, endeavouring with painstaking care to regain the Divine likeness.": In doing this we shall not be found 'meddling with other's concerns—such is the very opposite of the spirit of a sound mind, it is foolish; rather does 'the spirit of a sound mind teach us to "learn to be quiet and to mind our own business." We should take note of our failings and seek to correct ourselves. We may be of an irritable, impatient disposition, or curt, 'brusque; and so easily misunderstood, excitable or extreme and apt to jump to conclusion; and to judge others, perhaps given 'to surmising, or we may be too touchy or ready to take offence. Let us be ready to confess our faults, ready to make amend;, ready to deal leniently with others. Let us seek in prayer and study of God's Word to grow in grace. Guy strength lies in our faith in God, in •His love, His power and His promises of strength for our need. Perfect trust in God will assist us in all these matters.

Then the spirit of a sound mind takes note of our responsibilities and also of the responsibilities of others, leading us to so walk as not to infringe on others' rights or privileges. Sometimes one overestimates one's privileges and underestimates the privileges of others. ,-Sometimes we may exercise liberties and in doing so curtail someone 'else's liberties, as in a class where one speak; too long and too often so that others do not get opportunity. We should prefer to encourage all to take part.

Also in our homes sometimes we may not realise how much our ways .and likings may be irksome to others. The fact that "a man's ways may be right in his own eyes" does not make them right in God's eyes. Even in our religious arrangements and sacrifices we should make certain that we are not, perhaps, taking too much time from. others who are anxious to get along with matters which devolve upon them. In our relationships the Christian love in one may be patiently enduring what another may not be sufficiently alert to notice and correct in himself.

God's will should be the deciding factor in all our arrangements. In His great 'plan there is perfect order and time observed, and we must seek to copy his -ways. As His people associate in worship, fellowship and study, all things must be done decently and in order, and each member must respect the arrangements made, must recognise. the appointments and submissively adhere to the order of meetings and direction of the, elders.

The spirit of a sound mind will not conflict with 'the .Golden Rule that we do unto others as we would that they should do unto us, but will assist us so to "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise., .redeeming the time because the days are evil; wherefore he not unwise bid understanding what the will of the. Lord is." (Eph. 5::15, 16.) Let us give no offence to •any,- but seek to be more and more-a help and blessing. to all, especially to the fellow members in Christ with whom we may be in contact, that grace may abound, that progress may be made, and-.that the happy condition of unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace may continue. "With all lowliness and meekness, with long- suffering, forbearing one another in love."—Eph. 4:2, 3.

What Constitutes Spiritual Mindedness ?

“To the spiritually-minded is life and peace.”—Rom.,:6.

Ability to understand the Scriptures, to talk fluently upon them and to expound them clearly is a qualification which we think should follow in the wake of spiritual-mindedness; but some might be able to expound Scripture very well, and to express truths in very good form, who are not necessarily very spiritually-minded.

To be spiritually-minded is to have a mind in harmony with the Spirit of God, and fully surrendered to the Divine will—fully consecrated to the Lord. It would not be enough merely to have a preference for good, saying, “I prefer not to do any gross sin; I prefer to live a life that will be honest and decent.” This attitude would not be spiritual-mindedness. Adam was not spiritually-minded, but in his perfection he had a mind to do right. He had the mind of God, in the sense that he had a balanced mind, not one having a preference for sin, or one that was weak. He was sound-minded and could appreciate things from the standpoint of righteousness and justice. But even in his perfection Adam had not a spiritual mind in the highest or Scriptural sense of the word.

In Rom. 8:6 the Apostle Paul uses the expression “spiritually-minded” in describing a certain class who have become followers of Christ, who have made a full consecration of their lives to the Lord, and who, in harmony ‘With this consecration, have been begotten’ of the Holy Spirit. These are spiritually-minded. These are granted a spiritual insight into divine things.

OUR LORD BECAME SPIRITUALLY MINDED AT JORDAN

This was true of our Lord Jesus. Having left the glory which He had with the Father, and having humbled himself to take the human nature, He was found-in fashion as a man. We read that He was not an imperfect man, but “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26.) Yet with all these special qualities, He did not have the spiritual mind to which the Apostle has reference. Our Lord had a mind such as Adam had before the fall—a mind in perfect harmony, perfectly balanced. Our Lord received the spiritual mind, however, at the moment when He was - begotten of the Spirit, when He made full consecration at baptism, and as a .consequence the Holy Spirit descended and lighted upon Him in bodily form like a dove.

Following that begetting; the Lord had an enlargement of understanding and was granted to See certain deep things of God, which He had not seen before His concecration so we read in that very connection that “the heavens were opened” to Him—the higher things became clear to Him—the more spiritual things. . These thing; St. Paul calls “the deep things of God.” “The natural Man,” Paul says (the natural -man would he a perfect man; fallen man is imperfect, unnatural), “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14.) Then he proceeds to say that we have received the Spirit of God through the begetting of the Holy Spirit; and that have the new mind, this-spirit begetting,- we are enable to understand the deep ‘things of God. “The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God; and we have received . . . the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” Thus to us is it given to know the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2:11, 12.)

NO NATURAL MAN IS SPIRITUALLY MINDED.

So, then, the one who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit is spiritually-minded. He sees things from the new standpoint which God specially brings to the attention of the spirit begotten. As the Apostle John says, “Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it.” (1 John 2:20.) Whoever receives this begetting of the Holy Spirit, this anointing, has an understanding of heart and of mind which is different from that which any natural man would have—a quality that will progress with him.. He has the privilege of growing in grace and in knowledge and in the appreciation of the deep things of God, and he should grow.

The Apostles Peter and Paul go on to explain (1 Pet. 2:2, 3; Heb. 5:13, 14; 6:1, 2) that one thus begotten of the Spirit of God is at first only a babe, and, as a babe, should desire the sincere milk of the Word—the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; but as he goes on, he should feed upon the strong meat of God’s Word. Some of those who have the begetting of the Spirit may be blessed with the special gift of language, so that they can make the matter very clear to others; some others, who have also received the begetting of the Spirit, may riot be blessed with this gift. But all certainly would have the desire to tell forth the blessings which they have received from the Lord, that others might know and might glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are His.

As these spiritually-minded ones would thus endeavour to tell the good tidings, we have no doubt that the Lord’s blessings upon them would more and more qualify them as ambassadors and representatives, that they might tell the message to others, if not in one form, then in another. We have noted, however, that some who speak with

stammering lips have sometimes accomplished very wonderful things while others have failed to obtain the same results. The victory is not always to the strong nor to the swift; for the Lord may grant His blessing with the feebly-spoken word, particularly if the while life he in harmony with the message given out.

We have been surprised at times to find that some who have apparently considerable understanding of spiritual things, in the sense of being able to tell about them, do not always give the best evidence in their lives that they really have the Spirit of the Lord. Sometimes in their private lives there is that which is quite contradictory. This condition surprises us; causes us to wonder how it is that those who apparently understand the Truth should 'be without the power, or manifestation of the power of the truth in their daily lives. We should bear in mind that whoever speaks the words of the Lord with his mouth, should uphold it in his every act, thought in private life as well as in public.

THE LIFE NOT THE WORDS, A TRUE INDEX.

The Truth should be the standard. Everything else is certainly quite contrary to the Divine will; and that person who fails to uphold the Truth in his daily life gives evidence that he has not the Spirit of the Lord in the proper degree. If, therefore, any of us should find that in our daily lives we have not been living in conformity with the message of our lips, it would be a matter of serious concern, for we cannot doubt that whoever is out of harmony with the Lord in his heart will sooner or later get out of harmony with his utterances.

We think, therefore, that if in a congregation of the Lord's people any one were proposed as an elder or a deacon who outwardly had ever so great ability as a teacher, but who did not in his daily life give good evidence of being fully consecrated to the Lord, and of seeking to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, he should be regarded as an unsuitable person to be put into the position of elder or deacon. The sooner he is left quite by himself the better. For the more such people are put forward in public, the worse it will be for them and for the congregation whom they are supposed to serve.

[The above article is a reprint from the writings of our Brother Russell. It is our thought that at the time it was written—1912—he had clearer insight into the deeper truths than when he commenced his writings. Some of our brethren have had their minds exercised recently on the subject of spiritual mindedness, and this article is recommended to their careful consideration.]

One of these days we shall know the reason
Haply, of much that perplexes now;
One of these days, in the Lord's good season,
Light of His peace shall adorn the brow.

Blessed though out of tribulation
Lifted to dwell in His sun-bright smile,
Happy to share in the great salvation,
Well may we tarry a little while.

—M. E. Sangster.

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