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Friendship Begotten From Above

(Convention Address Reprint)

“A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity”—Prov.17:17.

FRIENDSHIP-LOVE is not a miracle, but results from certain combinations. The one we love need not necessarily be just like ourselves, but rather would appeal to us more as a counterpart possessing qualities which we admire, but do not so strongly possess. Darkness, however, never loved the light; the light never loves darkness. Hence for friendship-love on a noble plane both friends must have high ideals, noble aspirations, even though they may have these in different measure. Each should see in the other something to esteem and to look up to; although in the case of our Heavenly Father this cannot be true; His love for us is of a parental character and chiefly along the lines of sympathy for us and appreciation of our endeavours to attain to His standard of character.

Reverence for the Lord and a recognition of the righteousness of His ways and precepts, and an appreciation of the Divine will and providences, are most essential to all true friendship, a hindrance to all spirit of rivalry and in general constitute a most valuable uplifting influence in every Christian character. How much it means to us in the way of contentment to know that our Heavenly Father is at the helm as respects all the affairs of His people! How much rest it permits in our hearts! How much meekness, gentleness, kindness, and love it prompts toward others, both to realize that they as well as ourselves are subjects of Divine care, and to have a heart so fully submitted to the Lord as to desire that His will shall be done irrespective of our own temporal interests or those of others.

This undoubtedly is the fruitful soil out of which all proper love amongst the Lord's people will be developed. We must love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength before we shall be prepared to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to sincerely wish for him the

same riches of grace that we desire for ourselves under the Lord's providences. Still more is it necessary to have this supreme love for God before we could in any measure approximate the degree of love which the Lord set before His followers as a new commandment, saying—“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you”—John 13:34.

Jonathan's love approximated this Christian love, this self-sacrificing love which so loved his neighbour as to delight to see that neighbour have the Lord's blessing upon him, even while this meant his own loss of honour, prestige, and kingly power. Oh, that such love as this might more and more prevail in the hearts of the New Creation! It is to such that the Apostle says—“Let the brother of high degree rejoice in that he is abased, and the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted”—under the Lord's providences.

At times friendships spring up based upon mutual admiration, and often with a measure of selfishness in co-operation. But this is not the result where the love and reverence of the Lord properly enter in. As for instance in the case of Jonathan and David, selfishness would have operated against the friendship; it is, therefore, a sample of disinterested love. Every success and honour that came to David raised him as a popular idol to the place which Jonathan to a considerable extent had held. Every advancement of David meant the preparation of the people to receive him instead of Jonathan as Saul's successor. The king saw this, so did Jonathan; but they were reversely affected by it. The king was made jealous, angry; Jonathan, reversely, loved his rival, and that from the time of their first meeting, on which occasion he gave to David his armour and court robes—1 Sam.18:4. We read—“The soul of Jonathan was knit unto the soul of David”—1 Sam.18:1—their natures interwove, intermixed—a beautiful

description of the purest and truest of love.

Alexander White says—"Had I read 'Jonathan loved David as his own soul', for once only I should have passed it by as exaggeration . . . but as I read again the rest of the story, I found myself saying to the sacred writer, 'Lo, in all this speakest no exaggeration.'"

David and Jonathan have had their fore-runners and successors throughout all the generations of men; but the story of their devotion, one to the other, continues to exert its influence upon the minds of the children of God as they ponder over this exhibition of fidelity. Such contemplation reveals the power of an unselfish love to crush out of the heart every ignoble, selfish thought, and to elevate the mind and character up to that grand ideal so beautifully described by the Apostle where "love seeketh not her own," "suffereth long and is kind," "is not provoked," "thinketh no evil"; "beareth all things, endureth all things"—where love reaches its clearest expression in actual demonstration.

So often the thought is held that real, true, brotherly love may be defined as the test of our patience, forbearance, and sympathy, or a reciprocative response to the love bestowed upon us by others; but these things have more to do with the passive side of love's operation, while the more positive action of love seems to have to do with its power to achieve results—where love controls, where the soul triumphs over hindrances that otherwise would be insurmountable, and exhibits strength, vitality, and beauty. These in turn stand out as an attractive force drawing to itself kindred spirits, uniting them to itself and imparting to such its own invigorating influence until fully reflected in the oneness of true brotherhood.

Thus we see that in the purposes of God our highest spiritual interests are served by our being so constituted as to require the mutual friendship of kindred minds—brethren controlled by similar aspirations and holy desires. Not only because the exercise of their true love upon us will react to our highest good, encouraging and stimulating our minds to reciprocate their love by seeking to be lovable, attractive, and pleasing to them, but also because we in turn require such companionship in Jesus in order that our love may be exercised upon others in assisting, strengthening, and beautifying their lives by its sanctifying power.

Now in all this, as well as in other matters, Jesus seems to fulfil rather than to destroy. He sent His disciples out two by two, as we believe, on a recognition of this great necessity in human life; and to this time in all Christian service and Christian living, the strength and joy of a strong personal Christian friendship is almost beyond computation. Another has beautifully observed

that "The love of God never disturbs the order of things He has established. We never love our neighbour so truly, as when our love for him is prompted by the love of God. All other foundations for our affections have reference to self. It is ourselves that we love in our friends, and this is an imperfect love. It is more like self-love than real friendship. How, then, must we love our friends? We must love them in the way that God has ordained. We must love God in them. We must love the good things with which God has endowed them, and we must, for His sake, submit to the privation of those things which He has denied them. When we love them with reference to self, our self-love makes us impatient, sensitive, and jealous, demanding much and deserving little; ever distrusting ourselves and our friends. It soon becomes wearied and disgusted; it very soon sees the termination of what it believed was inexhaustible; it meets everywhere with disappointment; it looks for what is perfect, and finds it nowhere; it becomes dissatisfied, changes, and has no repose; while the friendship that is regulated by the love of God is patient with defects, and does not insist upon finding in our friends what God has not placed there. It thinks of God and of what He has given; it thinks that all is good, provided it is from Him, and it can support that which God suffers to be, and to which it is His will that we should submit, by conforming ourselves to His designs . . . It is all things to all men, not in a forced appearance and in cold demonstrations, but from a full and overflowing heart, in which the love of God is a living spring of the tenderest, the deepest, and the truest feelings."

Surely this represents the thought of our blessed Lord as He sets before us the requirements of true brotherhood. What language can express the delight, comfort, and strength experienced by those whose hearts are blended together in the spirit of this deep, unselfish friendship! But facing the disciple in this matter of friendship, there is a great limitation. He cannot enter into any close bond save with those who are, like himself, entirely consecrated and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the highest law of all to him, and nothing that could possibly interfere with his relation to the Lord must be tolerated for a moment.

The claim itself looks hard and arbitrary, but the infinite wisdom and love thereof has been evidenced by the sad results accruing to those who have disregarded it, and have formed friendships with the worldly, or with those who walk disorderly, "after the flesh and not after the spirit"; which friendships have proved to be "enmity against God."

The reason is perfectly clear to those who have a true conception of what discipleship really is,

and how radically it differs from all other associations. It is intended to be a relationship centred in Jesus, a union of hearts touched deeply by His love, purity, and greatness, with each individual earnestly seeking continuance of His friendship by remembering His definite statement—"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." Behind all this stands the great desire of this One we mutually love, namely that our association centred in Him might represent to us a high spiritual vision of His loveliness, begetting in our hearts that spirit of oneness, helpfulness, and faithfulness so grandly exemplified in His friendship to us.

Additionally, how evident it is that those restrictions are necessary, since Jesus has repeatedly taught us that it is His will that His friends should in their relationship to Him, and to one another, bear testimony to the world as "the salt of the earth"; that there is a power in His friendship to constitute us a witness to the practical results of union with Him, producing characters and relationships that demonstrate the power of His gospel to purify, and the power of His love to bring together the high and the low, the rich and poor, the learned and unlearned, mature and immature, binding all together in a fellowship like to that above—"that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Remembering this, let us now consider how this discipleship in Jesus is, in itself, a perfect qualification for the highest form of friendship. The disciples of Jesus drawn toward each other by the law of spiritual affinity will find His work in them fitting them for a friendship of the strongest and most enduring kind. There is the self-denial which He has enjoined upon them as the way of entrance upon discipleship, and the condition of its continuity. If self be smitten to death, and the one most prolific source of dissension, resulting in that breaking up of friendship, has gone, with what strength we can love and serve—if we have given up our hold on self with all its increasing demands. Then the common consecration of the life to the Kingship of Jesus, His people loving each other, and each able to say—"That life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God"—Gal.2:20—have the will and the impulse of One, and that One in His way and work is love.

Still further, there is a communion of interests. It is written of the hosts that gathered to "Hebron" that they were of "one heart to make David king." That common cause made a people, a nation, solid and strong. So with friendship in Jesus. Each disciple has nothing to live for but by word and deed to emulate Him and to be the fullest expression of His mind and character.

When two or more of these are brought into

comradeship through the love and grace of God, and their friendship becomes fervent with a great desire and purpose such as this, how strong and lasting must that friendship be. Each will cherish for the other a very high ideal of life, character, and service, no less than the will of God in each. The prayer of Epaphras for the Colossian brethren—"That ye may all stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God"—Col.4:12—is a delightful statement of the desire that disciples, comrades, ever cherish for each other, and that friendship is ever looked upon as a means to that end. Thus the very heart of the Golden Rule is reached in that friendship, for each does to the other what he would the other should do to him. Yea, more—each catches the spirit of Jesus, who went beyond the requirements of the Golden Rule, even to loving others better than Himself. Such a love is rarely known, except among the saints; and, alas, we fear not often experienced even among these. When, however, we do find a friend who sticketh closer than a brother, we properly appreciate him all the more because of the rarity of his kind. And to Jonathan the depth of David's affection was shown when they were forced to part. "And they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded"—1 Sam.20:41. This love found expression in David's lament at the death of his friend—"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women"—2 Sam.1:26.

When this mutual love becomes established amongst brethren in Jesus, then comes that delightful sense of rest and naturalness in each other's company, which is the very essence of friendship. A writer has most beautifully expressed this thought thus—"O, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pour them all right out just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then, with the breath of kindness blow the rest away."

That is the abiding condition of friends of Jesus. All necessity for reserve and hiding is gone, in the absolute confidence born of the certainty of high unselfish love. This laying bare of each to each produces the true vision of each to each. I shall thus be able to recognize quickly all the excellencies in the character of my friend, which perchance other persons may be slow to discover. He will see with clearest vision the points of my shortcoming and failure. Intelligent love is **never blind**. We shall know each other more deeply and truly in that life of mutual love than it is possible for man to know man by careful

(Continued on page 7.)

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

"Our Earthly House" and "Our House from Heaven."

The Apostle is writing to the New Creation respecting their condition—not including the natural man. He recognizes the new will as the New Creature, and the body as its "tabernacle", or tent, which is much better than none, though quite unsatisfactory. The New Creature cannot feel perfectly at home in it, but earnestly longs for the perfect body, to be his in the resurrection—his permanent home, or share in the "mansion" our Lord promised to prepare for the New Creation—John 14:2. "We know that if our earthly house of this temporary dwelling were dissolved, we have a permanent structure of God, a house not made with hands (not produced by human powers), everlasting, heavenly."

It is true that in this present body, or temporary house of pilgrimage, we groan—oppressed not only by the evil influences of the world and the devil on every hand, but also and especially by the weaknesses of our own flesh. For when we would do good, evil is present with us, so that the good which we would do we are often hindered from doing, while the evil which we do not approve often obtrudes itself on us and requires to be continually resisted and overcome. As the Apostle elsewhere declares, we "which have the firstfruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our body"—the Church, into the glorious likeness of our Lord.

But our groaning is not with a desire to be unclothed. We do not wish to be without a body, for that at very best all down through the Gospel Age would mean to be "asleep" waiting for the resurrection morning, to be "clothed upon with our house from heaven", our new, perfect and permanent body, our "home." What we prefer is not to have the little spark of present life extinguished, but to have it swallowed up, absorbed into the perfect conditions of the perfect life to which we are begotten. We long for resurrection birth, with its perfect body.

"Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the spirit." This perfect condition, which we are to obtain in the resurrection, will be the grand

consummation of our salvation, which God has promised; and the new mind, the new will begotten by the Word of truth, is reckoned as the beginning of that New Creature, which will be perfected in the divine nature when the first resurrection shall have completed it. The holy spirit granted us in the present time is a prepayment, so to speak—an "earnest" or assurance of the grand and gracious results for which we are hoping and striving, groaning and praying.

"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body (so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions—ourselves and our surroundings), we are absent from the Lord." If we were living near to Him, "walking with God", we would not feel perfectly satisfied with present attainments, conditions, etc; but would feel like pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better rest, a better home, "which God hath in reservation for them that love him." But this, as the Apostle explains, is true only of those who walk by faith and not by sight. "But we are confident (full of faith toward God, we rejoice to walk by faith), and well pleased rather to be from home (homeless, pilgrims and strangers on the earth) and to be at home with the Lord" in the spirit of our fellowship.

For this cause we are striving, that whether it be by and by when we reach our home, or whether it be in the present time when we are actually away from home, pilgrims and strangers, we strive that we may be acceptable with the Lord; that we may have His favour and blessing and realize His fellowship and presence and know that we shall ultimately be accepted by Him.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." All through this pilgrimage we are standing at the bar of our Lord's judgment: He is testing us, proving us, to see whether or not we love Him and the things which make for righteousness and peace; and if so, how much we are willing to sacrifice for righteousness' sake. He marks the degree of our love by the measure of our self-denials and self-sacrifices for His sake, the Truth's sake.

But thus to speak of our bodies as houses can be true only of the "saints", the "New Creatures" in Christ. Others of mankind have not duality of nature, and could not properly apply to themselves such expressions as that of Romans 8:10, 11—"If Christ be in you the body is (reckoned) dead because of sin; but the spirit is alive because of (the imputed) righteousness" of Christ. The new nature of the saints, begotten by the Word of truth, is really only the new will, which, however, is thenceforth addressed as the real person, and it alone is recognized of God, who knows us not after the flesh but after the

spirit of our new minds—Christ-minds. Notice also Romans 6:3,4. These “New Creatures” have an old man, or outward man, that is perishing, and a new man, inward man, or hidden man of the heart, who is being renewed day by day—2 Cor.4:16; Col.3:9,10; Eph.4:23,24; 1 Pet. 3:4. (From—“The New Creation.”)

Visiting Brethren Overseas

(By Brother Graeme Smith)

Proverbs 10:22 expresses a great truth—“The blessing of the Lord, it (indeed) maketh rich.” The inclination of David as stated in Psalm 13:6 is therefore easily understood—“I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.” Both of these realizations were with me throughout a trip around the world in 20 days. Although the reason for travel was my temporal employment, there was some opportunity to visit brethren in U.S.A., Canada (by telephone) and England. It is hoped that sharing some of my experiences might enable some of the blessings to flow to others, and to thus assist the whole Body to be fitly framed together, to the glory of God.

God's Own

One profound impression gained was that expressed in 2 Tim.2:19—“The Lord knoweth them that are his.” In all places, the spirit is working out the same qualities of character, although in different ways in different circumstances. This was in vivid contrast to the worldly scene where national attitudes differ so markedly. Government objectives differ so widely—some aim to control and restrain, some to protect liberty and freedom, and some plot a somewhat confused course between the two. Our Father's purpose is uniform throughout the world, and Heb.13:8 came frequently to mind—“Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today, and forever”, in all countries.

Darkness

Another powerful impression gained was that spiritual darkness indeed now covers the earth. The world rushes on—everywhere. This is clearly an encouragement to us—“When the Son of man cometh, shall he find (the) faith on the earth?” As we therefore see the world so totally devoted to mammon, “let us look up, and lift up our heads, for our redemption (deliverance) draweth nigh.”

The Lord's people were in small numbers in all the places visited. Being tied to a business itinerary did not permit attendance at any Conventions, but this was really an added blessing because all meetings attended were more representative of the Lord's work in that local area.

First Meeting

It was a thrill to speak by telephone with Sister Ludmila Grudzien at The Dawn. I was at Washington, D.C., and she was able to give me the telephone number of Brother and Sister Hagensick at Chicago, and Brother Earle in Maryland State. I telephoned Chicago immediately and the Hagensicks send their warm Christian love to all, together with Phil. 4:4-8.

As the Lord would have it, there was a meeting in Vienna, Virginia, on the Tuesday evening, and Brother Earle kindly provided transport from my hotel. The meeting was in a private home, with less than 10 present. The Lord was truly with us as we meditated on Heb.2:9-11.

Canada

Time in Canada was very limited. The offices where we worked were in the same building complex as our hotel, so that one did not need to go outside to go to work. The only contact I had was with Sister Elaine Myhill, at Belleville, approximately 120 miles from Ottawa. However, there was insufficient time to visit Belleville, and I had to be satisfied with a lengthy telephone call. Sister Myhill remembers all the brethren around Melbourne well and sends her warm Christian love, by God's grace.

England

After work on Friday, we flew all night to London, arriving early Saturday morning. Although suffering from jet lag, it was an inspiration to attend the Class at West Wickham, Kent, for two meetings on Sunday. West Wickham is an outer suburb—30 minutes by train south from central London. The Class met in a basement of a school hall, with 8 present for the afternoon study (which commenced at 4 pm, by which time it was already dark) and 10 for the evening study.

There I met several brethren whose names I had heard before leaving Australia. Several of the brethren were well acquainted with the “Peoples Paper”, and one Brother had a copy of a book entitled “The Bible Teaching on the Covenants, Ransom and Sin Offering” (“What P.R. Taught”). This had been reproduced by Brother E. Martin in Melbourne in 1939-40, and was still being cherished after almost 45 years. Several items of the “Berean Series” of literature were on display and my mind recalled the words of Matt. 13:57. How careful we must be to recognize the Lord's providences on every hand.

After three days in London, our next “business call” was at Oxford, approximately 100 km. north west. It was here that the Lord's hand was most dramatically revealed. Although scheduled for two days' work, our hosts were unable to accommodate us and so we had finished all we could do in two hours. I telephoned Brother Hudson of “Bible Study Monthly” immediately,

and within 30 minutes was on my way by car to Milbourne Port, Dorset. Milbourne Port is approximately 180 km. south west from Oxford, in the south west of England. My pulse quickened with every passing kilometre, but wet roads and light rain called for caution and the trip took just on 3 hours.

Gainsborough House

Brother Hudson met me in the grounds of Gainsborough House at 2.40 pm. It was heavily overcast, and with sunset only an hour away, darkness was closing in. Brother Hudson had an appointment later which he could not alter, and so our time together was limited. However, it was a very thrilling experience to talk with him and the other brethren living at Gainsborough House.

Brother Hudson was at Brother Russell's meetings in London in 1913. 1500 members of the public attended one meeting, and the English speakers often attracted 500 people to meetings in Albert Hall. Brother Hudson has been corresponding with some Australian brethren for 45 years.

The concept of Gainsborough House is excellent, as those readers who receive the "Bible Study Monthly" will know. It is the original Gainsborough Manor House, and was built in 1840. The brethren have had it refurbished and subdivided into self-contained units. The brethren live independently except for the midday meal which is prepared by a housekeeper lady in the kitchen and eaten together in the dining room. The complex contains a meeting room and about 30 brethren meet on Sundays and Thursday nights, five of whom currently live at Gainsborough House. The only feature which is perhaps not so palatable is the number of steps and stairs—manor houses had two storeys. Leaving brethren is a sad moment at any time, and the words of Acts 20:37 were vividly in my mind as I drove out of the gate.

Bedford

Our last assignment was at Bedford, in Bedfordshire, about 100 km. north of London. The weekend was spent here, and again bountiful blessings flowed from the Lord. Each month the brethren from around this area meet for a Saturday mini-convention in the home of Brother and Sister Robinson, at Holwell, near Hitchin, in Hertfordshire. This is only 16 km. from Bedford and coincided with my visit, so I was able to attend both sessions. Again it was a great thrill to meet several brethren whose names I had read in Sister Grant's record of her visit several years before.

One point of a "lighter" nature was the provision of music for the meetings. A portable organ was used, and this was of great interest to me. I had always associated the great church

organs of the world with Westminster Abbey, and so wondered what brand the portable instrument would be. Alas!—it was a Yamaha: the Japanese influence had infiltrated into the very heart of tradition! Japanese or not, the brethren made a very cordial and joyful "noise unto the Lord"; and our minds were quickly fixed on things above, and not on things on the earth.

There were 19 brethren present and the meetings were an exhilarating experience. One practice of this Class which I had not met before (and which was not the case for this meeting) is that occasionally one Brother gives a discourse during the first meeting on a particular day, and the Class then discusses the thoughts expressed during the following meeting. They find it very helpful, and it appeals to me as being very appropriate to clarify the deeper doctrinal truths. Extended comments are not always in order during normal studies, but they are necessary to explain some of the more involved truths. Discussion facilitates comprehension and assimilation.

My last meeting with the brethren was on the Sunday when Brother and Sister Robinson took me to visit Sister Boote in Hitchin. Sister Boote had a broken leg and was unable to attend on the previous day. It was a precious time of quiet, sweet fellowship.

Homeward Bound

The 24 hour trip home was punctuated by only two stops for fuel—at Bahrain and Singapore. We left London at 9 pm. and so we were in darkness until approaching the Persian Gulf. We flew down the southern side of the Gulf but could see many miles of the desolate wilderness of Iran to the north. It sent a chill down my spine to realize that I was looking over a country which at that moment was so intensely involved in war. Although I strained my eyes I could not identify the Karg Island oil terminal—a vital post in this prolonged struggle. The reality of the hostilities in the area was further impressed by the soldiers patrolling Bahrain airport, sub-machine guns over their shoulders. This was in stark contrast to the overflowing spirit of love and unity so greatly enjoyed only two days before. The **need** for the Kingdom of God was dramatically and indelibly impressed into one's mind. "Even so, come Lord Jesus"—Rev.22:20.

"A New Ruler—Humanity's Only Hope!"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all readers with this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

(Continued from page 3.)

calculation or closest critical observation. It has been said that "love will stand at the door and knock long after self-conscious dignity has fallen asleep", which is only another way of expressing the beloved Apostle Paul's great words—"Love suffereth long and is kind", and because this is true, the clear vision of friendship ever makes demands on eager consecrated service. The good recognized will be developed by fellowship, by encouragement and fidelity—even when that good is costing my friend much sacrifice and suffering. As sharers in common of the friendship of Jesus, the shortcomings of each will be a matter concerning which the true disciple-friend will mourn and pray in secret, and of which he will speak in such tones of tender love that his brother will be won to the highest surrender, which ever means victory and advancement. So, together, and by the reciprocity of holy comradeship there will be a building of each other up and a several growth in grace.

There is no higher or more wonderful description of possibilities of true friendship in Jesus than that contained in Paul's words to the Romans 12:15—"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." That is true sympathy, and perfect sympathy between two is friendship. The word "sympathy" has too long been robbed of its glory by the narrowing interpretation which has considered it only as power to "weep with them that weep." That is the smaller and easier part of true sympathy. Sympathy we would say, is the power that projects life outside the circle of personality, and shares the life of another, feeling the thrill of the other's joy, and the pains of the other's woe. "There is such a thing as making my brother's sin my own, and bearing it in the spirit before God, as though it were my own. We need to be very near to Christ in order to enter into the spiritual meaning and application of all this. It is a wonderfully blessed and holy exercise, and it can be known only in the immediate presence of God. How little we really know of this the heart can testify. Our tendency is, when a brother or sister has sinned, to sit in judgment upon them; to take the place of a severe censor, to look upon their sin as something with which we have nothing whatever to do. This is to fail sadly in our priestly functions. It is a most precious fruit of grace to be able so to identify oneself with an erring brother or sister as to make their sin one's own—to bear it in spirit before God. This truly is a very high order of priestly service, and demands a large measure of the spirit and mind of Christ. It is only the spiritual who really enter into this; and how few of us are truly spiritual! 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault **ye which are spiritual** restore such an one in the

spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ"—Gal.6:1,2. May the Lord give us grace to fulfil this blessed 'law'! How unlike it is to everything in us! How it rebukes our harshness and selfishness! Oh! to be more like Christ in this as in all beside!"

This attitude can be realized only when the friendship is in Jesus. There it can be, and is. Is my brother in trouble, in difficulty, in temptation? I am his companion still, and the sorrow, the perplexity, the anguish, are mine also. Leave him now that he is fallen? **Impossible!** When he fell, I fell; not in the sense of manifesting his weakness, but in sympathy with him in his failure, and I shall not feel erect again until he has made even that fall a stepping-stone to higher things.

Is my brother in joy, in prosperity, in victory? I am yet with him, and the rapture, the success, the triumph are mine because they are his. Be jealous of his promotion? Again, **impossible!** If he rises, so do I, and all his advancement is my greatest progress, for we are one.

Blessed is the man that hath such a friend, and himself becomes such a friend, in the brotherhood of Jesus! It may be impossible to have many. It is questionable whether any person apart from the higher realm of relationship can ever have many. Such friendship cannot be separated. Oceans and continents may divide, but mutual love laughs at these, and in daily service, prayer, and meditation, each is still with the other, and thinks and plans and works under the old influences.

Friendship is always beautiful, but the friendship of disciples of Jesus, based upon the law of spiritual affinity, and conditioned and consummated in Christ, is **Peerless**.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Who Divided the Bible into Chapters and Verses?

(From "A Book about the Bible"
by George Stimpson)

EARLY editions of the Bible were not divided into chapters and the smaller sections now known as verses. They did not contain even perceptible spaces between words. The divisions into chapters and verses were a gradual process that started during the Middle Ages. Tertullian,

who died before 240 A.D., referred to some sort of sections in the New Testament. Later the Gospels were divided into what were known as the Ammonian-Eusebian sections, which were smaller divisions than our present chapters. Euthalius, a deacon and bishop who lived about the middle of the 5th century, divided parts of the New Testament into minute portions similar to the present verses. About 1226 Cardinal Hugo de Sancto-Caro of France divided the entire Latin Vulgate into chapters and verses somewhat similar to those of today. But even the early printed Bibles, such as the Gutenberg Bible, were not divided into chapters and verses. The first printed New Testament with such divisions was issued in 1527 at Lyons by Sanctus Pagninus. Robert Stephens followed a similar arrangement in his edition of the new Testament printed at Geneva in 1551. This was a two-volume work with the Greek text in the centre of the page and with the Latin of Erasmus on one side and the Latin Vulgate on the other. Stephens, whose French name was Robert Estienne, was a member of a famous family of scholars and printers in France. In the preface to his concordance, the son of Robert Stephens says his father worked out the system of chapters and verses for his edition of the New Testament while he was journeying on horseback from Paris to London. His system of dividing the Bible into chapters and verses was adopted by William Whittingham and his associates in the Geneva or Breches Bible, the New Testament of which was first printed in 1557 and the Old Testament in 1560. An introductory note to the reader of the Bible says: "The argumentes bothe for the booke and for the chapters with the nombre of the verse are added." The Geneva Bible is the first English version with the chapter and verse enumeration as we now know them. It should be borne in mind that the Greek classics and other ancient books were likewise arbitrarily divided into sections for convenience and reference. The general plan appears to have been to include each separate sentence or its equivalent in a verse, but this plan was not always followed. Both chapters and verses often disregard natural divisions of thought and are misleading. For instance the first 3 verses of Genesis 2 are clearly the conclusion of the narrative in Genesis 1. But the chapters and verses are now definitely fixed and are regarded as virtually parts of the Bible. Although the arrangement sometimes obscures the sense and interrupts the flow of the narrative, it is so convenient for reference and citation that its elimination would destroy the usefulness of thousands of concordances and other reference books and make millions of citations meaningless. The Revisers of 1885 tried to solve the problem by printing the chapter and verse number in the margin.

Born of the Spirit

There are a number of expressions used in the Scriptures to describe the work of the holy spirit in the hearts and lives of Christians. One of these is "born." This is a word which suggests the coming into existence of a new life, and this is one of the things accomplished by the power of the holy spirit. This new life, when it comes fully to birth, will be so different from the human life that concerning it Jesus said—"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit"—John 3:8.

The Greek word in the Bible translated "born" is also correctly translated "begotten", and it is necessary to determine from the context which thought is intended by the writer. By observing this distinction we learn that it is not proper to speak of conversion to Christ as being born of the spirit. When one comes to God in repentance and, through faith in Christ as his Redeemer, surrenders himself in full consecration to do God's will, what occurs is properly described as a "begetting" of the spirit of God. In other words, a new life is then begun.

However, this new life, to continue the symbolism, is merely an embryo. It needs to be nourished by the Word of God, and thus to develop, growing strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. It is not until the resurrection that this new life comes to the birth. Not until then is one truly born of the spirit, Not until then are the words of Jesus true that one thus born is able to go and come invisibly as the wind. Thus we see that to note this difference in the use of the words born and begotten gives us a much more comprehensive understanding of what the power of God exercised through His Word accomplishes on behalf of the consecrated followers of the Master— Selected.

"The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"— 1 Tim.3:15.

The Lord's Church, the only one to which the name ecclesia, Body or Church, is properly applicable, is so insignificant, so unostentatious, and comparatively so poor in this world's riches, that it is not recognized nor recognizable from the worldly standpoint. It is neither man-made nor man-ruled; nor are its members enrolled on earth, but in heaven—Heb.12:23. Its Head and Bishop is the Lord; its law in His Word: it has but one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; and it is built upon the testimonies of the holy apostles and prophets—Jesus Christ Himself being its chief corner-stone. Z. '99-37.