



Volume XXXII No. II MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER, 1949 Price— Fourpence Halfpenny

## Dead Unto Sin.

*“FOR in that He died, He died unto sin once; hut in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to he dead indeed unto sin, hut alive unto God through Jesus Christ OUR Lord.”—Rom. 6:10, H.*

SIN is the root of all the trouble through which humanity has passed during its entire downward course from the days of Eden until now. Sin, in brief, is disobedience to the law of God, the Creator, who, by virtue of being the Lifegiver, has a just right to demand obedience. It was through one man’s disobedience that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and death has passed upon all because all have sinned. (Rom. 5:12.) “But,” explains the Apostle, “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8.) And so, in the divine economy it works out that while “the wages of sin is death,” yet there is hope of escape from death because “the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—Rom. 6:23.

Marvellous gift, indeed, is this “gift of God” through which eternal life is obtained. It is a gift that was prompted by love, which should be the motive behind every gift. John tells us that “God so loved . . . that He gave” this wondrous gift of His Son, and Paul explains that the Father “commendeth His love to us” in providing that while we were yet sinners His Son should die for us. And this gift was all sufficient to effect a release from sin and death. In order, however, to be thus effective, it must be accepted. It is not the Father’s intention to force this gift of His love upon anyone. It is only to “whosoever believeth in Him (Jesus)” that the assurance is given that they shall “not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16.

Now just as belief in, and acceptance of, this unspeakable gift of God is essential in order to participate in the lifegiving blessings accruing therefrom, so it seemingly should follow that those who do from the heart believe, and with their lips make confession of their belief, would not need to die. The fact and philosophy of this is very simple—“The wages of sin is death,” and we are witnesses of the very literal manner in which the disobedient world of mankind have been receiving their wages—all are going down into the tomb. But since Jesus came into the world to die for sinners, thousands upon thousands have sincerely believed on Him, yet not a single one of these has escaped going down into the tomb. How, then, it is true, that the “gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord”? —Rom. 6:23.

Those who hold the view that the death of Jesus was for the purpose of opening up a way for believers to go to heaven when they die, thus escaping the otherwise sure fate of an eternity of torture in hell, are not, of course, faced with any particular problem along this line. To them, death as we know it, is the inevitable gateway to heaven; and consequently, they never think of the ransoming work of Jesus as affecting, one way or another, the present material life of human beings. From their standpoint, it is the “immortal soul” which they suppose is possessed by every human being, that is involved in the Christian philosophy of life and death. True, to have their philosophy work out right, even then, it is necessary to think of death as meaning separation from God in a place of punishment, and life as dwelling with God in a place of happiness.

But to those who have learned that the Bible does not teach the inherent immortality of the soul theory, and who know that death, which is the wages of sin, is the absence of life; and that ever since Jesus died to give us life, believers, as well as unbelievers, have continued to die, Paul’s statement of Romans 6:23—“The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”—calls for an explanation. If the gift of God was, as the Scriptures so clearly teach, for the purpose of setting aside the sentence of death that came upon the world of mankind through disobedience of Adam, then why should not believers in that gift be released from

the necessity of dying?

### “Dead Unto Sin.”

The Scriptural answer to this question is contained in the words of our text—“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.” There is a vast difference between these words and those of Romans 5:12, where we are told that sin entered into the world and “death by sin.” The whole world of mankind is dying “by sin”; that is, they are paying the wages of sin, which is death. There is nothing “reckoned” about this. It is all very real, very literal — every graveyard testifies grimly to the full measure with which the wages of sin are meted out. No, non-believers do not need to reckon themselves as dying, they are dying.

But Paul’s words to the consecrated believers speak of a death that is reckoned. What does he mean? The key to the apostle’s meaning is in the word “likewise”—“likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.” To what does the “likewise” apply? This he has just told us; that is, he has explained that you are also dying unto sin. The thought clearly is that just as Jesus actually “died unto sin” we are to “reckon” that we also “die unto sin”; that is we are to consider that we die the same kind of a death that Jesus died.

This, evidently, is the Apostle’s explanation of what he means earlier in the chapter where he speaks of our being “planted together in the likeness of His death,” and of being “baptized into His death.” This, in other words, is the “likeness” of His death, namely, that Jesus died “unto sin,” so are we to “reckon” ourselves as dying “unto sin.”

The question then arises, How did Jesus die “unto sin”? He could not die unto sin in Himself, because He was “holy, harmless, and separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:25.) Jesus’ death “unto sin” therefore, must have been, and was, a death calculated to affect the result of sin in the lives of others. Indeed, this is exactly what the Apostle explains, saying, that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. He likewise died for the whole world of sinners, that they might have an opportunity of being made free from sin and its wages, and live.

### Sacrificial Death.

Jesus’ death, therefore, was a sacrificial death. He did not die because He Himself was a sinner and condemned to die. Rather, He died voluntarily, that others who were condemned to die, might live. He took upon Himself the wages of sin that belonged to others. It was thus that Jesus died “unto sin.” Because the life Jesus thus sacrificially offered up on behalf of others was a perfect life, hence an uncondemned life, it became the “propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.”-1 John 2:2.

Yes, the sacrifice of Jesus was full satisfaction for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world; yet, at the same time, even though we accept this gift, we apparently continue to die even as when we were yet sinners. The reason? Paul explains it. “Likewise, reckon ye yourselves also to be dead indeed into sin.” Yes, “likewise” — just like Jesus — we now are to die a sacrificial death, we are to be “planted together in the likeness of His death.”

Having accepted the provision of life through Christ, there is no more legal necessity that we should die; but like Jesus, we offer ourselves for death, to be “dead unto sin” on behalf of others.

This, in a word, explains why not a single consecrated believer since Pentecost has ever enjoyed the restitution blessings purchased by the death of Jesus. The “times of restitution” belong to the Millennial age, and the Gospel age has been an age of sacrifice, an age during which consecrated believers in Christ have been participating in sacrificial death with Him, and thus sharing with Him in the great offering by which the blessings of health and life will be dispensed to the dying world of mankind when the due time comes.

### More Needed Than Propitiation.

When the apostle thus explains that the death of consecrated believers is an offering “unto sin” he does not wish us to understand that by our death we, in any way, assist in the payment of the penalty for sin. The Scriptures make it very clear that Jesus alone did this. Yes, He is the “propitiation” or satisfactory payment, as we have seen, not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. This is a fundamental teaching of the Scriptures which must be maintained as the basis of a proper understanding of the manner in which we share in the sacrificial work of Christ.

But in the divine programme whereby a sin-cursed and dying world is finally to be reconciled to God, it is seen that in order for full reconciliation to be effected something more than propitiation for sin is required. If we think of the ransom as the purchase price, then there remains, as it were, the delivery of the goods, which, in this case, would include all that is implied in the actual restoration to perfect life of the billions who have died since the days of Eden. In the divine programme, the church takes part in this great work of reconciliation and restoration, upon the condition of voluntarily dying as Jesus died—a sacrificial death.

The fact that more is needed for the reconciliation of the world than propitiation for sin is apparent by the fact that had the plan of God ceased to operate at the moment Jesus died, not a single one of Adam's children would have ever received life through His death. The fact that not one throughout the centuries that have followed His death has received restitution blessings is evidence that a further necessary preparatory work is still going on.

A simple illustration might be that of a patient afflicted with a malignant growth or tumor, such as cancer. Nothing will save the patient's life but the removal of the cancer; and, in the hospital where the sufferer lies, there is only one person who is able to remove the cancer, and that is the specialist and surgeon whose skill is now depended upon to save this patient's life. Now the patient cannot live unless the cause of death is removed; and there is only one, the surgeon, who can remove the cause of death. But, if nothing more were done for the patient than to remove the cancer, death still would claim its victim.

Imagine, if you can, a surgeon removing a cancer from a chloroformed and half dead patient, and then walking out of the operating room, and bidding his assistants to walk out with him, expecting that, with nothing further being done, there will be a glorious recovery of health. This, of course, is unthinkable. The assistant surgeons, nurses, cooks, housekeepers, and all others who have to do with the management and care of the hospital, have a share in helping to restore the patient to health; but not a single one of them, nor all of them together, could have saved the patient's life until the cause of death had been removed. Only the surgeon could do that. But with the cancer removed the co-operative work of the hospital staff begins. Under the supervision of the surgeon, the patient is carefully removed from the operating room to a comfortable bed; watched over, and cared for, during the long period of convalescence; and if all goes well, a full recovery is the final result.

### The Cancer of Sin.

It is sin that has dealt a death blow to humanity, because God, in His wisdom and justice, has decreed that no one who disobeys His law can continue to live. Our illustration does not, of course, fit in every detail, but we can properly think of Jesus as the great Surgeon who, alone, had the ability to render sin powerless as a death-dealing agency to those who accept Him as their Redeemer. He, alone, is the propitiation for sin. He pays the penalty for sin, hence divine justice does not demand the death penalty of those who accept this provision. But the full restoration of mankind to perfection and everlasting life requires more than the satisfaction of the demands of justice accomplished by the ransom. The cancer, shall we say, is removed, but the patient is still prostrate and helpless, and needs to be nursed back to health.

It is in this further work of removing the effects of sin, and to thereby restore the willing and obedient of mankind to life, that the church is invited to share. It is all a part of the work of reconciliation, a sharing in the divine plan to remove sin and its result—death—from the earth. For this reason the sacrificial work of the church is Scripturally styled a dying “unto sin”—a sin-offering. It is not an offering to propitiate for sin, but an offering which is related to the work of removing the sin and its results for which propitiation has already been made by the blood of Christ.

It is in this sense that the church is said to be “planted together in the likeness of His death.” It is the manner of dying that is the same, not the result of the dying. Both die sacrificially, “unto sin.” The death of Jesus provides payment of the penalty of sin, the death of the church has to do with the great work of eliminating the results of sin, hence the result of the church's sacrificial death is dependent upon the previous result of the sacrificial death of Jesus; and related to it as effect to cause.

### Workers Together With Christ.

Another apostolic manner of expressing this same vital truth pertaining to the sacrificial work of the Christ is that of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, and 6:1. We quote: “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we may be made the righteousness of God in Him. We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.”

How plainly the Apostle thus sets forth the manner in which the church shares in the great work of reconciling a lost world! It is all of God he explains. That is, it is the divine plan or method made possible by Him through the gift of His own dear Son. This gift, first of all, reconciles us to Himself, and then He makes us ministers of reconciliation. The philosophy of this, Paul explains, is that God was in Christ, that is, working through Him, reconciling the world to Himself—that is the great objective of the whole plan. The reason that it is a workable arrangement is because the ransomed believers do not have their trespasses imputed unto them. As long as sin is imputed, death must continue.

But the ransom sets aside the just condemnation for sin in order to give the dying one a chance to recover.

One of the first things necessary beyond the ransom itself, is a knowledge of the ransom. This truth is spoken of by Paul as the “word of reconciliation.” Equipped with the “word of reconciliation” we become ambassadors of Christ. The author of Scripture Studies explained that the church’s part in the sacrificial work of Christ has to do with the manner in which the merit of the ransom is made available for the blessing of the world; and that is exactly what the Apostle is telling us in this 5th chapter of 2nd Corinthians.

God is working through Christ to reconcile the world, and has made us the ambassadors of Christ to convey to the world the vital information concerning the basis upon which reconciliation to God is possible—the “word of reconciliation” which, through the church, will be “testified to all in due time.” Now this, the Apostle explains, means that we are “workers together with Him (Christ)” in the great programme whereby sin is destroyed and sinners restored to harmony with God and to life everlasting. No wonder the Apostle admonishes us not to receive this “grace of God in vain.” What grace it is, indeed! To think that members of the fallen race, sinners even as all the others, could be laid hold upon by God, justified through the blood of Christ, and used together with that sinless One in the recovery of our fellow men.

### Sacrifice Required.

The actual work of reconciling the world as a whole, and of restoring mankind to health and life, will be during the thousand years of Christ’s reign, the Millennium; but in order for the church to live and reign with Christ and share in that great future work, she must now suffer and die with Him. The present result of the sacrifice and suffering of each consecrated believer is the building up of the church itself in preparation for the great future work of dispensing blessings to the world, hence the Apostle speaks of “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ . . . for His body’s sake, which is the church.”—Col. 1:27.

It should be remembered, however, that the church is being prepared to administer blessings to the world of mankind, hence, whatever sacrifices are now being made on behalf of the church, are being made, also, for the world. We are commanded to lay down our lives for the brethren, and when we obey this command, we are also laying down our lives for the world because the brethren are being trained to serve the world. Our sacrificial death with Christ is Scripturally referred to as a “baptism” into His death, and Paul declares that this baptism is on behalf of the dead world.—1 Cor. 15:29.

### The Church Sacrifices.

To reiterate a thought already presented, those who accept the sacrificial work of Christ, should, from the standpoint of mere justice, have no further occasion for suffering and death. Receiving the gift of God, they should live, and not die. We have seen, however, that the time for such a programme has not yet come, and that God is now merely preparing the channel through which the life-giving blessings purchased by Jesus will flow out to the dying world during the next age. It is for this reason, then, that the only condition upon which any can now receive the benefit of Jesus’ sacrifice is that they, in turn, die with Him, their sacrifice being

made “acceptable” through the merit of His atoning work. Thus the Apostle admonishes, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1.

Anyone who is accustomed to thinking of the Christian life merely in terms of what we receive from Him, will be surprised to note how much the Scriptures say about our sacrifice. In Philippians 2:17, the Apostle speaks of being “offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith”; that is, the sacrifice necessary to build up the body members in the most holy faith. Philippian brethren had made sacrifices to help Paul, and this he refers to as an “odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.” (Phil. 4:18.) The “odour of a sweet smell” is an illusion to the incense offering on the golden altar in the holy of the tabernacle. In Ephesians 5:2, Paul uses a similar expression concerning the sacrifice of Christ. Thus does the Apostle identify the sacrifice of the church with that of Christ as being represented in the sacrificial services of the typical tabernacle.

In 1 Peter 2:5, the Apostle explains that the church is indeed a priesthood of God, constituted such for the very purpose of offering sacrifice. The word “spiritual” in this text is not found in some of the older manuscripts, and is probably not a part of the original text. If it is authentic it would merely mean that Peter is contrasting the sacrifice of animals during the Jewish age, with the church’s present sacrifice of time, strength, talents, and all, in the great service of reconciliation. Such might properly be referred to as a spiritual sacrifice in contrast with the literal slaying of animals. The important lesson in the text is that the church, even as the priesthood of old, is appointed for the work of sacrifice.

Not only is the term sacrifice itself thus Scripturally applied to the present ministry of the church, but many other like-meaning expressions are also employed by the inspired writers of the Bible to convey to our minds the full significance of the Christian life. We are admonished to deny ourselves, to take up our cross, to be crucified with Christ, to suffer with Him, to die with Him, to follow in His footsteps, to be killed all the day long, to be counted as sheep for the slaughter, to go to Him without the camp, to follow the Lamb, to lay down our lives, to give rather than to receive, etc.

While none of these expressions, either directly or remotely, imply propitiation for sin by the sacrifice of the church, they all indicate that the church does offer herself in sacrifice, that she dies with Christ; and it is the great Apostle Paul himself who, in our text, declares that this offering, this death, is “unto sin,” showing that, in the economy of God,

He uses it as a part of the divine programme to destroy sin and its effect, death. In Romans 6:6, this is referred to as a destruction of the “body of sin.” According to Romans 12:1, the individual bodies of consecrated believers are not “destroyed” but offered in sacrifice, and not looked upon by God as sinful, but “holy and acceptable.”

The individual bodies of all mankind are being destroyed by sin quite apart from any association with Christ, such as being “crucified” with Him. This “body of sin,” therefore, the destruction of which depends upon our being crucified with Christ, is evidently the great mass of sin operating throughout the whole world, alienating mankind from God, causing all the suffering and death we see around us on every hand. Jesus died in order that this body of sin might be destroyed, and we are “crucified with Him,” also, in order that it might be destroyed.

### Bodies Dead Because Of Sin.

We should always note the distinction between the “body of sin,” and our own individual bodies. In Romans 8:10, our individual bodies are referred to, and concerning them the apostle writes: “And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.” What profound truth is here expressed! Actually, as we know, the bodies of all mankind are dying because of sin, being condemned to death through Adam. What then does the Apostle mean by saying, “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin”? Seemingly, he should have said that “if Christ be in you the body is alive,” should he not?

Indeed, the Apostle does speak of our mortal bodies being “quickened,” or made alive (Rom. 8:11); but in verse 10, he evidently is referring to the sacrifice of our bodies, even as in chapter 12:1, where he admonishes us to present our bodies a living sacrifice. First they must be presented in sacrifice—a living one contrasted with the dead ones of the Law dispensation—and then they are “quickened,” or made alive through Christ. It is this work of sacrifice, this dying “unto sin,” that makes our bodies “dead because of sin.” But it is only because of the fact that Christ is dwelling in us, and we are in Christ, as members of His body, that this acceptable sacrificial work is possible.

### Shall We Continue In Sin?

The casual reader of the first 13 verses of the 6th chapter of Romans might easily conclude that Paul is merely admonishing the Christian to a resolute course of opposition to sin in his own body; and this, indeed, is the premise of the lesson. But it is in presenting the strongest argument he could think of as to why we should fight sin in our own bodies that the Apostle reveals the profound truth concerning our participation in the sacrificial work of Christ, our being “planted together in the likeness of His death.”

In the 5th chapter, the Apostle stresses the fact of the legal right to life accruing to all through the sacrificial work of Christ; that He struck off the legal demands of the law of God by which all sinners were condemned to death. Thus, he explains, life is now a gift from God, and is by grace—unearned by merit of our own. Then he follows up with the question, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?”—Rom. 6:1.

It is Paul’s answer to this question that is so remarkably enlightening. Apparently the strongest argument he could think of as to why we should not continue in sin, and one which he evidently felt the church at Rome would understand, was because we are dying with Christ and thus co-labouring with God in order to destroy sin; hence that it would be quite inconsistent to be sympathetic with, or in any way tolerate, that for which we are giving our very lives to destroy. “How are we that are dead to sin (dying as a sin-offering) , to live any longer therein?” the Apostle enquires.

As though there might be a possibility of mistaking what he means, Paul follows up by adding, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?” And then, to make sure that we grasp clearly just what he means by this he goes on to explain, as our text shows, that Jesus’ death was a death “unto sin,” and that “likewise” our death with Him is “unto sin”—“crucified” with Him that the “body of sin might be destroyed.”

Then comes the “therefore” of the Apostle’s argument—“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” In a word, the Apostle is here saying that we should think of ourselves or reckon ourselves as being alive from the dead—as though through the merit of Christ we had actually been restored to life—and now are to offer ourselves in sacrifice, as “instruments of righteousness unto God.” And this is to be with the thought that our suffering, our sacrifice unto death, is in the likeness of Jesus’ death, a dying sacrificially “unto sin.” This being true, we should not in any way whatever, willingly compromise with sin in our own bodies, or

let it have dominion over us. It would be inconsistent so to do.

We have learned to know something of the awfulness of sin, and its results. Our vision of God, through His Word, causes us to love Him and to love His law. Our love for Him causes us to become enemies of that which is out of harmony with Him. Sin is an enemy of God, and we have enlisted in the great cause of reconciliation, and by divine grace have become colabourers with Jesus in the work of destroying sin from off the earth. We are laying down our lives in this great cause—dying “unto sin,” and to destroy the “body of sin”; hence, we must not, as the Apostle indicates, for a single moment show any friendship for this hideous enemy. No, we must not fraternize with sin in any of its forms.

Grace, operating through Christ, strikes off the shackles of sin, and permits us to be legally free; but we must not “continue in sin that grace may abound,” because our shackles have been struck off in order that we may enlist in God’s great army of righteous servants who are being “planted together in the likeness of His death,” and thus being prepared, as His ambassadors, to finally, and everlastingly, put an end to sin and death in the whole wide world. (From “The Dawn,” 1939.)

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

(Monthly) 4 6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

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.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

## Preaching the Gospel a Necessity.

“Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.”- 1 Corinthians 9:16.

WOE is a word not so often used today as formerly. It was a common word in the old English; but there is a meaning attached to it at present, we think, that was not in the original word. Nearly all who read the parable where the Lord speaks of “weeping and gnashing of teeth” seem to have the thought that it means eternal torment. Woe, when used in the Bible, means the same to some minds. So these construe our text to mean, “I shall go to eternal torment if I do not preach the Gospel.” This is because of the creeds, traditions and customs that have come down from the Dark Ages, when the people were forbidden the Bible.

We understand the Apostle to mean here: “I should be very unhappy if I could not preach the Gospel; it would be a cause of great distress to me. In view of my former course of persecution, and the Lord’s great mercy to me, it would mean a loss of His favour and blessing should I refrain from proclaiming His Message.” The context seems to bear out this thought. So it should be a great distress to those to whom the Lord has granted the illumination of His Truth, if the opportunity of preaching this glorious Gospel were taken from them.

From one standpoint, the Apostle’s words would apply only to the public ministry of the Word. From another standpoint, any one of God’s consecrated people is a minister, ordained to preach; for ordination means commission, right, authorization. This commission to preach the Gospel is mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah. (Isaiah 6 1:1-3.)

There the Church is brought to our attention through the great Head of the Church, Christ Jesus, who is represented, primarily, as the speaker. We read: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that He might be glorified.”

### Many Ways Of Preaching The Gospel.

Here the commission of the holy spirit to Messiah was prophetically announced, long in advance. The Body members of the Messiah, who have received the same anointing through Him, have also received this commission to preach the Gospel. If the disciple of Christ properly appreciates the privilege of being a messenger of God, an ambassador for God, it would be a woe indeed to him if he could not proclaim the Message, to the extent of his ability and opportunity.

There are some who have the thought that there is no way to preach except by a public discourse from the platform. But this seems not to be the Bible thought of preaching. Jesus talked to the people by the seaside, and along the way; sometimes He sat upon the edge of the well and preached the Message of salvation; He preached to His disciples up in the mountain; sometimes He journeyed with them and talked. And so with us. Whatever way or time we may have for preaching the Good Tidings we should use.

The word Gospel means glad tidings, good news. We are to tell the "good tidings of great joy." This may be done in the daily walk of our life, as we meet the butcher, the baker and the grocery man, or our neighbours and friends. It may be done by literature sent through the mails, or by handing out a tract, a book, or by preaching from the platform. All of this is preaching the Gospel, making known the Good Tidings; for preaching means merely to make known, and does not relate to the manner in which the knowledge is imparted.

### Basis And Superstructure Of The Gospel.

Many tracts contain no Gospel; they contain tidings of great misery. These we would not wish to circulate; for the more we spread such tidings the less preaching of the Gospel we would do. We are to remember that our Lord Jesus especially identified the Gospel with the Kingdom. Therefore we should preach the Good Tidings, the Gospel of the Kingdom. This has been God's method for gathering the Church, and is to be the witness to the world. We still have the opportunity for making known this good Message of the Kingdom. The Basis of this Gospel is the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as a Sacrifice for sinners, His resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of the Father.

Its superstructure is the salvation of the Church and of the world—"whosoever will." The blessings of God are all through Christ.

The rich blessings of the Lord for both Church and world are to follow the Second Coming of Jesus. Then the Church is to be glorified and exalted; and the world will enter upon the Era of Blessing God has promised shall come with the full establishment of His Kingdom.

Whoever, therefore, understands this real Gospel, and appreciates his own ordination to preach it, must necessarily feel unhappy if he should be hindered from preaching it. Some can preach in several ways. Others can preach in nearly every way. Some can preach in very few ways; but all can preach in some way. The more we do, the more happy we should be. So we thank God that we have so many helps in our day—books, free literature, Bible Concordances, etc. We greatly appreciate all these and are seeking to make good use of them to the blessing of others as well as for our own upbuilding.

### Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Annual Convention will be held in Melbourne over the Christmas weekend (D.V.) , and the brethren extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Further information will appear in December issue, and is obtainable also from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 44 Heath Avenue, Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

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# The Talents.

Matt. 25:14-30.

As seen in the preceding parable,\* even the arrival of our Lord at His second advent would prove to be a testing time among those who were looking for Him. This parable shows that the first work in which Christ would then engage would be in connection with believers, inspecting their condition and progress and rewarding them according to their faithfulness respecting their talents and opportunities.

The man travelling into a far country is identical with the “young nobleman” of Luke 19:12, and represents the Lord, who ascended to the right hand of the Father until He would come again to claim His Bride, the Church, and exalt her to reign with Him. “Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:20, 21) . The “long journey” intimates that the interval between these two events would be a long period of time.

Every Christian has been entrusted with certain talents, an account of the use of which the Lord will, in due time, require. The position in the kingdom depends upon faithfulness. If James and John were to occupy the chief places next to the Lord, then they must be “baptised with His baptism and drink of His cup” of suffering.

In the parable but three illustrations are given; one man receives five talents, another two, and another one. These talents would represent such things as the opportunity of entering the race for the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus,”—health, time, money, ability to speak, or sing, or other means of serving the Lord, His cause and His people. Then the Apostle says, “A measure of the spirit is given to every man to - profit withal.” We must use all our talents for the Lord as good stewards in His service and for our own spiritual progress.

When we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ we were “justified by faith,” and were then in a position to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to God (Rom. 12:1) . We there devoted ourselves entirely to God, all we are, all we have or hope to have. The Lord accepts the offering but leaves us in possession of such talents (circumstances, etc.) as we have; not, however, to be used according to our own will, but as good stewards of God’s gifts, to make the most of such health, time, money, business ability, etc., to God’s glory, in His service, and for our own growth in grace and character building. According to the use of our talents is the reward in the Kingdom.

The same commendation is to the one, who, having only two talents and faithfully used them, as to the one who had been faithful with five talents. “Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter into the joys of thy Lord.”

The man who hid his talent illustrates those who, having received the opportunity of running the Christian way, did not appreciate the privilege of sacrifice in the cause of Christ. Hiding his talent in the earth seems to indicate that he loved the world and the things of the world, socialites and pleasures of this life. He sought to save his life and thus lost it, “He that loses his life for My sake shall save it.” This man lost all the privilege he had had. “Take the talent from him and give it to him that hath ten talents.” “Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” That is, that such an one has the light of truth taken from him and he goes into the outer darkness, losing even the justification which he had by faith, he becomes an outsider, an unbeliever, in sorrow realising how great reward he has missed.

It is when the Lord’s work of rewarding His saints is complete and thus all His joint-heirs in His kingdom are selected and initiated in their respective positions in glory that the great work in connection with the world of mankind will begin, as illustrated in the next parable,—Matt. 25:31-46.

“Take my life, and may it be  
Lord, acceptable to Thee;

Take my hands and let them move  
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet and let them be  
Swift on errands, Lord, for Thee;

Take my voice, and let it bring  
Honour always to my King.

Take my lips and let them be  
Moved with messages from Thee;

Take my silver and my gold;  
Nothing, Lord, would I withhold.

Take my moments and my days;  
Let them flow in constant praise;

Take my intellect and use;  
Every pow’r as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine;  
It shall be no longer mine;

Take my heart, it is thine own ;  
Thus in me Thyself enthrone.

Take my love, my God;  
I pour At Thy feet its treasure-store;

Take myself—I wish to be  
Ever, only, all for Thee.”

—FR.H.

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