



Volume LI No. 4 MELBOURNE, AUGUST—SEPTEMBER, 1968 Price-10 Cents

The Life Hid with Christ in God.

(Convention Address)

“For you died, and your life has been hidden with the anointed one by God.”—Col. 3:3. (Diaglott).

IN the apostle’s letter to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse, he approaches the subject of holiness in quite an open and somewhat personal manner, but helpful- to all desiring to complete their consecration to- the Lord in faithfulness and triumph. In the first verse of this chapter Paul reasons thus, “If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of-God.” That is, lift your thoughts and affections to things above, things which are heavenly, and seek to dwell in thought and affection where Christ is, at the right hand of God.

Similar language- is used’ by Paul in writing-to the Ephesian brethren. “He (God) raised us up together, and seated us together in the heavenlies.” (Eph. 2:6, Diaglott). In these remarks we are exhorted to appropriate to ourselves the heavenly citizenship, and by so doing enliven our heavenly or spiritual aspirations; and to set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth.

Our affections are important to us. They are dispositions of the mind which are directed to certain objects, or to persons. They are also emotions of the heart, and therefore a state of feeling, of friendship towards another, of good will, warm attachment, love and-sympathy, as the apostle again suggests: “Be kindly affectioned one to another.” Rom. 12:10.- -

So we set our “affection on things above, not on things of the earth. For ye died, and your life is “hid with Christ in God.” (Col. 3:2, 3). These two statements certainly appear contradictory, but are not when properly understood.

We are “dead” as human beings in the sense that we have devoted our humanity to sacrifice, and it is as spirit-begotten “new creatures” that we are hidden with Christ in God. By faith We reckonedly died with Christ at consecration. There we Covenanted sacrificially to change our viewpoint of life from self to God, and henceforth to seek to do His will in all our ways. Rom. 12:2; 6:11.

Our viewpoint of life -is now eternal. We are still the same person, but with a changed purpose in life. This -change makes us a new and different individual-in character, or personality. The change, of course, is toward righteousness, truth, peace, and love for God -and for Christ Jesus our Lord, and for all who are

of a like purpose of life. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the- flesh with its affections and corrupted desires.” Gal. 5:24.

What, then, is our responsibility as new creatures in Christ? First, it is to mortify (put to death) our earthly inclinations, or our “old man,” as Paul states it. (Rom. 6:6) Second, we are to nurture, cultivate, and bring to maturity the “new man, which after God is created in “righteousness and true holiness.” Eph:4:24.

For the “new man” only is there hope for a future life, and that hope depends upon “growing up” into Christ in all things. There can be no future life for the “old man.” The Scriptures declare, “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh.” Gal 5:24. The life which we now live as new creatures in Christ we live by faith. This new God’s keeping and only by our own unfaithfulness is there danger of its destruction”. ‘

“Wherefore, my beloved,-... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure.” We need to “work” with God that we might know definitely what it is, with God’s help, that we have to accomplish. (Phil, 2:12, 13). In this chapter the apostle gives us clear instructions and helpful advice for this work,

We are at war with our -”old man.” Paul wrote, “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.” (Col. 3:5). “Put off the old man with his deeds.” (Col. 3:9). The great favors which God has already bestowed upon us do- not in any way relieve us of these matters—rather the reverse—and we should be careful not to allow them to lull us to sleep in vain imaginings. Paul warned: “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Cor. 10:12.

So let us redouble our efforts to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh. (2 Cor. 7:1). In so doing we will demonstrate our true heart intention and be helped in building up character. This is our personal responsibility. Therefore let us seek to do as the Apostle Paul advises; that is, to “put on the new man.” Let us endeavour daily, as “the elect of God,” with all sincerity and dignity, to put on “bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, ... and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, . . . and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly in all wisdom, . . . and whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by Him.” Col. 3:10-17.

When all the elect of God so live, and so express their personality as new creatures, what a happy and what a blessed family it is! It represents the joint, the participated life, we now enjoy with others of the Christ family in which there is one Head, one spirit, one hope, and one life. It is, in reality, a foretaste of the fuller life that awaits us. (1 John 3:1-3). “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. 3:4). Meanwhile, let us adorn the “hidden man” of the heart with what is incorruptible, a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 1 Pet. 3:4.

It is so encouraging to know and realise that God, our Lord Jesus, and all the holy angels, are greatly interested in our welfare as new creatures. Every fitting and proper assistance is rendered to help us to be successful. Yet the matter of our continued existence is our personal responsibility. It is only those who “endure to the end that shall be saved.” Matt. 24:13.

The hidden life is one of faith. “The just shall live by faith.” “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” Therefore without faith there can be no hidden life. The apostle says: “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. 2:20.

What was true of the Apostle Paul, is equally true of us. The faith of Jesus Christ brought us justification,

a condition of being made right with God. The faith of the Son of God has brought us life, the hidden life which we now enjoy, as a result of our consecration to God.—Rom. 5:1, 2.

Without holiness, we read, no man shall see the Lord. (Heb. 12:14). Jesus said, “The pure in heart shall see God.” (Matt. 5:8). The Apostle John says, “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” (1 John 3:3). And those enjoying the hidden life are not of the world. (John 17:16). Consequently they avoid all unnecessary contact with it, particularly everything calculated to hinder their life of faith. Paul exhorted, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate.” 2 Cor. 6:17, 18.

We have sympathy for the world, and look forward to the appointed time when we will have the privilege of dispensing God’s blessings to suffering humanity. Meanwhile, we are striving to qualify for this honor by seeking truth in the inward parts —righteousness, godliness, holiness. Our ambition is to glorify God in all things and to become conformed to the image of His dear Son. Rom. 8:29.

We seek to practise love, sympathy, patience, faith, and all those traits of character represented in the Lord. Those virtues, Peter said, will make us to be “**not** barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet. 1:6-11). All who would nurture the hidden life, all who seek to walk with God and hold communion with Him and with His dear Son, as friend converses with friend, will find that they do so only on condition of holiness of heart.

So long, as one would cherish any unworthy thing, or voluntarily indulge in any known sin, he erects a wall of separation between himself and his Father to whom he has become attached. “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.” (Flab. 1:13). The hidden life can prosper only by complete surrender to God, in harmony with our consecration vows.

It is inconceivable to think that we might enjoy to the full those precious truths we have considered, except through prayer. Have we noticed how the promises attached to prayer are so definite? “Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” “Therefore let your requests be made known unto God.” (John 16:24; Phil. 4:6). These words should encourage us to be “instant in prayer.” Indeed our whole life should be one of prayer. “Pray without ceasing,” says the apostle 1 Thes. 5:17.

There are, as we are aware, certain conditions to be observed regarding prayer. It must be a prayer of faith. It must be offered in God’s appointed way, in the name of Jesus. (John 16:24). It must be subject to God’s will. And it is noticeable that God seems specially to favor secret prayer: “When thou prayest, enter into thy closet and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father, . . . and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” (Matt. 6:6). God’s children have a right to pray and are promised beforehand that the answer is assured. Just as our faith is true and constant, even so our prayers should be fervent and continuous to be acceptable. We must pray with perseverance. (Luke 18:1).

The hidden life of the new creature is also one of implicit trust. God’s children endeavor to persevere along an even tenor of their way, undismayed by things around them, undisturbed by the events of life, exercising a constant trust in their Heavenly Father’s overruling providence, realising that of themselves they can do nothing. (John 15:5). At the same time, knowing that all things are possible to the Lord, they are a childlike trustful folk, “simply trusting every day; trusting through a stormy way; even when their store is small—trusting Jesus, that is all.”

It is, of course, understood that this life of “simply trusting” is only possible to God’s dear children because of His revelation of Himself to them through the knowledge of His Word. They “know him whom they have believed, and are persuaded that he is able to keep that which they have committed to him against that day.” Hence they implicitly trust Him, —1 Tim. 1:12.

The life that is hidden with Christ is based on love. It must, of course, be love of the right kind. If our love for God is based merely upon what we may hope to receive from Him in return, it shows quite clearly that our love is, after all, a love of self and not a love of God. Whereas if we love Him without measure because He is God, then it will be our delight to know Him, to do His will, and to glorify Him. Such love will lead one to eternal life; whereas a love of self may, or can, lead to death. Thus the truest love for self is expressed in supreme love for God,-1 John 4:19, 3:16.

Our life is hid with Christ in God because God loves us. So then, our life already is where God would have us—hid with Christ. Even now we know something of the effect of the hidden life which leads to joy and pleasures otherwise unknown. We find elevating, ennobling, purifying experiences of peace, joy, and happiness of which the world can know nothing. John 17:13; 14:27.

Folded and protected in the arms of boundless love and infinite power, we give our all to God and take **all** from Him as dear children, willing to let our Heavenly Father guide us in everything; willing to have little or much as He sees fit; willing to know and not to know; willing to sit down or rise up; to be silent or to speak; willing to be honored or dishonored; to be on the mount of joy or in the valley of sorrow; to be anything or nothing, just as God wills. Our heart's song is:

“I love Thy will, O God,
Thy blessed perfect will,
In which this once rebellious heart
Lies satisfied and still.”

The Apostle exhorts those enjoying the hidden life to “put on the whole armour of God” that they “may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” (Eph. 6:11, 12). Everything connected with our old nature is opposed to the hidden life. “The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.” Gal. 5:17.

What a constant warfare it is as we strive to “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling”! (Phil. 2:12). Not only have we the desires of the flesh to contend with, but additionally the attractions of the world, which at times seem to impose themselves upon us the more we seek to escape them.

Then there are the snares of the Adversary so subtly set to entangle us. At times they seem to bewilder us. Yet God, who is greater than all our enemies, loves us. He has given us great and precious promises for our encouragement to offset all the allurements around us. (2 Pet. 1:3, 4). “My soul, wait thou upon God; for my expectation is from him.” Psa. 62:5.

We must co-operate with the Lord and with His people, or our service will not be acceptable. It is not for us to determine the station of our service, or the work we do, but all must be done to the glory of God our father. Our attitude should ever be of silent, sincere waiting, that we might learn to know what He would have us do, in what manner, and the time when it is to be done. Jesus Himself was our great example in this, for He **always** sought to please His Father in what He said, what He did, and the hour for it to be accomplished. (John 2:4; 12:33).

Only in this way can we hope to avoid all bias and all thought of self in our service. Let us freely acknowledge and bear in mind the fact that of ourselves we can do nothing. (John 15:5). It is necessary that we be but empty vessels to be filled with His spirit, for only in this way can we hope to render acceptable co-operation with God. “What have we that we have not received?” 1 Cor. 4:7.

It is well to remind ourselves of these things from time to time and so keep ourselves wholehearted for all that God has for us to do in serving His purposes and each other. All who are thus united to God in Christ Jesus should expect to have evidences of being under the influence of the holy spirit and realise that their life is hid with Christ in God. "Happy is the man whose God is the Lord." Psa. 144:15.

Let us see this in another figure. It is necessary to our happiness and success in our service to the Lord that our service to others now, or in the future, be in accordance with what we ourselves absorb from our Master. Jesus revealed this to His disciples when describing the fruitfulness of the vine, the true vine, and the branches, under the care of the Husbandman. It is that which we receive from God, and not what we ourselves provide, that counts. Let us not forget this principle of true life from God. But what of our future life and hope? It is this: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:4.

Now let us dwell a little on the manifestations of the hidden life. One manifestation is evidenced in a profound love for the Bible as the course of spiritual life, inspiration, and repose. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:33; Matt. 4:4.

Another is to be seen in a fervent love for the brethren. (1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 3:16). If anyone lacks in this, he should realise that he falls short in one very important element. "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.?" 1 John 4:20.

Another manifestation might be seen in our sufferings for righteousness' sake. Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33). No truly devoted child of God escapes from some form of tribulation. Yes, all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (2 Tim. 3:12). There are sorrows of mind, as well as sufferings of body, for each one to endure, made necessary that the naturally corrupted heart become purified and acceptable to God.

It is when all human supports are removed that faith is tested and tried, and valuable lessons are learned. Certainly those possessing the hidden life have their peculiar trials and temptations, and like all temptations, the attack is first made upon the intellect, by thought or perception. Our Lord's noble example in the wilderness should assist us to see the importance of resisting at this point. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7). How much pain of heart, of grief, and sorrow we would save ourselves if we but follow the Lord's example!

When the apostle says, "Ye are dead," he does not mean that we are literally, actually, in such a state that we cannot sin. It is the overcoming of temptation that will gain the crown,— "He that overcometh," and "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10, 11.

It has been suggested that the more holy the life, the more violent the temptations. Satan will endeavour to lead us into sin if he can. Let us bear in mind that the Lord is with us, and we will not turn to Him in vain. God is faithful! He will not suffer us to be "tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13). Prayer to Him brings instant relief, if not entire escape. Very few, if any have become strong in faith who have not passed through severe trials. (James 1:12).

Another manifestation or evidence of possessing the hidden life will be the desire always to avoid unnecessary familiarities with the world. (1 John 2:15-17). We should be pursuing a lowly, retired course, following the precepts and example of our Saviour. Our life is a sealed book except to those who share it with us. God knows those who are His, which is all that is necessary.

The long trial of our pilgrim way is not without its compensations, for we enjoy the rapture of experiencing the Lord's presence, as promised. "He hath promised I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:5). "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23). To experience this is a human thrill known only to those "who are dead and their life is hid with Christ in God." And then, "Christ in you," says the apostle, is "the hope of glory." Col. 1:27.

The joy and peace and rest of faith are such valuable treasures that even martyrdom becomes insignificant in comparison with being with the Lord, sharing His glory and honor and service; for the thought of "when he shall appear" has been the incentive and delight of our entire walk of faith. The exceeding great and precious promises, their sustaining power, the Heavenly Father's graciousness, and the supervision of all our affairs, will complete the triumph; so that "when Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." The Diaglott states the matter: "When the Anointed One our life, shall be manifested, then you also will be manifested with him in glory." Col. 3:4.

The birth of the hidden life will eventually be accomplished. And then, in "Thy presence" will be fulness of joy,

"at Thy right hand, there will be pleasures (delightfulness) evermore." (Psa. 16:11). It will be the end of any human warfare, the consummation of all our hopes, and the receiving of that new name. It will mean the fulfilment of that delightful love song of the Song of Songs. It will be the revealing of that hidden treasure, for which one sold his all to secure, buying the field in which it was hid. It will be the completion of the desired habitation of God Himself. It will bring the greatest thrill of prospective brides, "The marriage supper of the Lamb," and the crown of life, with that great assurance that presently everything that hath breath shall praise Jehovah!

PEOPLES PAPER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) 60 cents per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,

Victoria, Australia, 3101.

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.

Christ's Resurrection Day.

THERE has been an enquiry recently as to whether our Lord was really raised on the third day after His death and burial, and the following selection from the writings of Brother Adam Rutherford in his book on the Pyramid is presented as being most helpful on this subject.

At the time that Joseph of Arimathaea asked for Jesus' body from the cross, the account says, "it was the preparation, That is, the day before the sabbath" (Mark 15:42). Just as the **sabbath** was the name for the seventh day of the week at that time, so the **preparation** was the name for the sixth day of the week, the day we now call Friday. Similarly, in Luke 23:54 we read, "And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on." These days could be summarized as follows:— .

First Day—"The preparation" = Friday, Luke 23:54. Crucifixion of Christ. Burial. The women prepare spices, etc. "The sabbath drew on." Nisan 14 (Hebrew days end at, sunset) April 3, (Julian).

Second Day—"The Sabbath" = Saturday (Luke 23:56). The women "rested on the Sabbath Day according to the commandment." Nisan 15, April 4.

Third Day—"The first day of the week" (Luke 24:1). Resurrection of Christ. The women go to the sepulchre "very early in the morning" with the spices, etc., they had prepared. Nisan 16, April 5.

"Him God raised up the third day." Acts 10:40.

There are three expressions, "the third day," "after three days," and "three days and three nights" that occur in the Bible.

At the outset, the Bible itself explains the meaning of the expression "the third day" as used in those days and in that part of the world. Indeed, Christ Himself explains it, as recorded in Luke 13:32, 33. He says, "I do cures **today** and **tomorrow** and **the third day** I shall have finished (that is, in Galilee for the time being and go to Jerusalem—as the next verse shows), nevertheless I must go on **today** and **tomorrow** and **the day following** for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." It is perfectly clear from these verses that when Jesus said "the third day" He referred to the day after "tomorrow." So here we have a demonstration of the meaning that Christ Himself attached to the expression "the third day." Whether or not we of this 20th century give a different meaning to it, matters not. What we must ascertain is what it meant in those days in that country. So if we are going to give Christ the credit or being consistent, when He said repeatedly that He would be put to death and then would rise from the dead on "the third day," He meant He would rise again on the day after tomorrow, according to His own definition of the term. That is to say, If Christ died on Wednesday He would rise again on Friday, or if He died on Friday He would rise again on Sunday, and we know from the records in the Gospel that it was the latter that actually happened.

Not only in New Testament days but also far back in Old Testament times, "the third day" meant the day after tomorrow, as the following quotations prove: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people and sanctify them **today** and **tomorrow**, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against **the third day**; for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai" (Exod. 19:10, 11). "Ana Jona; than said unto David, O Lord God of Israel, when I have sounded my father about tomorrow any time, or **the third day**. . . ." (1 Sam. 20:12).

Not only did Jesus say that He would rise again on "the third day" but He also said He would rise again

“after three days” (Mark 8:31). As Christ was only in the grave once and was resurrected only once, these two expressions “the third day” and “after three days” therefore both define the same period of time, the time He was in the grave. Thus,

“the third day” and “after three days” are synonymous in the language of that time, notwithstanding that they would not be synonymous if written in this 20th century according to modern English meanings of the terms.

Christ also stated that He would be “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40). Here again Christ is apparently referring to the period He would be in the tomb. Accordingly the interval from Jesus’ death and burial till His resurrection is defined by all three expressions, “**the third day**” “**after three days**” and “**three days**

and three nights,” hence in this connection they are synchronous. But by the present day meaning of such expressions in English it is otherwise. Today if we say an event happened on “the third day” we mean it occurred sometime during the third day. But if we state that an event took place “after three days,” we mean after three days had passed. Nowadays too, the phrase “three days and three nights” means three times 24 hours, or approximately so. Yet Christ used all three expressions in reference to the same period of time, thus proving that the expressions had another meaning from what they have today in English. The application of modern literal meanings to words in ancient Hebrew and Greek idiomatic expressions explains the origin of the recent erroneous theories regarding the period of time that Christ was in the grave.

Regarding these three expressions, one writer who holds the theory that Christ was in the grave 72 hours, says “It will scarcely be denied that the **obvious** meaning of these phrases **favours** the longer interval which follows from the strict interpretation of Matt. 12:40.” Commenting on this remark, a Hebrew and Greek scholar, retorted, “**Obvious**, that is to an English reader, who is not familiar with other ways of reckoning besides his own. To a scholar, as to a native Hebrew or Greek, the obvious meaning not only **favours** the shorter interval, but **makes any other impossible.**”

“Salted Sacrifices.”

(Lev. 2:13; Mark.9:49, 50)

THE following article was prepared by our late Brother Jordan to present at the Adelaide Easter Convention, but our dear Brother finished the pilgrim way a short time prior to Easter. We are pleased to present the helpful thoughts for the benefit of all our readers.

“Salt” is used extensively in symbolic ways. A B.B.C. representative recently said, “NO broadcasting organization which is worth its salt,” and then went on to justify some aspect of his radio complex. Frequently we hear it said of an employee, a sportsman, or representative, “Huh, he’s not worth his salt.” During a conversation in which some particular person is criticised one will often hear the expression, “What he says you can take with a pinch of salt.” We all comprehend these symbolic expressions, but what did Jesus mean when he referred to His Church as the “salt of the earth”?.,

Salt enters into superstition: when someone upsets the salt cellar nine times out of ten that person will take a pinch of salt and throw it Over his left shoulder. This is either to expiate the evil powers or break the “bad luck” foreshadowed in the omen of spilt salt. It was also included in humor when children were advised the best way to catch a bird was to sprinkle salt on the tail feathers. Is speech “seasoned with salt” constructive criticism, wholesome advice, or pungent, stinging criticism, or reproof? In olden days when people ate salt with some particular person it meant they enjoyed either his hospitality or were dependent upon him for their maintenance. An example, Ezra 4:14 (margin) reads, “Because we are salted with the salt of the palace.” They were more than ordinarily concerned for the king’s honor; they knew which side their bread was buttered, and were zealous for their benefactor’s reputation. The ministry of Jesus to the Jews was referred to as “filling the children first” before any favors could be granted the Gentiles (Mark 7:25-30). The Syrophenician woman begged for just one crumb from such a beneficent table; this was granted. Do those benefiting from the ministry of ‘Jesus, salted with salt from the King’s table have salt in themselves?

“Ye are the salt of the earth,” said Jesus. Since the Gospel was to go unto all people in all nations, God’s Word has a larger scope in the Gospel Age than it did in the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations. Ye are the salt of the whole earth, and this speaks two or three important matters: (a) Very little salt is needed to change the unsavory into something that can be appreciated; (b) On our faithfulness depends not only our own security but safety and mercy for others, sometimes thousands; (c) Salt to do its work effectively must retain its saltiness.

Consider a few examples of the importance of little things. Trifles make the sum of human things, where a small unkindness is a great offence, while just a word in season, how good it is. The first solemn prayer in the Bible is Abraham’s plea for the Cities of Sodom: Wilt Thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? he asked of God, suggesting there must be fifty righteous men in the cities of the plain. Abraham would have abhorred the sin of these cities as much as did righteous Lot. He previously had rescued Lot with the skill of his sword but is powerless except in prayer to intervene between the angel of the Lord ‘and his stated intention of destroying these corrupt cities. Yet he uses all his interest at the throne of ‘grace to ;Dread for mercy because among Such wickedness there still may be 50-40 —30—20. Then in shame he must have pleaded the cause Of ‘five cities if but ten righteous could be found. God did not leave off granting till Abraham left off asking. Had ten been found could they have been described as the salt of the earth? Salt is a preservative. Just how strong is the influence of the salt of the earth must be considered along with God’s merciful kindness in that He would have spared the five cities for the sake of ten righteous people.

Without considering the perfect example, where the life of one Man secures benefits for all in Adam, let us ponder experiences in the lives of ordinary people, subject to like passions as ourselves. The city of Jericho was pleasantly situated, but the water was useless for health, irrigation, or food production. Elisha was told of their complaint. He called for a new cruse containing salt, went to the spring of the waters; that is, the fountain head, cast in the salt and pronounced healing in the name of the Lord, a healing that would be perpetual. "There shall not be from thence any more death or barren land." This was his first beneficent deed. Does this prescribe an effort by the Salt of the Earth to sweeten bitter springs and make barren lives fruitful? Just a little salt, directed at the fountain of life, will be sufficient to change the unprofitable into something useful. Purify the heart and the hands will be cleansed. The springs of life are corrupt in Adam; the ground cannot produce wholesome fruits except the salt of Divine grace purify the heart and

thus prepare the soil to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Another- well-known example where the many benefited because of the few: that memorable shipwreck of -the Apostle Paul on the way to Rome. (Acts 27). The hopeless souls on that ship, 276 of them, were encouraged by Paul, as he told them, the angel of God had stood by him and declared that the Apostle must be brought before Caesar (this was in God's plan), "and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." No one in the boat knew where they were, but the angel of the Lord that encampeth round about the Lord's people knows how to locate, protect and deliver. Paul was assured of safety, not only for himself, but for all others on board. The crew declared all lives would be lost, but this the Apostle contradicts, saying not one life would be lost. Because the salt of the Apostle's ministry had not lost its savor he became a public benefactor. Many others have shared similar experiences: Moses, Queen Esther, individuals standing between the wrath of God and thousands of people. Open the Bible at random and find salted sacrifices turning wrath into blessing. The Christian ministry seems in numbers so few and those few so weak, that some are inclined to ask, as did Andrew, But what is that among so many? The doctrines of the Gospel are as salt, penetrating, quick and powerful, pricking right into the heart; cleansing, relishing, preserving. Salt works silently but ever so efficiently, so that the Apostle could say of his sole effort under remarkable unexpected conditions in the palace at Rome, "We are unto God a sweet savor, making manifest the savor of the knowledge of Christ in every place" (2 Cor. 2:14, 15). Any other savor is insipid, as the Prince of Denmark says in Hamlet:

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable.
Seem to me all the uses of this world.

Jesus said, Have salt in yourselves. It would be impossible to share with others what we lack in ourselves. Thoughts, words, affections, actions; all seasoned with grace (Col. 4:6). The Apostles were told they should not always remain at Jerusalem, not laid on a heap to be trodden underfoot, but scattered as salt upon the sacrifice, here a grain, there a grain, that the unsavory may be wholesome. A little leaven will corrupt the whole mass, but a little salt will purify. Salt is a remedy for unsavory meat, but there is no remedy for unsavory salt.

Leaven putrefies, salt purifies. "With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." The offerer did not provide the salt; it was obtained from the Temple. The offering could be attractively dressed, skilfully prepared, adorned with costly spices, and in appearance be everything that one could wish for, yet lacking that small, mean, common, cheap element called Salt, be rejected. Does not this feature resemble the teaching in 1 Cor. 13:1-3. One may be an elegant orator, speak like an angel, understand all mysteries, types and shadows, able to expound the prophecies and doctrines, yet lacking love the sacrifice is of no consequence. It is not great knowledge or organizing ability but a heart activated by holy love that is acceptable with God. The most wonder-working faith one could imagine, capable of moving mountains

involving heavy and valuable machinery to accomplish mighty works said to be in Christ's name would be rejected if not salted with that ounce of Divine love. Doing good to others will do us no good except the motive is Christian love. To sacrifice our lives in "God's service" even to become martyrs, without love will not recommend us to God any more than offerings under the Mosaic arrangement could be accepted without salt. Any sacrifice in itself is displeasing, but salted with the salt of the holy spirit it becomes a sweet-smelling savor. "The sacrifices of the wicked is an abomination." Cain's offering not accepted; the Pharisees with their long prayers, external purity, alms-giving, rejected, and Paul says the sacrifice of the Christian dispensation lacking love (lacking salt) are in vain. The rarest thing in the world, Holy Love; the commonest thing in the world, salt; a little of either will work wonders.

Speak gently. It is better far To rule by love than fear Speak gently—let no harsh words mar The good we might do here.

Speak gently.
Love doth whisper low
The vows that true hearts bind;
And gently Friendship's accents flow—

Affection's voice is kind.
Speak gently to the little child.
Its love is sure to gain;
Teach it accents soft and mild;
It may not long remain.

Speak gently to the young, for they
Will have enough to bear
Pass through this life as best they may;
'Tis full of anxious care.

Speak gently to the aged one,
Grieve not the care-worn heart;
The sands of life are nearly run
let such in peace depart.

Speak gently, kindly, to the poor;
Let no harsh tone be heard;
They have enough they must endure,
Without an unkind word.

Speak gently to the erring: know,
They may have toil'd in vain;
Perchance unkindness made them so;
Oh, win them back again.

Speak gently: He who gave His life
To bend man's stubborn will,
When elements were in fierce strife,
Said to them "Peace, be still."

Speak gently. 'Tis a little thing
Dropped in the heart's deep well;
The good, the joy, which it may bring,
Eternity shall tell.
(Bates).

THE QUESTION BOOK

Word to hand from our brethren in Chicago, U.S.A., indicates that the Question Book—Answers to Hundreds of Questions, has been delayed in production, and is now expected to be ready by late spring. Orders placed with us at \$.35 will be filled as soon as supplies arrive. Further orders may be placed by friends desiring this book.

Christian liberality is the work of a willing mind; for if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath. Plainly it is not the value of the contribution, but the love of the contributor, which makes it precious.

F. W. Robertson.

News Of The Bible.

Ignorance of the Past

It is very affecting to contemplate the ignorance which existed in Europe before printing was introduced. Stephanus relates an anecdote of a certain doctor of the Sorbonne, who, speaking of the reformers, expressed his surprise at their mode of reasoning by exclaiming: "I wonder why these youths are constantly quoting the New Testament? I was more than fifty years old before I knew anything of a New Testament." And Albert; archbishop and elector of Mentz, in the year 1530, accidentally meeting with a Bible, opened it, and having read some pages, observed: "Indeed I do not know what this book is, but this I see, that everything in it is against us." Even Carolastadius, who was afterwards one of the reformers, acknowledged that he never began to read the Bible till eight years after he had taken his highest degree in divinity. Many other equally striking facts' might be introduced, illustrative of the ignorance of the Scriptures which prevailed at the time.

Books Available

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.20.
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages," Cloth bound--80c; PaPer covers-55c.
- "Emphatic Diaglott," New Testament-52.20.
- "Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday pages—\$1.10. "Tabernacle Shadows"-68c.
- "The Book of Books," Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.10.
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"-15c.
- "Manner of Christ's Return"-15c.
- "Christ's Return"-15c.
- "Some of the Parables"-15c.
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"-15c.
- "God and Reason"-15c.
- "Where Are the Dead?"-10c.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE 19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,

Victoria, Australia, 3101.