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The Good Paymaster.

(Convention Address)

YOU have heard of the Lord as a Good Teacher, for did not Nicodemus confess when he came to Jesus by night, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." You have heard of Him as a Good Shepherd, for He says "I am the good shepherd and the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." You have heard of Him as the Good Physician,— "The sun of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his beams." "Bless the Lord, oh my soul; who healeth all thy diseases." He is also a Good Builder, giving us the blue-prints of a temple, whose builder and maker is God; a Good Guide, "I will guide thee with mine eye . . . the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way," (Psa. 25:9) . and a Good Master, "You call me Lord and Master, and so I am."

However, the Scriptures present Him to us in many instances as a Good Paymaster. In the form of a paymaster He is presented from two angles—(1) As being very fair, just, faithful; and (2) as being generous, kind, compassionate, or good.

Generally speaking, and as pertaining to mankind in a large way, He is presented as being Justice itself. Let us glance at a few of these laws that affect every living person in some way or another — the laws of justice, keeping in mind God as being the paymaster.

Most men in this day of grace work under some award or other; be it ever so poor, and be there ever so much room for improvement, the conditions under any award are, better than those under none. Under the latter arrangement, men are exploited without mercy by unscrupulous employers, whereas, under an award, there has been a bargaining of conditions and payment for services rendered. Under these terms the working conditions of today are probably the best ever experienced in man's history. We know there is still much room for improvement, otherwise strikes and lockouts would never occur. To be working under a good award is the aim of most men; they are glad to have constant employment, with its consequent remuneration, and the concessions and liberties enjoyed by some over and above the remuneration aspect, such as holidays, sick leave, and in some cases long-service leave. Some even enjoy pensions on retirement, and even still better, generous employers remember their employees in their wills.

God is a very good Employer, too. He has an award also, under which men receive concessions or privileges, or hardship and privation; it all depends upon our co-operation. We sing

"While joyfully in Thine employ . . .
Henceforth my chief concern shall be.
To love and speak and toil for Thee."

He also pays over and above award rates—to some. Long-service leave is also cumulative. Pensions are generous; and a share in a future inheritance is also ours because of the legacy in the will of His dear Son.

God, the Supreme Paymaster, keeps account books for every individual. With the keeping of these books He has economised to a large extent by charging all on the debit side to one man by the name of Adam; he was the one who plunged us all to death, with its pains, aches and sicknesses. It was Adam who consigned us to the great prisonhouse of death. We had no choice at all, irrespective of whether we followed righteousness or sin. (Rom. 5:12,14.)

It is most important to note that, even with the pronouncing of the sentence of death, God's goodness can be recognised — "Cursed is the ground for thy sake . . . in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." Work. What a blessing is here in disguise. Exercise; strange, if men do not get it in their work their bodies cry out for it and they embark on the daily constitutional, or visit gymnasiums, or get busy in the gardens, to enjoy better health. Who will doubt that we have a Good Paymaster?

Is God obliged to give us fruitful harvests and bountiful seasons, whether we work hard or little? No. And if, after we gaze about us, we see His goodness on every side, we look into His plan and see there His great mercy, how He could find a way in condemning us. and at the same time a way for our escape, does not all this goodness, all this mercy, all this undeserved consideration affect us somewhat? Does it not lead us to the point where we cry out with almost frustration, "What can we do?" Does it not lead us to repentance? It was nothing else but the "goodness of God that led us to repentance." This is a good step. Instead of fighting against God, of complaining ignorantly about His laws, of finding fault with His administration, of questioning His judgments, we are convinced that what He does is good, is for our betterment, to lead us step by step closer to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift."

Let us ponder, briefly, to consider those pronouncements against us, uttered in the Garden of Eden where eternal life might have been our heritage. The penalties for disobedience and unfaithfulness are recorded for us in Gen. 3:17— "Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." "In sorrow" must mean in a comparative sense; compared with what might have been our happy lot, the present condition is inferior. Consider a similar pronouncement of "in sorrow." "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children," was a curse put on the woman, but look at all the joy that accompanies that marvellous event, even as our Lord declared—"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow . . . but as soon as the anguish is past she has joy that a man has been born." (John 16:21.) Note the mixture of sorrow and joy, God being kind and merciful even in His punishments. The same with the eating of our bread with sorrow; this also is mixed with joy, especially after one has been consoled that God is pleased with our works—Eccles. 9:7—"Eat thy bread with joy."

The curse — "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" is also a benefit, as many a farmer can tell. It is the rich ground only that will produce the vigorous weeds, as well as the good crops. It means that conditions or circumstances of life now pronounce for us WORK. "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread." What a blessing in disguise is this. It was during the late depression, when work was so scarce, that one put it so nicely—"If work be the curse of God what must His blessing be?"

It seems that the "sweat of thy brow" enforces exercise for our good. Natural exercise is beneficial, as many find out for their good during these days of easy living. The exercise we miss out in earning our bread we are forced to get in other directions. In short, what we dodge naturally we have to make up in other ways. Another name for work, of course, is exercise, which in turn affects our respiratory systems, so necessary for good health. How often do we open our lungs to inhale good draughts of air? If only we knew these benefits we would esteem it a duty to give them more attention, slothful creatures that we are. God gave us the penalties for our good and we are too beguiled by lying deceptions to recognise them. Is it wise to breathe continually impure air? Who is at fault when we suffer from such folly? Surely in our ignorance we charge to God in many cases what is merely the reaping of our own folly.

Another part of the curse is—"Thou shalt eat the herb of the field." It is not suggested we should, like Nebuchadnezzar, because of his continual offending in the eating part of his life, be turned out to graze on grass, to rectify the condition of his stomach ulcers or whatever it was. No, but pause for one moment; count up what proportion of your diet consists of some leafy material, some natural plant that comes under the category of "herb of the field." Be honest, we are companions of the many who have endeavored to lift the curse before its time, instead of putting our necks under God's penalties, for our own good. If you really want to know how far we have got away from His pronouncement, all to our hurt, have a look at Gen. 1:29 and consider how much it concerns you. We wonder why things go wrong, why our hospitals are overflowing, why parasites grow up among us. All because we tickle our palate with the "nice" things of society. Look into Daniel's habits.

"The sleep of a laboring man is sweet" and "Lord, if he sleepeth, he doeth well." Sleep and rest seem related; if we miss out on this necessity in a natural way, we are forced to get it in an artificial way. What mental disorders are the direct results of insufficient rest, either from worry, anxiety, or maybe we have not had the happy medium of natural exertion. Do we use sufficient of the correct lubrication to keep these machines of ours, our bodies, on the road? There is no need to study all the intricacies of the workings of our bladders or kidneys; sufficient to plead just the natural springs of earth, unpolluted with any discoloration or impurities. God has made provision for our occasional offending His laws in these matters; the wonders of healing properties astound us, but His laws become a little harsher if we persist in offending. Look at the sunlight; what healing properties are in its rays. God gave us clothes and houses; we ignore His counsel if we choose to remain cooped up like pigeons in a cage.

And now the last, but not least of His injunctions, but probably the most complex of all, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (Matt. 4:4.)

The foregoing constitute the “Conditions” of our award, with God being the Supreme Employer. Whether we like it or not, we are in prison, the prison house of death. Faithful subjects, like Joseph, Daniel and his friends, made the best of prevailing conditions, not like Cain, who rebelled and was confined to another part of the prison while undergoing detention.

There was at one time a class of people whom God favored greatly, and He said to them—“You may have more of my favors than these heathen (isolated) people. You may pictorially present annually and in feasts and ceremonies My plan for all mankind to be delivered from sin. This should benefit you immensely, and prepare you to receive the King of the earth.” They misappropriated His favors for their own aggrandisement and excellence among the other prisoners in this huge prison house. Had they been faithful in their duties there were other high favors to be won. Others were invited to enjoy these favors, and they should be careful to appropriate God’s favors for the purpose given. In short, we should study the terms and conditions of the new award under which we are working. These extra favors do not exempt us from responsibilities. We are subject to the general conditions prevailing in the prison. To enjoy these favors puts pleasure into work, whether it be housewife, servant, bricklayer, carpenter, office worker, employer or janitor.

God is a generous Paymaster; give what we may to Him in the form of faith, work, trust, zeal, love, service, and what do we get in return? We are rewarded over and above all that we ever give. Sometimes it may be to the extent of twenty, thirty, sixty, or even a hundredfold we are rewarded. But it is always returned with good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over. There are many glaring examples of this principle operating in the lives of the Ancient Worthies; we think of Job, Jaccia, Joseph, Daniel, etc.

Let us bring it nearer home: “Give God the thanks,” says Jesus. We thank God for our blessings, but ours should be a continual thanking Him for all His benefits—“in everything give thanks.” Have you noticed that when you are thankful you miss out on a lot of trouble? Compare the disposition of a disgruntled person with that of a thankful one; the former is sour, bitter, and there is no pleasing him. The latter is happy; he cannot help but be happy if he is thankful. If we knew of the hidden mysteries of how a state of mind can affect our stomachs, and thy in turn our health, we should be very careful to bow to God’s will in everything, and accept it as being best for our welfare. A troubled or worried person is more apt to find an accident round the corner than one who is free from worry and thus keen and awake to all the hazards of the day.

We do not seem able to thwart the operation of God’s law that “As ye sow, so shall ye reap” and that He will reward every man according to his works, for “every man shall receive his own reward.” It is no use our professing one thing and acting another. If we say we are glad to cast our cares upon Him and act as if we cannot trust Him to solve or ease our burden, what else can be the result but disadvantageous?

“With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Fair enough in anyone’s language, but it brings us up with a jolt to discover as we examine this rule or law, chat, the thing that really offends us most in our brethren is the thing of which we generally are most conscious in ourselves. If you are of the complaining kind, look inwards and see if you have not grounds for complaint nearer home. It is so easy to see the “mote,” the tiny splinter that is in our neighbor’s eye and miss altogether the “beam,” the huge failing in our own make-up. God takes note of all this, and rewards us accordingly. You will discover that even in His chastisements there is sympathy, consideration, and they come with the desire of correcting our waywardness rather than a punitive punishment for misdeeds.

We have so much for which to be thankful there should never be an occasion for murmuring. Human nature being what it is, we find in ourselves as well as in Scriptural records, the grumblers are there. Martha was “Cumbered about with much serving; overcareful and troubled with many things,” complained about her sister . . . the laborers in the field contracted to work for a specified sum and complained about others coming in later in the day and all receiving the same reward . . . the elder brother of the Prodigal Son complained when his younger brother was shown a favor.

All of God’s laws are for our benefit and protection, even if we should suffer injury through them in some way or another. What if we should place a rickety chair on a table to fix the hole in the roof, fall and sprain or break a limb. Whose fault? God’s law of gravity is for our protection, not our destruction. Yet we can, quite properly, ascribe our injury to the law of gravity. The point is, that we should examine these laws with our intelligence and develop in understanding, so that we may use them all to our advantage. Many by-laws govern the complete Law of Existence. We should note, as intelligent creatures, their effect upon us, and correct that part where we may suffer, like the insecure rung of a ladder, that we do not fall to earth rather suddenly.

“The Lord is merciful and gracious; He hath not rewarded us according to our iniquities. If Thou Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, who could stand ?” These beneficent mercies are gracious provisions incorporated in the general terms of God’s award under which we strive to be good servants, or employees. But He also has decreed that “As ye sow so shall ye reap.” As we receive His mercies we are counselled to pass on the good grace—”Freely ye have received, freely give.” The strange thing about this retributive action of receiving and giving is that no one ever becomes poorer by giving to others what God has given to him. For example, to pass on love, kindness, gentleness, etc., makes us the richer in those qualities rather than the poorer. On the other hand, to pass on bitterness, sourness, etc., does not lessen our complaint, but contrary, we become worse.

Some folk are easily discouraged, mostly on account of sins of ignorance, selfishness, wilful dispositions. Faultfinding comes quickly. To excuse their selfish approach they say, “What’s the use ? Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may be dead.” This unthankful attitude can hardly blame God for the ill results.

Some think they are unjustly treated and become despondent and discouraged; they lose the zeal and zest for a thankful heart. They complain that the aim is too high. Consider what cause for complaint had the thief on the cross upon whom Jesus had compassion. This man, we are told, was arraigned for stealing, and yet his penalty for such malpractice was crucifixion. The penalty, to any fair-minded one, seems far in excess of the crime. Think, crucifixion for theft! Yet this man cried out for mercy, for compassion, saying, “We receive the DUE REWARD for our deeds.”

Of a truth Paul declares, “There is none righteous, no not one.”

Because of exceedingly rich promises God has now lifted the death penalty as far as we are concerned. Faith-righteousness sees now ahead of it eternal life, a full reward for full obedience. And John exhorts us to look to ourselves, “That we receive a full reward.” (2 John 8.) Whether it be a full or partial reward, it will be over and above that which we should have received. Surely we have a Good Paymaster.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

The Institute's Work.

IT is a pleasure at this time to report another year's work being completed for the Berean Bible Institute, and our foremost thought is that of thanksgiving to the Lord for His blessings upon the efforts undertaken in His name together with our brethren who have co-operated in the service of the Lord in this part of the harvest field.

Our friends generally will realise that the efforts from the Institute, here in Melbourne, are directed along similar lines each year, the main object being to encourage our brethren in the Lord to press on along the Christian way in appreciation of the truths which have drawn them to the Lord and each other in, these last days of the Gospel Age, and also to witness to the message of the kingdom that others feeling after the Lord may be found and supplied with the precious things that have been such a blessing to our own hearts. To this end, our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" goes forth throughout this land and overseas, and it is encouraging to know that its contents have been appreciated generally, both near and far.

Contributions to the pages of the "Peoples Paper" have been gladly received and warmly appreciated, and it is our desire that this messenger for the Lord's truth may always contain just those things that will build up in Christian faith and doctrine, and promote the development of the graces of the holy spirit wherever it is read. It is realised that the harvest 'truths are of special importance, and these find a prominent place in our journal from time to time.

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper," which are now 5/- per year, do not cover the cost of production, but quantities are distributed free to those interested in spiritual things, and so the witness in this way is considered a good investment, in the Lord's service, for the deficiency in cost which is made up from the General Tract Fund. Our readers are welcome to extra copies of the "Paper" for distribution where good may be done, and those who provide subscriptions for others, or encourage others to subscribe for themselves are assisting helpfully in the work, and these efforts are greatly valued. The good help rendered in the checking of proofs, folding, wrapping and despatching of our monthly "Paper" by some friends is also appreciated very much.

During the past year quantities of tracts have been distributed and supplies of various topics Are available to those who desire to cooperate in this work. The mailing of Consolation Cards is another means of witness to those who have suffered bereavement, and in which our friends may assist.

Public lectures have been given regularly throughout the year in co-operation with our brethren, and it has been encouraging to note the interest and appreciation of the messages from the Word of God, presented along the line of the Plan of the Ages, by some new friends, as well as by our brethren who are rejoicing in these truths.

The General Tract Fund Account reveals the financial position of the general work, and all the good help has been provided, in the Lord's overruling providence, by the voluntary contributions of our brethren generally. Such loving co-operation is greatly appreciated, as unto the Lord, and is most encouraging in the efforts to serve the Lord's cause of truth.

Looking back over the year we have much cause for praise and gratitude to our Heavenly Father. It is certainly a privilege to be free from the trouble and distress which is prevalent in some countries of the world, and this gives us further opportunities for service amongst our brethren and towards all who have ears to hear. The prayers of our brethren are requested that the Lord's guidance and blessing may be upon His work, that His will may be done in our hearts, and amongst others with whom we come in contact, either personally or through the mails, to His praise. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." (John 4:36.)

GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/56	£54 3 2
., Donations ..	570 15 10
	£624 19 0
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples	£98 2 3 Hall
Rents, Advertising Circulars,	36 10 6

General Expenses (Office, etc.) ..	52 8 2
Towards Personal and House Ex-	325 0 0 41 11 4
Pilgrim Work and Assisting Brethren	27 2 0 Free Books and Booklets .. 5 7 6
Travel and Sundries ..	13 7 0
Credit Balance 1/5/57 ..	25 10 3

£624

Radio Work.

THE witness work by means of the radio has also continued steadily, over another twelve months, and we lift up thankful hearts to the Lord for His blessings in connection with this feature of service in which it has been a privilege to engage with others of our dear friends in various parts.

A goodly number of enquiries have been received throughout the year past, and it is a pleasure to report that from this number quite a few in the different States have appreciated the truth message very sincerely. During the past year the same radio stations have been used, namely-3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY/NA and after each broadcast complete copies of the discussions by Frank and Ernest are offered free to all interested listeners, as well as other free literature.

To all enquirers to the radio sessions free copies of the "Peoples Paper" are also forwarded for several months, and in this way full opportunity is given to encourage the interest of all who are feeling after the truths of God's Word. Our brethren within range of the radio stations would be performing a good work by encouraging people to listen, and advertising slips for this purpose are gladly supplied.

Looking back over the 14.1 years since this witness work commenced in Australia it is encouraging to realise that a number of brethren were first contacted by this means of service, and by the Lord's grace, have continued to rejoice in the truth. It is fully realised that the spirit of the Lord draws earnest hearts to appreciate His truth, but what a privilege it is to be used in any small way in the service of our Lord who has done so much for us.

The financial position for the work over the radio is shown by the Radio Fund Account. The good assistance to this branch of service by voluntary donations is warmly appreciated, and has met all costs, by the Lord's providence. Our brethren in Western Australia continue to cover the cost of the sessions over 6KY/NA. It is desired that the prayers of the brethren be offered for the Lord's blessing upon this avenue of service also in the days ahead, that all may be accomplished in harmony with His good will, to His praise.

RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/56	£80 10 4
„, Donations...	756 19 2
£837 9 6	
By Radio Stations 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ	£692 3 1
Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY	49 0 10
Freight Charges	13 6 2
Printing Dialogues .. Travel and Sundries ..	8 5 0
Bank Charges ..	65 10 1
Credit Balance 1/5/57	

£837 9 6

Study in Hebrews 10.

THE wonderful plan of God, by which He forgives the sins of all mankind and establishes His new covenant with Israel and ultimately with all the families of the earth, is outlined so clearly and helpfully throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews by the Apostle Paul.

To those who have made an examination of this masterly presentation by the Apostle of the typical and antitypical priesthoods of God, the truths of God's Plan shine out in added beauty, and appeal in ever-increasing grandeur as the various features are grasped and appreciated as coming only from the mind of our gracious Heavenly Father.

In the tenth chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews the Apostle presents so beautifully the explanation of the antitypical sin offerings which were prefigured on Israel's day of atonement by the slaying of the bullock and the Lord's goat, and the sprinkling of the blood of these animals, in succession, upon the mercy seat in the Most Holy of the tabernacle.

Israel's day of atonement was a 24-hour day, but the antitypical day of atonement lasts the whole of this Gospel Age. So, says Paul, as it is "not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins, wherefore when he (Christ) cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. 10:4,5.) We surely rejoice that "Jesus was made a little lower than the angels (made flesh) for the suffering of death . . . that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.)

Our Lord's sacrifice of His humanity to "taste death for every man" constituted the ransom price to take away the sins of the world, and the way in which this valuable price is made applicable to cancel the sins of all mankind is revealed by the sin offerings, so ably presented by Paul in this 10th chapter of Hebrews in particular. Jesus was the antitypical bullock, and, as in the type, the bullock's blood was sprinkled on behalf of "himself and his house" only, and not for all Israel, so our Lord's sacrifice was applied for His body and household of faith only, and not for all the world when he "appeared in the presence of God for us." (Heb. 9:24.)

As it required the sprinkling of the blood of the Lord's goat, in the type, to cancel the sins "for the people" — all the remainder of Israel—(Lev. 16:15), so in antitype the Lord's people follow in the steps of Christ's sacrifice, and having His merit making their sacrifice "holy, acceptable to God," they are the secondary offering for sin during this Gospel Age. So, we see a secondary meaning in the words of Heb. 10:5—"a body hast thou prepared me." God had prepared the Body of Christ, His Church, representatively in the Apostles and other brethren who were offered in sacrifice at Pentecost. All the Gospel Age other members of the Lord's body are also "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24.)

So, the Apostle declares—"He taketh away the first (the typical sacrifices) that he may establish the second (the antitype, the real sacrifices for sin). By the which will we are sanctified (set apart to holy, sacrificial service) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (the members of His Body, offered representatively of the whole, at Pentecost). For by one offering (in two parts—the Christ, Head and Body) he hath perfected those being sanctified. Whereof the holy spirit also is a witness to us." (Heb. 10:9,10,14,15.) Yes, "the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16), and being sanctified more and more during the daily presentation (offering) of ourselves as members of the Lord's goat class in His service.

Paul then proceeds in verses 16,17 of Hebrews 10, to refer to the wonderful transformation that will be effected in the lives of Israel (and later all mankind) by the establishing of the new covenant with Israel "after those days" — after the "seven times" or 2520 years of chastisement upon Israel, ending about 1914-18. We are not to conclude that this new covenant should have been established fully with Israel immediately the "seven times" expired, but rather from that time the Lord's favor would begin to return to Israel, and ultimately "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

The Apostle had mentioned this new covenant in more detail in Hebrews 8:8-13, so the reason for again bringing it forward in chapter 10 seems to be to show the connection between the "offerings for sin" of the Gospel Age, and the blessings to follow under the new covenant in the Millennial Age, still future. For, says Paul, in verse 18—"Now where there is forgiveness of these (forgiveness of sin for Israel and the world under the new covenant) an offering for sin is no longer needed." No, indeed, the antitypical offering for sin will be completed before the new covenant can become operative, for the very good reason that the secondary antitypical sprinkling of the heavenly mercy seat must be accomplished before the High Priest can "appear the second time without sin (without a sin offering) unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28.)

How clearly, then, has the Apostle established the fact that the new covenant is to be made with a natural, earthly

people, and is not operative with the Lord's people of this Gospel Age, who are developed under the Abrahamic covenant, as shown by Paul in Gal. 4:28—"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

However, the main purpose of Paul in stressing the benefits to be received under the new covenant, by the forefathers of those to whom he wrote his Hebrew's epistle, seems to be to impress the goodness and mercy of God, so that they may be the more encouraged to press on in their privileges as the "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1), and to esteem the opportunity of being counted in with the sacrifice of Christ as the greatest favor ever offered to any of the human family. To us also, in this end of the Gospel Age, does the Apostle's reasoning appeal, as he seeks to lead us forward to grasp more and more of the inestimable favor of being called into the Body of Christ, prepared for sacrifice first of all by our loving heavenly Father, and later, by His grace, to enter into the antitypical Most Holy, "whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:20.)

"I TOLD THEM OF . . . THE KING'S WORDS"

There is no more precious talent entrusted to us with which we may trade with certain success and splendid increase than the words of our King. A simple text passed on may be the immediate means of wonderful help and quickening, and the comfort whenever we ourselves are comforted of God (not some otherwise concocted comfort) may comfort many who are in any trouble, without even one word of man as its vehicle.—F.R.H.

What is the Cross?
I questioned.

'Tis bearing every day
The trials which the Father
Permits along the way;

'Tis sharing the reproaches
Your Master meekly bore
While those who claim to love Him
Revile you more and more.

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music)—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

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Swallowing angry words is a lot easier than having to eat them later.

Excerpt Convention Report 1930.

HAVE we ever stopped to really think seriously just how the Saviour would view matters and what He would say to us were He visibly to appear in our midst in these times? Some have said, "Oh! how I wish the Master would visit us as He did with those disciples long ago; how I wish I might consult Him with regard to many questions that have so troubled me; I am sure, if the Master were right in our midst, we could soon have the burning, vexing problems and issues that have disturbed us in these recent years quickly settled." But, brethren, is there any question, problem or difficulty before us today that the Master has not already answered in one or another of His many sayings when He was here long ago? Has He not through the spirit in the Apostolic messages dealt with all the present issues?

But still someone says, "If He were here I would like to ask Him who has charge of His Church today, and whom He has put over His people to control and direct them with power and authority." How would Jesus reply to this question? I believe that we already have His answer to that question—My dear disciples, I have never vacated the position which the Father gave to Me in the beginning of the Age. As I then said, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," so now I say that I alone have charge of My Church, and I have never delegated authority to any man or company of men to rule over the Church or to interfere with the individual liberty of each member.

Another might ask: Master, tell us what great movement or work have you authorised your people to carry on in the earth today; what great pronouncement is there to be made in fulfilment of your will? Again we may be sure the Lord would answer in harmony with what He established as the mission of the Church when it was instituted, and that answer would be: I have not authorised any great movement or any great work to be achieved during this dispensation, for "My Kingdom is not of this world." I remind you that in the beginning of the Age I said that My people would be scattered here and there throughout the earth. I never authorised My disciples to organise any great and wonderful work while yet in their earthly pilgrimage. Was not this the sum of the teachings of Christ and the Apostles with regard to what was authorised or expected of the faithful Church all along through the centuries until her glorification?

Another question might be: Master, will you not tell us just who and where your people are to be found in the earth today so that we may be numbered among them and thus enjoy fellowship with the true saints. We believe the Lord would answer, saying, "My followers are those who do the will of My Father in heaven; they are those who possess My spirit; they are such as are consecrated—surrendered—to My will; they are those who deny themselves and have taken up their cross to follow Me; in fact, whoever will do the will of My Father the same is My Brother, My Sister, My Mother." And, dear brethren, should not this reply of the Master be satisfactory to us? Do we not really love all who love the Lord Jesus and possess His spirit? As many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God.

All our perplexities of today can be settled if we properly take them to the Lord and enquire what the spirit has long ago said unto the Church.

Why should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others,—that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious, or troubled,—when with us is Prayer,
And Joy and Strength and Courage are with Thee!

—Matt. 28:20. R.C.T.

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“THAT MUCH.”

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

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

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

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