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The Keeper and the Kept.

(Psa. 121. Convention Address).

AS we journey along the Christian way, what hills are there to which we shall lift our eyes? There are some hills we can look unto with profit, and especially one on which we must fix our eyes, not- only when we first turn to God, but we must never lose sight of it all along the way. Whom do you see upon that hill? There is One there who was lifted 'up upon that hill, as Moses lifted up -the serpent in the wilderness. A look at Him is the remedy for the sting of gin and death, "There is life in a look at the crucified One; yes, there is -life there for thee."

Upon that Hill of Calvary was slain "the Lamb of God- which taketh 'away the sin of the world.'" if our love should get: cool towards God or the brethren, then lift up your eyes 'to the Hill of Calvary. Think of His broken, pierced 'body, His agonizing cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." Listen to the bitter words of sarcasm from those who mocked Him, and let our hearts be filled with love and devotion. "Hereby perceive we love because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." 1 -John 3:16.

When Satan, the flesh, self-will or the world tells you not to -deny yourself so much, or to have your own way and will a little, just look again at -Calvary's Hill, and that special sacrifice, trial or suffering of yours will be as light afflictions in comparison -with Christ's sacrifice for you. Glory in nothing but the Cross of Christ, trust in nothing -else for your help, for the help of all mankind cometh from there.

But let us- look higher still; the Psalmist says - hills. Can you see another -hill—another hill of sacrifice? - It is there where-the father of the faithful received his greatest blessing. It is believed that upon Mt. Moriah . Abraham. gave up his all—his Isaac to God. And it is true to say that we cannot "be filled with the fulness of God" (Eph.:19) until we go to "Mt. Moriah,"- and there lay our all upon the altar of sacrifice. There is nothing to fear in giving our all, for see the Lord returns Isaac to his father.. We surrender all, He accepts it, but returns everything multiplied a hundred-fold. Our Lord says, "And every one that bath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, shall receive an hundred-fold and shall inherit everlasting life." (Matt. 19:29).

There is still another hill; lift up your eyes to the Mount of Olives. It was there where Christ spoke His great prophecy of His Presence, the end. of the age and the coming Kingdom. The Mount of Olives would seem to be a symbol of the Kingdom of light, peace, joy and Divine blessings to come. In Zech. 14:4, we read that Jehovah's feet •shall stand upon this Mount in the latter days, "and it will cleave in the midst." Remember, then, that coming Kingdom for which all saints have looked. Our vision in these last days is much clearer, we see it will cleave in the midst representing the heavenly and earthly phases of the one Kingdom of God, for the help of all mankind.

Further, there is another hill—a mountain—which the Apostle says we are approaching, from whence cometh our help. "But ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to -the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits ofjust men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel . . . Wherefore, we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken." Heb. 12:22-24, 28. Lift up your eyes, then, and also as the Master said, "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." "Our help cometh from the Lord." Although He may use various agencies and dispensations, yet we all see that Jehovah is the source of all things—He made heaven and earth, and is called the Saviour of all men, the Great Judge of all.

When we get a little knowledge of the heavens through those who have made the discovery of thousands and tens of thousands of vast planets much larger than our own earth, all moving with wonderful exactness (if one moved out of its appointed course, possibly this little earth of ours would be dashed to atoms), we marvel at the power of the Keeper of the heavens. Our help, then, cometh from the Lord, who made these and keeps them in their place.

But let us come down to earth; there is nothing so common upon the face of the earth as a blade of grass, yet how wonderfully it is formed, with pores to breathe and receive the moisture, and Jesus takes our thoughts to it for the very purpose of teaching us confidence in Him who is our Keeper. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Matt. 6:30. The Scriptures inform us that He has prepared a seat in the heavens for those who do His will always, much rather than will He care for us, than the grass or many sparrows. "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps."

Satan knows the Lord is the Keeper, most people know He is the Keeper, but only those who have given themselves to Him can say, "He is my Keeper," as though there were no other sheep for the Shepherd's care.

The love and care of our Keeper is clearly taught us in the 23rd Psalm. It is said that in Palestine the chief shepherd goes in front of the sheep and sometimes he has following behind two under-shepherds to care for any lame or weary and straying sheep and to carry the lambs. Now these two under shepherds are mentioned by name in this Psalm, 23. Do you know their names? Have they not often ministered to you? They are "goodness and mercy," "goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

Have you felt faint or weary in following the steps of the Chief Shepherd? Then surely goodness has come to your aid—"I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Psa. 27:13. Have your feet ever slipped? Then you know that mercy has come to your aid. "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had quickly dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." Psa. 94:17, 18. Surely, then, we would be in a bad way without the assistance of the angels, "goodness and mercy." If we give ourselves to Him always, every moment, we shall find our Keeper a perfect Keeper, and we can confidently say, "I shall not be moved."

Not only does He promise to keep us as a whole, but as individual portions also. "He will keep our soul" (Psa. 121:7), i.e., the New Creature. Although we have this treasure in an earthen vessel, that which is begotten of Him, He will surely keep until the clay when He shall give it a body as it pleaseth Him.

"The peace of God shall keep your hearts," Phil. 4:7. From the heart proceeds all manner of evil, so our hearts especially need keeping. If we give Him our hearts, as He invites us—"My son, give Me thine heart and let thine eyes observe My ways"—He will surely keep it for Christ to reign there; He will keep or garrison and fill it with His spirit, and sin shall not have dominion over us, "Therefore, sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." (1 Pet. 3:15).

If our Lord will keep the heart, then He will also keep the mind, the thoughts. Shall we not claim this promise and expect Him to bring every thought into captivity? But some one may say, I find it hard to keep my thoughts for Him; well, give them up to Him, He will keep them for you. "Commit thy way unto the Lord and He shall bring it to pass." "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips." Psa. 141:2. This implies that the writer of this text had tried to keep his lips and could not do it himself. This is an important matter, then, to commit our lips to our Keeper, because by our words we shall be justified or condemned. Perhaps no member needs more careful, constant watching; it is the thoughts harboured, the evil, unbrotherly surmises indulged in, that finally must have an outlet, and what havoc the outflow causes—not so much to the accused ("For who shall harm you if you do that which is good"), but to the accuser, for such things undermine their peace, joy and progress, however much they might tell you they are increasing in these fruits.

If we follow that which is good, nothing can harm us (1 Pet. 3:13), and this you can claim. In the light of this text, should an accusation be made against you it implies that the accuser has not been following or thinking that which is good, otherwise he would be able to say with us, If I am following that which is good, nothing that can be said or done against me can harm me. Therefore, let us commit the keeping of the door of our lips to the Keeper and have faith that He will keep them for His use, which is the building up of the Body of Christ in love and unity: Satan's use for them is to sow discord among the brethren and disrupt the fellowship. This reminds us of "Christian," in "Pilgrim's Progress," where two men, "Prejudice" and "Ill-will," continually throw dirt up at him, but the dirt would not stick, it would soon fall off and his garment remained clean. Often, too, the mud cast at another acts like a boomerang and flies back.

Then, perhaps, someone is afraid to work or speak for Jesus for fear of saying something wrong, but give your lips to Him, then. He will use them or close them according to His will. No doubt you have noticed sometimes when you were about to say something that it was right on the tip of your tongue and just then it was kept back and how glad you were

later that you did not say it. That is the Lord, as it were, putting His hand over your mouth. On the other hand, you have probably had occasion to make a defence for the truth, and how easily thoughts and Scripture texts came out of your lips; that is the Lord using your lips. Further, you may have sat long over a study at home and yet not come to any satisfactory meaning until you had assembled in fellowship, and suddenly while you were speaking, the right thought has come through you. See Matt. 10:19.

“He will keep the feet of His saints . . . for by strength shall no man prevail.” 1 Sam. 2:9. He will secure the ground and establish their going that we may neither stumble in the way nor wander out of the way. It is only if we keep God’s way that He will keep our feet. “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in His way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand.” Psa. 37:23, 24.

“He will hold thy hand.” Isa. 42:6. Our hands too are consecrated to Him, and if we want them kept we must often ask ourselves, “What is that in thine hand?” Are your hands in the hand of the Keeper? If so, then say, “I will not let Thee go until Thou bless me.” But if they hold something that is earthly or cause offence by hindering us in the service of our Lord, then, as the Master said, “Cut it off.” Rather, let us give our hands into the Keeper’s hand, and He will lead, then we can well walk in the dark with God.

A father once had an occasion to visit a house at night, and took along with him his two little sons. The path leading up to the house was bordered with large trees, and as they entered the avenue the darkness became intense. The father said to the boys, “You had better take my hands.” One came at once and gave his hand; the other preferred independence. Soon there was a bump; he had run into a tree. The father offered his hand, but no, off he went again. Shortly there was a scramble and a cry; he had run up against a sharp stone. This time he quietly put his hand in his father’s and walked along in silence. Presently, he said, “Father, can you see in the dark?” The answer was, “No, but I know every step of the way.” Let us take the hand of the One who has gone every step of the way, then we shall avoid many self-made experiences with which often comes the delusion that we are suffering for Christ’s sake and Christian principles. Along with this comes another delusion—we settle down and congratulate ourselves on our spiritual progress, especially so if we imagine we have been hurt by someone. Never mind so much about the little boy on the other side of his father; he may be smaller and weaker, but the father holds his hand, and is not that sufficient for our concern? These two delusions are really Satan’s counterfeit for goodness and mercy; they are in reality spiritual pride and hardness. Beware of self-made experiences.

Where will the Keeper keep us? “I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.” Gen. 28:15; Josh. 1:5. How careless, i.e., free from care, we may be, then, for in whatever position God has placed us we may be sure of His keeping. The kept ones’ position is that of trust, satisfied with His leading, His feeding and His protection. To know that we have given ourselves over to Him means we have perfect confidence that He can and will manage us and everything concerning us, then we can be without care.

Supposing you had deposited your money in a trustworthy bank, but after a few months you began to get anxious about it, until you could not rest, but must go and see the manager, finally going to him every day because you had imagined that the money was not really safe and that you would soon have to starve and be in rags, etc. Now, what would the manager of the bank think of you? Trusting God, as He said, in all places and with everything, then, is the common-sense way, and do we not do it continually every day with our fellowmen. We step in a railway car, motor or steamer with the utmost unconcern, trusting ourselves to the driver.

Our Part.

Of course, being kept by Him depends on our obedience. Israel’s obedience to the law meant blessings, but disobedience brought disaster to themselves. We may say, therefore, that obedience is mainly a matter of self-interest. It is not so much a duty imposed upon us, but as a privilege offered for our highest, spiritual good.

,No-matter how great the trial, how dark the perplexity, or how grievous the sin, yield it fully to the Keeper’s management and He will straighten it out in His own time and way. “Be careful for nothing,” covers the whole ground—the all places -,are in, sorrows, perplexities, anxieties, friends, brothers, sisters, children, prosperity, health, business, past; future, height and depths. “Therefore, Wait -my ‘soul upon the Lord.” Let us not too hastily form ‘our own plans and conclusions, nor despise His two angels, “goodness and mercy,” saying this certain experience is not for our good, or that of others, and imagine we had better manage this affair ourselves right away. Neither let us exalt ourselves as being above instructions, “For who will harm you if you follow that which is gold?” So, “be not afraid of their terror.” If we follow-the Good Shepherd and behind us follow ‘goodness and mercy,” and on either side are the walls of salvation (Psa. 23:6), how can we have any. terror of being defiled?

When does He keep us? “I, the Lord, do keep it . . every moment . . . I will keep it night and day.” Isa. 27.:3; 58:11. Not sometimes, but every moment, in the day and in the night, from this time forth, even for evermore.- “I will be as the

dew of heaven" (Hosea. 14:5), "then we shall grow as the lily." To be fully kept, we must be fully yielded to Him every moment; one moment of independence is. one moment of falling. "I will keep thee in the hour of temptation." Rev. 3:10.

- From what will He keep us? "From all evil," verse 7, of our Psalm. Also Psa. 91. If we are kept from, then we must be kept in something else. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isa. 26:3). "Therefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator." 1 Pet. 4:19.

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

Convention News.

Easter Convention arranged by the Adelaide and Gawler Classes is once more in the past, and we are thankful to the Lord and to our Heavenly Father for the many evidences of love and care, and for the helpful fellowship enjoyed in company with some who are striving to walk in His steps and attain to His character-likeness. Those privileged to attend this Convention freely expressed their appreciation of the feast provided for our New Mind by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Our Bible studies in 1 Tim. 6:6-12; 1-Pet. 3:8-17; Eph. 4:1-6; Prov. 3:1-7; were very helpful indeed, and we trust that the many beautiful thoughts and loving exhortations from the various brethren will long remain with us, being received into good and honest hearts and bring forth fruitage to the glory Of God.

At the best attended meetings, those present numbered about forty, and the brethren seem to fully realise the need for the perfecting of ourselves in Christian character and grace, knowing that before very many years the Bride will be complete and the Kingdom of God established in the earth for the blessing of all mankind.

Our study in 1 Tim. 6:6-12, gave us the lesson of contentment with the Lord's provision for us. Though a man should acquire great riches—all this world could offer—there would be no satisfaction, no contentment, unless Christ is enthroned in our hearts. The selfish desire for gain undermines good character, and it has been the means of causing some to err from the faith. The man of God must "flee" the love of selfish gain; and "follow after" righteousness—the foundation of all proper character, and then cultivate the various graces of meekness, patience, love, faith, etc.

To gain the prize, we must strive for it; "fighting the good fight of faith," laying hold on eternal life—grasping it with both hands—keeping our calling well in view and allowing nothing to hinder us or turn us aside.

Our fellowship meeting on "What constitutes real humility?" gave us some good thoughts on this important subject. It is only when we realise our own smallness that we can rightly appreciate the beauty of the Lord's character of justice; wisdom, power and love. So we must walk with meekness and lowliness, and in reverence before God, because the reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Another meeting of this kind on the "Advantages of waiting on the Lord," showed that courage and strength, wisdom and grace will be given to those who wait upon the Lord in prayer and in meditation upon His Word. This will not mean inactivity, but rather we must ponder the pathway before us, making straight paths for our feet; still doing with our might what our hands find to do while looking to Him for further counsel and guidance. The opportunity for expressing thanks and praise to God was freely used by the brethren and sisters in the praise and testimony meetings.

The addresses by the various brethren were much appreciated. The opening topic was, "A house of God's building," and some good thoughts were given along this line. Then we were reminded of the "necessity of prayer," a timely exhortation in these days when earthly things tend to crowd in upon our consecrated time. Again the value of building up a right kind of character was emphasised; "adding to self-control, patience"; while another brother spoke from Jer. 6:16. In his address on Psalm 121, "The Keeper and the Kept," our brother dwelt on the Lord's power and ability to keep His people and showed how we must trust Him fully, as a child does his parent. In the address, "Take My yoke upon you," it was shown how we each become united with our Lord in His yoke when we take the step of full consecration. He assists us individually and personally. No trouble of ours is too small for Him to notice, and we should ever draw near to Him in all our trials, realising His love and sympathy and willingness to help us in every time of need.

In his closing address, our brother spoke on the need of keeping our Lord's commandments. Jno. 14:21. If we do this, it proves that we love the Lord, and then He will love us and manifest Himself to us. Have we the proof of our love for Him? Is Christ manifested to us? Our love for the Lord is shown by our love for His brethren—the members of His Body. We are to keep His words—allow them to dwell in us and we in Him. Jno. 15:7-12.

Messages of love and goodwill from Classes in Victoria were gladly received, and it was a pleasure to have present with us some members from Classes at Melbourne and Digby, Vic. Our prayers go with these dear brethren as they return to their homes and various duties. We trust they will be richly blessed and strengthened in their Christian walk.

A pleasing feature of the Convention was the baptism service on the Saturday, when a brother and two sisters symbolised their consecration to be dead with Christ by immersion in the waters of baptism. We rejoice with our dear brethren that they have taken up their cross to follow Christ, and trust that they may each one find just the needed grace and strength to so run that they may obtain the heavenly prize.

Memorial Observances.

ON Tuesday evening, 16th April—the anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death—the majority of the brethren assembled together in the various little gatherings, or in the twos and threes in solemn remembrance of Christ, our Passover Lamb.

At the service in Melbourne, over twenty were in attendance, while some other dear members were prevented from being present on account of sickness. The prayers of the brethren, the hymns, and thoughts expressed, while bearing especially on the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, were also appreciative to our loving heavenly Father for all His goodness in bringing us to an understanding and rejoicing hope in the “so great salvation, enabling us to walk in the footsteps of our Master after full consecration “if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”

The following passages of Scripture were read for meditation:—Isa. 53; Matt. 26:17-46, John 18:28-40; 19:119; and the “Christian Hymns” 322, 164 and 31 were sung. Following the short address, hymn 2 was sung, and the emblems were partaken of after blessing on both the bread and the cup. The closing hymn, 155, was sung with much feeling, and Memorial 1935, “in remembrance of Him,” was in the past, and by His grace we endeavour “to keep the- feast” each day of the pilgrim way.

Burnie, Tasmania.

The little Burnie Class met together at 7.45 p.m.. to celebrate our dear Lord's Memorial Supper. We were seven in all, and the little room was the one at the rear of Bro. Grubbs store. We have always kept it on the evening of 14th of Nisan, our corresponding date being this year 16th April.

It was a blessed time, the words—”In remembrance of Me”—seemed to have an added significance as we see the day approaching and realise that soon, indeed, if faithful, we shall be drinking it anew with our present Lord in the Kingdom.

A glance at the dear ones partaking brings the thought, this may be the last time possibly, for the Kingdom seems even at the door. Our thoughts and prayers went out especially to those celebrating at the same time, the time that our Lord indirectly asked us to keep it when He said, “Do this in remembrance of- Me.” Our thought is that if He instituted it on a certain day and on no other could it be instituted, then the same date is equally important in its remembrance.

May all the Lord's people feed and drink His precious body and shed blood until they, too, shall appear with Him in glory.

Digby, Victoria.

We at Digby celebrated the Memorial of our Lord's death on Tuesday evening, the 16th. There were six of us in attendance (the brethren at Merino were prevented from joining with us), and each experienced and appreciated a very blessed time.

The solemnity of the occasion—as we review not only our Lord's death, but our own. covenant to be broken with Him also—means more and more as the years go by, and our prayer was, and is, for the Lord's sustaining grace and help that we may indeed be able, as the days go by, to “keep the feast.” Surely as the Lord is faithful who promised we will find that it will be according to our faith, as we, by His grace, keep ourselves in the attitude to -be profited by all the lessons and experiences He sees fit to come upon us.

Each of the brothers -took part in the service, and their prayers, while mindful of our own need, were not unmindful of the need of the Lord's people everywhere. We sang hymns 7, 164, 118, 253 in “Christian Hymns,” and read the 26th of Matthew's Gospel and the Apostle Paul's account in 1 Cor. 11:23-32.

The brother who had charge of the meeting decided that he could not put together more appropriate thoughts than those given us in April “P.P.,” so used them by way of a little address.

May each and all of the Lord's people not only continually eat of that bread—appropriating to ourselves the merit of our Lord's pure life—but also be ready and willing to drink of His cup, appreciating the privilege of suffering now, in order to be made meet to share the joys of His future glory.

Sydney, N.S.W.

The various brethren that came together at Rawson Chambers to celebrate the Memorial on this occasion were very thankful for another privilege granted by our heavenly Father. Although a very solemn occasion, it is to the Lord's people an enjoyable one if they participate in the right spirit.

Our number on this occasion was twenty-five, and the members came from all points of the compass—some, fairly long distances. We were pleased to see in our midst a Brother that had not met with us for some years past, also some elderly brethren came in cars, so desirous were they to be present at this year's Memorial.

Our thoughts and prayers were with those of like precious faith, those in Classes, and the few scattered here and there in their several homes.

Another little assembly of four members is reported from Sydney. Ailments so often prevent travel even on such special occasions, and the Lord surely adds His rich blessing wherever His people "remember" Him, and worship in spirit and in truth.

Here, O my Lord! I see Thee face to face;
Here faith can touch and handle things unseen;
Here would I grasp with firmer hand Thy grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

Here would I feed upon the Bread of God;
Here drink with Thee the royal Wine of Heaven;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,
Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

I have no help but Thine the righteousness;
Another arm save Thine to lean upon;
It is enough, my Lord, enough indeed;
My strength is in Thy might, Thy might alone.

Mine is the sin, but Thine the righteousness;
Mine is the guilt, but Thine the cleansing blood:
Here is my robe, my refuge, and my peace
Thy blood, Thy righteousness, O Lord, my God.

Too soon we rise; the symbols disappear;
The feast, though not the love is past and gone,
The Bread and Wine remove, but Thou art here—
Nearer than ever—still my Shield and Sun.

Feast after feast thus comes and passes by;
Yet passing, points to the glad feast above:
Giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
The Lamb's great bridal feast of bliss and love

Add to Self-Control, Patience.

(Convention Address).

ALL right-thinking people realise the value and necessity of self-control. It is one of the most important elements of good character. "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city" is the counsel of the Wise Man.

Self-control has to do with all our sentiments, thoughts, tastes, appetites, labours, pleasures, sorrows and hopes. It is that quality which governs and regulates the life and conduct along lines of justice, goodness, purity and truth. The Apostle tells us (2 Tim. 1:7) that God has given us (consecrated believers) "the spirit of power (courage), and of love, and of a sound mind." It is this spirit of a sound mind—the wisdom from above—which directs and assists us to exercise self-control in every direction.

From the Word of God we learn more and more what His will is for us, and our development in self-control will depend largely upon the extent to which we yield our hearts, our wills to God's will as expressed in His Word. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord, and depart from evil." (Prov. 3:5, 7). Surely these are words of wisdom; and we think that if we as disciples in the school of Christ could always bear the thought of these verses in mind and allow the spirit of them to control our hearts, we would be spared many a heart-ache.

The spirit of a sound-mind teaches us to "be not wise in our own eyes." The Apostle Paul, in Rom.12:3, gives us some good advice along this line; he says:--"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

We need to get a proper, sober estimate of ourselves, and it is the spirit of a sound mind, the wisdom from above, that enables us to see that we have nothing of which to boast in ourselves. We have nothing but what we have received, and if we have received it, why should we glory as if we had not received it? (see 1 Cor. 4:7). How foolish we must seem in God's sight when we begin to think ourselves important. Let us guard against the evil influence of pride and self-conceit. God can use us only when we keep little in our own eyes, for His Word assures us: "He resisteth the proud and showeth favour to the humble." Let us then exercise self-control in suppressing the tendencies to pride and self-conceit; and let us ever seek to humble ourselves under His mighty hand. Humility is that quality which inclines men to serve others. Our Lord had the humble mind, and so He was ready to lay aside the glory of His pre-human condition as the mighty Logos, and become a man in order that He might pay the ransom-price which would secure our deliverance from the bondage of sin and death. What fine self-control the Master showed at all times. We do well to consider Him, because He is our Pattern as well as our Counsellor and Guide. For 30 years He was subject to His parents, waiting patiently until the time appointed for Him to commence His ministry. The secret of His success was that He was fully consecrated to do the will of the Father. Then after His baptism at Jordan He was filled with the holy spirit and manifested the Father's character of love and mercy in all His words and actions, even under the most trying circumstances. "When He was reviled He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but committed His cause to Him that judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. 2:23).

In Hebrew 12:3, the Apostle urges us to "consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Christ is our example, and to carefully consider His course will greatly assist us in ruling our own spirit. We are to rule our mind, our natural impulses. This means that if a thought present itself to the mind, or if we feel a certain impulse, we should be quick to perceive the nature of the thought or impulse; and if it is not in harmony with the principles of righteousness, or with our covenant as children of God, we should at once resist it, seeking the Lord's promised grace to help in every time of need. There is a grave danger of saying things, or of doing things, under a momentary impulse, that our heart, our consecrated judgment, would not approve; hence the necessity of bringing our thoughts and impulses into subjection. We are to consider, what would be the effect of my words or my actions upon another. Would it bring harm? Would it be an injury, or cause needless pain, for me to say or do this thing, or would it do good? By thus scrutinising himself, by thus taking himself in hand, and ruling his spirit, the child of God is showing his earnest desire of heart to be pleasing to the Lord and true to his covenant. And those who learn to rule their own spirit according to the will of the Father are the ones whom He will be pleased to make joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom.

In what way can a Christian cultivate this control of his own spirit? At first he has not the power to control himself in everything; but as he learns to exercise self-control in the little things, more and more doing what he can in this direction, in thought and word and deed, he will gain in strength of character. If we daily practise self-control, we shall gradually attain a strong character along this line, which will be of great advantage to us in our Christian warfare.

There is no place where the proof of our ability to rule our spirit is better shown than in our own home. With husband

and wife, with parent and child, with brother and sister, this is an important matter: The battle with self is the greatest battle we have to fight; and the Word of God declares that "he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." He is, greater because he has learned to exercise the will, the determination, of a true character in the right direction, in the direction of control of self.

Moral strength is much more to be desired than the greatest degree of physical strength or the keenest strategy. And it is only after we have conquered ourselves, and cast out the beam from our own eyes, and subdued anger and malice and strife in our own hearts, that we are able, by means of these severe battles with our own weaknesses, to assist the brethren, to assist our neighbours, to aid them—by our example—in overcoming their besetments and infirmities.

To rule one's own spirit, disposition, implies a conflict similar in some respects to that of taking a city; for no matter where we begin, we find entrenched within us many armed and opposing powers. They have possession by heredity—they are there as the result of the fall. And if we have passed the days of youth they are the more strongly entrenched, and it requires the greater skill to rout them. But whether one has begun early or late, he that would succeed in ruling his Own spirit must "war a good warfare." He must "fight the good fight of faith," down to the very end of the present existence.

The ruling of one's own spirit is by no means an easy task; and it cannot be done single-handed and alone. Consequently, the wise "general" will invoke all the assistance at his command, remembering the words of the Apostle, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." (Eph. 6:12). These powers of the world, the flesh and the devil are closely allied, and therefore, he who plans for conquest and an established reign thereafter, must seek alliance with another and stronger power. This power is tendered to all who earnestly undertake this great work: It is none other than the almighty arm of our God, who says to those who accept His strength, "Greater is He that is with you--that is for you—than all they that be against you; gird yourselves like men, be strong, fear not." (see 1 Jno. 4:4; Isa. 35:4).

The Apostle Peter urges that we add to self-control, patience. The Scriptures everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. The meaning of the word "patience" in the text under consideration is cheerful, hopeful endurance or constancy. In every phase of human experience we can see the need for the exercise of this quality. To be just under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be injurious to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellowmen. Therefore, the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humanity. God Himself possesses this quality of patience and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next age, the Church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop a character pleasing to the Lord.

Patience is closely allied to love and mercy. If God was unloving, unmerciful, He would be without patience. In man's present blemished, fallen condition, patience is sadly lacking. This Godlike quality, like all the other qualities of character inherent in God and in all perfect beings created in 'His likeness, has been largely obliterated in humanity by the fall of our first parents.

It will surely be profitable for us to cultivate carefully this; element of Christian character of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, and without which, His Word assures us, our Character cannot be perfected. The Christian requires patient endurance to put on the whole armour of God, and to keep it securely buckled. We need it in dealing not only with others, but also with ourselves, with our own blemishes: We should always take into account the various circumstances and conditions surrounding ourselves and others. As we look around we see that the world is in a condition of blight, of sin. This knowledge should give us great sympathy with humanity, without which we would have but little patience. All of our brethren in Christ, like ourselves, are by nature members of this fallen human race. Therefore, we should have a great deal of patient endurance with the Lord's people, as we would have them exercise this grace towards us.

As the quality of justice will always persist, so will the quality of patience, though not in the sense of patient endurance of evil. God patiently works out His own glorious designs, in perfect equipoise, of mind. At present, this requires the exercise of patient endurance with evil, sinful conditions; and in the ages of glory to come, God will, we believe, still work out His purposes in perfect patience.

But in the exercise of patience under present evil conditions, wisdom must have a voice. God has declared that in His wisdom the time will come when He will cease to exercise patience toward the world. That is to say, He will no longer bear with the world in their present sinful imperfect condition. That time is now near at hand. The great time of trouble will sweep away the present order of things preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Then God will give men the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with Himself and righteousness before He will deal with them summarily.

The time is coming when there will be no more sin. God will have a clean universe by and by. But He will first give everybody an opportunity to rise out of. If they will not avail themselves of the opportunity, then God's patience, long-suffering, will cease to be operative toward such. This will not mean that God's patience has ceased, but that its activity has ceased in that direction.

God's patience has arranged the thousand years of Messiah's reign for man's blessing, and His wisdom has decided that those thousand years will be sufficient for the elimination of evil. Whoever will not learn to live righteously under those favourable conditions would never learn, and it would not be the part of divine wisdom longer to exercise patience with such.

Likewise also, in our dealings with ourselves and others, there is a limit to the proper exercise of patience—long-suffering. We should not be patient with ourselves beyond a certain point. There are circumstances in which we would properly feel that we should have known better and should have done better than we did.

If a child of God realises that he has been derelict with himself, he should say, I will not be patient with myself any further. I will take myself in hand and conquer this weakness which I have permitted in a measure to assert itself to the weakening of my own character and probably to the discomfort and pain of others. I cannot do this in my own unaided strength, but by the grace of the Lord I am determined to overcome— in this matter.

Our ability and strength to patiently endure should increase as we progress in the narrow way. We should grow "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." But we cannot develop this essential trait of character without trials—experiences intended to call for the exercise of cheerful endurance. So let us not think it strange if we are called upon to pass through protracted trials which make necessary the nerving of ourselves to bear. We can see a reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as our Master had His—under an evil environment—that we might not only have all the necessary qualities of Christian character, but have them rooted, grounded, fixed, established.

How much we all need to hear the Master's words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Let us hold fast to our blessed hope in Christ. Let us learn to wait patiently upon the Lord. He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us, and He is able to make all things work together for good to those who love Him. And God's promise is the foundation upon which all that we hope for, either of character or coming glory, is built. Let us prize this truth so that we will not compromise it in any sense or in any degree; let us not only hold the truth in the letter but in the spirit—in the love of it, because it is true as well as because it is beautiful and grand. And let us ever remember the importance of patient endurance, that we may not only cultivate the Christian graces, and practise them, but that we may take joyfully the trials, persecutions or difficulties which our Lord may see proper to permit to come upon us for our testing and for the development of this character which He explains to us is of paramount importance, and without which perfect love could neither be attained nor maintained.

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