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CHRISTIAN ALTERNATIVES

IT sometimes helps to make Truth clearer and bring home to our hearts its importance by considering some of the great verities of our faith in their negative aspect. This method is frequently employed in the Scriptures and Truth seems to shine out brighter when we consider sometimes what might have been, if one thing or event had not happened, or if the other thing had happened.

How often, even in our daily lives that little word "IF" forces us to make important decisions with far-reaching consequences. This little conjunction "if" serves somewhat the same purpose as a hinge does to a door; it will either admit you or shut pin out. This little word contains tremendous power.

After we have exercised faith and consecration, it may be said that our whole sanctification and future glorification depends on that little word "if" The Apostle Peter says so—"If ye do these things ye shall never fall," (2 Pet. 1:10), but, if not, what then? "Then he is blind and cannot see afar off," —he is unfruitful. (2 Pet. 1:8, 9.)

The same was true of natural Israel. Whether they would be a holy nation—God's own people—depended also on that little word "if." "If ye will keep my commandments and statutes . . . then ye shall be a holy nation, high above all nations." etc. (Dent. 11:22-28.) In Deut. 28, there are sixty-eight verses which state the blessings coming to them if obedient to God's law and the curses if they were disobedient. So, again it is "if" ye do, or "if" ye do not.

In Dan. 3:13-25 we have an account of King Nebuchadnezzar and the three Hebrews. In this story we have faith's alternative. Faith answered the king and said, "We have no need to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we shall not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

If these Hebrews had acted at that critical time as all the people of Babylon acted, how different the story would have been; possibly their names would not even have been mentioned. There would be so much less to encourage the faith of future righteous men and women. There would be so much less for Christians to rejoice in; fewer examples to which we may point, or on which to meditate, if these faithful three had denied the true God at the last moment. There would be fewer words in the book of Hebrews,— "Quenched the violence of fire," would not be there, and who can measure the weight of influence their decision and example of faith had to do with the victories of the faithful martyrs, over the Papacy and its idol worship, and errors, in the dark' ages, when many suffered the violence of 'literal 'fire and were not

delivered. Who can doubt that these words, “if” and “if not,” were the deciding factor in their battle with Babylon the Great. If we would contribute something to, future generations, let us also make firm, unchangeable decisions for Truth..

Consider, if Moses had preferred the treasures of Egypt and its pleasures as greater treasures than the promises of the Messiah, what a gap there would be; how different would be the history of the Jews, and what a loss to us. Take Moses out of the purposes of God, then we and Israel of old would have so much less to encourage us and in which to glory; so much less to contemplate, less light to guide us on our way and to interpret the Scriptures. If Moses had not existed, or if he had preferred Egypt, then our Bible would be much smaller.

There is one great vital subject in the Bible where the negative side is discussed, only in a few Words, yet it is made to hinge upon that little word “if.” It appears six times in seven verses and if it were true, it would be appalling, a dreadful disaster, not only to the Christian but to every individual. But if it is not true, then, joy knows no end, for our joy is based on and springs out of that very fundamental truth. This is found in 1 Cor,15:12-19. “If Christ risen”—what a calamity. “If there be ‘resurrection’; “If so be the dead rise not” ;””,If in •this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable,” etc. “If Christ is not risen,” what despair, what disappointment, as we would contemplate the inevitable ,doom of all, our hopes. Neither the Apostle Peter, nor any, of the. Apostles; would have written of their “glorious hope, or thanked God “for ‘His abundant mercy, who hath betotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from-. the dead.” (1 Pet. 1:3.)

To us, now, it would mean our faith is in vain, being still in sins and condemnation,, and all that are asleep have perished. Eternal ‘death spreads itself and settles down, embracing all, in blackness and darkness for ever. Then the present night of sorrow .and weeping and pain cannot be pierced with rays of ,hope, light or consolation. Man’s life of a few days and full of trouble must remain forever an unexplained, a locked mystery, and there would be no answer to Job’s complaint and question—
”Wherefore, then, hast Thou brought me forth? . . . Oh that I had given up the spirit . . . I should have been as though I had not been,” etc. (Job’ 10:18-21.) Surely, life would be a tragedy “IF Christ is not risen.”

Suppose you could be elevated to some high position above the earth, and from there distinctly see and watch the scene on the earth as it revolves every twenty-four hours. What do you think you would see? Perhaps one would see it through the eyes of Isaiah, and “Behold, the darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people.” (Isa. 60:1.) Another would see it through the eyes of the Prophet Joel and behold “preparations for war . . . beating their plowshares into swords and pruning hooks into spears.” (Joel 3:8-12.) You would see that the nations are angry; they are all assembling together for battle. You would exclaim in the language of the Apostle Paul, “A groaning creation, groaning and travailing in pain together until now.” (Rom.. 8:22.)

What a view of misery, woe, anguish, degradation, oppression, hatred, cruelty and death you would witness among mankind, and the only change you can see in this scene is that at frequent intervals and places there are special, intensified outbursts of calamities, and religious hatred and intolerance, slaughter and oppression, and know that this has continued practically six thousand years, and^ must continue to all eternity, or end in self-destruction--”IF”—”If Christ is not risen.”

What a colossal mistake to bring into existence a race of intelligent beings possessed of instinctive longing for fulness of life, worship, freedom and happiness, if they can never be satisfied; far better, we Would tell the atheist, had the human race never existed.

Since the days of righteous Abel there have been men and women who loved right principle and purity,

and who have', suffered persecutions and shamefully cruel deaths, and if Christ is not risen, or "If there be no resurrection," what shall we say of these? Surely we would have to come to the same conclusion as the Apostle Paul,—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, then all is vain," --they have perished forever. "If the dead" rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," (1 Cor. 15:32.)

"If Christ is not risen," then there is nothing to glorify our common task. It would be the end of all hope, life would become a tragedy, the sacrifices and self-denials to attain sanctification would be a wasted, fanatical life, for if such sacrifices and faithfulness cannot be rewarded with a "better resurrection," then all has been vain, our hopes have perished with us. ,

Then, the angels, "who aid the righteous with friendly arm and guard us on our way," must also sigh in despair. On the occasion of the creation of man upon the earth we read, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. (Job 38:7.) The vast spaces of heaven rang with jubilations, but "If Christ is not risen," then their service for us is wasted, they see nothing for the future but a desolate earth, a silent heaven.

"If Christ is not risen," then we would have no New Testament, except perhaps the story of Jesus' life of courage, good works and power, but nothing on which to base our future hope; our hymns and spiritual songs would be void of comfort or consolation. Our mind is staggered at those things that are swept away; we must sorrow for the dead as others who have no hope, while in our ears the mocking voice is heard, "He is not risen." The destructive work of St. Paul's "if" is complete; there would be no message for despairing and broken hearts.

And to the world, this little word "if" hangs, as it were, as a curtain hiding the scene on the stage. How mankind waits and longs for the curtain to be raised, "waiting and groaning for the manifestation of the sons of God." If there is a God, they say, why are such dreadful calamities and inhuman cruelties allowed. "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn."

But faith takes the "if" out, and to us all is clear. "Christ is risen," and "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it:" (Isa. 40:5.) What a consolation! There has been advocated among men various ideas or theories of Utopia—various attempts have been made to bring in just, equal and better conditions, with peace and goodwill, but they have ended in disappointment. Their theories hinged upon that little word, "if." "If only you would do as we advocate," which is really an admission of doubt and lack of power to establish their Utopia.

But the Utopia or Millennium of which the Bible speaks will know no defeat, for it will not be introduced by man's will or power, but the Lord speaking by the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah says, "I am God and there is none else. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, I will do all my pleasure . . . yea I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isa 46:9-11, Also Isa. 45:22, 23.)

The Millennial rule of justice and love shall be established. That does not mean universal salvation for every individual, regardless of obedience to that righteous rule. No, the Lord leaves salvation to the individual choice and free-will. The Prophet Ezekiel tells us this when he wrote of the laws to be established during that golden age. See Ezek. 18:1-32.

The same alternatives are placed before the Christians now. "If we be dead with Him (Jesus) we shall also live with Him. If we suffer we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we believe not, yet He abides faithful." (2 Tim. 2:11-13.) Jesus also said that we would be His disciples only "If ye continue in my word." (John 8:31.) In John 15 some alternatives are brought to our attention by our Lord. Verse 6: "If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch." Verse 7: "If ye abide in me and

.my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.” Verse 10: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.” Verse 14: “Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

In 2 Pet. 1:5-11 the Apostle Peter refers us to character development, but only “If ye do these things ye shall never fall.” One wonders what use the advocates of the Universalist theory have for this little word “if” That doctrine would have us believe that such a word, which is fraught with such consequences, does not occur in the teachings of our Lord and the Apostles. But to us the Word has spoken with Divine authority. If ye are obedient, or if disobedient, eternal decision will follow. So

“Remember well this little word,
A word so small is seldom heard,
But on it rests success or fall,
To heed it not we lose our all.

‘Tis IF we ‘will’ and IF we ‘love,’
That links us to our Lord above.
“To wondrous heights we may attain:
But then we must with heart and main

Consider well—not overlook
This little word found in God’s Book.
So if from heart of love we give,
It tokens well that we shall live.”.

“If ye do these things ye shall never fall.” (2 Pet. 1:10, 11.)

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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ONCE again the twelve month's term for the Berean Bible Institute . is completed. In reviewing another year it is with much gratitude and thankfulness of heart to the Giver of every good thing for the many privileges and blessings bestowed in connection with the work of the Institute in co-operation with the dear brethren generally. By the Lord's over-ruling providence the work has continued as in past years, with some variations according to opportunities and circumstances.

The monthly "People's Paper" has again served as a means of contact with a nice number of friends and it is encouraging to know that its message has been helpful and is appreciated by our readers. The articles for the "Paper" are contributed by a number of brethren, whose services in this way are much appreciated. While the subscriptions have shown an increase over the past year, the "People's Paper" is far from being self-supporting, the balance being made up from, the Tract Fund. Quite a number are on the free list, and these are gladly supplied so long as our funds permit; a request every twelve months to be kept on the free list is desired, as by this arrangement we are sure the journal is being read with appreciation. Additional subscribers are welcome, and those friends able to assist in this way are supplied with extra copies of the "Paper" for passing out as samples. Lists of names and addresses sent in also receive attention with three months trial issues, free. All the friends are invited to assist in extending the message of truth contained in the "People's Paper" wherever possible.

The call for general literature published by the Institute and that stocked from overseas has been maintained. During the past year another edition of the "Daily Heavenly Manna" has been published; this little book is a favourite in other lands as well as in this country. The "Poems of Dawn" has also been produced and is appreciated by many.

A good quantity of the helpful Bible Studies—books and booklets—has been supplied throughout the year. Those friends able to devote time to colporteur work should not overlook this privilege of service; particulars are available to all enquiring.

The distribution of tracts has continued, some thousands having been forwarded to willing workers and by this means the message of truth has brought a blessing to a nice number, and no doubt much more good has been done without visible results. All Who are rejoicing in God's plan of salvation, should surely desire to pass on the glad message to others, and having a supply of tracts always at hand is 'a Means to this end. The tracts are supplied free to all who will use them wisely..

Over the past year, the use of what is termed Kingdom Cards has been tried, to encourage people to send for the free literature, and has brought some good results. From about 20,000 cards distributed in ten months, sixty enquiries have been received, and Sortie who have come in' contact with us by this means are now rejoicing in the truth fully and are regular readers. These cards are for general use, and all the friends are advised to make use of this opportunity of witnessing.

In more recent months, another card, known as he. Consolation Card, has been made available for the benefit of bereaved persons. A number of these has been used by the brethren and have brought in 14 enquiries for literature to the present time, and no doubt the message of hope has been a comfort to those who have lost loved ones. Supplies of these cards are on hand for all who are able to place them in the hands of the bereaved, either in person or through the post. In using the news papers or directories for either the Consolation or Kingdom Cards, it is well for the friends in each locality to combine their efforts in order to avoid duplication of names.,

The insertion of free literature coupons in the newspapers has not been overlooked. Some Classes and individual brethren have continued to witness in this way, with the result that 55 enquiries have reached us for booklets and papers. This is also encouraging, especially as some have been brought to a knowledge of the truth by this means. All able. to co-operate in this form of service will be supplied with samples of coupons that have already been used to good advantage.

A further increase in correspondence has been in evidence over the 'past year, and the words of encouragement are appreciated. It is a pleasure to hear from the friends regularly, and we assure all of sincere interest in their well-being, and desire to be, of all possible help in supplying their needs both for personal use and in the witness work.

As 'usual, the Tract Fund Account shows the amount 'of donations received for the general work over the' twelve 'Months, as well as the expenses met for the same 'Period. The loving, voluntary assistance from the brethren, in the Lord's providence, lids enabled all calls for literature to be met, and it represents much self-sacrifice on the part of those friends who have helped the work in this way, as unto the Lord. It will be noticed that the credit balance of £13/3/8 at this time last year is now practically exhausted. The supplying of Kingdom Cards, and also free booklets, to the enquirers from the paper advertisements has meant extra expense, but it is felt that the results have fully justified the extra outlay. It is with confidence that another year is entered upon, realising that the provision will be sufficient to meet the needs of the Lord's work, in which it may be our privilege to engage, in co-operation with the brethren generally.

While the world outlook is dark and gloomy indeed from the human standpoint, yet, from the Lord's standpoint, which is the Christian's standpoint, it is brighter than this time last year, because we are this much nearer the fruition of our hopes, as also the hope for the poor, groaning creation. May it be that the dear brethren may seek to draw the nearer to the Lord in the days ahead, knowing that He is indeed "our refuge and strength," and will deliver His people at a time and in a manner that will, be in their best interests and to His own praise and glory. In the meantime it is the privilege of all who are His to serve His cause in every way possible, using their every talent —"while it is day: for the night_ cometh, when no man can work." The prayers of the brethren on our account are warmly appreciated, and a continuance of same is requested, to the end that the Lord's will may be done in all things, assuring all the dear friends, known and unknown, of remembrance before the throne of grace for their highest welfare. "God is not unrighteous- to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister."

Tract Fund Account.

To Balance Carried Forward	113 3	8
„ Donations Received ..		111 2	6
£124 6			2
By Free Books and Booklets		£3 1	11
„ Kingdom Cards, etc. ..		122	5
» Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples Paper"		6514	6
„ General Expenses (Office, etc.) ..		267	6
		1613	4
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Bible Stories for Children.

The response to the notice in last month's issue, respecting the above has been very gratifying, and the work of producing the stories in booklet form will go ahead in the near future, No doubt the helpful explanations of the truth in simple language will appeal to all, Further orders may be placed as desired, and the cost for materials, etc., will be stated in next month's issue, D.V.

Question Box.

Question.—What is or will be the sign of the Son of Man in heaven?—Matt 24:30.

Answer.—The Lord is here dealing with the questions in verse 3 of this chapter and in this 30th verse particularly with the indication of His second presence (parousia) as requested by the disciples—"What shall be the sign (indication or proof) of Thy presence," (parousia).

The Lord had in previous verses given a short synopsis of the history of the Gospel Age as it would affect the Church, and in verse 29 He foretold of the darkening of the sun and moon and falling of the stars. That did not mean the literal sun, moon or stars, but that the Gospel light (sun) would be darkened, and the moon (the Law) would not give her light. This has already been fulfilled; the light of the Gospel has been darkened by teachings of higher criticism, evolution, Christian Science, Spiritism and many theories of men posing as preachers of the Gospel, as well as the false doctrines adopted by the Church of Rome during the dark ages. All these teachings have obscured the light of the Gospel of Christ, as also of the Law and the prophets.

In verse 30 the Lord appears to have reference to a particular indication of His actual second presence. It is a sign, not in the literal sky, but in the religious elements of society ("heaven")—something that would occur when He shall have again arrived, to prepare for taking His great power to reign. Verse 31 informs us what work will proceed as the first indication of His presence. "He shall send his angels (messengers) with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from one end of heaven to the other." That shows what "heaven" is meant, for the elect are still on earth, but while in the world (on the earth) they are not of the world,—they "sit with Christ in the heavenlies." Eph. 1:3. The trumpet is not a literal trumpet, but means a special call; it is a great proclamation of truth—the Word of God—which is as the sickle in the Harvest to gather the wheat into the garner.

This work at the second presence is foretold by our Lord in His parables; see, for instance, Matt. 13:47-49, also verses 38-43. The parables of Matt. 25 illustrate the phases of work to be accomplished during the second presence of Christ, explaining the Lord's discourse of Matt. 24. The first parable of the Ten Virgins shows the condition of believers at the coming of Christ; many were not properly prepared and could not recognise His presence until it was too late to enter into the feast. The next parable shows that the Lord has a work to do with His elect in apportioning positions for the work of the Kingdom. The third parable shows the work of dealing with all the rest of mankind during the Kingdom Age.

So, the sign of the Son of Man in the heaven would be that a work would proceed of dividing or separating the wheat from the tares,—a gathering of His elect by a proclamation of truth. "Where the carcass is there the eagles (class) will be." Such a work has been going on for many years; many have had to leave the various churches, because there was no food there. They heard the trumpet sound and gathered to the carcass in small or large companies, wherever the feast was spread. The feast was promised in Luke 12:35-40,—":He will gird himself and make them to sit down to meat and will conic and serve them." See also Rev. 3:20. That this work is and has been in process for many years is, we believe, the indication in the heaven (the religious phase of society), the sign (indication or proof) of the

Lord's presence.

Gladness of Heart.

The Lord wants His people to be a joyful people, and the joy of the Lord is the strength of His people. There is nothing more attractive and inviting than a glad and joyful Christian. So we should see to it that our souls are kept happy in the Lord and enjoy gladness of heart which the Lord (who was anointed with joy and gladness above His fellows) wants to put into our hearts.

Extracts from a Memorial Address.

(Held over from last issue)

HOW clearly the Apostle identifies our Lord with the Passover Lamb. he says, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast." (1 Cor, a:7, 8.) There is special force in the Apostle's words; our Saviour is not the world's passover, but the Church's passover. All Israel pictured the world of mankind under the bondage of sin and death, the great taskmaster in the type being Pharaoh, in the antitype Satan. So, all of the church of the firstborn (pictured in the firstborn of Israel) need the blood of sprinkling upon their hearts, to appropriate to themselves the merit of Christ, the value of His sacrifice. Also, they must eat of the unleavened bread 'of truth if they would be strong and ready for deliverance and the work of the new dispensation. Thus, do we put on Christ, not only by faith but more and more as we are transformed into His image in heart and life.

No wonder our Lord chose as His memorial that which represented what was in His and in God's estimation His mightiest work—His sin-offering on our behalf—and that which His real followers, and they alone, would appreciate inure than any other feature of His mission. True, His followers would have appreciated something commemorative of His wonderful words or works, but the worldly also could have appreciated these things. But not so the value of His death as our ransom sacrifice, the basis of our reconciliation and atonement, which has never yet been fully apprehended by any but the consecrated little flock—the elect. It was for these that the remembrancer was arranged and instituted, and though a Judas was present, he. was given a sop and went out from -the others before the supper was ended, thus possibly representing that in the close of this age, before the little flock will have finished their part of having fellowship with, their Lord in His sufferings, the sop of truth will have become so strong, as to drive forth,, from the company and communion of the faithful, all who do not rightly appreciate and value the ransom accomplished by the Lamb of God, for the taking away of the sins of the world.

It was by the giving of His life as a ransom for the life of the Adamic race, which sin had forfeited, that a right to life might come to men through faith and obedience under the New Covenant. The shed blood was a ransom for all, provided by the Lord Himself, but His act of handing the cup to His disciples and asking them to drink of it, was an invitation to them to become partakers of His sufferings, or as Paul expresses it—"To fill Lip that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."

On the occasion of the institution of the memorial of His death and in conversation with His disciples, the Lord said, "I will not drink 'henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it with you in my. Father's kingdom." Thus, He contrasted two great days, the day of sufferings and the day of glory. The Gospel 'Age is the day of suffering and the Kingdom Age is the day of glory. Thus .the cup of wine would represent not only the crushing of the grapes, but also the exhilaration that comes as a result. So, in our drinking of the literal cup, it symbolises to us our Saviour's sufferings and death, and our own participation with Him in those sufferings, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." We joyfully accept His invitation to drink of His cup and not until His sufferings are complete—the cup drained to the Last—shall we receive the other cup of Kingdom joys.

The Words of Jesus.

“All wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.—Luke 4:22.

THE question is, how far do the teachings, dogmas and creeds of the churches, Roman Catholic and Protestant, .Anglican or Non-conformist, represent the words, the teachings of Jesus? Jesus said, “He who hath seen me hath seen the Father.” God was manifested in the life of Jesus; that is, that the character of the Father, His disposition, was revealed in Jesus’ life and words. 1 John 1:2 says, “For the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.” See also John 1:14, 18. How truly the Psalmist (Psa.. 45) also wrote of Him,—“Grace is poured into thy lips.”

No wonder Mary loved to sit at His feet and listen to His wonderful and gracious utterances; of the “Good Samaritan” for instance, which Parable showed how the priest and Levite, the leaders of the worship of God, passed by the wounded man in their pride, while the Samaritan, apart from the commonwealth of Israel, showed mercy. Then, too, how the Parable of the Prodigal Son and the benevolent, merciful and gracious father was given to illustrate the yearning heart of the great Creator—the Heavenly Father—yearning for the return of the sinner—even going to meet him at the least indication of repentance and return, and to make merry, to kill the fatted calf and make a feast for the occasion. The complaint of the elder brother shows that the father, who was the one sinned against, . was ever so much kinder, gracious and forgiving than even fellow Christians may be. (Rom. 5:8.) The feast reminds one again of the words, “Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance.” (Luke 15:7.)

Recently listening to the Roman Catholic Requiem Mass on the occasion of the death of the -late Prime Minister, one was struck with the inconsistency. Does the Heavenly Father who “commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were • yet sinners Christ died for us”; who sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, require to be pleaded with mutterings and groanings in long mournful song, like a dirge, to receive a soul into eternal rest? That would be very unlike the father of the prodigal son. Surely if “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,” He would be like the father of the prodigal, ready to meet him and welcome the believer home.

As it happened, a day or two previously, we had heard the oratorio “Elijah,” and the direful groanings, like the howling of . dogs, of the priests in the Requiem Mass just made one think of the howling, screaming and groanings of the prophets of Baal.

In view of the fact that God so loved the members in Christ—indeed also all mankind—in that He “spared not His own Son but freely delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him, freely give us all things?” “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect, it is God that justifieth.” (Rom. 8:31-33.) God has justified and imputed the righteousness of Christ to His saints and loves the members of His Church even as He hath loved the Son, and so much more than any earthly father loves his children, being “more willing to give the best gifts to them that ask Him.” (Luke 11:13; Matt. 7:1.1.) How foolish, in view of the revealed disposition of God as shown in His Word and by His Son and the Apostles, is all this mummery and wailing in the man made ceremony of the dark ages of ignorance and superstition—the Requiem Mass.

This great, false ceremony is supposed to be based upon the emblems used by our Lord “on the night in which He was betrayed,” but such was very far from any intention of Jesus. He had just partaken of the Passover Supper, which was a memorial of the deliverance of the first-borns of Israel in Egypt. Now, there would be no need for this memorial to be observed any more, for the great antitype of the Passover lamb was now to be slain. “Christ our Passover is slain for us”—the Church of the firstborn, says Paul. (1.

Cur. 5:7, 8; Heb. 12:23.) So, Jesus gave the disciples these simple tokens, so full of meaning, to partake of just once a year, to remember His sacrifice for us. "As oft as ye do this (annual Passover), do it in remembrance of Me." It is no longer needed in regard to the type because the antitype has taken its place, and there is no need for any officiating clergy; any two or three gathered together may "do this."

The love of God, declared by Himself and manifested in His Son and revealed in all His works, words and promises, is incompatible with this doctrine of the Mass, or with purgatory or eternal torture. The real purpose of God has been hidden by such paganish doctrines; there is nothing about such teachings in the words of Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets. If we lay aside the doctrines and dogmas of men and go to the Word of God the truth may be seen and a purpose regarding the human race revealed to the earnest enquirer that will satisfy any reasonable, honest heart and mind.

"The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45.) "My flesh I give for the life of the world." (John 6:51); that is, that Jesus came to pay the penalty of sin under which humanity is born, for "by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, so death (penalty) passed upon all men." (Rom. 5.) The dogma from the dark ages says that the wages of sin is eternal torture, but the Bible says, "the wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23.) Jesus did not suffer eternal torture in order to pay the penalty for sin, but "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures," (1 Cor. 15:3.) So, the doctrine of eternal torture denies the efficacy of the cross of Christ. This God-dishonouring doctrine is based on the pagan teaching, or shall we go back to the beginning, on the lie which Satan, "who was a liar from the beginning," declared when he said, "Thou shalt not surely die." The teaching of the inherent immortality of the soul was promulgated in the time of Isis at Babylon, supported by Plato and adopted by the false Roman Church and along with eternal torment and purgatory, brought great wealth to Papacy.

The usual church teachings are based upon the thought that man has something in him called "soul" that cannot die, but the Bible says "the soul that sinneth it shall die." Jesus said, "Fear not them that may destroy the body but cannot destroy the soul (the being—the personality—they cannot prevent the resurrection of the individual) but fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in Gehenna," (destroy forever in the second death). There is no passage in the Bible that speaks of the soul as being immortal. Indeed, the Apostle in 1 Tim. 6:16, tells us that God "only hath immortality." Immortality (life in oneself) was primarily, then, only possessed by the Heavenly Father. Then Jesus, because of His faithfulness unto death, was highly exalted, even to the Divine nature—immortality. He says (John 5:26), "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." Isaiah 53:1.1, 12 prophesies that this would be the reward of Jesus. "Therefore wilt I divide him a portion with the great (God) and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death."

Our Lord was with the Father in the beginning; see John 1:1-3, Greek text. "In the beginning was the Logos (Word) and the Logos was with the God and a god was the Logos." The Logos, the only begotten of the Father, the Archangel Michael (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1), offered Himself to be "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." That is, the arrangement was made that He would leave "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was," and by His death purchase the human race, which, it was foreknown, would forfeit life, by sin. He became man, was made flesh and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. So it was that "He gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The first Adam sinned and brought death upon all, Christ offered Himself as a corresponding price, a perfect man, thus redeeming Adam and all his posterity and in due time will return in power and glory to restore all the willing and obedient to perfect manhood by a course of judgments, during His thousand year reign over the earth. So our Lord "poured out His soul unto death," "He made His soul an offering for sin." (Isa. 53.) "He bore our sins on the tree," says Peter. "He died, rose and revived that He might be Lord (owner) of the dead and the living." (Rom. 14:9.) There would be no use being owner or Lord of the dead, if they were always to stay dead, but Jesus declares, John 5:28, "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have

done good (believers) unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto a resurrection of judgments"; i.e., a time when they will have a trial and if they are obedient they will be rewarded, while the disobedient will receive punishments of correction and may go up the highway of holiness (Isa. 35) and receive the reward of everlasting, earthly life. That is the hope of the world generally, but the Church, those who walk in the steps of Christ now, during this Gospel Age, have a heavenly hope—to be like Christ, spiritual beings in the heavens.

So, the Scripture declares that because of our Lord's suffering and death, "God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." And the Apostle, in 1 Cor. 15:

21-24, informs us that when Christ has brought the world back to righteousness and health and life, that He will hand over the Kingdom to God, the whole work accomplished, the whole earth restored like the Garden of Eden—the earth, which is God's footstool, made glorious, and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters fill the great deep, "for all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest." (1 Cor. 15:25-28.)

"No place shall be in that new earth
For all that mars this universe;
No evil taint the second birth—
There shall be no more curse.

"Ye broken-hearted cease your moan,
The clay of promise dawns for you;
For He who sits upon the throne
Says, 'I make all things new' "

The churches' doctrine is that Jesus is God; that when Jesus died on the cross it was God who died, but such teaching is foolish—all acknowledge that it is incomprehensible. Jesus at no time ever claimed to be God; He continually referred to the fact that "He was sent of God," and "the Son of God." He said, "My Father is greater than I," and prayed to the Father. How foolish to think that Jesus would pray to Himself—that He would say to Himself, "Let this cup pass from me, 'nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done,'"—two wills, but one quite submissive to the other. How Jesus' loyalty abounds in such expressions as—"It is not I that do the works, but my Father." "The words that I speak, are not mine but my Father's." "As the Father gave me commandment, so I do." "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love," etc. Then on the cross He cried, "My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me." At His ascension He said, "I ascend to my Father and your Father; to my God and your God."

Not until we are prepared to accept the words of Jesus, the teachings of the Apostles and of the Law and the Prophets can we fully appreciate the beauty and fulness of the Word of God.. The false teachings of the dark ages have been the means by which "the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Why should the churches hold in such reverence those doctrines which have no Scriptural foundation and teachings which will neither stand the tests of reason or sense or Divine authority and which only cause confusion and hinder any clear understanding of God's purposes or harmonious understanding of the Bible and which are responsible for so much infidelity and indifference to religion to-day? "To the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Surely the great need to-day is to get away from human theories and creedal fences back to the Bible and to the liberty of individual judgment and freedom to serve God in the spirit and in truth according to

conscience. In the dark ages, when there were no Bibles available, and when even few of the clergy knew anything of it, the church dignitaries assumed authority to dictate creeds, dogmas and ceremonies, but now that everyone may possess a Bible gratis, if unable to pay for it, there can be little excuse for ignorance of the simple, beautiful and reasonable doctrines of Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets. It is indeed strange how many intelligent people, who are capable in worldly matters, can accept the unreasonable teachings of church creeds,

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