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January 2008



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The Passing Time

“My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.”

—*Psalm 31:15*

AS WE HAVE COME TO THE end of another violent and turbulent year in the history of this sin-sick and dying world, let us endeavor more fervently to put our trust in our loving and eternal Heavenly Father as we enter the

new year. We must keep in mind that he has promised his people that he would guide, strengthen and protect them from those who would persecute and do them harm.

DAVID’S TESTIMONY

In the wonderful words of the Psalmist David, he reveals his very high sense of trust by putting his ‘times,’ or his life, in the hands of the most high God. He thus begins the psalm by saying, “In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.” (Ps. 31:1) These sentiments should characterize all of the Lord’s people who are living during the closing years of this present Gospel Age. He continues, “Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me. For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy

name's sake lead me, and guide me. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength. Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth." (vss. 2-5) We are inspired to greater trust and faithfulness as we realize, as did the psalmist, that our times are also truly in the hands of our beloved Lord.

A GLANCE BACK

Reflecting on some of the news events of the past year, we may perhaps look back with fading memories, but recall that the new year opened while the elaborate funeral proceedings for the 38th president of the United States were in progress of completion. Gerald R. Ford had been the longest living ex-president, having died at the age of 93 at his home in Rancho Mirage, California on December 26, 2006. After services in California and then lying in state at the nation's capital, interment took place at Grace Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan on January 3, 2007.

THE UNELECTED PRESIDENT

Ford had become America's 38th president as a result of some of the most extraordinary events in the entire two-hundred-year history of the country. As a former Republican Congressman from Grand Rapids, Michigan, he was sworn in as President on August 9, 1974. This immediately followed the resignation of President Richard Nixon as a result of the Watergate scandal. Ford thus became the only governing official to ever occupy the White House who had never been elected to office as either president or vice president. He had been brought to the

height of power to accomplish the difficult process of healing that the citizens of the United States sought at that time to heal the wounds surrounding Nixon's impeachment and resignation.

At the time of Ford's death, President George Bush praised him as a man of integrity and great rectitude, and that most Americans were grateful for his service to the country. He said, "For a nation that needed healing and for an office that needed a calm and steady hand, Ford came along when we needed him the most." Vice President Cheney said that he had served under Ford as chief of staff in the White House. "He embodied the best values of a great generation—decency, integrity and devotion to duty."

Ford served as President for 2 ½ years, and during the early days of office his approval rating reached 71%. However, after he later granted President Nixon full pardon for all federal crimes that he had committed while in the White House, Ford's political approval rating plummeted to 36%. His political career was doomed, but he said the pardon was necessary to finally bring the Watergate scandal to a close.

EXPANDING EUROPEAN UNION

January 1, 2007 also marked the time when Romania and Bulgaria joined the European Union, bringing the total number of participating countries to 27. This move helped to end the geographic divisions that had been left over from the cold war, and it extended the borders of the EU to the Black Sea. It now encompasses an area inhabited by nearly 500 million people. Romania has about 22

million people, while Bulgaria has approximately 7.7 million. There are now 32 official languages in the Union.

In Bucharest, Romania, President Traian Basescu said that attempts to enter the European Union had been going on for 17 years, and added, “We arrived in Europe, welcome to Europe. This is an enormous chance for new generations.” Meanwhile in Sofia, Bulgaria, a newspaper headline read, “We are home.”

Both countries are the EU’s poorest members and the hope is that joining will help raise per capita wealth, which is one-third of the average. This is the second wave of enlargement into formerly Communist Eastern Europe, which will give political and economic stability in a region surrounded by unstable neighbors.

VICE PRESIDENT TARGETED

Americans were shocked to learn in an ABC News report submitted by Jonathan Karl (February 27, 2007) that Vice President Dick Cheney had been the target of an assassination attempt. Under the title “Cheney Targeted in Assassination Attempt” Karl wrote, “A suicide bomber struck at the main entrance to Bagram air base in Afghanistan today, as Vice President Dick Cheney was visiting.

“Immediately after the attack, a red alert traveled throughout the base—a red alert that we heard saying that the base was under direct attack. At least nine people were killed, officials tell ABC News. Associated Press reporters at the scene said they had seen the bodies of at least 12 people.

“A Taliban spokesperson has claimed responsibility, saying the intended target was in fact Cheney. The bomber never got near Cheney. Qari Yousef Ahmadi said, ‘We knew that Dick Cheney would be staying inside the base . . . and that the attacker was trying to reach him.’ Although Cheney was apparently never in danger at any time on a trip that had been marked by intense secrecy and high security, but this is clearly an unwelcome surprise.”

IRAQ SITUATION GRIM

America’s war in Iraq during the year 2007 continued to worsen. The death toll of civilian casualties in the country rose dramatically, and the numbers of United States military personnel killed was becoming increasingly more unacceptable by the citizens of this country. It was hoped that a change in policy might have positive results. Therefore, President Bush moved Lt. General David Petraeus into position as top commander of all United States troops in Iraq, thereby replacing former General George Casey Jr. Also, Admiral William Fallon would succeed General John Abizaid as head of Central Command.

In addition to these changes, it was then decided that a temporary surge in the number of American troops serving in Iraq would be required to help bring an end to the deadly violence and carnage. The level was therefore increased by several thousand. Most of the increase would be achieved by extending the deployments of those troops already in Iraq, and also by accelerating the deployments for those troops scheduled to be posted there.

The Bush administration and military officials believed that without adequate security, particularly in Baghdad, any progress in Iraq would be difficult if not impossible. Once the level of violence was brought under control, the U.S. military could then concentrate on accelerating the training of Iraqi security forces, and thereby turn more territory over to them for control. The new plans also included an increase in the amount of money needed for reconstruction projects.

Some United States generals and many analysts warned that a short-term surge in military forces would not have any long-term effect on the level of violence in Iraq. They feared that it would only result in an increase in American casualties. It was also realized that these changes would increase the political opposition within the government.

MAJOR TERROR PLOT FOILED

Three Islamic militants were arrested by German police that were suspected of planning a large-scale terrorist attack against several targets, including the American Air Base at Ramstein and the Frankfurt international airport which is one of the busiest in Europe. It was learned that the plot was in its advanced stages, and would have been extremely deadly if carried out.

The German federal prosecutor said, at a news conference, that a six-month investigation involving 300 people from the police network had uncovered the major plot. Police officers had raided 41 houses and apartments across the country seizing computers and other equipment.

The suspects had amassed 1,500 pounds of hydrogen peroxide in a hidden location, and were in the process of moving the explosive material when they were arrested. This was the main chemical used to manufacture the explosives that were used in the suicide bombings that took place in London in July, 2005. Officials said that they also had military-grade detonators which connected them to Al Qaeda. Two of the men were converts to Islam who had trained in terrorist camps in Pakistan. The third man fled and in a scuffle with a police officer was able to get his pistol away from him. He shot the officer in the hand before being subdued.

These arrests came only one day after Danish police arrested eight people who were suspected terrorists in a plot there. German officials said there was no evidence of a direct link between the plots although there are many similarities, including a suspected link to Al Qaeda.

THE WARS WORST ATTACK

News reports from Iraq during the midsummer months spoke of a string of suicide bombers who were targeting an ancient religious group known as the Yazidis, a small Kurdish-speaking sect in the northwestern part of the country. At least 400 people were killed, and many more injured. Some estimates of death were as high as 500. A ministry spokesman said that 2 tons of explosives were used in the blasts, which crumbled buildings, trapping entire families beneath the bricks and rubble. It was acknowledged that this was the most devastating attack of the entire Iraq war.

As emergency crews and dazed residents were sifting through the debris, reports came in that described another attack that had occurred at a Baghdad market district during the morning rush hour in which several more innocent victims had lost their lives or were injured.

All of this took place as the American military was claiming that the recent troop surge was a huge success, particularly against Al Qaeda terrorists. It was clear, however, that Al Qaeda still has the capability of carrying out major attacks. United States commander, General David Petraeus, had said only a day or two earlier that he was preparing recommendations to reduce the level of troops in Iraq, but cautioned against a quick or significant reduction that could jeopardize America's achievements in the war. The attack on the Yazidis dealt a serious blow to the Bush administration's hopes of presenting a positive picture in a progress report on Iraq by Petraeus to be given later in the year.

WILD WEATHER

There is increasing evidence that the earth's climate is changing, and that it tends to be more violent and unpredictable. During the past year, a heat wave killed over fifty people in the Midwest and Southern parts of the country, with sustained temperatures rising well above 100 degrees in some places. California had its second largest wildfire ever.

Torrential storms flooded areas of Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Missouri, Indiana, Iowa, and South Dakota. Texas and Kansas residents were preparing for a new wave of storms, while still cleaning up from previous flooding—along with Oklahoma,

which is also being flooded again. Also, a massive rainstorm in New York City closed the subway system for a time.

All of this disruption is not confined to the United States. It was also estimated that over 2,000 people were killed, and millions more were displaced in India and Bangladesh during severe storms and flooding. There were runaway forest fires covering a large portion of Greece, while the hottest-ever temperatures were recorded in Japan. In addition, there has been unprecedented melting of Arctic ice caps.

CHANGING ATTITUDES

A few years ago most Americans felt indifferent toward the subject of global warming. The media gave equal time to those who denied any possible effects, and respected scientists who had studied the problems involved. Neither had the United States signed the Kyoto Accord, which was the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held at Kyoto, Japan in December, 1997. The convention, too, had agreed to allow carbon emissions at the current enormously high levels. Those who realized the danger said that this agreement would only ensure continuous and increasingly destructive world weather patterns. They pointed out that in many areas farmers already could no longer rely on old established rain patterns to grow their crops. Furthermore, compliance with these agreements would guarantee throughout the world bigger floods, worse droughts, more destructive hurricanes and tornadoes, and even, in some areas, increased blizzards.

Opinions suddenly changed in the aftermath of the Katrina hurricane that devastated New Orleans. With the ever-growing succession of severe local storms, people are now considering the possible connection between these storms and the worldwide change in weather patterns. Each new natural disaster reinforces this sense.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

During the past year, illegal immigration continued to be a threat to the identity and security of the nation, and the American people want the government to do something about it. In June, 2007, President Bush's guest worker amnesty plan was turned down, and the issue of tax-paid services to illegal immigrants was again brought to attention.

Most Americans realize that new laws are not needed to stop the endless flow of illegals into the country, but to enforce the existing laws, and to repeal some laws that grant taxpayer-financed services to these people. The guest worker amnesty plan is essentially an attempt to have open borders. This would allow programs such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) plans to be carried out. Both of these plans allow for open borders and an economic integration of North America. Open borders are thus required to make these programs operational.

President Bush and those in his administration that were promoting open border legislation suffered a setback, and were surprised at the force and determination of those who rejected it. Those who are promoting these schemes continue to use

their positions of power to seek new ways to work around the opposition and to pass the legislation anyway, either as a whole or incrementally. However, communities across the country are now taking matters into their own hands in an attempt to stop the unpopular interests of the Federal government. It is no longer a 'border issue' but a 'national issue,' and it is affecting small towns and cities all over America.

THE ECONOMY

During the past year, Americans became more aware of a financial crisis that was developing, especially in the housing market. It was associated with sub-prime mortgage loans which had been issued on many homeowners properties, along with a sharp rise in foreclosures. This problem began a year earlier in the United States, but in 2007 it spread to other areas of the world. Sub-prime lending refers to the practice of making home loans to people who do not generally qualify for them, based on their income, or through previous poor credit performance. It therefore becomes a risky contract for both those who are purchasing the homes and for those who are lending the money.

When interest rates began to rise, the monthly payments on home loans also increased because many of them were written with adjustable rates. This resulted in a decline in property values when many homeowners were unable to meet their financial commitments and forced into foreclosure. Lending institutions were also left without means to recoup their losses. The sharp rise in foreclosures after the housing bubble burst caused several

sub-prime mortgage lenders to shut down or file for bankruptcy. This has affected the value of stock prices in some sectors of the economy.

In late summer, customers across Great Britain queued up in long lines to withdraw their savings from Northern Rock, one of the largest mortgage lending institutions in the country. Concern spread that a sustained panic could damage the national economy should the confidence of investors and depositors be undermined, and there was fear that the apprehension might affect other financial institutions. Questions have been raised concerning the impact that United States sub-prime mortgage lenders may have had on British financial institutions.

OUR SALVATION IS NEAR

Having looked briefly at some of the events that took place during the past year, and noting just how desperate the conditions are in the world, we realize that we are truly living in the closing years of this present Gospel Age. Our attention becomes focused on the glorious spiritual calling and promised inheritance of our consecrated walk in the Lord, and we willingly leave all troublous matters in the powerful hands of our loving Heavenly Father.

We thus turn to the serious words which were written by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the brethren at Rome. He admonished, "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." (Rom. 13:11,12)

‘Our salvation’ and wonderful inheritance is truly ‘nearer than when we [first] believed.’ Let us trust that all things will work in us according to God’s ultimate purpose.

In accordance with the apostle’s words, we now consider the prophetic words of our Lord Jesus as recorded in Luke’s gospel. Looking forward to the present time at the end of this Gospel Age, he says, “There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring. Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”—Luke 21:25-27

The symbolic signs of which Jesus spoke indicate the great events that would be associated with this special time. The ‘sun’ thus represents the glorious light of gospel truth. The ‘moon,’ as a reflection of the sun pictures the law of God, and the ‘stars’ point to the inspired apostles as the teachers of truth. It was to be a time of great ‘distress’ among the nations, while statesmen, world rulers and religious leaders would be full of fear as they looked at the deteriorating conditions in the world. Our Lord Jesus, however, will soon establish his kingdom of righteousness over all the earth as promised.

THE CHURCH’S DELIVERANCE

Luke then writes, “When these things are beginning to occur, raise yourselves, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance is drawing near.” (vs. 28,

Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott) The wonderful hope and nearness of the church's salvation is inspiring to all who put their trust in God.

As we enter another new year, we are witnesses of a level of violence and instability in the world that continually increases. No one knows what lies ahead, or how to prepare for it. However, the consecrated child of God is being guided and led by the powerful hand of our loving and eternal Heavenly Father, who knows our every weakness and every need. Let us put our lives in his hands and trust him to help us in our heartfelt desire to know and serve him in the days ahead. ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JANUARY 3—"Pray without ceasing."—I Thessalonians 5:17 (Z. '96-162 Hymn 162)

JANUARY 10—"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience."—James 5:10 (Z. '95-3 Hymn 322)

JANUARY 17—"Keep yourselves in the love of God."—Jude 21 (Z. '02-173 Hymn 166)

JANUARY 24—"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart."—Proverbs 3:3 (Z. '02-171 Hymn 143A)

JANUARY 31—"The meek will He guide in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way."—Psalm 25:9 (Z. '00-68 Hymn 71)

Inspired to Inquire

Key Verse: *“He said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”*
—*Luke 2:49*

Selected Scripture:
Luke 2:41-52

WHEN JESUS WAS TWELVE years old, it is recorded that he went with his parents, Mary and Joseph, to Jerusalem to keep the feast of the Passover [feast of unleavened bread]. (Luke 2:41,42) This was a requirement under the Jewish Law, “Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in

the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.” (Deut. 16:16) Mary and Joseph, being of a righteous heart, knew the importance of keeping God’s law to the best of their ability, and so made this annual journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, a distance of about sixty miles, taking young Jesus with them each year.

When they had “fulfilled the days” of the feast (Luke 2:43), Mary and Joseph began the trip back to their home, together with others of their family and fellow Jewish brethren who resided in Nazareth, all of whom had evidently traveled together on this annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Jesus, however, had tarried behind, and since there were so many traveling together back to Nazareth, Mary and Joseph did not realize he was missing until they had traveled a full day’s journey. (vss. 43,44) They looked among the entire traveling company,

but to no avail, so they turned back toward Jerusalem, most surely concerned for his well-being. Upon arriving back in Jerusalem, they continued to search for Jesus, looking for three days without success. “It came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.”—vs. 46

Mary, although very thankful and relieved that her son was found safe and well, chided him, saying, “Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You.” (vs. 48, *New American Standard Bible*) This would seem to have been a natural and reasonable response from a concerned parent, especially considering that Jesus was only twelve years old, not even close to adulthood. Jesus’ response, however, stated in our Key Verse, was quite astounding. He, in effect, reminded his mother that the Temple is the first place she should have thought to look for him. After all, Mary knew even before his birth that he was to be the Savior of mankind, and hence she should have realized that from a very young age he would have a great desire to learn as much as he could about God’s plan and his heritage as a Jew, born under the Law. How appropriate it was for young Jesus to sit at the feet of the elders in the Temple, soaking up the wealth of information they provided, ‘both hearing them, and asking them questions.’ “And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.”—vs. 47

Jesus realized that, as important as it was for him to gain as much knowledge and understanding of God’s plan as he could at a young age, it was also proper for him to be subject to his parents until he reached adulthood. Thus, the account states, “He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”—vss. 51,52 ■

Inspired to Love

Key Verse: “*Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.*”
—**Luke 6:35**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 6:27-36

UNDER THE TYPICAL LAW

Covenant arrangement, it was God’s purpose to deal with only one nation, Israel, using them as examples of blessings as well as of cursings. In so doing, God instructed his chosen people to destroy the enemies which they encountered as they laid claim to the land he had promised them through father Abraham. Jesus, in his Sermon on the Mount, recalled this former arrangement of God, saying, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.” (Matt. 5:43) This phase of God’s plan was now coming to an end, and Jesus was about to introduce a much higher law than that which Israel had been under for so many centuries.

In our lesson, we immediately see the much higher standard which should now govern the behavior of God’s people, as we read, “I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. (Luke 6:27-29) Rather than hating or even destroying our enemies,

Jesus says that we are to love them. He points out that this love should be to the extent that we are willing to suffer ridicule and persecution from our enemies without retaliation on our part. Jesus continues in verses 30 and 31 of our lesson by saying our love for others should be such that when we give to them, we hope for nothing in return. He emphasizes also what we commonly call the 'Golden Rule,' that we only do unto others as we would want them to do unto us.

Jesus points out the reasons for instituting this higher standard of God's law in this way, "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. (Luke 6:32-34) Love, for the Christian, must be shown not just to those who love us, or who agree with us, or who do good to us. It must be evidenced to all people with whom we have to do; otherwise we are no better than sinners who love other sinners.

The Key Verse shows us that loving our enemies is not to be done in mere words, but by actually doing good to them, without any desire for reciprocation or recognition. Those who do this are the ones whose 'reward shall be great,' and who will be associated with Jesus in his coming kingdom which will bless all the families of the earth. It is this godlike love—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16)—which the true Christian is to develop. God gave his Son to die for all, yes even the 'unthankful' and 'evil' of our Key Verse. Our lesson concludes with these admonishing words from Jesus, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." (Luke 6:36) As God has been merciful and loving to us, and as Jesus has exemplified this same character, may we also be motivated to love all mankind and to do good to all with whom we have to do. ■

Inspired to Pray

Key Verse: “*I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*”
—**Luke 11:9**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 11:5-13

TODAY’S LESSON BEGINS with a parable spoken by Jesus to his disciples. “He said to them, Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and goes to him at midnight, and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and from inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you *anything*.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him *anything* because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.”—Luke 11:5-8, *New American Standard Bible*

In the parable of the friend at midnight, the person who needed bread to feed his unexpected visitor pictures those who are the consecrated followers of God who continually seek after him for spiritual food and guidance in their lives. The friend whose house he went to at midnight pictures God. One of the lessons contained in the parable is the time of day this took place, at midnight, a time you would least expect someone to be knocking at the door of his neighbor, even if they are friends. This shows that those who are truly God’s people may come to him in prayer and supplication at any time and under

any circumstances. Note that, in the parable, the friend in the house did not give the one who came to his door anything just because he was his friend, but did so when he saw his persistence. This is symbolic of the fact that our Heavenly Father, although glad to give us everything we need to make our calling and election sure, is most pleased when we consistently, and persistently, come to him in prayer. This attitude shows the Father that we truly are interested in receiving his help in every time of need, and his guidance in every experience. This is what God wants from us. He doesn't want a passive attitude in which we say, 'I'll go to the Father once about this, but if I don't get a quick answer I'll do what I want to do.'

The Key Verse of our lesson tells us that God is willing to give us all things needful for our spiritual growth and development. As the verse says, asking, seeking, and knocking shows persistence, and when we approach God in this way, as shown in the parable, he will gladly answer our request. We will receive what we ask for, find what we seek for, and have doors of providence, opportunity, and service opened up to us, all of course in accordance with his will.

The remaining verses of our lesson point out another important feature of God's care for his people. "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or *if* he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:11-13, *NASB*) If we ask aright, and in harmony with our spiritual needs, God will always answer us in a way which will help supply those needs, through the working of his Holy Spirit. How thankful we should be for the privilege of prayer and its wonderful benefits to us. ■

Inspired to Trust

Key Verse: *“He said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.”*
—*Luke 12:22*

Selected Scripture:
Luke 12:22-34

IN THE KEY VERSE OF OUR lesson, the meaning of the phrase ‘take no thought’ is not that of carelessness with regard to the necessities of this life, but rather that we should not have anxiety concerning them, whether it be the food we eat, clothing for the body, or even our overall physical health. As Jesus continues in the next verse, our life is “more than meat, and . . . more than raiment.” (Luke 12:23) He further shows the care God has for the birds of the air and the plants of the field. The ravens, Jesus says, do not sow or reap to be assured of their next meal, nor do they have a storehouse or barn, but rather they rely upon what God has graciously provided in the way of food and shelter. Likewise, the lilies of the field do not express anxiety concerning their need for proper sunlight, rain, and soil nutrients necessary for growth. God abundantly provides all these things through the wonderful workings of nature.—vss. 24,27

In contrast to the birds of the air and plants of the field, Jesus speaks of God’s greater care for us, “How much more are ye better than the fowls?” “If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he

clothe you, O ye of little faith?” (vss. 24,28) It is interesting to note the phrase ‘O ye of little faith.’ Jesus evidently is pointing out to us that if we have anxious, or unnecessary, care over the temporal things of life it is a sign of a lack of faith. If we truly believe that God is the all-wise Creator of the universe, and that he has a plan of salvation which includes all the families of the earth, and further that he has called us to have a share in the blessing of all mankind in Christ’s kingdom, then it would truly be a sign of a lack of faith to doubt God’s care over us with regard to the necessary things of daily life. To emphasize his point Jesus says, “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?”—vss. 25,26, *New International Version*

The most important matters for the Lord’s consecrated people to be concerned about are those which pertain to our spiritual life and the making of our calling and election sure. If we are truly engaged in attaining unto these heavenly goals and aspirations, God will more than adequately overrule for the provision of our fleshly needs. “Seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (vss. 31,34) Our treasure must be laid in heaven, not upon earth. The primary treasure we are to lay up is the Christian character, summarized in the fruits of the Spirit—“Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance.” (Gal. 5:22,23) These are heavenly treasures because they last eternally, and will particularly be of use as the glorified church—head and body—teach and guide the world up the highway of holiness in the kingdom.

Yes, we must trust God in all life’s affairs, realizing his great love for us, summarized in these words of our lesson, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”—Luke 12:32 ■

Seeking High Office

“From Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

—*Revelation 1:5,6*

In the First Resurrection, the overcomers of this age of sacrifice are thus granted the wonderful promise spoken of by the Apostle Paul, when he wrote, “To them who by patient continuance in

THE GREAT HOPE OF THE fully consecrated child of God means a personal deliverance from sin and death. It also includes sharing with our Lord Jesus in the uplifting of the human family, who will be blessed during Christ’s future kingdom over all the earth. We are inspired with the scriptural assurance that, because of our faith in the merit of our Lord’s precious blood, we have been delivered from the present kingdom of darkness and death, and into the kingdom of God’s dear

well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.”—Rom. 2:7

THE FUTURE WORK

Among the terms used to describe the future office and work of the faithful saints, are ‘kings’ and ‘priests.’ The psalmist speaks of God as a “king,” “The LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.” (Ps. 95:3) In accordance with this thought, the Apostle Paul states, “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”—I Cor. 15:24-28

The Divine commission for the kingdom of Christ is recorded by the psalmist, “Yet have I set [anointed, *Marginal Translation*] my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” (Ps. 2:6-8) Here is presented to us the only one who has ever been appointed to rule the world as God’s representative in such a high office, and the only king who can be said to reign by Divine

authority. During the present Gospel Age preliminary steps are in preparation for the establishment of that blessed kingdom of truth and righteousness and, as the Prophet Isaiah points out, “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”—Isa. 9:7

ASSOCIATE RULERS

The Lord Jesus is to have associate rulers with him when his kingdom is established, and these are also now being chosen and tested from among the fallen human family. Jesus said to his disciples, when he was about to experience the final test of his earthly ministry, “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Luke 22:28-30) The revelator writes in much the same terms saying, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”—Rev. 3:21

SPECIAL QUALITIES OF OFFICE

Among the special qualities that are necessary to be an associate ruler is being able to carry out the will of God equitably in respect to the uplifting process that will take place during the time of Christ’s kingdom. In the Apostle Paul’s letter to Timothy, he says, “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified,

and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (II Tim. 2:20,21) It is necessary that those who have been called for this position should have experiences that will prepare them for this important office. As associate rulers, they will have the privilege of sharing with our glorified Jesus in the great work of ruling, blessing, and bringing mankind up to perfection, those that are willing and obedient in that day.

In connection with this great work, Jesus, when he was in the upper room where he had instituted the memorial of his approaching death, instructed his disciples and pointed out to them that their association with one another was not to be used as an opportunity for one to dominate another. His words strongly indicate this, "He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth."—Luke 22:25-27

During the final hours of our Lord's earthly ministry, he here brings to our attention two quite different attitudes which he says were common during his day, and which are also still common today. Both attitudes are improper among the Lord's people, and cannot be the disposition of those who are to share the Lord's throne in his future kingdom.

We note the first of these is the disposition to dominate other brethren. Among the Lord's people there would be a class of men who naturally desire

and are able to dominate and rule over others. There is also a much larger class who are willing to be dominated and who, as stated by the Lord in this passage, would call their rulers 'benefactors.' Jesus points out that both of these attitudes have no place in the relationship of brethren in the church, or to one another. He cautioned that it should not be so that a brother desire, or attempt, to dominate other brethren. Likewise, it should not be so that the brethren shall submit to such domination.

LEARNING SELF-CONTROL

Opportunity for exercising ourselves along the lines of learning to rule was spoken by Solomon who wrote, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32) This may be accomplished by ruling one's own spirit or disposition in daily taking up his cross and following in our Lord's steps. This means complete consecration to the doing of the Heavenly Father's will, and in humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God. The humble and teachable follower of our dear Lord will find constant opportunity to exercise and develop true and proper ways to please and learn of him.

Paul gives testimony to this Divine arrangement saying, "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be

a castaway.” (I Cor. 9:25-27) How searching is this admonition of the great apostle, that even though he himself had been so greatly blessed and used in the preaching of the Lord’s message to others, yet unless he practiced self-control in his own consecrated walk and kept his body under, he would fail to find a place in the body of Christ.

Jesus again defines the proper attitude that we should develop toward one another. “He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” (Matt. 23:11,12) What a wonderful company of kings and priests that will be gathered together with our glorified Lord Jesus to rule and bless mankind.

PROVISIONS FOR RULING

One of the most important features in connection with God’s provision for the blessing of the fallen human race is the provision for a priesthood. In connection with this arrangement, we note the democratic features and organization of our own government, under which we presently live. In the United States, there are three divisions of government that have been established to rule the people of this great nation. The first division is the legislative branch, which enacts the laws. The second is the judicial branch that interprets these laws, and the third division is the executive branch that enforces or executes the laws.

These provisions for governing the people were established by very well-meaning men during the institution of the governing body. In a comparative sense, they have their corresponding features in

God's ultimate plan for the government of earth under the administration of our Lord Jesus and his faithful church during the time of his future kingdom. The laws have already been established under the hand of our loving Heavenly Father, and are to be carried out and enacted in the affairs of mankind under righteous rule. No new statutes will be required, which differs from the present system under which legislatures and councils are constantly enacting new laws and modifying old ones.

The judicial phase of government is suggested in the provision that God has made for judging the people in the kingdom. This function will be accomplished by our Lord Jesus and his body members as the Prophet Isaiah writes, "Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." (Isa. 49:8) The Apostle Paul, in reference to the righteous provision of the future kingdom, compares it with the former conditions under the old Law Covenant through which no one could obtain life rights. He writes, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [New Covenant]; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."—II Cor. 3:6

Under the arrangements of the ruling church, there will also be earthly representatives. These will consist of the faithful worthies of old who were tested during a previous age for their part in the righteous administration of God's laws to the human family. The psalmist speaks of these faithful men of God and says, "Instead of thy fathers

shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.” (Ps. 45:16) Paul includes a brief account of many of these in his letter to the Hebrews. Concerning this faithful group he writes, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.”—Heb. 11:1,2

The executive branch of the world’s new government will be represented in the arrangement for the kingly and priestly authority with which Jesus and the church will rule mankind. Some of these functions are addressed by the Apostle Paul. “Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.” (Heb. 5:1,2) These arrangements are for the blessing of the human creation, and are in connection with things pertaining to God. The benefit to man will be realized by instructing him in the knowledge of God, the ways of righteousness, and in bringing him into harmony with his laws and regulations.

COMPASSION TOWARD ALL

This great and much needed service for mankind could only be undertaken and effectively carried out by those that can appreciate and understand the weaknesses of those to whom they are to minister. They must exercise much patience and compassion upon all, and assist them in obtaining life. The testimony of the apostle in his letter to the Hebrews gives a true picture of the Lord Jesus and his church in his great office of *(Continued on page 35)*

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(Continued from page 31) chief priest. He says, "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."—Heb. 2:17,18

The apostle stresses the spiritual calling and says, "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him." (Heb. 3:1,2) Paul further explains, "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4:15

ASSOCIATE PRIESTS

Jesus' followers are also called to be priests in Christ's kingdom, and as such they have a service to perform both in the present life and in the future. In the Divine arrangement for the priesthood, every priest must offer a sacrifice. Of Jesus, the apostle again wrote, "When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."—Heb. 10:5-7

Of his disciples who are also being called during this present Gospel Age to share in the wonderful privilege of assisting mankind in the ways of holiness in Christ's future kingdom, it is written, "You also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house

for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”—I Pet. 2:5, *New American Standard Bible*

The present work of the Lord’s followers is to suffer and die with him. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”—Rom. 6:3,4

The Lord’s people respond to the present calling from our Heavenly Father. The Apostle Paul addresses this by writing, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1) We thus accept the Father’s invitation that is an essential feature concerning his preparation for the priesthood in the kingdom.

What a glorious arrangement has been made for us that we can offer an acceptable sacrifice by faith in Jesus Christ through the imputation of his righteousness to us. This is our justification, and we will have the necessary experiences that will prepare us to share with the Master in the future work of the great Royal Priesthood in glory.

The function of the priesthood is recorded in the Old Testament, and contains spiritual significance and instruction for the Lord’s people of this Gospel Age. The priests were the judges in the court of appeal for the settlement of difficult matters between the children of Israel. We read for example, “If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment,

between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then thou shalt arise, and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose; And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment.”—Deut. 17:8,9

The final decision was made by God’s representatives—the priests—that stood to minister there before the Lord. This represents the greater work to be done during Christ’s kingdom, when the final judgment of mankind will be in the hands of the Royal Priesthood.

Of utmost significance for those who have responded to the heavenly calling and hope to be with the Lord in the kingdom, is to take full advantage of the opportunities we are given for learning the lessons and exercising ourselves in the qualities which we must possess if we are to be among those who are faithful. Let us, by the grace of God, ever keep in mind the importance of exercising ourselves unto faithfulness. As we read, “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”—I Tim.4:6 ■

“Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.”—Philippians 1:29

Jesus: An Example of Consecration

MCCLINTOCK AND STRONG'S *Bible Encyclopedia* defines consecration this way: to be holy, often rendered 'sanctify;' to dedicate; to complete; the act of devoting or setting apart anything to the worship or service of God. Bible Students have added to this the thought that consecration means to be fully and completely dedicated to the doing of God's will.

The Son of God has always been consecrated. As the prehuman *Logos*, he was fully dedicated to God his Creator and fully engaged in his service and the doing of his will. Likewise, as the glorified Christ, from the moment of his resurrection to the Divine nature until now, and to the endless ages of eternity, he is similarly dedicated to the doing of his Father's good pleasure. We, though, wish to look at the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God as he came to earth, made a little lower than the angels at his first advent, and examine his consecration during that short, but vitally important period of his existence.

It was this aspect of his consecration, as the man Jesus, that was so critical to man's hope of salvation, and it was this aspect also which we most relate to as an example as we strive to follow in his footsteps as true Christians. We are in the flesh as he was—we, too, are going through the trials and testings of life (Heb. 10:33)—we, too, are striving to live a sacrificial life (Rom. 12:1)—we, too, must be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10)—all similar to the experiences of consecration which Jesus carried out during his First Advent ministry.

Jesus is the perfect example of consecration, in that he faithfully carried out God's will and served him in absolute perfection, not only of heart intent, but of every thought, every word, and every deed. The fulfillment of his consecration vows was perfect in every way, without a flaw or a misstep. We cannot hope to achieve anything near such perfection. However, by looking at specific aspects of how he carried out his consecration, we can gain lessons which will help us attain, at least in a small measure, to the standard that he set for us. We want to look at six examples of Jesus' consecration, centered on six scriptures, all of which are based on his dedication to the doing of the Father's will, and examine those examples as they might help us.

DELIGHTING TO DO GOD'S WILL

“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Ps. 40:8) Jesus' consecration and the carrying out of it was an absolute delight to him, because it was based on a total abiding of God's law in his heart. That law was so fixed in his character, and he was so in agreement with it, that

he always felt glad to do whatever God wanted him to do. God's attributes—his character—were so rooted in Jesus' being that doing God's will was a delightful proposition, regardless of outward circumstances.

This is an example to us. The Christian's consecration should be based on God's law, not merely outwardly but in the heart, with the same delight that was evident in Jesus' character. "Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."—Eph. 6:6

LOOKING FOR GOD'S GUIDANCE

"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (John 5:30, *New American Standard Bible*) Jesus' consecration was guided by his continual looking to God and his word for guidance. Jesus, even though a perfect man, did not attempt to use merely his own judgment and thinking to guide his actions and words. He continually sought to know and follow his Father's ways, whether through prayer, the study of his Word, or by the knowledge gained through his own experiences.

This, too, is an example to us. If Jesus, being perfect, found it necessary to seek God's will and way, how much more must we look to God, his Word, and his overruling providence in our experiences for guidance. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God,

which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” (I Thess. 2:13) By so doing we, in effect, also join with the words of Jesus (John 5:30), testifying that we seek not our own will, but the will of our Heavenly Father who has called us.

AN ACTIVE CONSECRATION

Jesus’ consecration was centered on action—doing his Father’s will, working his works. We read, “Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” (John 4:34) His was not a passive consecration in which he sat idly by and waited for the Father to do all the work. It also was not merely a statement of faith, or an attitude of confessing faith, without works. It was not lip service. It was not a vague far-off desire to do something at some distant time in the future for God. His was a consecration built on taking immediate advantage—today—of speaking, doing, and acting in all aspects of life for the purpose of, in some way, helping to accomplish his Father’s will and work. Although the most important specific work of Jesus’ ministry was providing the ransom price, there was much other work which he also engaged in—speaking the words of Truth and doctrine, being a perfect example of character, engaging in service to others, performing of miracles, and much more.

For us, as with Jesus, our consecration involves work and activity, with particular emphasis on the thought: there is work to be done today. As the Apostle James says, “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is

like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (James 1:22-25) Some of the ways we work out our consecration are: study of the Word of God; coming to know his plan; character work; service to our brethren, ecclesias, conventions, and even those in other parts of the world; witnessing and comforting those that mourn in the world; spreading the message of Truth by all the various means available; encouraging our brethren; bearing each other’s burdens; being examples in the workplace and in the home; doing all things as unto the Lord. These are just some of the works which should accompany our consecration. No single member of the body of Christ can do every work there is to be done for the Lord, but all can, and must, be engaged in some aspect of work for the Lord.

PUTTING ALL EXPERIENCES IN PERSPECTIVE

Jesus’ consecration was always carried out within the view, perspective, and framework of his Father’s plan of salvation. As recorded in John 6:38-40, he states, “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may

have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” Jesus desired that all would believe on him and have everlasting life at the last day—first the church, then afterward the world of mankind during his righteous kingdom. Anything that did not serve as a means to that end was of no interest to him. Yet the least member of mankind, the lowest esteemed, the most sinful, he did not cast aside, because he lived for the ultimate purpose of his Father’s plan, that God would have “all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim 2:4), and gain everlasting life. That is the ultimate goal Jesus was working toward, and everything in his life was bent in that direction.

The example to us is the same. The Christian should always live with the perspective of God’s plan in view, even in the midst of trial and sufferings. The Apostle Paul expresses this perspective beautifully in his epistle to the Romans. “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for [our] adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”—Rom. 8:18-23, *NASB*

TURNING ALL THINGS OVER TO GOD

“He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” (Matt. 26:42) The depth of Jesus’ consecration allowed him to put himself completely in the hands of his Father in times of difficulty. Even as the perfect man Jesus, he had experiences in which it was necessary for him to completely turn himself over to his Father for guidance, direction, and leading. He realized that even one as dedicated to God as he was needed the guiding hand of his Father, especially during the most difficult of experiences. This was not weakness on Jesus’ part, but actually strength of character in that he chose to do this very thing, rather than perhaps, under the extreme stress of trial, do something that would have proven to be out of harmony with God’s will.

What a humbling example this is to us. If Jesus felt the need to place himself, a perfect man, into God’s hands during his most difficult experiences, how much more so must we do likewise. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. . . for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” (Heb. 4:16; 13:5,6) Our boldness is not in ourselves, but only in the Lord, that he can and will direct each and every issue of our life if we will but let him do so. How our sentiments should be ‘Not my will, but thine, be done.’

KEEPING THE GOAL IN VIEW

The goal which Jesus had in view he expressed in prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) How so? Jesus’ consecration was with the ultimate goal in view that eventually God would be exalted by all, whether in heaven or in earth, and that his will would be done on all planes of existence. Jesus’ desire was that not just he, and not just his disciples, but all men, in heaven and on earth, and all the angelic hosts, would together one day echo in complete harmony the same words—those of our opening text—‘I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea thy law is within my heart.’ With this as his goal, Jesus had confidence that by being faithful he would have a part in bringing his Father’s plan to completion.

The example to us is clear. Consecration will eventually be universal, in earth and in heaven. God’s plan will come to fruition, and will not tarry. Therefore, with the goals of God’s plan in view, let us not waver nor tarry in our confidence toward God or in the fulfillment of our consecration vows. “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”—Heb. 10:35-37

IN SUMMARY

Recapping the examples contained in Jesus’ consecration and its fulfillment which we have considered here:

1. Jesus' consecration and its fulfillment were a delight to him, because God's law was within his heart.

2. Jesus' consecration was guided by his continual looking to God and his Word for direction and instruction.

3. Jesus' consecration was centered on action—doing God's will and working his works.

4. Jesus' consecration was always carried out with the perspective and within the framework of God's plan of salvation.

5. Jesus' consecration and its depth allowed him to put himself completely in the hands of his Father, especially in times of great difficulty.

6. Jesus' consecration had a goal always in view, that one day all in heaven and in earth would likewise delight to do God's will.

May we take these examples of Jesus' consecration to heart, as he is our great pattern, and use them to help us fulfill the vow that we have made with God, our Father. ■

“Dawn Devotional Radio” Internet Radio Station

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www.live365.com/stations/dawn_radio

The Doing of God's Will

*“Then said I, Lo, I
come: in the
volume of the book
it is written of me,
I delight to do thy
will, O my God:
yea, thy law is
within my heart.”*
—*Psalm 40:7,8*

THE LOGOS WAS MADE

flesh and came to the earth as a major part of God's plan to purchase the human family from the inherited sentence of sin and death. He did this by giving his own perfect human life as a ransom price for fallen mankind, and this was the ultimate purpose of our Lord Jesus that was well expressed in this wonderful psalm.

A WILLING SACRIFICE

Many years after the Psalmist David penned these prophetic words the Apostle Paul, when writing to the Hebrew brethren concerning Jesus' sacrifice, quoted these words which had been fulfilled during his earthly ministry. He wrote, “Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst

pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.”—Heb. 10:7-9

The faithfulness of our dear Lord Jesus in carrying out his Heavenly Father’s will, in accordance with the Divine program for the reconciliation of mankind back to God, has resulted in a special invitation being tendered during this age for believers to become associated with the Lord in bringing blessings to all the families of the earth during the future millennial kingdom.—Gen. 22:16-18

SHARING WITH HIM

In order to have the hope of participating in such a grand and glorious arrangement, the essential first step is to make a full and unreserved consecration of ourselves to do the will of God. After this consecration is accepted, as evidenced by receipt of the Holy Spirit, there is a lifetime of work to carry out this vow. The words of Jesus remind us that “Many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matt. 22:14) This is in comparison to the vast number of individuals on earth who may hear about Jesus and love him, but cannot bring themselves to renounce their earthly wills in order to fully accept the will of the Heavenly Father. Those who will ultimately share in the future kingdom honors of Christ are described by the revelator who referred to our Lord Jesus as the Lamb of God. He wrote, “He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”—Rev. 17:14

SURRENDERING OUR WILL

When we have taken this step and have surrendered our wills to the will of God, it will thus dictate how we spend our time, our talents, what we will say, where we will go and what we will do. If we have truly given our all, then it will be true that we “are dead” with him and that our “life is hid with Christ in God.” (Col. 3:3; Rom. 6:3,4) This burial by baptism into Christ’s death represents our renouncing of all earthly aims, hopes, and ambitions. If we are faithful in this endeavor, not only will we now walk in newness of life with him, but we will have a great future hope, as Paul explained to the brethren at Corinth. He said, “As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. . . . For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” (I Cor. 15:49,53) What an extraordinary promised reward is held out for us as followers of the Master, as well as the precious privilege of helping to reconcile mankind back to God.

GOD’S HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit will direct the path of God’s children who are obedient. Paul wrote, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom. 8:9) The energizing power of this Holy Spirit points us to do his will and perform in his service. After Spirit begetting has taken place, our actions should be vastly different from what they were previously, because formerly we were not led of God. A good test to see to what degree the Holy Spirit is working in our

consecrated lives is to evaluate whether our way of life and looking at our affairs has changed, and that our prime interest is in the doing of the Heavenly Father's will. The apostle said, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. 2:13

GOD'S WRITTEN WORD

The question may be asked as to what the will of God is for each consecrated Christian. This is a matter of personal study, and the best place to look would be in the Word of God which serves as our instruction manual. We read, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39) Finding from the Word of God what the Scriptures say on a particular subject, we should then pray that we might be led by the influence of his Holy Spirit. When we thus come to a decision—having exhausted all of our resources which may include conferring with others of like precious faith who might provide mature spiritual counsel, and if we have come to have peace with ourselves—then, regardless of the consequences, we may rest assured that the Lord will help to overrule all things for our highest spiritual welfare. We are to do God's will even if it brings difficulty to our fallen flesh, because he desires that we overcome the world, the flesh, and the Adversary and to put our total trust in him in all that we do.

BE YE HOLY

Another important aspect of God's will for us is illustrated by the Apostle Peter in his first epistle. He said, "As he which hath called you is holy, so be

ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (I Pet. 1:15,16) Since we are sinners by nature, it is often difficult to understand how we could apply this scriptural requirement to ourselves. However, because God judges us not by actual performance according to the flesh but by the heart intentions of the New Creature, he can make allowances for our weaknesses as long as we are seriously striving to keep our body under, and to do those things which would be pleasing to him.

RENEWING OUR MIND

This attitude of heart was expressed by Paul when he exhorted, “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Rom. 12:2) One of the considerations that we need to reflect upon with regard to attaining holiness and purity of heart is the concept of Christian liberty. This liberty does not allow believers to make a certain set of rules for others to follow. We are not free to do anything we wish without concern for whether such actions would be pleasing to God. It is essential that we seek scriptural guidelines for every act that we commit, to help us determine the degree to which it agrees with the spirit of sacrifice, the spirit of consecrated living and the spirit of holiness.

PRAYER AND MEDITATION

The matter of doing God’s will is all important to us as believers because we are to imitate Christ and to walk as he walked if we are to be successful in our consecrated sojourn. In the case of the Master,

we note that immediately after his baptism into death he was driven into the wilderness where, for a period of forty days and forty nights, he was under the influence of the Father's Holy Spirit. Through prayer and meditation he was then absorbed in the Scriptures, delving deeply into what was recorded in the Law and the Prophets. He was thus assured what it was that the Heavenly Father wanted him to do during his earthly ministry. Armed with this understanding, this is what he did daily in laying down his life, and submitting his all in fulfilling every aspect of God's will for himself.

OVERCOMING

Although the Scriptures do not detail what the Master endured in the wilderness, it is probable that throughout this entire period the Adversary was most active in bringing temptations of all kinds before his mind. Three specific assaults against Jesus by Satan have been recorded in the Word of God. This took place when he was in a weakened condition after not having eaten for forty days and nights. One suggestion Satan made to him was to command that stones be turned into bread for him to eat. Another was to cast himself from the top of the temple without suffering injury because the angels would protect him. In such an act, he could prove to the nation of Israel that he truly was the long-foretold Messiah. Satan's final suggestion was to acknowledge and cooperate with him, as he was the "god of this world." (II Cor. 4:4) By so doing, Jesus would be able to convert and rule the world in concert with the Adversary, and no sacrifice or humiliation on the Master's part would be required.—Matt. 4:3-10

Each of these subtle suggestions was rebuffed by Christ, however, with the words “It is written.” It was thus that he showed that God’s will, as revealed in the Scriptures was the only standard that he would follow. Since he understood clearly that the giving of his life and becoming an offering for sin was God’s will for him, he absolutely refused to consider any other course that violated what God’s Word indicated his will to be for him.

THE MIND OF CHRIST

Another of the many scriptural exhortations to guide believers into doing the will of God is pointed out by the apostle. He said, “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:5-8, *American Standard Version, 1901*) The matter of subjugating our own personal wills to that of the Father’s is an important accomplishment because each of us has his own ideas about many things that are not necessarily supported by scripture. This was not the case of our Lord who could always say concerning his expressions, ‘It is written.’

HUMBLING OURSELVES

Part of God’s will for the Lord and for ourselves is to submit to certain circumstances that we may not especially like, as part of our crystallization of character. We read, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt

you in due time.” (I Pet. 5:6) Have we ever had a difficult experience and said, or thought, “How dare they say or do that to me?” As followers of our Lord Jesus we are to put on the mind of Christ. The question may be asked whether the Master would have ever manifested resentment towards those who attacked his righteous character? Did he still love those individuals enough to die for them despite their hatred towards him?

The Prophet Isaiah spoke concerning this when he wrote, “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”—Isa. 53:5,7

OBEDIENCE NECESSARY

Jesus understood that he was going to fulfill the words of Isaiah’s prophecy, and he did yield to these experiences, willingly and fully. If he had not done so he would not have fulfilled the Heavenly Father’s will fully. He had to maintain perfect obedience to demonstrate his worthiness of ultimately being exalted. A fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy has been recorded in the New Testament. We read, “Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their

hands, Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?" (Matt. 26:65-68) Jesus humbly and faithfully submitted to these indignities without a word, because he understood that it was God's will for him to accept this kind of treatment from members of the fallen human family.

SUBMISSION

Paul's example of submission to God's will was also most remarkable concerning someone who was imperfect according to the flesh. The Bible's record includes many beatings, shipwrecks, and various persecutions that the apostle endured. (II Cor. 11:23-28) We may read from the account of Paul testifying to the Sanhedrin. "The high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." (Acts 23:2-5) Would we have thus responded after having been slapped as did Paul? Would Jesus have responded in that manner? Paul probably responded instinctively as he did after being struck, but caught himself afterwards when he said he did not realize he was insulting the high priest.

FAITHFULNESS

Further, we read, "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them

that diligently seek him.” (Heb. 11:6) This scripture tells us that no matter what experience may be permitted to come into our lives, we cannot be pleasing to God without faith. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Rom. 10:17) Thus it is necessary for us to study the Scriptures as a first step towards our faith development in that we will know what God’s Word teaches. We must then demonstrate our belief in the Father’s purposes by obeying what the Scriptures indicate we should do. A hearing, or understanding, as well as a doing of God’s will, are necessary on our part if we are to please the Creator. Conversely, even if we hear God’s word and understand it but do not do it in our lives, we cannot be pleasing or acceptable because to that extent we would still be doing our own will.

FAITHFUL MEN OF OLD

When we read of the experiences of the many faithful believers who lived before Christ as recorded in Hebrews, chapter 11, we are encouraged by the fact that they were instructed by God as to what to do in their lives, and they faithfully endeavored to carry out his will and purpose to the best of their ability. How simple, we might say, and yet would we have been as obedient ourselves? In the case of Abraham, for example, how many seventy-five-year-old husbands, in obedience to God’s instructions, would take their sixty-five-year-old wives on a sojourn to a new land, have faith that their wife would finally become a mother at the age of ninety and, some several years later, take their son of promise to a mountaintop with the intention

of offering him as a sacrifice? That experience demonstrated complete faith in, and obedience to, the will of God.

YIELDING OURSELVES

As footstep followers of Christ, one of our greatest battles in life is the need to overcome our self-will and yield ourselves to whatever God's Word indicates for us. The study of doctrine thus becomes very important in our Christian walk and we should obey what the Scriptures teach and practice.

These precepts in our lives are designed as an aid to developing sanctification, since our sanctification is also the will of God. In following the Master, let us remember that his battle was not related to simply learning doctrine. He understood clearly all that there was for him to know after the Scriptures were opened up to him as he studied for forty days and nights in the wilderness. However, his task was to endure patiently and faithfully the opposition of evildoers as he humbly submitted himself to God's eternal purpose concerning his earthly ministry. Let us also strive more diligently to do the Heavenly Father's will in our lives as we seek to walk even as Christ also walked. ■

The photographer takes his sensitive plate into a dark place to develop his picture. Sunlight would mar it. God often draws the curtain upon us, and in the darkness brings out some rare beauty in our life, some delicate feature of his own loveliness.

—selected

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

CANNOT ATTEND CHURCH

DawnBible: I am so glad to have found Dawnbible. See I am unable to attend church because of my job, and Dawnbible is keeping me in touch with what I really want in my life. Thank you.—IL

THE GOOD NEWS

DawnBible: I enjoy being a subscriber of *Dawn's Herald of Christ's Presence*. I have learned a lot of the truths of the hidden Word of God.

I'm always looking forward to the next month's issue. Thank you very much for sharing the good news of Christ Jesus.—TN

FALSE TEACHINGS

DawnBible: Praise the Lord. I am very much in the study of the Word of God. There are so many false teachings going around. There are

many Bible subjects that I want some insight on, and I am praying that your Dawn ministries can be a blessing to me and my family, praying for you and your staff. God bless.—NC

GENESIS TO REVELATION

DawnBible: I did not believe one priest who told me that the Old Testament partially is made up of stories.

I wanted to know the truth because I believed the Holy Scriptures are true from Genesis to Revelation. Thanks for the booklet sent to me which helped me see this clearly. God bless.—Zambia

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

Dawn Bible: Thank you so much for the opportunity to see all your inspirational literature. I am a new Christian and

frequently need to fill my soul up with God's Word.

Your material is very interesting and what this world needs. We all have questions that need answers and comfort in what we face daily in our lives. God bless you all!—TN

TRUE TO HIS WORD

DawnBible: Thank you for such an inspirational site! It's so hard to find a place that offers Bible based principles and doctrine.

May God continue to bless you and your readers as you remain true to his Word.—PA

THE BIBLE ANSWERS

DawnBible: My thanks go to all of you for your work to make this website a blessing to all who want to know more of the truth.

I am watching *The Bible Answers* programs as I miss them on television. Now we can view

them with realplayer. Thank you.—TX

BOOK OF HEBREWS

DawnBible: I recently completed your studies on the *Book of Hebrews*. They were complete and packed full of knowledge and wisdom.

I will continue searching your studies and viewing more of your studies in the future. Thank you.—FL

HOPE FOR MANKIND

DawnBible: What a privilege it is to be able to come to your website each day to read and be built up in such a wonderful hope for all mankind. Thank you so much.—TX

PRAYING FOR YOU

DawnBible: Thank you very much for sending your monthly magazine. We read it with prayers and receive blessings. We are regularly praying for all of you. In Christ—India ■

General Convention Bulletin

July 19-24, 2008—Johnstown, Pennsylvania

THE 2008 GENERAL CONVENTION returns once again to the lovely facilities of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Air-conditioned hotel-like rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family-style apartments (also air-conditioned) with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air-conditioned) in other facilities will be available on campus. A child may sleep on a bedroom floor at no charge in his own sleeping bag if both beds are occupied. If a child is alone in a bedroom sharing the bathroom with other adults, the double occupancy rate will apply to all family members.

All room and meal costs for children 12 years old or younger will be paid by the convention. As in the past, 50% of the cost of those from 13 through 17 will be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his or her age group. This subsidy does not cover meals paid in cash at the door.

The February issue of *The Dawn* will include a complete pricing schedule, as well as a registration form and other convention information. We are pleased to report that prices are not expected to rise in 2008. We encourage you to make your plans now to attend and participate in the blessings of this year's General Convention. ■

The Year Before Us

Standing at the portal of the opening year,
Words of comfort meet us, hushing every fear;
Spoken through the silence by our Father's voice,
Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.

Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

"I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid;
I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed.
Yea, I will uphold thee with Mine own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen in My sight to stand."

Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

For the year before us, oh, what rich supplies!
For the poor and needy, living streams shall rise;
For the sad and mournful, shall His grace abound;
For the faint and feeble, perfect strength be found.

Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant He will never break;
Resting on His promise, what have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient for the coming year.

Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

—Poems of Dawn

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

The speakers listed below, in cooperation with the Dawn, are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

S. Jeuck

St. Petersburg, FL January 20

L. Wesol

St. Petersburg, FL January 20

OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to their family and friends in the loss of these dear ones.

Brother Ed Baum, Miami, FL—November 5. Age,

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA CONVENTION, January 24,25,26,27,28—ESA Conference Centre, Buxton Road, Marysville. Contact R. Charlton, 6 Laane Avenue, Rosanna 3084 VIC Australia.

LOS ANGELES QUARTERLY CONVENTION, January 27—Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA. Contact R. Bieniak. Phone: (949) 457-0894

SACRAMENTO CONVENTION, February 15,16, 17—The Clarion Hotel, 2600 Auburn Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95821. Contact K. Ajise, 6925 Gallery Way, Sacramento, CA 95831. Phone: (916) 813-3948

SOUTHWEST WINTER CONVENTION, February 23,24,25—Sunnyslope High School, 35 West Dunlap Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021. Contact A. Mengos. Phone: (480) 390-3767

DETROIT/METRO DETROIT JOINT GATHERING, February 24—Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge, MI. Contact M. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 879-1814

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 8,9,10—Hilton Orlando Altamonte Springs, 350 S. North Lake Blvd., Altamonte Springs, FL 32701. Contact S. Jeuck, 471 Kentia Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 834-7592

COLUMBUS PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, March 22,23—Ramada Inn East (Airport), 4801 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43213. Phone: (614) 861-

0321. Contact T. Alexander, 3278 Foxcroft Drive, Lewis Center, OH 43035. Phone: (614) 519-8282

NEW YORK SPRING CONVENTION, March 30—Doubletree Hotel, Mahway, N.J. Contact D. Szybinski. Phone: (212) 998-2095

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 4,5,6—Macomb Community College, 14500 Twelve Mile Road, Warren, MI 48088. Contact P. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

FRESNO PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 4,5,6—Vagabond Inn Executive, 2141 N. Parkway Drive, Fresno, CA 93705. Contact B. Wilson, 2103 N. Price Avenue, #112, Fresno, CA 93705. Phone: (559) 255-2241

GREATER NEW LONDON PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 6—Bayview Lodge, Society Road, East Lyme, CT. Contact V. Grillo. Phone: (860) 823-7099

BOISE CONVENTION, April 25,26,27—Owyhee Plaza Hotel, 1109 Main Street, Boise, ID. Please contact by April 4, D. Allers, 7558 W. Hathaway Lane, Boise, ID 83714. Phone: (208) 375-6873



“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”—Hebrews 10:23-25, New American Standard Bible

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~ All prices are in U.S. dollars ~

THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES (\$2.00 + \$1.00 postage) Gives an outline of the Divine Plan revealed in the Bible, relating to man's redemption and restitution.—358 pages

THE TIME IS AT HAND (\$2.00 + \$1.00 postage) Deals with Bible chronology and time prophecies, identifies the Antichrist, and points out the time and manner of our Lord's return.—371 pages

THY KINGDOM COME (\$2.00 + \$1.00 postage) Discusses time prophecies relating to the work of the church at this end of the age, the restoration of Israel, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom. One chapter pertains to the Great Pyramid of Egypt.—384 pages

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON (\$3.00 + \$1.50 postage) Shows the dissolution of the present order. It discusses many prophecies relating to the end of the age, noting especially our Lord's great prophecy of Matthew 24.—660 pages

THE ATONEMENT BETWEEN GOD AND MAN (\$3.00 + \$1.00 postage) Devoted to the fact and philosophy of Christ's atoning work, the nature of man, the divine punishment for sin, the truth about hell, and the operation of the Holy Spirit.—498 pages

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach:

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD —peculiarly “his workmanship;” that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and the chief “corner stone” of this temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING of the consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH is that she may be like her Lord, “see him as he is,” be a “partaker of the divine nature,” and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35