

SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

A Monthly Magazine.

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the **Word**, that ye may grow thereby.”—1 PETER ii. 2.

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the **Word** with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. **Therefore** many of them believed.”—ACTS xvii. 11, 12.

“The **Word** of the Lord endureth for ever.”—1 PETER i. 25.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Judgment-seat of Christ	1
David in the Land of the Philistines	8
What to Preach	13
A Call to Prayer	19
Answers to Correspondents—	
27, 54, 81, 109, 138, 168, 193, 221, 247, 276, 305, 330	
Why have you not Peace?	29
“Greater Love”	35
Love like Christ’s	37
Rewards	39
A Look into Eternity	42
The Regions Beyond	43
“Present Truth”	48
The Disease and its Cure	51
A Sevenfold Cluster	57
Definite Prayer	61
Concerning Preachers, Hearers, and Others	65
<u>Ittai’s Opportunity</u>	<u>69</u>
Devotedness and Intelligence	72
The Church : How and When it Began	75
Fragments 64, 95, 104, 126, 205, 214	
Only One Way of Salvation	85
God’s Object in Leaving a Christian here	91
Power over Sin	97
God and His Gospel	105
An Example to Follow	113
7 “God Testifying of his Gifts”	117
Many Miracles, but no Faith	120
The Advocate or the Accuser	123
Confusion in the Workshop	127
Shining More and More	133
Millions Going Nowhere	141
Does God Love Sinners?	149
Giving	157
How Great Names are Gained	163

	PAGE
Hints to Open-air Workers	166
Self-occupation	169
Working in the Vineyard	173
What is that in thine Hand ?	175
Three Aspects of Christ's Work	181
God Made Known	186
The <u>Eternal Life</u>	190
Worldliness : Its Causes and Effects	197
"Tarry Ye"—"Go Ye"	207
Predestination	215
An Important Question	225
Christ—An Object for the Heart	229
Worldliness : Its Antidote	233
The Activity of Grace ; or, "Lift up Your Eyes"	239
Nicodemus the Pharisee	253
The Holy Scriptures	259
Christianity without the Company of Christ	263
Divine Growth	265
A Fine Epitaph	281
The Book of Appeal	285
The Lord's Supper	288
Precious Words for those that Fear the Lord	294
A Man of Purpose	299
Personal Holiness	309
The Heart and its Objects	319
Building and Watching with Him	323
"Time is Short"	325
"Harry Saved"	327
POETRY—	
The Love of Christ	34
Press On !	38
"The Lord is my Shepherd"	74
It Matters Little	96
"Thine Eyes shall See the King in His Beauty"	116
How and When ?	122
"That I may know Him"	148
A Bright Hope	180
The "Comfort" of His Promise	206
"My Exceeding Joy"	275
"Weeping may endure for the Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning"	321

SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

A WORD TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

ANOTHER year has come and gone. Time is brief, and eternity draws nigh. It might be here to-morrow, or even "in the twinkling of an eye," were the Lord to come.

The present determines the future. The life to come is the obverse of the life that is, and time is but the seed-plot of eternity. Now the sowing, then the reaping. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," are words addressed to *Christians*. How intensely solemn!

To show clearly that the present and future are correlative—that the one affects the other—let us draw your attention to

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

The apostle Paul, writing to *Christians*, says:—

"We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. v. 10.)

Young Christian, *you* must appear there.

Does someone say, "Why, I thought that we were never coming into condemnation? What

2

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

about that verse, 'He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and *shall not come into condemnation*'? Is that not true?"

Dear young Christian, it is most blessedly true, and nothing can ever possibly alter those words of the Lord Jesus. Heaven and earth will pass away—His words NEVER.

More than that. You quoted John v. 24 as it reads in our ordinary version. In order to give greater elegance to our translation, and avoid repeating the same word over and over again, the translators sometimes used two or three English words to express the meaning of one Greek word. John v. 24 more properly reads:—

"He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into JUDGMENT, but is passed from death unto life."

Now if the believer will never come into *judgment*, how can he possibly come into *condemnation*? If he never appears before God to answer for his sins, how can he ever be condemned for them?

The atoning work of Christ has settled for ever everything relating to the believer's sins. If God were to reopen that question, it would imply that the sacrifice of His own Son had not settled everything. "*It is finished*" would not then mean "*It is finished.*" No! no!! God remem-

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

3

bered the sins of the believer once when He laid them upon His own Son, so that now He declares, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember *no more.*"

Indeed, so gloriously hath Christ wrought, and so thoroughly is God satisfied, that the question of judgment will never be taken up by Him again. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." (John v. 22.)

It is the Saviour who will be the Judge.

You may ask, "If I am never coming into judgment, why is it that I must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ? How do the two statements agree?"

It is very simple. Both statements are true. **YOU** will never come into judgment, but **YOUR WORKS** will. In short, the judgment-seat of Christ is not to judge your person, but

TO MANIFEST YOUR WORKS—

to *divest* you of all that has been unworthy of Christ in your life, and *invest* you with a reward for all that has been of and for Christ.

An illustration may help. A large number of art students have worked at their different studies during their term of work. The drawings are finished and hung upon the walls of the art saloon, and it is prize-day. The students, attired in their best clothes, accompanied by parents and friends, are all gathered together.

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

The scene is gay and animated, and the hum of conversation grows louder and louder.

Suddenly there is a hush. Every eye turns to the door.

THE JUDGES HAVE COME!

Do the students turn pale with fear, and do visions of punishments and prisons rise before their eyes? Oh dear no! Do they expect to see judges, with wig and gown, heralded by marshals and ushers, and attended by policemen? Certainly not!

They quietly turn round, and probably see two or three benevolent old gentlemen—art critics—with white beards and gold-rimmed spectacles, who have come not to pronounce judgment upon their *persons*, but upon their *works*; not to mete out *punishments*, but to bestow *rewards*.

And so it will be with us. The judgment-seat of Christ is *the place of manifestation and reward*.

It all depends upon how those students used their time and talents *during* the session as to whether they receive the coveted rewards. And it all depends on how *we* act during our earthly session as to whether we shall be rewarded.

The awards of earthly judges are necessarily more or less faulty. Those who have most ability—largely an accident of birth—usually gain the rewards. The blessed Lord awards with perfect equity, as One who thoroughly knows our hearts and reads our motives.

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

5

Someone may ask, "What about

OUR SINS *BEFORE* CONVERSION?

Do they come to light?"

Yes, without a question; for they cannot be excluded from "*the deeds done in the body.*"

Some Christians get angry at the idea that all *before* conversion will come out. But the secret of their anger is that they are not grounded in grace. Or is it that they are covering up some evil, or have never really confessed without reserve their sins to God?

It will be an immense gain that *all* should come out—not before others perhaps, but between ourselves and the Lord. It may be in our present condition we could not endure the *full* consciousness of our sins. We have known people unable to sleep, eat, or drink, so great was their soul-anguish when the sense of their own utter badness dawned upon them. Saul of Tarsus, at the time of his conversion, neither ate nor drank for three days.

The blessed Lord knows *all*, for He suffered for our sins; but *we* do not know all. The judgment-seat of Christ will confer at least three immense benefits upon us:—

(1) *We shall have no reserves with Christ.*

This will be a great help to us, and should encourage us to have none now, but to allow the light of that judgment-seat to manifest *to ourselves* our motives and deeds.

(2) *We shall know the full extent of our indebtedness to Christ.*

This will so enlarge our sense of His love, that our love will be greatly drawn out to Him, on the principle that to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much.

(3) *We shall see eye to eye with Him about our whole life.*

We repeat, it will be an immense gain to us to have it all out—to know not only that all our sin is atoned for, but to have done with it *in our own souls*; for much we harbour now will then pass away in the consuming fire of judgment, and we shall rejoice to see it go.

So we can sing with McCheyne:—

“When I stand before Thy throne,
Drest in beauty not mine own;
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart—
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.”

Further, all

OUR LIVES AFTER CONVERSION

will be manifest; our motives, our hidden springs, will be revealed to us as never before. We shall trace the grace of the Lord, in bearing with us all the days of our folly and backsliding. We shall praise Him for the way He sheltered us from temptation, or in love allowed us to eat the fruit of our ways; for the patience with which He taught us our lessons, and we so stupid and slow,

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

7

and all the while, it may be, thinking ourselves clever and great. We shall then, too, see those things in our lives which were pleasing to Him, and recognize them as the fruit of His grace.

One last word. Should our object in life be to gain a reward at the judgment-seat of Christ?

The answer is simple. If our motive has been reward rather than love to Christ Himself, our motive has been impure, and therefore deeds flowing from an impure motive are impure, and will not be able to stand the fire of judgment.

A single verse will show how far the *work* may be condemned, yet the *person* saved:—

“If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but HE HIMSELF SHALL BE SAVED; yet so as by fire.” (1 Cor. iii. 15.)

It is like a man who has the clothes burnt off his back, yet he himself escapes, as did the three Hebrew children, without the smell of fire.

But if our lives are really set for Christ, it will be a stimulus to us to know how His heart delights to reward and appreciate all He can.

But our pen would run on to an indefinite length; so we lay it down.

May the light—the solemn light—of the judgment-seat shine upon us, even now, disclosing the real weight of our motives and actions; and may the spring of our life be positive attachment of heart to Him who died for us and rose again.

A. J. P.

DAVID IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES.

1 SAMUEL xxvii. 1, 2.

THE biographies of the Bible are faithful and true. They must be so, for they were written by the Holy Spirit. In other biographies the writers engage us with the excellencies of those of whom they write, and say but little of their faults. The Holy Spirit acts differently. He records alike the failure and the faithfulness even of the most eminent of God's saints and servants. And both are recorded for our profit.

David said *in his heart*, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." He may not have said so with his lips, but the trembling thought was there. This was unbelief pure and simple. His confidence in God faltered, his faith gave way. We may marvel at it when we remember the remarkable deliverances he had already experienced, and which could hardly have been forgotten. But the recollection of past goodness avails nothing *apart from present faith*. It may encourage us still to trust in God, and strengthen confidence if it be in exercise, but not without. This was lacking in David when he yielded to despondency and unbelief. Surely God, who had been his Rock, his Fortress, and his Deliverer, when he was hunted by Saul as a partridge upon the mountains, could shelter and

DAVID IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES. 9

save him still. No doubt. But David did not reason so. "I shall perish one day," said he. So he took his case out of God's hand, and began to plan for himself. He resolved to escape into the land of the Philistines, so he passed over with his six hundred men unto Achish, king of Gath.

And his policy seemed to succeed. "It was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him." Things became easier now for David. He was out of danger. There was no need to be ever on the alert. The weary watches of the night were past. His exercises of heart were fewer. All this was on the profit side as men speak; but what about the loss? During the sixteen months he was in the land of the Philistines there were fewer things to take him to God in earnest prayer. He had no fresh experience of God's delivering mercy, of the abundance of His resources to meet the need, however great or varied. No triumphant psalm came from his pen. The Spirit of the Lord spake not by him, nor was His word in David's tongue. It was a dreary season of spiritual drought. All was silent and still—the silence and stillness of spiritual death. This was the loss, though not the whole of it, and it was a grievous loss indeed.

It is always so. The life-history of many a choice servant of God, told in the Bible, tells the same story. And so does the life-history of many and many a saint, though no record of it be written with pen and ink. The policy of unbelief

10 DAVID IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES.

invariably produces inward decay, and ends in disaster and disappointment. "*The just shall live by faith.*" Unbelief will seek to decoy us from that path. It will conjure up a thousand fears, and furnish a thousand reasons—all plausible enough—why we should seek an easier one. It will urge us to escape into the land of the Philistines, to surrender our principles, to choose a smoother way, to place ourselves under the shadow of Achish, to ask for some Ziklag where we may rest from conflict, and find a home in which to settle down. This is what David did. The immediate effects we have spoken of in the preceding paragraph. How it ended we shall shortly see.

We pass over the record of chapter xxix. The Philistines, we are told, gathered their armies together to war against Israel, and David and his men were with them. What a position! Who would have ever thought that the conqueror of Goliath could have sunk so low? But unbelief had caught him in her toils, and dragged him captive at her chariot wheels. From these humiliating associations the providential hand of God alone delivers him. David and his six hundred men are sent away, and they return to Ziklag.

And now we see the result of David's unbelief in escaping into the land of the Philistines. He had sown the seed, he was now to reap the harvest. Ziklag was burned with fire, and their

DAVID IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES. 11

wives and their sons, and their daughters were taken captive by the Amalekites. Is this what it all comes to? A heap of ruins, and the dear objects of their love carried away they knew not where! No wonder they lifted up their voice and wept. Unbelief had promised them rest and immunity from danger; she only lured them into a path where everything was lost. But this was not all. "David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him." *He* had brought them into these sore straits. They trusted him, and followed his leadership, and this was the result! Their first impulse was to be avenged, but God withheld their hand. Had David alone been the loser his grief might not have been so great. But his one false step involved six hundred followers, and this intensified his distress six hundredfold. It was indeed a dark, dark night.

But now the first streaks of the morning begin to be seen. The hills are tipped with gold. "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." But what did this imply? Surely the heart-felt acknowledgment of his sinful unbelief, of the mistake he had made, of the wrong step he had taken, so dishonouring to God, so disastrous to himself. David took the low and only right place. He was in the dust. And now he seeks counsel from God, and God is not silent. He encourages David, gives him counsel, and assures him that all shall be recovered. David's soul is restored, his broken fellowship with God

12 DAVID IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES.

re-established, and ere long Ziklag is left, and he and his are once more in the land of Israel. God's faithfulness and grace are unchanging and exhaustless.

And we shall find it so if there be anything in our life analogous to this episode in the life of David. However dark and distressful the circumstances into which our wilfulness and unbelief have brought us, let us encourage ourselves in the Lord our God as David did. But this surely involves the confession of our sin and folly, as also the justice of all that has come upon us in consequence thereof. We judge ourselves and justify God. This is always the way of true repentance. And the moment we take that place God will be with us, and will give us strength and blessing. He may not deliver us altogether from the results of our unbelief, but, if not, He will uphold us, and fill our hearts with His own peace.

If we are ever tempted to quit the path of faith because of the difficulties that confront us, let us remember this incident in David's life. It is written for our admonition. Better, infinitely better, to be in the roughest road with God than in the smoothest path where He is not. To every emergency He is equal. Only let us trust Him with a perfect heart, and the more we do so the more we shall discover how worthy He is of all our trust. The life of faith will ever have its testings, but it is rich in experiences. And, as God becomes better known, He will be more fully trusted, according to that faithful saying, "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee." (Psalm ix. 10.)

WHAT TO PREACH.

ONE of the sorrows of the servants of Christ to-day is the acknowledged "*dearth of conversions.*" No true-hearted soul-winner but mourns this terrible fact. Where does the fault lie? If it should lie in any way in the preaching, then it becomes the preacher to take heed. It is quite true that new birth is the work of God alone. But for His sovereign grace not one of us would have turned to Him. Never would we have owned our lost condition had not His Spirit wrought a sense of it in our consciences.

Still, that is God's side, and while fully and thankfully owning it, the preacher must address himself to his side of the blessed work.

And what can the preacher do? He can only preach, but if he preach in divine power he does very much. Thus we read: "How shall they hear without a preacher?" And, again, "So then faith cometh by hearing." (Romans x.) Hence the preacher, though but a vessel, holds a very important place in the blessing of the soul. He is God's channel of communication. He must, therefore, be exceedingly and prayerfully dependent on God for His message on each occasion of delivering it.

But assuming that he seeks to reach souls that are clearly unconverted, who have never, so far

as can be judged, felt conviction of sin, or the struggle of a guilty conscience, his one great effort should be to bring them to repentance before God.

Repentance is a *sine quâ non*! "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," said the Lord to the people of His day (see Luke xiii. 3); and He it was who charged His apostles, ere He ascended to heaven, to preach "repentance and the remission of sins." (Luke xxiv. 47.)

Repentance lies at the bottom, and is absolutely essential in any divine work in the soul. If that be lacking there is clearly no foundation at all. It may be deep and overwhelming, or it may be comparatively feeble, as in the case of Lydia; but apart from that which repentance implies, viz., the judgment and repudiation of self before God, there can be no work in the soul.

But what does repentance mean? It means, literally, a "change of mind." That may appear a small thing, but it is not so. Think of what it is to have a change of mind as to God! It means that all your previous thoughts of Him were wrong! in a word, that you yourself were wrong toward God! It implies a revolution, a collapse, a complete breakdown of the whole inner man! No change so radical as repentance! And, notice, this change is absolutely necessary.

But what is the preacher's part in the production

of repentance? He must do his best to grapple with the *conscience* of his hearers; he must feel as though everything depended on himself; he must view them as sinners guilty of specific sins, and these he must charge home, fearlessly, on their consciences. He must expose their lives to them; he must connect their guilt with the judgment-bar of God—the great white throne; he must announce that judgment as the certain and inevitable goal of the impenitent; he must proclaim “the wrath of God” and “eternal judgment” as that which awaits all who have failed to repent. He must not flinch from calling sin by its own name, or from linking it, as cause and effect, with death and judgment. Preachers must never be guilty of moral cowardice, nor pander to the taste of man.

They tread on tremendously solid ground when they deal with actual sins. Thus the early preachers dealt. Their preaching was very matter-of-fact. (See Acts. ii., iv., vii.) And facts, *facts*, FACTS, are very formidable things!!

Other truths may well be introduced at a later stage (*e.g.*, the judgment that rests, even now, on man, and the presence of the Holy Ghost, in itself the conviction of the world because of sin); but, in dealing with a totally unrenewed soul, there is nothing so effective as the enforcement of its own personal offences. It is this which, under God, will bring about the necessary collapse, and

remove the complaint of "the dearth of conversions."

The spirit in which such preaching should be done is one of deep Christlike love. The soul of the preacher must be imbued by the infinite love of that Saviour who passed through Gethsemane, and who bled on Calvary under divine judgment against sin, in order to deliver us from "the wrath to come." Nothing is done without *love*. (1 Cor. xiii.)

I should like to quote part of a letter received the other day from a beloved and honoured servant of Christ, bearing out the above remarks:—

"I have had a very decided conviction lately, and it has grown upon me, that there is a great lack to-day of the good old-fashioned *call to repentance*! I feel I should like myself to make up for lost time in this respect, and *preach* it more, and try to *explain* it less, but rather leave it to the Spirit of God to explain it to the soul, and to enforce its necessity in any soul that listens to the echo, in our lips, of God's own call.

"I would not surrender my faith in the necessity of God's sovereign action for anything; but repentance, rather than this side, was what characterized the preaching of the apostles."

Quite so; it is, thank God, all His work from beginning to end, otherwise it were valueless; but as His servants and messengers to the souls of men, it is our duty and privilege to do His work effectively; not to daub with untempered mortar nor lightly heal; but if the conscience must be conquered and the pride of man humbled,

then the first and primary effort must be to show man his guilt—to “open his eyes” to that which he has done and is—that he may take his true place before the God of infinite love and holiness, in utter detestation of himself and his ways.

This is repentance. The goodness of God leads to it. The soul must repent when consciously in His holy presence, as we may see in Job, Isaiah, Saul of Tarsus, and others; and this, however it may be brought about, should be the supreme object of the preacher who would be faithful to the souls of his unsaved and sin-imperilled audience.

If only he have that prophetic power which can say to the sinner, “Thou art the man,” and cause the conscience of the adulterer to quail under the charge of his crime, or the drunkard, or the thief, or “the sinner of the city,” or the Pharisee who prides himself on his supposed moral superiority—this is far more effective, though it may call for much more personal dealing with God, than broad generalizations, which, though perfectly true, lack the grip of individual application.

When the soul is thus gripped it is reached. It must then repent. No doubt the call to repentance is not the gospel; but neither is the plough the seed-basket! But repentance is as preparatory for the gospel as the furrow is for the seed.

When conviction is wrought in the conscience, how unspeakably happy then to unfold the heart of God and the value of the atoning death of Christ, and all that flows from Himself on high! But the preparation for this, as for all blessing, is found in repentance before God.

Hence we find that repentance was the loud and earnest call of John the Baptist, in view of the coming of his Master, who, when He had come, took up the same note, as His first and continued appeal. So, too, Peter, on the day of Pentecost, called for repentance on the part of those guilty thousands whom he had charged with having slain, with wicked hands, their Messiah. And, finally, from Mars' Hill went forth that universal command that "all men," "everywhere," should repent! Yes, "all men," from king to captive, and from wise to foolish; "everywhere," from north to south, and from east to west, without one single exception! It is God's *command*! Obedience is necessary! Shall not God's command be the preacher's care?

May the Lord grant the needed wisdom, love, and courage to His beloved servants, who rightly yearn for the blessing of men, so to preach in this proud, pleasure-loving day, that, ere the door close, multitudes may be awakened to their true state, and led to know Himself in the surpassingness of His rich and saving grace. J. W. S.

A CALL TO PRAYER.

FEW but will feel the present moment to be one of peculiar solemnity. Not only have we entered upon the closing year of another century—an incident in itself of commanding interest—but events everywhere testify that the “end of all things is at hand,” and call upon us with ever-increasing earnestness to “watch unto prayer.”

That there are urgent reasons for special prayer is evident, and many are feeling it. At a recent gathering of large numbers of Christians, the prayer-meetings were said to be times of special power; and so deep was the impression made that the following refrain was upon every lip:—

“I believe God answers prayer;
I am sure God answers prayer;
I have proved God answers prayer.”

To this every believer can say, Amen! and find in it an encouragement to “continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

There is a divine principle running all through Scripture which is very striking. It is that God is pleased to unite His people with Himself in whatever He is about to do. He first of all leads them to pray, and then does what He intends in answer to their prayers. Let us see how the principle is exemplified in Scripture.

The first instance occurs in the history of Abraham. With reference to the destruction of Sodom, we hear God saying, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" God does not hide it, and, as a consequence, there follows one of the most touching appeals that ever fell from human lips, that the city might be spared. How wonderful that God should disclose His intentions, so that His servant might plead for that guilty city! This is the first prayer, of any length, recorded in the Bible, and it is well to notice that it is *a prayer for the salvation of men*.

Elijah furnishes another example. Because of the wickedness of Israel, God had determined to withhold rain. But it is not done apart from the prayers of His servant. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, *and he prayed earnestly* that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months." (James v. 17.) And when God would send rain again, it was not sent apart from prayer. "Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees." In answer to his prayer the rain came.

These instances relate to the past. Let us see whether the same principle does not apply to the future. Everyone knows that one day the now dispersed and downtrodden sons of Jacob will be

A CALL TO PRAYER.

21

gathered back to their own land. This will be accomplished as a direct answer to prayer. We have only to turn to Isaiah lxii. to find this confirmed. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are the Lord's remembrancers [see margin], keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Could there be a more striking confirmation of the principle that God gives effect to His purpose in answer to prayer?

We have thus seen how God delights to stir up His people to prayer, in order that He may accomplish His purpose. Let us now see how this principle still applies.

What is God's present purpose? In other words, what is He doing at the moment in which we find ourselves? Speaking broadly, He is saving men through the gospel from the guilt and power of sin and from the wrath to come. We do not enter here upon what His purpose is after He has saved them; we only affirm that He is saving them. Judging from what we have already seen, we are prepared to expect that He does so in answer to His people's prayers. Nor are we disappointed. In 1 Timothy ii. the apostle Paul exhorts "that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made *for all men.*" And why?

Because "this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, *who will have all men to be saved.*" His present attitude toward all is that of a Saviour-God. Consequently He unites His people with Himself, and enjoins them to pray for all.

Dear reader, have we risen to this privilege? What is it? Nothing less than communion with the blessed God about the salvation of immortal souls. For eighteen hundred years, as far as this world is concerned, God has been occupied with little else. How much has it occupied us? How much *does* it occupy us each day we live? Do we think God will save them whether we pray or not? Perhaps our thoughts sometimes shape themselves thus: "God has His elect; I cannot add to the number. He will take care that they are saved, and as to the rest, well, what difference can my prayers make to them?" We cannot tell you what difference your prayers may make; we can only repeat what God enjoins, "that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions be made for all men," and we cannot disregard His voice without loss to ourselves at least, and it may be—who knows?—loss to others. This at least we know, as a matter of fact and common experience, that God does save men in answer to prayer. An instance of this occurred some time ago. At a certain prayer-meeting the usual attendants got cold and

worldly and stayed away, until at last the only one left was the woman whose duty it was to light the lamps and prepare the room for the others. She valued prayer, however, too much to desist because others did, and so every week regularly the lamps were lighted as usual, and she spent the hour alone wrestling with God. As a result a revival broke out in the place, and many were saved. Another Christian, who could not get to the Sunday evening service because of the distance, always spent the time in prayer. The burden of it invariably was that her children and children's children to the fourth generation might be saved. And God gave her her request. She actually lived to see her descendants to the *third* generation brought to the Lord.

But not only should we pray for all men because it is a day of salvation, but also because we are living in *immediate prospect of the Lord's return*. This is the next great event in the ways of God—an event big with the most tremendous results both to the Church and the world. Can our prayers affect this at all? Why not? If in answer to Daniel's prayers Jerusalem was rebuilt; and if in answer to prayer Israel, now dispersed, are to be regathered, why should not our prayers hasten the coming of the Lord? What are almost the closing words of inspiration? Listen. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." This is the burden of

the last prayer in the Bible. The first was for the salvation of men; the last is, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Thus we have seen the way in which God connects His people with Himself, and executes His purpose in answer to their prayer. Whether in the past, the present, or the future, there is no difference; it is an unvarying record. Who that considers it can help being profoundly affected? And now we find ourselves face to face with these two facts—the salvation of men and the coming of the Lord; and about these we are to pray.

Are we saying "Come" to the Lord Jesus? The Spirit says, "Come," and has been saying it for eighteen centuries. The bride, as the bride, is in unison with that cry. But here it is important to notice the individual is to take it up. Oh to take up again what the Spirit says, and then, surely, the answer will be given! Seventy years ago, the hope of the Lord's coming was revived by the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom." What is the suited response on our side but to say, "Come"? Are we saying it? Have we ever thought that by our prayers we could help to bring about a result so desirable as the return of our Lord Jesus Christ? The testimony of Scripture again and again, as we have been seeing, and the very invitation put into our lips, warrant the assumption. Did not He come the first time in answer to prayer? What is the opening scene in Luke's Gospel but a prayer-

A CALL TO PRAYER.

25

meeting? As the people prayed without, Gabriel was announcing to Zacharias within the birth of Christ's forerunner. Did not the Holy Ghost, too, come in answer to prayer? Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter"; and of the disciples we read, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."

One other consideration before bringing these remarks to a conclusion. Whether it is a question of men being saved, or the Lord coming back again, we cannot pray for either unless we are in a right state ourselves. If we would entreat God on behalf of others, like Abraham, like him it must be said of us, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." If we are to get answers to prayer, like Elijah, we too, as he was, must be apart with God; or if, like Daniel, we are to have the mind of the Lord, and be able to intercede for others, as he did, so must we remain undefiled by the pollution of the world, remembering always it is the effectual fervent prayer of a *righteous* man that *availeth much*.

We are told that "a growing impression exists among evangelists and aggressive Christian workers, that there are indications of a widespread revival at hand." May God grant it; but sure we are that if anything of the kind

is to take place, the revival must begin with the people of God, and in the way of real confession and self-judgment. Then indeed we may expect that He who has promised the “early and the *latter* rain” will not forget us, but that He will fulfil His word—“I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and dry land springs of water.”

Some may think that the corruption and worldliness in the Church forbid such a thought as a revival. It may, as far as the Church as a whole is concerned, but surely not as regards individuals. God has often listened to individuals when He could not to the mass. And the closing word of Revelation is hopeful on this point—“Let *him* that heareth say, Come.” And then, “Let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

In these closing hours of the Church’s sojourn on earth, may some be found whose chief concern it is to wait upon God, with hearts so delivered from this present evil world, that they desire nothing so much as their Lord’s return. And, while with ever growing longing they say “Come” to Him, may they in the meantime declare with equal earnestness and emphasis, “Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

R. E.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. H. (Luke xix. 13-26).—There is a moral link between this parable of the pounds and the story of Zacchæus which immediately precedes it. *That* speaks of SALVATION, full, free, and all of grace, the blessed result of the Lord's first coming; *this* of SERVICE and responsibility, and of reward when He appears the second time to set up His kingdom. These are evidently different things, though following each other in the order of this chapter. But what gave rise to the parable was not the tax-gatherer's conversion; it sprang rather from the expectation of some that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. And they looked for the kingdom, not in its moral and present aspect, which is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." They looked for it on the side of public display, and thought it was on the eve of being established in power and great glory, as indeed it will be in a day to come. This impression the Lord corrects, and announces His own departure from the earth, and His future return and reign, under the figure of a nobleman who goes into a far country to receive the kingdom from a superior power, and then returns to possess it. While he is away, his servants, to whom he entrusts equal sums, are to trade therewith on their lord's account. We are those servants. Whatever gifts of the Spirit we enjoy, whatever means and opportunities are at our disposal, these are to be wisely and diligently used for our Lord's glory. For the day of account is coming. We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Then our labour shall have its full reward, and each shall have his appointed place *in the kingdom*. This point is enlarged upon in the article

on "The Judgment-seat of Christ" appearing in our present issue. Moreover, whatever progress we make in the knowledge of God and in divine things generally, we shall not lose it when we depart hence. It goes with us, and is added to. In addition, there is our place in the kingdom, as we have already said. As to the servant who did not trade at all with his lord's money, he represents those who, while taking the place of servants, are utterly in the dark as to the character of the One they profess to serve. Probably unconverted, though that question is not raised here. Idle, thinking nothing of their Lord's interests, they have nothing to show for all that had been entrusted to them. Verse 26 has a present application. If we value and rightly employ that which we have, then more shall be given. On the other hand, if we neglect and care nothing for our privileges and opportunities, we need not be surprised if we lose them altogether.

STOKE-ON-TRENT.—Will the kind friend who sends copies of *Simple Testimony* to Mr. House, at St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica, please send them by *Book Post*, leaving the package open at the ends? Mr. House writes to tell us that he had to pay 3s. 1d. extra postage for the four copies posted in October, because they were sent in a closed envelope. By book post they would have cost only one penny, paid at this end.

F. E. H.—If you have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, you have no need to feel the least trouble at the thought of His coming again, or of your dying. Assuredly you would not be forgotten at His coming; and as to your dying hour, should you ever have one, you will find His grace abundantly sufficient. The trouble of which you speak may be the result of physical causes; if so, keep near to Christ, rest in His love, seek to maintain a good conscience. These are the best cures we know.

WHY HAVE YOU NOT PEACE?

“**I** HAVE been in the enjoyment of peace with God for over forty years.”

“Do you mean that for all those years you have never been troubled with doubts or fears as to your salvation?”

“Never, thank God; no, never!”

Such is the substance of a brief conversation that I chanced to overhear the other day. Nor do I reproduce it in black and white because it is in any way exceptional, or the testimony given rare. On the contrary, it is a testimony that could be echoed by thousands, and they persons of a very ordinary type.

It may seem to you a very wonderful thing to be able to say truly that one has the continual enjoyment of peace with God; but the fact remains that hundreds and thousands *can* say it, and say it truthfully, and that the Word of God declares that such experience is in accord with its teaching. “We have peace with God” (Rom. v. 1) are words which it is the happy privilege of even the youngest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ to utter.

If *you* cannot take these words upon *your* lips, my reader, there must be some grave reason, and

it is the object of this paper to help you discover what that reason is.

Broadly speaking, there are four reasons why souls are not in the enjoyment of peace with God. It may be of some help to you if we examine them together.

(1) Possibly you have not peace with God *because you do not really want it*. God does not give His blessing to those who do not feel their need of it. It ever remains true that "He satisfieth the *longing* soul." If still blind to your condition, and careless as to your eternal future, no wonder that divine peace is not yours. You live in a kind of dreamland. The devil takes care that nothing shall disturb your dreams, and thus you pass through life calmly and peacefully. But your peace is not the peace that God gives. It is a false peace in which Satan keeps your soul, in order that no desire may be awakened within you for peace *with God*.

(2) But you, reader, are not of this company; your desire is to be right with God. Perhaps, however, the reason you do not enjoy peace arises from the fact that *you are trying to make it yourself*.

"Have you made your peace with God?" is a question often asked, but founded on ignorance of the gospel. No one can make a thing that is already made. Point to a chair and ask a carpenter to make it, and he will think you bereft

of your senses. Now we read in Colossians i. 20, "Having made peace by the blood of His cross." The peace that the awakened sinner longs for is not the result of works of righteousness which he can do. The blood of Christ is the true ground of it. A man who tries to make his own peace with God is lamentably "behind the times." He is nearly nineteen centuries too late.

"I am aware of that," replies someone, "and all my hope is in Christ and His blood-shedding on the cross; and yet I seem to be as far from peace as ever."

We must seek, then, for yet another reason why it is not yours.

(3) *Self-occupation* is a fruitful source of unrest and doubt. Many who know that all their blessing depends upon the work of Christ yet look within to find evidence of their being in what they call "a state of grace." If they discover what they are searching for they conclude that all is well, and *for a time* are happy enough. I say "for a time" advisedly, for the evidence of grace which they note to-day may not be so manifest to-morrow, and the next day may have disappeared altogether, leaving their souls in a state which is the very opposite of peace.

To admit that our experience, our frames and feelings, and our condition of soul, are changeable, is to admit that they afford no basis for solid, settled peace with God.

"I have learned the truth of what you say by bitter experience," replies one. "I turn from myself with distrust and loathing, and am clinging only to the cross, and yet I have not the peace I long for."

(4) It may be, then, that the reason *you* have not peace is because you are doing that very thing—clinging to the cross.

Do not mistake my meaning. The cross of Christ is the basis of all the blessing that is offered to sinners. Were it not for the sufferings and the blood-shedding of our Substitute, peace with God would for ever have been an impossibility.

Still, I repeat that merely clinging to the cross will never of itself bring permanent *peace* to the soul. Something further is needed.

One may often see upon the walls of cottage parlours a picture illustrating what is popularly meant by "clinging to the cross." In the midst of a wild, tempestuous sea, with the battered wreck of a ship in the distance, a woman is seen clinging for dear life to a huge rock carved in the shape of a cross. Calm and serene, it stands in the midst of the raging waves, and the scene is supposed to represent the peace that ensues from clinging to the cross.

Such a representation of "Peace," I venture to say, is nothing less than a travesty of the peace of which the Scriptures speak. Far from being

WHY HAVE YOU NOT PEACE?

33

a mere peacefulness in the midst of a storm, it is a peace which depends upon the fact that *the storm is all over*.

When on the cross Jesus was in the midst of the storm. The clouds of God's judgment gathered thick around Him; the torrents of wrath that were due to sin fell upon His head. We sometimes sing—

“The tempest's awful voice was heard,
O Christ, it broke on Thee.”

But He is no longer under the storm. Death and judgment, suffering and woe, are things of the everlasting past for Him. The cross is bare, the grave is empty; and now He sits in glory *above the storm*.

“The storm that bowed His blessed head
Is hushed for ever now.”

The storm that raged at Calvary exhausted itself upon Christ. Now mark, dear reader, it was *for us* He bore that storm. The wrath of God that He endured was the wrath that *we* deserve. The storm that is past and gone, hushed for ever, is the storm with which *we* were confronted. The blissful consequence of its being all over is that peace, perfect and eternal, becomes our present portion.

Hence we read in Romans iv. 25 not only that Jesus “was delivered for our offences” (*i.e.*, went into the storm for us), but that He “was raised

again for our justification" (*i.e.*, has left the storm behind Him).

"Therefore," continues the apostle (that is, as a consequence of His being raised again, and the storm being past), "THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God."

Blissful peace! Who would not desire it? What heart would not leap with fervent longing after it if only its blissfulness be understood?

But it can only be possessed *in God's way*, as a result not only of Christ having died, but of His being raised again.

May the reader be one of those who have peace and enjoy it.

H. P. B.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

"He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love."—SONG OF SOLOMON ii. 4.

LOVE, strong as death, nay, stronger;
Love, mightier than the grave;
Broad as the earth, and longer
Than ocean's widest wave.

This is the love that sought us,
This is the love that bought us,
This is the love that brought us
To gladdest day from saddest night,
From deepest shame to glory bright,
From depths of death to life's fair height,
From darkness to the joy of light:

This is the love that leadeth

Us to His table here;

This is the love that spreadeth

For us this royal cheer.

BONAR.

“GREATER LOVE.”

LOVE has often given extraordinary proofs of its power, but none can equal the love which laid down its life for its friends.

This was the love of Christ. It stands alone.

We may read of the love of a Jonathan who loved David as his own soul, and stripped himself in order to equip the object of his admiration.

We may read of the love of the bereft Rizpah, who spread sackcloth on the rock where lay the forms of her sons, and who for weeks protected them from birds and beasts of prey. It was a mother's love for her children.

We may think of the agony of that distracted father who brought his possessed boy to the Lord, that Satan might be cast out of him—nor was he disappointed. His long agony was removed. It was paternal pity for a suffering child.

We may remember the love of the Bethany sisters on the death of their brother Lazarus, and the earnestness of affection that prompted them to send for the Lord in order that He should help them. How their cry was answered! It was evoked by a sister's love.

But yet how far short do any of these proofs of love come of the love of Christ. He gave Himself! A man laying down his life for his friends is adduced as the greatest proof of human love. There could not possibly be a greater. To die for an enemy is a thing absolutely inconceivable. It is outside the range of nature. A mother might die for a child; a brother might risk his life for a brother. That is conceivable; nay, it has often been done. A comrade on the battle-field might venture a storm of bullets to rescue a wounded fellow-soldier; it has frequently and notably been accomplished. This is history, and greater love is impossible. But the love of Christ eclipses even such transcendent instances of love.

And how? He died for His enemies, for those who hated Him!

Ah! is there nothing *new* in this wondrous fact? Have our ears become so accustomed to the story of Calvary that we are no longer struck by its accents?

List once again, "*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*" Pause, dear reader, as your eye quickly scans these words.

They fell from the Saviour's blessed lips just when men had done their worst—just at the first awful shock of physical agony when the cross was erected.

Then and there human hatred of God reached

"GREATER LOVE."

37

its climax, for He who was crucified was "God manifest in the flesh," and then and there too divine love shone out in its utmost glory!

Let me quote a memorable couplet:—

"The very spear that pierced His side
Drew forth the blood to save."

How true! What a moment when love and hatred met together—the dire, wanton malevolence of man hurled against the greatest expression of eternal love!

The greatest and blackest sin met by the prayer for "forgiveness"!

No love like this?

Christ's love carries the palm! He can challenge a greater love than His. None can be found.

He gave what?

His glory? His honour? His life? Himself? Yes, all!

And so Paul, once His chief enemy, could declare, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Depend upon it such a sacrifice affected Paul as nothing else ever did.

Have you, my reader, been affected by the love of Christ?

J. W. S.

Love like Christ's.—"He asks not that our love should equal His, but *resemble* His; not that it should be of the same strength, but of the same *kind*. A pearl of dew will not hold the sun, but it may hold a spark of its light. A child by the sea, trying to catch the waves as they dash in clouds of crystal spray upon the sand, cannot hold the ocean in a tiny shell, but he can hold a drop of the ocean water."

PRESS ON !

"One thing I do."—PHILIPPIANS iii. 13.

SORROW and gladness,
Darkness and light,
Gleams of the morning,
Gloom of the night,—
Leave these behind thee,
Scenes that are gone,
This be thy watchword—
"Press on !"

Mourn not the loved ones
Passed on before ;
Old year and new year
Know they no more !
Seek thou His presence,
Where they have gone,
And to that glory—
"Press on !"

Keep thou the lessons,
Learnt from above,
Taught thee in mercy,
Taught thee in love ;
He who has borne thee
In years that have flown,
Still shall support thee—
"Press on !"

On ! for the Master
Calls from on high !
On ! for the day
Of His coming draws nigh !
Much is before thee,
Yet to be won,
Look not behind thee—
"Press on !"

On—to the gladness,
On—to the light,
Past—all the sadness,
Past—all the night.
Soon to those mansions,
Where He has gone,
Jesus shall call thee—
"Press on !"

D. C. S.

Belfast.

REWARDS.

WE saw last month, in our paper on the judgment-seat of Christ, that the *person* of the believer would never come into judgment, but that his *works* would be manifested. And further, that all contrary to God in the life of a believer would pass under the fire of God's judgment, and he would suffer loss; whilst, on the other hand, all in the believer's life that had been for God's glory would meet with reward at the judgment-seat of Christ.

The suffering loss is as if a contractor built a house which the government inspector condemned as falling short of government requirements, and instead of the contractor receiving the reward of his labour, he suffers loss. His time, money, and labour are fruitless. On the other hand, if his work passes the government inspector, he is rewarded by receiving payment for his work.

Having said thus much, let us enquire as to the nature and character of the rewards the Lord Jesus gives to His own.

Rewards are not given as the recompense of gift or ability, but of faithfulness.

This is illustrated by Matthew xxv. 14-30 and

Luke xix. 12-27. In the former case the king gives one servant five talents, another two, and another one, "according to his several ability." The *bestowal* of talents is according to ability clearly, but not the *reward*—the *responsibility* of each is according to his capacity, but not the *recompense*.

When the king returns he finds that the servant to whom had been committed *five* talents had traded and made other *five* talents; likewise the one to whom *two* talents had been committed had traded and made other *two*. And what are the terms of the reward? *Exactly the same*, word for word in each case. "Well done, thou good and *faithful* servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." (Matt. xxv. 21-23.)

In each case they had exactly doubled their capital. Whilst one had greater responsibility, each had taken the full advantage of the opportunity given him in sovereignty by his lord and been equally *faithful*, and hence the reward is in the same terms.

But in the second scripture (Luke xix.) the nobleman calls his ten servants before him and gives them ten pounds in equal portions. *They all began on one dead level.*

On returning the nobleman calls his servants before him. One man's pound has gained *ten*

pounds. Reward, authority over *ten* cities. Another man's pound has gained *five* pounds. Reward, authority over *five* cities. In this parable the industry and faithfulness are greater in one servant than in another, hence the reward differs in that proportion.

Let this be an incentive to us not to repine because our talents and opportunities are not so great as others', but to *faithfully* use what our Lord has, in sovereign discretion, committed to our care. If others have greater talents, remember they have greater responsibilities.

We are exhorted to "covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet," we are told, "I show unto you a more excellent way." What is that? To love one another. It may take talents and gifts to preach or teach, it may take a large income to give largely to the Lord's work, but one can love with a full heart, even if one's head and pocket are alike empty.

And, further, it may take more grace to be faithful with a little than with much; as, for instance, a man will pray before he gives a five-pound note away, whilst he will bestow a shilling with little thought.

Rewards are in connection with the absent Lord returning to His kingdom. We shall reign, and reign *with* Him. "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." *Our place in the kingdom* is determined by our faithfulness to the

rejected One, who will yet reign over the earth. *Our portion in heaven* is of free sovereign grace, and, apart from merit on our part, our title to it is the precious work of Christ. Each child is equally dear to the Father. There will be no favourites there. Precious thought it is that heaven is all of grace—righteous grace.

The kingdom gives one the idea of *government and rule*, although it is the government of grace; the eternal state, the idea of *grace and glory*.

One last word, and let it be a word of inspiration. "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, EXCEPT HE STRIVE LAWFULLY."

May God give us true desires and motives, so that we may serve Christ and use our opportunities as those that count our responsibilities to be privileges. Thus shall love, not reward, be the motive-spring of our actions. A. J. P.

A Look into Eternity.—That eminent American preacher, Summerfield, when he lay a-dying, turned round to a friend in the room and said, "I have taken a look into eternity. Oh, if I could come back and preach again, how differently would I preach from what I have done before!" Take a look into eternity, brethren, if you want to be earnest and decided.

THE REGIONS BEYOND.

“To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you.”
2 CORINTHIANS X. 16.

THESE words set forth the large-heartedness of the self-denying and devoted apostle, and furnish a fine model for the evangelist in every age. The gospel is a traveller, and the preacher of the gospel must be a traveller likewise. The divinely-qualified and divinely-sent evangelist will fix his eye upon “the world.” He will embrace in his benevolent design the human family. From house to house, from street to street, from city to city, from province to province, from kingdom to kingdom, from continent to continent, from pole to pole. Such is the range of “the good news” and the publisher thereof. “The regions beyond” must ever be

THE GRAND GOSPEL MOTTO.

No sooner has the gospel lamp cast its cheering beams over a district than the bearer of that lamp must think of the regions beyond. Thus the work goes on. Thus the mighty tide of grace rolls, in enlightening and saving power, over a dark world which lies in “the region of the shadow of death.”

THE REGIONS BEYOND.

“Waft, waft, ye winds, the story,
 And you, ye waters, roll,
 Till like a sea of glory
 It spreads from pole to pole.”

Christian reader, are you thinking of the regions beyond you? This expression may, in your case, mean the next house, the next street, the next village, the next city, the next kingdom, or the next continent. The application is for your own heart to ponder; but, say, are you thinking of the regions beyond you? I do not want you to abandon your present post at all, or at least till you are persuaded that your work at that post is done. But, remember,

THE GOSPEL PLOUGH

should never stand still. “*Onward*” is the motto of every true evangelist. Let the shepherds abide by the flocks; but let the evangelists betake themselves hither and thither to gather the sheep. Let them sound the gospel trumpet far and wide over the dark mountains of this world, to gather together the elect of God. This is the design of the gospel. This should be the object of the evangelist as he sighs after “the regions beyond.”*

When Cæsar beheld from the coast of Gaul

* The conversion of the world is not the object of the divinely-instructed evangelist, but the gathering out a people to the Lord’s name—a people for the heavens, the body of Christ, the Church of God. (Acts xv. 14.)

THE REGIONS BEYOND.

45

the white cliffs of Britain, he earnestly longed to carry his arms thither. The evangelist, on the other hand, whose heart beats in unison with the heart of Jesus, as he casts his eye over the map of the world, longs to carry the gospel of peace into regions

WRAPPED IN MIDNIGHT GLOOM,

covered with the dark mantle of superstition, or blasted by the withering influences of "a form of godliness" without the power.

It would, I believe, be a profitable question for many of us to put to ourselves, how far are we discharging our holy responsibilities to "the regions beyond"? I believe the Christian who is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit is in a deplorable condition. I believe, too, that the assembly which is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit is in a dead state. One of the truest marks of spiritual growth and prosperity, whether in an individual or in an assembly, is

EARNEST ANXIETY

after the conversion of souls. This anxiety will swell the bosom with the most generous emotions; yea, it will break forth in copious streams of benevolent exertion, ever flowing toward "the regions beyond."

It is hard to believe that "the word of Christ" is "dwelling richly" in anyone who is not

making some effort to impart that word to his fellow-men. It matters not what may be the amount of the effort; it may be to drop a few words in the ear of a friend, to give a tract, to pen a note, to breathe a prayer. But one thing is certain, namely, that a healthy, vigorous Christian will be an evangelistic Christian—a teller of good news—one whose sympathies, desires, and energies are ever going forth toward the regions beyond. “I must preach the gospel to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.” Such was the language of the Divine Evangelist.

It is very doubtful whether many of the servants of Christ have not erred in allowing themselves, through one influence or another, to become too much localised—too much

TIED TO ONE PLACE.

They have dropped into routine work—into a round of stated preaching in the same place, and in many cases have paralysed themselves and paralysed their hearers also. I speak not now of the labours of the pastor, the elder or the teacher, which must, of course, be carried on in the midst of those who are the proper subjects of such labours. I refer more particularly to the evangelist. Such a one should never suffer himself to become localised. The world is his *sphere*, “the regions beyond” his *motto*, to gather out God’s elect his *object*, the current of the

THE REGIONS BEYOND.

47

Spirit his *line of direction*. If the reader be one whom God has called and fitted to be an evangelist, let him

REMEMBER THOSE FOUR THINGS,

which all must adopt if they would prove fruitful labourers in the gospel field.

Finally, whether the reader be an evangelist or not, I would earnestly entreat him to examine how far he is seeking to further the gospel of Christ. We really must not stand idle. Time is short! Eternity is rapidly posting on! The Master is most worthy! Souls are most precious! The season for work will soon close! Let us, then, in the name of the Lord be up and doing. And when we have done what we can in the regions around, let us carry the precious gospel into "THE REGIONS BEYOND."

"Go labour on while it is day,
The world's dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed thy work, cast sloth away:
It is not thus that souls are won.

"Men die in darkness at thy side,
Without a hope to cheer the tomb;
Take up the torch and wave it wide,
The torch that lights time's thickest gloom.

"Go on, faint not, keep watch and pray;
Be wise the erring soul to win;
Go forth into the world's highway,
Compel the wanderers to come in."

C. H. M.

“PRESENT TRUTH.”

A LETTER TO A BROTHER IN CHRIST.

“I AM so thankful to have met you, and to have heard of all God’s gracious dealings with you. It is a wonderful blessing to have been brought out of darkness into His marvellous light; but all we have so far got is only the *beginning*. He bids us follow on, ‘then shall we know, *if we follow on* to know the Lord.’ That verse in Phil. iii. is very encouraging, ‘If in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God *shall reveal* even this unto you. Nevertheless whereunto we have already attained,’ etc.; it speaks of progress, growth, both in the knowledge of Himself and of His truth by His Word.

“Now, while *all* God’s blessed Word is *for* us, some parts are more especially written *to* us; and while some are of general application and suited for all times, some are suited for particular stages in the Church’s history and our own history as saints, and are what the apostle Peter calls ‘present truth.’ I would refer to such portions as 1 Tim. iv. and 2 Tim. iii., in the first of which the apostle contemplates the *latter* days, and in the second the *last* days (of Church history below), and gives suited instruction.

“I write all this because I don’t think you

quite understood what I was saying last Sunday afternoon when you read those two chapters in Ezekiel. Those chapters are prophecy as to a terrible onslaught to be made upon the people of Israel after their restoration to their own land. They are God's Word, deeply interesting and instructive to us, but written especially for those who will pass through those scenes in that day, to strengthen their faith and comfort their hearts by making known the final result; they are not written *to us* in the peculiar way that other portions are. We are passing through different times and different scenes, and in the mercy of God we have been furnished with peculiar instruction suited to our times, *words in season*; but we need spiritual intelligence 'to know the times'; we want to be like those men of Issachar, named in 1 Chron. xii. 32, 'that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.'

"Now, I believe we are in all the confusion depicted in 2 Timothy, and that that is one of the portions especially given for our present need. Paul, while reminding Timothy in chapter iii. of the *all Scripture* which had been given before, yet writes fresh Scripture, as did also Peter, Jude, and John, 'words in season' for days yet to come, and bearing on forms of evil which were then beginning to develope.

"Now, two things seem to me to stand out very

distinctly in 2 Timothy. One is the way the Spirit of God encourages the poor servant in view of evil coming in like a flood. He encourages him to be *strong* in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. That does not fail; Christ does not change. He abides faithful; God's foundation stands firm, and He has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. The other thing is that he is to be careful of his associations, he is to choose his company; from some he is *to turn away*, he is *to purge himself* from vessels to dishonour, and to follow after righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

“All this needs spiritual intelligence, only to be obtained by waiting on the Lord Himself. We need the help of the Spirit, who gave the Word, to help us to understand, apply, and obey it. We may help one another in this, but each servant is responsible to his own master.

“I will not add more. May the Lord lead you on, and may you be willing to follow. I write this about purging yourself in view of what you said of being able to go anywhere. Those who have turned from the truth to fables and doctrines of men I must turn from, if I am to be true to my Lord and Master, as I have to keep His Word and not deny His name.

“God bless you, dear brother.

“Yours, etc., J. G. D.”

THE DISEASE AND ITS CURE.

THE writer of the following letter had been a sporting parson, one who had lived for time rather than for eternity. But God in His grace gave him to know that he was lost, and as a lost sinner he fled for refuge to Jesus, who came to seek and save such.

If the reader be either careless as to that other world, or be resting in any degree for salvation on the best of all his own works, may God bless to him this message from one who, being dead, yet speaketh.

“MY DEAR SIR,—It has not been from carelessness about you that I have not sent to your house to enquire after you since I heard you were ill, but circumstances have set me at a distance from you, and I did not know whether such an attention would be acceptable from me. I feel, however, a strong desire to assure you that I have you very much in my thoughts, and that I sincerely wish, if it be God’s will, that you may recover health. This is only the feeling of common friendship, and which your kindness to me in times past calls for. But, indeed, I have, since those times, been taught a new tie which draws me to you. It was then this world, and the

things of it in which we could take a common interest, but I did not then think of that other world in which we are both eternally interested, and in which, for anything in ourselves, our lot in common must be eternal misery. We are both poor sinners, neither of us possessing any claim upon God for favour, and deserving nothing but His just wrath. On this ground we both by nature stand, in this we are equal: both lost but for the grace and mercy of God. In this there is not a shade of difference between us. It is this emboldens me to write to you. Our cases are the same, our souls both alike diseased, and our cure must be the same. Blessed be God, I can tell you of that cure, and testify to its power in a case as bad as any poor sinner's soul was ever in, and I know it is the only cure.

“Dear sir, that cure is the blood of Jesus Christ, and faith in Him assures the healing application to every poor sinner. God found in that blood a ransom. Every sinner that trusts in that blood as the full atonement for all his sins honours Jesus Christ and pleases God, for ‘this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.’ (John vi. 29.)

“Oh, when we come to die, and our sins are brought to our remembrance, and we feel we are going to stand before the God we have sinned against, how dreadful would our state be but for the blood which Jesus carried into heaven,

THE DISEASE AND ITS CURE.

53

and sprinkled upon the mercy-seat on which God sits, so that the blood of His own Son is before Him—atoning blood, blood that answers all the accusations, blood which is the full payment of all demands. God looks on that blood, and when He sees it He is satisfied. There can no sin come up before Him, but the power of that blood and the value of that blood in His sight is far greater to save than that of the sin to damn.

“I sincerely pray that the sense of the value of Christ’s blood in God’s eyes may give you an assurance that it far outweighs all your sins, and that you may trust for the saving of your soul wholly to its all-prevailing power with God. The blood of Jesus is all-sufficient; every sinner that goes to God, expecting mercy because that all-atoning blood is before Him, will assuredly be saved. The name of Jesus opens the heart of God for the love He bears that beloved Son.

“Cast away everything, my dear sir, that comes into your mind as a ground for hope, besides the blood of Jesus Christ. This, if you believe in Him, will save your soul, while the best of all your own works would only justify God in condemning you.

“Pardon my freedom with you, and be assured it arises from an earnest desire for your eternal peace.

“I am, yours for the Lord’s sake, J. W. P.”

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. H.—Samson's life is one long, loud warning against the unequal yoke of 2 Cor. vi. 14. It lifts up its voice, it cries aloud, and bids us beware of the pit into which he fell. A Nazarite from his birth, a judge in Israel, a man on whom the Spirit of the Lord came, moving him to mighty deeds, and yet he goes to sleep on the lap of Delilah, and suffers the inevitable consequences. The Philistines took him, gouged out his eyes, bound him with fetters of brass, put him in prison, made him grind on their corn floors, and heaped upon him a thousand other indignities. Poor Samson! In those dreary days how his heart must have groaned in anguish at the remembrance of his folly, his sin, his departure from God! Deep and sincere was his repentance, we may assuredly believe. But though in answer to prayer his former strength came back, and he used it to inflict a terrible blow on the enemies of the Lord and His people, yet he himself perished in their overthrow. It is a solemn story, teaching us that if we would be true witnesses for God we must be separate, according to His Word, and that worldly associations and unscriptural alliances will surely deprive us of every vestige of spiritual power, and bring upon us untold miseries.

Samson's riddle, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness," finds its full solution in the death of Christ. Death is the great eater. His insatiable maw is never

satisfied. And who so strong as death? From the hour it sallied forth, sword in hand, from fallen Eden it has conquered everywhere. It has laid in the dust generation after generation. Giant and pigmy alike have been swept into the grave. But out of the eater meat has come, and sweetness out of the strong. Death—the death of Christ—is the greatest, sweetest proof of love, and to us it has become the gate of life. This the sixth chapter of John fully unfolds. “Who-so eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.” There is the true answer to Samson’s riddle.

J. B.—We believe there are many who have been born again, and therefore have divine life in their soul, who would be afraid to say they were saved lest they should say too much. The new birth does not give peace of itself, though there can be none without it. But it generally happens that when a soul is new-born it realizes its unfitness for the holy presence of God a great deal more than ever it did before. Sin is seen to be exceeding black, and the soul cries out, “Woe is me, for I am undone.” By-and-by it learns that God is rich in mercy, and it is led to cast itself wholly on Christ, and to rest on the perfect atonement which He has made. Then, the sure testimony of God being believed, the soul is at peace, and is able to speak with confidence as to its salvation.

And we cannot forget that much of the current religious teaching rather encourages a doubting state. The certainty of salvation, founded on the finished

work of Christ and the faithful witness of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, is what many a preacher does not himself enjoy; how then shall he set it before others? Yet this certainty should be possessed by the believer from the very outset of his Christian course. It is no high attainment, reached after long years of religious life, but a part of the birthright of all who are born of God. But we need not further enlarge, as the subject is dealt with in our present issue in the paper entitled "Why have you not Peace?"

As to your second question—the unbelieving may indeed resist the Holy Ghost. Stephen charges the Jewish council with this solemn sin. The testimony which they were resisting was the testimony of the Holy Ghost. This surely may be done to-day. And in a somewhat different sense the same sin may be committed now. For example, the Word is preached, the power of the Spirit clothes it, the conscience quails and joins with the Spirit in calling on the individual to receive the message. He resists, refuses, drowns the voice of conscience, and pursues his mad career. It is an awfully dangerous thing to trifle thus with one's religious convictions, for once stifled they may never revive. *But the new birth goes further than all this.* We may be sure that when a soul is born of the Spirit it will never again become a child of perdition. He who begins the good work will carry it on. A candle which God has lit shall never be blown out by the devil; of that we may rest fully assured.

POETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS have been received from R. S., F. T. S., N. T., C. L., and others.

A SEVENFOLD CLUSTER.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—JOHN iii. 16.

FAMILIAR words surely to all of us! But how great the message! how great the One who sends it to us—“the great God,” “the eternal God,” “the living God,” God, who created all things, who gives “to all life, and breath, and all things”! (Acts xvii. 25.) It is God who sends us this message; His heart is the source of it. Have we heeded it? have we listened to it?

THE GREAT LOVE.

“So loved.” Who can measure this love? It is infinite, divine. All human love has a limit, a point beyond which it may not, cannot go; but God’s love is without limit, and more than that, it is eternal. Our Lord said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John xv. 13.) We seldom hear of one who loves another to such a depth as to lay down his life for him; but “when we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son” (Rom. v. 10)—*enemies*, yes, *enemies*. God *so loved*, that He gave His Son for you and me when we were *enemies*. Let us ask ourselves as we ponder it, Has this great love touched our hearts? Has it reached us in our deep need

as "enemies, sinners, ungodly"? (Rom. v. 6, 8, 10.) And if not, why not? It is for us, as we shall see by the next few words.

THE GREAT COMPANY.

"The world." Is there one outside that word, one who could say as he reads it, "It is not for me"? Thank God, no! It is for all: "God so loved the world." It is for us, who live in a Christian country, with all the light of God's Word shedding its beams upon us. It is for those, too, in other lands, where the darkness of superstition and popery reigns. And, yet again, it is for those who live in heathendom, with no ray of light to brighten their lives. Fellow-Christians, let us ask ourselves as we ponder these things, Are we doing all that we might to send the tidings of this wondrous love to those who are in such darkness? The knowledge of God's love has filled *our* hearts with joy and gladness from day to day, and we rejoice in hope of His glory. (Rom. v. 2.) But *they* know nothing of Him: they have no God to turn to, no comfort in the midst of sorrow, no hope beyond the grave. What a contrast! May it stir our hearts to their very depths.

THE GREAT GIFT.

"He gave His only-begotten Son." Heaven's best treasure has been given for us. "Having yet therefore one Son, His well-beloved, He sent Him also last unto them." How great must have

A SEVENFOLD CLUSTER.

59

been God's love to the world, that He gave His Son, His well-beloved, to die! How great must be His grace, that He allowed man to mock Him, to scorn Him, to deride Him, to spit upon Him, and then to crucify Him between two malefactors! We speak sometimes of sacrifice, of giving up this and that for Christ, but surely, as we gaze upon Him there on that cross of shame for us, we can only say that such love claims our heart's best affections, our lives, our all. There is a solemn warning, too, in these words: "He sent Him also *last* unto them." For those who refuse this great gift there remains no other way of salvation. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

THE GREAT INVITATION.

"That whosoever believeth in Him." We have seen that God's message of love is to all, and now He gives an invitation, one which will reach a king upon his throne and a beggar in the street; it is "whosoever believeth in Him." The work is done: the Lord Jesus Christ has "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. ix. 26.) He "died for our sins according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. xv. 3.) Christ has done the work; God sends us the invitation to that great inheritance which we find at the end of our verse. Let us see to it that we do not neglect it, that we do not put it off until it is too late.

A SEVENFOLD CLUSTER.

THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

"Should not perish." *Perish!* We almost shudder as we speak the word, with all its awful solemnity. Luke xvi. 22-28 gives us a picture of its meaning. Men to-day speak against God because of what His Word tells us of the doom of those who refuse His great invitation, but "we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth." (Rom. ii. 2.) Surely, then, we may say that God has a great deliverance for those who will have it.

THE GREAT INHERITANCE.

"But have everlasting life." How plain God's word is, how sure to rest upon. There is no doubt, no uncertainty, here. "*Have* everlasting life." We have it now; we "are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus iii. 7.) We have received the "promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. ix. 15), and we have also "the earnest of our inheritance." (Eph. i. 14.) The day is coming when we shall enter into it in all its fulness, with nothing to hinder our enjoyment; but even now by faith we can know something of those things that will be our portion for ever. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) Happy indeed are they who can say, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." Can *you* join in saying so? Is that love shed abroad in *your* heart? J. L.

DEFINITE PRAYER.

“Friend, lend me three loaves.”—LUKE xi. 5.

THIS man evidently knew what he wanted, and asked for it in very explicit terms. He went straight to the point, and laid his need before the other with the utmost plainness and simplicity of speech.

Had he lived in our day, and followed the practice of some good men whom we have known, he would have been much more diffuse and infinitely more obscure. Instead of five words he would have used five hundred, wasting his breath and taxing to the utmost the patience of his friend.

This man furnishes a fine example of *the definite* in prayer. We say nothing of men's private prayers, but some who lead us in public prayer would comfort us not a little were *they* to be equally explicit, or at least a great deal more explicit than they are. We sometimes wonder whether they themselves know what they are going to ask for when they rise and say, “Let us pray.” They seem to have nothing definite before them, or if they have it is soon lost in an endless cloud of words, empty phrases, and dry statements of doctrine.

We would give much to gain the ear of such. Were we sure they read our simple pages, we would seek to show them how very deadening such a practice is, how far removed from the spirit of true prayer. We would entreat them, with loving words and arguments, to give it up, and to pray as men who had something to pray for. Whether we should succeed or not it is hard to tell. Old habits are not easily broken off. Besides, it is a common feature of this disease that those who suffer from it most do not believe they suffer from it at all. They see and pity it in others, but never suspect it in themselves. Such is the blinding power of habit.

A story reached us the other day from Germany. In that country no one is allowed to make a speech, or give an address, at any funeral save the authorised ministers of religion—an official class. This law is rigidly enforced, and upon any breach of it the culprit is summoned before the proper tribunal to be punished. Quite lately a funeral took place, and some simple Christian man stood forth to pray. Alas for him! his prayer on this occasion was very long—a sort of prayer, lecture, and exhortation all in one. A detective happened to be there, and he, not recognising this amazing string of words as prayer at all, thought the good brother was a fraud who, under pretence of prayer, sought to make a speech or deliver a discourse. He was straightway charged with breaking the

DEFINITE PRAYER.

63

law, and, in spite of explanations and protestations, had to pay a sum equal to seven pounds of English money. The sentence seems severe, but if it checks the habit the money will not have been thrown away, nor the story told in vain.

And if it be impossible to check it altogether, at all events we may indulge the hope of saving some from falling into it. There are young men among our readers whose voices will soon be heard in our meetings for prayer. To these we give one word of earnest, loving counsel. *Be definite.* Have something to pray for when you stand up to pray. Seek to realise that you are speaking to God, and that you are the mouthpiece of others. Beware of preaching-prayers—we mean prayers three parts of which consist of words that might be well addressed to men, but are not prayer at all, even if judged by the most elastic rule. We have often listened to such with much inward groaning, and have tried to follow till our mind, tired out, was lost in a labyrinth of words. Beware of that. A meeting for prayer should be one of the most precious seasons upon earth. Why should it be made barren and unfruitful by habits that ought never to have been formed, or, if formed, should be seriously struggled against till overcome? Remember *the definite* in prayer. “Friend, lend me three loaves.”

Only another word. Give earnest heed to the

prayers of the New Testament. Mark the lines along which the Holy Spirit led the saints of early days to pray. Study the prayer of the persecuted apostles in Acts iv., of Epaphras in Colossians iv., of Paul in Philippians i. and again in Ephesians i. iii. These were prayers for the advancement of God's kingdom, for the spiritual growth and blessing of the saints—definite things expressed in definite terms. Surely the Holy Spirit would lead us along similar lines to-day. We say this lest our prayers should be confined to things temporal. There is a danger in that direction. If the scope of our prayers is *only* large enough to embrace our own things, it will be narrow indeed. In whatever direction the interests of Christ lie—whether in the Church circle, embracing *all* saints, or in the gospel circle, whose broad sweep includes *all* nations, peoples, and tongues on the habitable earth—thither our prayers should go, and so they will if we pray intelligently and “in the Holy Ghost.” (Jude 20.)

“THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, COME.”—As the traveller, homeward bound, after long years of absence, longs to see the faces of those he loves, as the exiled patriot hungers for his own dear native land, so the Church looks forward with earnest hope and expectation to the return of the Lord to receive her to Himself—she the object of His love, and He the object of hers. “*Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*”

CONCERNING PREACHERS, HEARERS, AND OTHERS.

I HAVE read, with much interest, the article in the January number of *Simple Testimony* entitled "What to Preach," and as it deals with a subject about which I have had much exercise of mind, I venture to send you the following remarks.

I am quite sure that all your readers who seek to serve God in spirit in the gospel of His Son (Rom. i. 9) must be thankful for the way in which "J. W. S." has called attention to the subject-matter of the preaching and the apparent dearth of conversions. His points are weighty, and deserve attention from all who are interested in the important question of soul-winning.

In the third paragraph he says: "And what can the preacher do? He can only preach; but if he preach IN DIVINE POWER, he does very much." The question arises, Whence, then, this power? I answer: If there is with the servant, preacher or otherwise, a going in before God in spirit, the entering into the secret chamber of Matthew vi. 6, the promise of the Father will be *surely* fulfilled to reward *openly*. I quote here the words used by a beloved servant of the Lord recently:—

"Have I a little corner where nobody but myself and God are, where God and I can be alone? Speak

66 CONCERNING PREACHERS AND HEARERS.

first to God about yourself. I need to go into God's presence before I can begin to pray; it takes time. You cannot jump into the spirit of prayer. Speak to God about men first, then to men about God. If you speak more than you pray, you will be weak by that amount, by the amount that your preaching exceeds your praying. . . . We have a fourfold strength: the Holy Spirit; the throne of grace; the Word of God; a pair of knees. Make use of them."

Of late there has been much going up on to the mount, and seeing Him in His glory. But why so little power at the foot of the mount to deal with those oppressed by the devil? Surely it is because the word of the Lord about "prayer and fasting" is so little heeded. What did it mean to Him? He again and again withdrew Himself from His disciples—from the public gaze—that He might be *alone with God*. He, who in Himself could have been most independent, was, as the true Servant, the *most dependent*. He sowed in tears; He will reap in joy.

The preacher *is* God's channel of communication, as "J. W. S." truly says; but then the channel must be emptied of all that is not of God, or the message will not "have free course, and be glorified." (2 Thess. iii. 1.) How often—and it is humbling to own it—the vessel or channel is not sanctified and meet for the Master's use, not purged from all that dishonours. (2 Tim. ii. 20, 21.) Some little selfishness is allowed, some youthful lust, and the cross not fully applied; thus the servant is not properly free. To follow

CONCERNING PREACHERS AND HEARERS. 67

Him there must be the *daily* denial of self (Luke ix. 23), saying to ONESELF, as Peter said of his Lord, "I know him not." We are absolutely sure that if there be a hindrance to effectual service the fault is ours, not God's. He would have us "workers together with Him." If He cannot use us, He will use others. If one says, "Here am I, send me," then He will surely use such a one if there be the true moral fitness.

Having thus referred to the preacher, and to his work and state of soul, I would now point out another *great* reason why we see so few conversions; it is the terrible indifference which marks so many of the people of God. In numerous places where the gospel is regularly preached, there *appears* to be, on the part of the Christians who attend, absolutely no expectancy that God will use His Word in saving souls. What is the effect? The preacher is pressed down and burdened in spirit; the preaching is a labour to him, and the chariot wheels drag heavily. Thank God, there are exceptions; but, alas! this frigid, indifferent attitude is met with only too often. If the great servant and apostle Paul said, "Pray for me," how much more does the preacher to-day need the hearty prayers of his fellow-saints! If on their part there were more waiting upon God *privately* as well as publicly for His blessing on the gospel, what results would speedily be seen!

68 CONCERNING PREACHERS AND HEARERS.

And if there were more exercise of heart before Him as to the asking of needy souls to come and hear the Word, would He not guide to such, and lead them, through His children, to the place where His "good news" is proclaimed?

Often the preacher comes fresh from the presence of God, and burdened with His message, only to find few to hear the Word, and the spiritual atmosphere cold and cheerless, no effort made to gather the unsaved together, no visiting of the highways and hedges to compel them to come in! Can it be wondered at that many who have but little of the precious truth we so much enjoy, but who go out in earnestness and persistency, are used in the salvation of many whom we fail to reach?

Would to God that amongst saints, preachers or otherwise, there were such a revival of soul before Him as is evidently needed! THEN there would be a return of soul-stirring times, and many would be turned to God. (1 Thess. i.)

In closing, one can only desire that the heart and eye of each and all may be so set upon Christ in glory, that out of full, overflowing hearts the testimony of the gospel may go forth. Then the seeking and finding process, so blessedly set before us in John i. 29-51, will be repeated again and again, to the glory of God and the blessing of not a few.

H. S. H.

ITTAI'S OPPORTUNITY.

“Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. . . . And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.”—2 SAMUEL xv. 19, 21.

THIS chapter unfolds one of the darkest moments in David's eventful history. The man after God's own heart, the sweet singer of Israel, the deliverer of God's perplexed people, the one who had slain his “ten thousands,” is a fugitive. A usurper has taken the king's rightful place and laid his hand upon his throne and house; the wiles and the kisses of Absalom have found a response in the unguarded hearts of the people. (See *vv.* 5, 6, and 11.) It was indeed a dark day, and to stem the tide of evil and rebellion seemed impossible.

With broken hearts, tearful eyes, covered heads, and bare feet, the king and his body-guard pass over Kidron and up towards Olivet. What a scene! But this day of David's distress, and of Absalom's usurpation, was the day of opportunity for true-hearted Ittai. Never before has his name been mentioned in the history. A citizen of Gath (for such was Ittai) found no welcome from the

courtiers who surrounded David's throne. But that heart, true as steel, had found its opportunity at length. He lays himself and all he has at David's feet. "As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be." Precious words from a heart wholly David's, and spoken when they were most welcome.

Do *we* speak of the days as being dark and difficult? They are! The usurper is enthroned, the true King rejected. "Not this man, but Barabbas," is as true in principle to-day as when 1800 years ago it was first uttered. The days are indeed dark and perilous. But, dear young Christian, this is your opportunity. Make the most of it. Seize the occasion, and let heart and voice be definitely for Christ, and His loving heart shall be cheered, and His truth maintained. Do not miss it!

In 2 Samuel xviii. David confides to Ittai a third part of his army, and then with Joab and Abishai he is used in the restoration of the king to his throne and home.

It is to the "Ittais" of to-day that the King will entrust His interests, whole-hearted, devoted men, who are willing if need be to lay down their lives for His sake.

In Matthew viii. the Lord Himself gives the true test of devotedness. A scribe learned in

the Scriptures professed boldly his devotedness: "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." The answer is, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." And the scribe probably preferred the comforts of home and the advantages of an ancestral religion to the company of Christ and all that it entailed. Another professed follower claimed the favour of "first burying his father," and the dominant love of his heart is exposed. The presence of Christ ever thus acts; the unreality of the hypocrite and the reality of the true heart are alike declared.

In Philippians i. 20 we have Paul, the devoted servant of his Master, in the midst of circumstances of desperate danger, fearlessly testifying his earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing he should be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ should be magnified in his body, whether by life, or by death.

May the words of Ittai and Paul express the true attitude of our hearts towards the One who is so soon coming again. As a sovereign delights to be surrounded by those whom he has himself ennobled in recognition of heroic deeds done for love of king and country, so may it be His delight in that coming day to have us near Himself, to reflect the glory of His person and add to the brilliancy of His throne.

G. W. H.

DEVOTEDNESS AND INTELLIGENCE

WE place devotedness before intelligence because they are given in this order in God's Word. Generally speaking, devotedness has to do with the *heart*, while intelligence is more connected with the *mind*.

While we plead for more affection for Christ, we wish it to be clearly understood that we are not offering a premium for *ignorance* as to things concerning Himself. Mere intelligence will not produce affection; but one cannot conceive how a believer could be really devoted to Christ without becoming correspondingly intelligent in divine things. But when truth only reaches the head and touches not the heart, it simply results in knowledge that "puffeth up."

It is astonishing, but humbling, to see how very much believers can *know* of truth without their lives and ways being much affected thereby.

Peter, as it were, wanted to be intelligent straight off before following Jesus, and of course had to be set right. Peter, seeing Jesus, said, "Lord, and *what shall this man do?* Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? FOLLOW THOU ME." (John xxi.) When Peter followed Jesus he would *know* that John was doing the same.

DEVOTEDNESS AND INTELLIGENCE.

73

So with us: when we follow the Lord we shall find others who are in the same path. No one can follow Him and at the same time be ignorant and in evil. We must be separate from evil to be with "them that call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart." Peter had to find out John's devotedness to the Lord by being devoted himself.

Mary Magdalene was a very striking instance of deep personal devotedness to her Lord and Master. Her affection for the Lord no doubt was the secret of her rapid growth and of her much-honoured service. One loves to dwell upon such a character as Mary Magdalene. When Jesus had dispossessed her of seven demons, we read of her following Jesus from Galilee ministering unto Him of her substance, that she "stood by the cross of Jesus," was "sitting over against the sepulchre" when the great stone had been rolled to the door. Then, after the resurrection and before daylight, it is written of her that she "stood without at the sepulchre weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre. . . . Jesus saith unto her, Mary, . . . go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God. Mary came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her."

Mary Magdalene honoured the Lord so much that He honoured her in turn by entrusting to her the most wonderful message ever communicated to His disciples.

It is beautiful to see how Mary Magdalene was so blessedly associated with the Lord in His earthly pathway, in His death, and in His resurrection; but, mark, it is written that she "*followed Jesus.*"

May Peter's and Mary Magdalene's examples encourage us to cultivate true affection for our rejected but coming Lord, for His glory's sake!

J. N.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD."

"**T**HE Lord is my Shepherd!" Oh, say, who can fathom
The beauty and sweetness that dwelleth in this?
"The Lord is my Shepherd!" and safe in His keeping
I rest, for by infinite grace I am His.

Yes, His; for He bought me, on Calvary paying,
In anguish, the debt that was due for my guilt;
For far o'er the mountains in sin was I straying,
Nor could I return till His blood had been spilt.

Yes, His; for He sought me. In deepest compassion
He left the fair home of His glory so bright,
And far o'er the mountains He followed the lost one,
Dwelling afar in the regions of night.

And now, in His love and His pity, He bears me
For ever at rest on His bosom of love;
Nor e'er will He leave me till safe in the glory
His loved ones He brings to the mansions above.

N. TUNLEY,

Brisbane.

THE CHURCH: HOW AND WHEN IT BEGAN.

PERHAPS there is no subject about which such general ignorance prevails as that of the Church or assembly of God.

People talk about going to church, of having been to church, and of joining the Church. A young man comes to suited years, and he is sent to college with a view to his going into the Church. Others speak of the Old Testament Church and the Church in New Testament times, as if the latter were a continuation of the former, and meant the same thing. They spiritualise and appropriate all the blessings predicated of God's earthly people Israel, as if there were not the least distinction between Israel and the Church.

It ought to be needless to say that the Church is not a material structure—a building of stone and mortar. Two verses suffice to dispel such a delusion:—

“Howbeit the Most High *dwelleth not* in temples made with hands.” (Acts vii. 48.)

“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, *dwelleth not* in temples made with hands.” (Acts xvii. 24.)

76 THE CHURCH: HOW AND WHEN IT BEGAN.

Nor is the Church something we can join. We must be joined to it by the Holy Ghost, and when thus joined we form part of it. In the beginning *the Lord added* to the Church daily such as should be saved.

Every person who is born again, justified before God, and indwelt by the Holy Ghost forms part of the Church which is Christ's body, and he only.

All such are spiritual priests, and have equal privileges, though they may not be gifted alike. Peter, in addressing the whole company of saints, says, "Ye also, as lively" (living) "stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Such a thing as a special class of men, known by their dress and set apart as priests, was utterly unknown at the beginning of the Church's history.

It may help to an understanding of the subject if we keep before our minds the three distinct classes of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians x. 32: "Give none offence, neither to the *Jews*, nor to the *Gentiles*, nor to the *Church of God*."

Previous to the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, by whose coming the Church was formed, there were but two classes, namely, Jews and Gentiles.

We search the Old Testament in vain for any mention of the Church—the body of Christ. There may be figures of the Church as the Bride.

THE CHURCH: HOW AND WHEN IT BEGAN. 77

Eve undoubtedly was such. Paul speaks of her in this connection in Ephesians v.

The Church was a mystery kept secret since the world began, and the truth of it was first made known to the apostle Paul by revelation. (See Eph. iii. 1-10; Col. i. 24-27; Rom. xvi. 25, 26.) When Peter confessed Christ as Son of the living God, then for the first time the Lord announced that "upon this rock I WILL BUILD My Church." (Matt. xvi. 18.)

It must be very clear from such a statement that the Church was then something future in the mind of Christ. It had no existence in fact, nor could it have until Christ had died, was risen and ascended, and had sent down the Holy Ghost.

Until the rejection of the Lord Jesus by the Jews they had always held a place of special nearness in which the Gentiles had no part. These were afar off, strangers from the covenant of promise, and were regarded as unfit for the company of a Jew.

This explains what the Lord meant when the poor Gentile woman from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon came to Him and said, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. . . . But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." His mission *as David's Son* was not to Gentiles as such, but exclusively to Israel's race. (Matt. xv. 22-24.)

78 THE CHURCH: HOW AND WHEN IT BEGAN.

The Jews, for the time being, are cast off, and the Gentiles have been brought in. The middle wall of partition which kept the Jew in his enclosure no longer exists; all such distinctions have been abolished in the death of Christ, and now from out of both Jews and Gentiles the new company has been formed—the Church.

With the formation of the Church the coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost must ever be connected. The Lord had said to His disciples, “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.”

After His resurrection and immediately before His ascension He told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. (See Luke xxiv. 49.) Their Jewish minds were still looking for an earthly and visible kingdom. In the first chapter of Acts they said to Him, “Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” And He said unto them, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

After tarrying ten days in the upper room in

THE CHURCH: HOW AND WHEN IT BEGAN. 79

prayer, the promised Comforter came down from heaven like a rushing mighty wind, and filled all the house where they were sitting. By the coming and presence of the Holy Ghost they were all incorporated into one body, which was now Christ's body. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

Although the Church was formed into one body by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, the truth of it did not then come out. It was yet a secret. The first inkling of it was when the Lord appeared to Saul of Tarsus on his way to persecute the saints at Damascus. "Why persecutest thou ME?" was the language that came from the glorified Christ and fell upon Saul's astonished ears.

Observe how close the bond was between the Lord and those whom Saul in his madness was persecuting. The Lord Jesus did not say, Why persecutest thou My saints? No, but "ME." "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

What a marvellous revelation this was to Paul, and what an effect it had upon him, his after-life plainly declared. He himself was the instrument chosen of God for bringing out and setting forth the true relation of the Church to Christ. The Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians show clearly the character of the truth he taught.

80 THE CHURCH: HOW AND WHEN IT BEGAN.

These epistles make it plain that the Church *as Christ's body* was a mystery kept secret in God's eternal counsels, and that this secret was not made known until revealed to Paul.

Christ in glory is the Head of the body, the Church. She has no other Head, and should own no other. He is the One from whom she should draw all her supplies. The Holy Ghost is the bond by which all the members are bound together. The Spirit is the Church's only power. It is only as she acts in concert with Christ, her Head in heaven, and in the fellowship of the Spirit, that she is able to stand for Christ here, in His absence, against the world.

Alas! alas! how much the professing Church has failed as a witness for Christ we all know, or ought to know, to our sorrow. The wall of separation between the Church and the world has been broken down. Hence the Church, viewed as a professing body, has lost her power and her place of distinct testimony for Christ here. The fine gold has become dim. She has left her first love. Still, His love never changes. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end." He gave Himself for the Church, and still lives for her, and He looks forward to that moment when He shall present her to Himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

P. W.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. C.—Why should you resist the thought that all our life, both before conversion and after it, will come up for review at the judgment-seat of Christ? In doing so you seem to us to resist the plain statement of Holy Scripture, “For we must all be manifested before the judgment-seat of the Christ; that each may receive the things done in the body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or evil.” (2 Cor. v. 10.) We quote from the new translation of Mr. J. N. Darby. Now, “things done in the body” is a phrase that covers the whole of our life, and not simply that part of it which comes after conversion. The course we have run on earth will be spread out before our eyes, and the judgment we shall then form of every detail will perfectly agree with the judgment of Christ Himself, for in His light we shall see light. And what losers we should be were there no such manifestation! For however much we may realise our indebtedness to divine grace in an infinite variety of ways, we surely must confess that we apprehend that grace only in part. It is indeed larger than our largest thought. But in that day, when we see our life from start to finish as the Lord sees it, we shall understand the greatness of the grace that bore with our wayward will, watched over us in hours of danger, and kept us out of many a ditch, even in our dark, unconverted days. Then we shall read our life-story as it really is. We shall read it from cover to cover, missing nothing. And then

shall we know that the gracious Lord was far more gracious than we had ever thought; and then the wisdom, loving-kindness, and unwearied patience that always marked His ways with us will be clearly seen. We shall the more adore Him when all this comes to pass, and praise Him in louder, sweeter strains. Surely you can understand this.

Then as to our sins both before conversion and since. As guilt they are for ever gone. They will be remembered no more. God has cast them behind His back, has blotted them out as a thick cloud, has covered them so that they are no more to be seen, has cast them into the depths of the sea, has removed them from us as far as the east is from the west. Moreover, Christ, who bore them in His own body on the tree, is now in glory. His being there is the glorious proof that the claims of the eternal throne have been wholly met. And "as He is, so are we in this world," accepted in all His acceptancy, and loved as He is loved. All this is most blessedly true. We rejoice in it, and would seek to build up every believing soul in these truths, so great, so grand. In speaking, therefore, of the judgment-seat of Christ, we have not the remotest thought of our sins being brought up as guilt. But if the full extent of my sin is there revealed to me, shall I not more fully understand the greatness of the grace that has forgiven all? Suppose I were in monetary difficulties. "How much do you owe?" asks a kind and generous friend. "So far as I can tell, about £3000," say I. "Let me have your books," he replies; "I will go through them and pay every debt you owe." But if I learned afterwards that instead of

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

83

£3000 I owed £30,000, and that my friend had paid it all, should I not have a much deeper sense of his kindness and generosity? My case being ten times worse than I thought leads me to see that his goodness was ten times greater than I at first supposed. Would it not be a loss were all this hid from me, and would it be just to my friend? Now the same principle applies to the judgment-seat of Christ. And here let me quote a few lines from the pen of "J. N. D." :—

"Cannot I, being now in peace, look back at what I was before conversion, and at all my failures since my conversion, humbled, but adoring the grace of God in all He has done for me, but without a thought of fear or imputation of sin? Does not all this awaken a very deep sense of all that God is in holy grace and love, in unbounded patience, towards me, both keeping, helping, and restoring? Such will be the case perfectly when we are manifested, when we shall know as we are known."

Finally, the thought of recompense cannot be excluded from the judgment-seat. Good and evil have their reward there. If there has been anything of good in our lives, though it be all the fruit of grace and of the Holy Spirit's work, it shall not be forgotten, and the Lord will reward it as if it had been all of ourselves. But what of the evil? If we have continually grieved the Spirit, if we have not been faithful in our stewardship, if we have used our resources chiefly for our own ends, if we have lived to ourselves, what about all this? We shall suffer loss. The fruit that might have been unto praise, honour, and glory is not found. We shall miss the Lord's commendation exactly in that measure. And

we shall see, too, those things in their true light, and judge them deep down in our conscience. But we say no more, trusting enough has been said to clear your mind ; if not, write again.

ANON.—We have sent your kind note to the writer of the paper, as requested.

ALPHA.—Isa. liii. 9. The Revised Version opens thus : “ And they made His grave with the wicked.” Mr. Darby in his translation renders it, “ And [men] appointed His grave with the wicked,” and completes the verse thus : “ but He was with the rich in His death.” We understand it in this way : men, wicked men, purposed for the Saviour a malefactor’s grave ; they thought to do Him this dishonour, their hatred pursuing Him to the bitter end. But God defeated their intention, and so ordered it that in His death (not in His dying) He was with the rich. The new grave, of “ a rich man of Arimathæa,” was the resting-place of the body of the Lord. The prophetic voice, long centuries before, had said it should be so, and this scripture, as all others, was most scrupulously fulfilled. With reference to the marginal reading of “ deaths ” instead of “ death,” we append the following note :—
“ The phrase here is most expressive, and points to the intensive and exceptional death of the holy Sufferer, as concentrating many—countless—deaths in that one.”

Your inquiry as to Ephesians vi. 2 is easily answered. The children are to honour their parents in every possible way, both by obedience, respect, filial affection, and in their maintenance, if needs be. In connection with the last clause see Matthew xv. 4, 6.

ONLY ONE WAY OF SALVATION.

IS there more than one road to heaven? Is there more than one way in which the soul of man can be saved? This is the question I propose to consider in this paper, and I shall begin by quoting a text of Scripture:

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.)

These words are striking in themselves, but they are much more striking if we observe when and by whom they were spoken.

They were spoken by a poor and friendless Christian in the midst of a persecuting Jewish council. It was a grand confession of Christ.

They were spoken by the lips of the apostle Peter. This is the man who, a few weeks before, forsook Jesus and fled: this is the very man who three times over denied his Lord. There is another spirit in him now! He stands up boldly before priests and Sadducees, and tells them the truth to their face.

Let us make sure that we rightly understand what the apostle means. He says of Christ, “Neither is there salvation in any other.” Now

XVI.

E

what does this mean? On our clearly seeing this very much depends.

He means that no one can be saved from sin—its guilt, its power, its consequences—excepting by Jesus Christ.

He means that no one can have peace with God, obtain pardon in this world, and escape wrath to come in the next, excepting through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ.

In Christ alone God's rich provision of salvation for sinners is treasured up. Christ's blood alone can cleanse us, alone can give us a title to heaven. Jews and Gentiles, learned and unlearned, kings and poor men, all alike must either be saved by the Lord Jesus, or lost for ever.

There was but one place of safety in the day when the flood came upon the earth: that place was Noah's ark. All other places and devices—mountains, towers, trees, rafts, boats—all were alike useless. So also there is but one hiding-place for the sinner who would escape the storm of God's righteous anger; he must venture his soul on Christ.

There was but one man to whom the Egyptians could go in the time of famine when they wanted food. They must go to Joseph: it was waste of time to go to anyone else. So also there is but One to whom hungering souls must go if they would not perish for ever: they must go to Christ.

ONLY ONE WAY OF SALVATION.

87

Such is the doctrine of the text: "No salvation but by Jesus Christ; in Him plenty of salvation, salvation to the uttermost, salvation for the very chief of sinners; out of Him no salvation at all."

We are to venture the whole salvation of our souls on Christ, and on Christ only. We are to cast loose completely and entirely from all other hopes and trusts. We are not to rest partly on Christ, partly on doing all we can, partly on keeping our church, partly on receiving the sacrament. In the matter of our justification Christ is to be *all*. This is the doctrine of the text.

Heaven is before us, and Christ the only door into it; hell beneath us, and Christ alone able to deliver us from it; the devil behind us, and Christ the only refuge from his accusations; the law against us, and Christ alone able to redeem us; sin weighing us down, and Christ alone able to put it away. This is the doctrine of the text.

And the doctrine of the text must be true, *because man is what man is.*

Now what is man? There is one broad, sweeping answer; man is a sinful being. All children of Adam born into the world, whatever be their name or nation, are corrupt, wicked, and defiled in the sight of God. Their thoughts, words, ways, and actions are all more or less defective and imperfect.

Is there no country on the face of the globe

where sin does not reign? Is there no happy valley, no secluded island, where innocence is to be found? Is there no tribe on earth where, far away from civilisation, and commerce, and money, and gunpowder, and luxury, and books, morality and purity flourish? No! there is none. Look over all the voyages and travels you can lay your hands on, from Columbus down to Cook, and from Cook to Livingstone, and you will see the truth of what I am asserting. The most solitary islands of the Pacific Ocean—islands cut off from all the rest of the world, islands where people were alike ignorant of Rome and Paris, London and Jerusalem—these islands when first discovered have been found full of impurity, cruelty, and idolatry. The footprints of the devil have been traced on every shore. Whatever else savages have been found ignorant of, they have never been found ignorant of sin.

All through the Bible, from Genesis down to Revelation, there is only one simple account of the way in which man must be saved. It is always the same: only for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, through faith; not for our own works and deservings.

One golden chain runs through the whole volume: no salvation excepting by Jesus Christ. The bruising of the serpent's head foretold in the day of the fall; the clothing of our first parents with skins; the sacrifices of Noah, Abraham,

ONLY ONE WAY OF SALVATION.

89

Isaac, and Jacob; the Passover, and all the particulars of the Jewish law—the high priest, the altar, the daily offering of the lamb, the holy of holies only entered by blood, the scapegoat, the cities of refuge—all are so many witnesses to the truth set forth in the text. All preach with one voice, salvation only by Jesus Christ.

Let me conclude this short paper with a few words by way of application.

First of all, if there is no salvation excepting in Christ, let us make sure that we have an interest in that salvation ourselves. Let us not be content with hearing, and approving, and assenting to the truth, and going no further. Let us seek to have a personal interest in this salvation. Let us not rest till we know that Christ is ours, and we are Christ's. If there were two, or three, or more ways of getting to heaven there would be no necessity for pressing this matter. But if there is *only one way*, who can wonder that I say, "Make sure that you are in it"?

Secondly, if there is no salvation excepting in Christ, let us try to do good to the souls of all who do not know Him as a Saviour. There are millions in this miserable condition, millions in foreign lands, millions in our own country, millions who are not trusting in Christ. We ought to feel for them if we are true Christians; we ought to pray for them, we ought to work for

them while there is yet time. Do we really believe that Christ is the only way to heaven? Then let us live as if we believed it.

Let us look round the circle of our own relatives and friends, count them up one by one, and think how many of them are yet without Christ. Let us try to do good to them in some way or other, and act as a man should act who believes his friends to be in danger. Let us not be content with their being kind and amiable, gentle and good-tempered, moral and courteous. Let us rather be miserable about them till they come to Christ and trust in Him. I know all this may sound like enthusiasm and fanaticism. I wish there were more of it in the world. Anything, I am sure, is better than a quiet indifference about the souls of others. Nothing so proves our little faith as our little feeling about the spiritual condition of those around us.

Lastly, if there is no salvation excepting by Christ, we must not be surprised if those who preach the gospel preach much about Him. They cannot tell us too much about the Name that is above every name. We cannot hear of Him too often. We may hear too much about controversy, we may hear too much of works and duties, of forms, of ceremonies, of sacraments and ordinances, but there is one subject which we never hear too much of: we can never hear too much of Christ.

ADAPTED.

GOD'S OBJECT IN LEAVING A CHRISTIAN HERE.

MANY form but a very feeble idea why Christians are left on earth. But first of all, are we clear as to what a Christian is? Much is called Christian nowadays that might be more correctly called anti-Christian. It is an old saying that "all is not gold that glitters." We live in Christendom, surrounded with its many influences and forms. Tens of thousands are satisfied to bear the name of Christian, and trouble their heads very little, and their consciences still less, as to whether they are real ones or not. Now profession is right enough, but to profess, without possessing the blessings of the gospel, is utterly vain. God must have reality. Multitudes have been baptised and confirmed. They have become church members, they partake of the Lord's Supper, and yet their hearts are estranged from God, and all saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ is lacking. Dear reader, how is it with you?

What, then, is a real Christian? A real Christian is one in whom the Holy Spirit has wrought, bringing him to true repentance towards God. He is one who has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, to the salvation of his soul.

His sins are forgiven for His name's sake. (1 John ii. 12.) He stands justified by God Himself, and cleansed from his sins by the precious blood of Christ. (Rom. iii. 24-26; 1 John i. 7.) He is reconciled to God. Moreover, he has eternal life in a risen Christ, and is freed from the mastery of sin. (Col. iii. 3; Rom. vi.) He is henceforth in relation to God as one of His children (Rom. viii. 16), and he is one of His sons according to His eternal counsel, blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. (Eph. i. 3-6.) All this is the fruit of God's abounding grace, ministered in righteousness, on the ground of the finished work of Christ—love the source and spring of all. What a wonderful thing it is to be a real Christian! Are you one? If so, marvellous indeed is your portion. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." But He reveals them unto the believer by His Spirit. (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) Whatever you do, do not deceive yourself. If you die a mere professor it were better that you never had been born.

Some few years ago we had a long interview with a professing Christian, a preacher. The conversation turned principally on the new birth, the first work in the soul. Our friend took decided ground that he was born again through

his baptism. We sought to explain clearly the great difference between baptism—right in its place—and God's own work in a sinner's soul. After a long and friendly conversation on the subject, he turned round as he left the room, and said, "I believe I am born again; but if the new birth is what you say it is, *then I know nothing whatever about it.*" He was an honest man, and spoke the honest truth. He was, we doubt not, *a sincere professing Christian*, but, like thousands of others, he knew nothing of the reality of true Christianity. He had not been born again, and knew nought of a living faith in a living Saviour.

Now Christians—true ones—are fit for the glory of God, to which they are called at the very start. Having believed, they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, whereby they are sealed till the day of redemption. (Eph. iv. 30.) Some are taken home at once, but most of us are left here for a while; and God has an object in that. What is it?

We are left here to glorify Him. The Lord Jesus Christ was the faithful and true Witness, and at the end of His path He could say, "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." (John xvii. 4.) And then He said of His loved ones, "I am glorified in them." (John xvii. 10.) During the hour of His absence we are to reflect Him in the scene

where He was cast out and crucified. What marvellous grace, that the Lord of glory should connect His glory with such poor feeble things as we are! What a powerful effect it would have upon us if we realised it more! And what was the character of the pathway of Him who glorified God on earth? He was dependent, obedient, and lived to do the will of God. "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God." (Heb. x. 7.) And He has set us an example that we should follow His steps. (1 Peter ii. 21.)

Now to accomplish this we must walk by faith, and not by sight. We must walk in the power of the Spirit who dwells in us. Fixing the eye on Christ in glory, we become morally transformed into His image; and studying God's Word, we learn what the pathway was which He pursued. To walk by faith we must be dependent; and to walk in obedience we must walk according to the Word, for all around us is more or less according to the thoughts of men.

Moreover, God would have us grow in the knowledge of Himself and His ways. Four things at least are necessary for children in order to grow naturally, namely, food, light, air, and exercise; and, in order to grow spiritually, we need the same. We need to feed on the Word, to look to God for light, to walk in the atmosphere of His presence, and to be exercised in

heart and conscience before Him. Then we shall make progress, growing according to His mind, and bringing glory to His name.

And, further, as we grow spiritually we become more and more separated from the scene through which we pass. It is a moral separation that the Lord enjoins. And so we pursue the path of pilgrims and strangers, occupying till the Lord come to introduce us to the sphere to which we already belong. And so we become also witnesses for Him in His absence, plainly testifying, like those of old, that we seek a country, and that a heavenly.

Let us also not forget that Christians are called in one body, and hence are not only responsible to seek the Lord's glory as individuals, but collectively, as one with Him and with each other here. This is a study in itself, into which we cannot enter here.

May the Lord in His rich grace give to each reader of these lines to be assured of his salvation, and, if a true Christian, to learn His mind as to why we are left here, that he may walk worthily of Him to all pleasing, and be approved of Him at that day when each shall give an account of himself to God.

E. H. C.

"THE soul is the dwelling-place of the truth of God. The ear and the mind are but the gate and avenue; the soul is its home or dwelling-place."

IT MATTERS LITTLE.

IT matters little whence this spirit-life
 Departeth unto God,
 Whether from seas "profound" it takes its flight,
 Or from earth's beaten sod.

'Tis unimportant if the shell it leaves
 As dust be swept away,
 Or if each atom, sundered far from each,
 In ocean's depths decay.

No change for me, whether or light or shade
 Come upon earth or go ;
 Whether the tale that once *I* trod the earth
 Time doth efface or no.

I hear the "strife of tongues"; but there on high
 Graven, my record stands
 Imperishable, howsoe'er on earth
 'Tis marred by human hands.

Yes, there in light the "MAN OF COUNSEL" sits,
 My name upon His breast ;
 The Intercessor, Advocate—FOR ME—
 None may His judgment wrest.

There ruleth He, while Faith and Hope and Love
 Cheer on His pilgrim here—
 My threefold link with Christ my Lord above,
 My spirit's proper sphere.

It matters little, then, if through this life
 Waves—billows—round me roll.
 His Spirit pilot sits, and steers my barque
 Calmly towards its goal.

H. C. ANSTEY.

POWER OVER SIN.

SALVATION, in the fulness of its significance, implies much more than shelter from the punishment that sin deserves. It involves a complete deliverance, not only from the penalty, but from the power of sin.

Men are generally more anxious to be saved from the consequence of sin than to be kept from its commission; hence, when their fears are relieved through finding in Jesus a Deliverer from the wrath to come, they are apt to consider *that* the whole extent of God's salvation. The thought of sin no longer awakens in their breasts the terrors of coming judgment, and the great truth of substitution assures them that what Another has borne will never be reckoned to their account. What more can they wish for? what more need they seek?

If, indeed, there be no real aversion to the presence of sin, we must conclude that the soul is not born of God at all; but the danger of a certain character of teaching is that the believer may be "lame from birth" through having heard a gospel of deliverance from wrath to come with little or no reference to a present salvation.

It is just to this point, and no further, that

much of the preaching of the day will lead the soul. Little wonder, then, that we see on every hand so-called Christians whose lives are a disgrace to their profession!

Salvation on the easiest terms—"only believe," and heaven in exchange. Eternal security from judgment, and justification by faith alone. Such, indeed, form part of the gospel of the grace of God. Yet offered widely, to all and sundry, the announcement may have disastrous consequences in the spiritual history of the hearers, if there be not first some preparation of the soul to receive the message.

What is called "the plan of salvation" has been brought by force of logical deduction to the simplicity of a formula, but with the inevitable result that the moral effect of considering "*why*" and "*how*" is lost by the soul's entire occupation with the question, "*What* must I do to be saved?"

It is true the answer to the jailor's entreaty was explicit and precise, but to-day the same assurance is offered broadcast to those whose souls have been shaken by no earthquake, and who are very far from wishing to end a life which is worth living no longer. (Acts xvi. 26, 27.)

Should the Queen's almoner find an anarchist unable to obtain work after repeated imprisonment, and dying of starvation, he will feel that only half his work is done when the man's need

is met. Rather will he avail himself of the very ministry of relief to impress the recipient with a profound sense of the goodness of the donor. Not only will the distress to which the offender's criminal conduct had brought him be relieved, but the evil will be checked at its very source, and a sense of the Queen's undeserved favour will turn a traitor into a faithful and devoted subject.

The programme of the earliest gospel preaching is profoundly significant. Philip "preached unto him Jesus"; Peter preached "peace by Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all"; Paul testified "the gospel of the grace of God"; "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." In every case what we notice is not so much *man* and his need met as *God* and His grace revealed.

If "so great love" were preached as much as "so great salvation," the awakened soul would be brought more consciously in touch with God, and would know more of what grace teaches.*

Anxious to avoid the mistake, all too common, of making salvation the reward of a long and painful repentance, there has been a danger of

* We quite lose the force and beauty of Titus ii. 12 if we think of soberness, righteousness, and piety as an obligation imposed upon those who are subject to the grace of God. They are brought before us not as an obligation, but as a *normal consequence* of a true sense of grace. They are not what grace requires, but what grace *produces* in the soul.

pressing a message of "only believe" on the hearer in a way that altogether leaves out of sight the first half of the apostle's testimony both to Jew and Greek. (Acts xx. 21.) It has not been sufficiently explained that repentance is no arbitrary demand, but an inevitable accompaniment of genuine faith.

Repentance is a change—nay, a revolution—in the soul's reckoning of sin, and involves not only sorrow for the fruit, but an abhorrence of the tree itself. But this sentiment is only reached in the presence of God. (Job xlii. 6.)

Man likes sin, and pursues it, until one day his soul is touched by the thought that his sin has offended a God whose goodness is manifest in the gift of His Son. Sin then has another meaning for him, and he turns from it in the attitude of his soul, and towards the One from whose love it would separate him. It should be evident that there can be no faith in the Saviour unless there be a desire to be saved, unless there be a turning from the sin for which Christ died. It is labour more than lost to persuade men to believe in Christ if they have no real desire to be free from sin.

Had the work been begun by preaching "Jesus" instead of preaching "salvation," the problem of power over sin would have been half solved before ever it was encountered. It is because souls have been accustomed to think of Christ

only as a Saviour from coming wrath that they are so much at a loss for deliverance from present indwelling evil. The perplexity is perhaps increased by some "holiness" teacher, who persuades them to "only believe" that they will be kept from sin, and a holy life will follow. Experience corrects their hopes, and must do so, since their expectations are still based on something in themselves—their faith—and lack the element of power which alone can effect the end they desire.

If we examine our strivings after holiness, perfection, and the like, we may discover that, after all, *self* was the object of our pious exercises; our sorrow was that *we* had sinned; our regret was remorse rather than repentance. And with this discovery we find ourselves in touch with the true secret of power over sin. Self-love, self-esteem, though strong enough to embitter the cup of illicit pleasure, are not sufficient to put the veto on self-indulgence. There must be the power of *another love* before that can be realised. We have now reached the heart of our subject in the discovery that *love* is the only sentiment that displaces *self*.

"Love took up the harp of life; smote on
All the chords with might;
Smote the chord of self, which, trembling,
Passed in music out of sight."

Surely self-indulgence will no longer influence us, if Another's pleasure is more dear to us than our own !

Power over sin, then, is found alone in the love of God, manifest in the cross of Christ, and shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. If our hearts are won, and our thoughts held captive, by that love, the power of sin is broken for our souls. "*Ye are under grace*" is the divine way of freedom from the dominion of sin. The exhortation to "keep yourselves in the love of God" will exercise a more powerful control than a whole code of rules. The Father's heart, that gave so much to set us free, the Saviour's love, that suffered all for our sake, become the measure of our own aversion to the yoke of sin's bondage; and the Spirit, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us, maintains in our souls the reckoning that He has formed. (Rom. vi. 11.)

One has sometimes seen a poor famished creature spending the last leavings of an empty purse in buying medicine for weakness brought on by insufficient food. A good meal would have reached the root of the evil, with a smaller outlay and happier result.

The believer then, if overtaken in a fault, will judge not so much the specific character of the offence as that, through having grieved the Spirit, some cloud has come between his soul and the brightness of divine love, making it possible for

him to again find pleasure in self-indulgence. The moralist thinks of the way his sin degrades himself; the believer, whose heart is in the sunshine of the love of God, thinks only of how it dishonours the One who loves him. The personal element is the power of Christianity. Some Oriental heathen religions can offer a refined moral code, but they cannot enlist the force of personal devotedness which alone would enable them to put their precepts into practice. Of Jesus it was said that "HE shall save His people from their sins," and just as our hearts are constrained by His love we are saved, from day to day, from all that would wound it. The man in Romans vii. found deliverance from his difficulties when his heart was engaged with Another (v. 25).

It is a blessed thing for our souls to see from Romans vi. that the flesh that troubles us has been dealt with, and annulled for God, in the cross of Christ; yet that recognition, of itself, will not give power over sin, for it is but the negative side. We get the positive in chapter vii. 4, where we find there is *fruit unto God*, not by the requirement of a law, but as the consequence of relation to Christ.

God's estimate of the value of the blood of Christ is the measure of our safety from sin's penalty; our sense of the love of His heart in shedding it is the measure of our freedom from

sin's power. In the illustration of the anarchist we see that the gift of the Queen's bounty would save the man from the consequences his crimes had brought upon him, but a true sense of her Majesty's kindness would preserve him from the commission of the crimes themselves.

Sin and suffering are joined together in the ways of God. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." (1 Peter iv. 1.) When the thought of sin suggests suffering to us instead of gratification, we are morally free from it; it is no longer a temptation. If then it be Another's suffering that comes before us—One dearly loved, because of His great love to us—much more really shall we shrink from the offence that brought Him to the cross.

May it be with us, not merely a matter of doctrine, but the daily experience of our lives, that love, the love of God, is the divine way of power over sin.

S. E. McN.

"THE *beauty* and the *joy* of the truth may have unduly occupied the outposts, filled the avenues and crowded the gates; but it is only in the soul that its reality can be known. And it is by *meditation* that the truth takes its journey along the avenue to its proper dwelling-place."

GOD AND HIS GOSPEL.*

THE great Epistle to the Ephesians does not close without bespeaking the hearty fellowship of the Ephesian saints in the gospel labours of the apostle. It is his closing exhortation, as though he would take leave of the saints with one last endeavour to keep their hearts fresh in what was so dear to the heart of God. Their danger, and, alas! their fall, was in forgetting and leaving their *first* love.

First love, while attaching the heart to one commanding and absorbing object, is necessarily connected with simple and elementary truths. In the freshness of first love, what does the soul yet know of the Church and union with Christ, and so on? These things find their place afterwards, and how wonderful they are! but to dissociate the knowledge of *them* from the early sense of how God's love had expressed itself in Christ to the sinners of this big, guilty world is,

* The following paper is part of a letter from the pen of Mr. W. H. Westcott, labouring in Central Africa. Not written for publication, we, nevertheless, publish it by permission, in hope that it may convince any who need to be convinced that the present limits of Christendom do *not* define the sphere of the evangelist or of the gospel he is commissioned to preach. The whole world is his parish, and every creature under heaven one to whom the gospel of the grace of God is sent,—ED.

I submit, a sure sign that *we* have left our first love.

What is *God's* attitude in the gospel? I ask this because it—and none of man's reasonings—must determine *our* attitude. A simple believer may not know how to combat the miserable argument of many that the gospel "sphere" is already defined, and its borders—the borders of this "sphere"—must not be crossed. But he does know—and with this he can meet the most doughty opponent of the free spread of the gospel—that repentance and remission of sins are to be preached "IN HIS NAME" amongst all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. With *this* Name to support a world-wide gospel, what if anyone, however excellent and beloved, puts down *his* name as one who thinks otherwise? If there be any question of "follow-my-leader" in the matter, we will follow *our* Leader, who has given the sanction of His holy name to the going forth of God's glad tidings to earth's remotest corners.

But it is, nevertheless, important to see how fully the inspired Word of God meets these uninspired words of men. Reading together Romans x. 12-18 and Psalm xix. 1-6, who can fail to see that the same Spirit of God who defines the "sphere" of creation's testimony to man describes the "sphere" of the gospel in identical terms? *If you can find a square inch*

of the surface of this world where there is no testimony from God's creation to men, daytime or night-time, then, and not till then, have you found one square inch where the gospel need not be preached to men.

There is, however, a difference in the two testimonies. The first is a *silent* one. Verse 3 of the Psalm is very lovely. "There is no voice nor language; without these their voice is heard." (Margin.) The majestic works of creation are all the more grand because of their silence. The fall of a tiny leaf in a forest makes more noise than the rise of that mighty sun which yet speaks so impressively of its Maker's power. And the distant twinkling star shining over a mountain-top is more mysterious to the wise men of this world than the mighty, cumbrous mass of earth that will shortly hide it from our view. From its inconceivable distance that tiny light, sustained throughout the ages, speaks to men in mysterious language of its mighty Creator-God. What is its function? Does it throw some influence over our small solar system which we cannot yet discover? What design is in His mind who decreed that its tiny ray should unerringly travel through unmeasured space and fall upon the eyes of white men and black in this insignificant earth of ours? We do not know, except that it exhibits a power which humbles the fancied greatness of man, and suggests to him a Being infinitely greater than

himself, who yet deigns to appoint these things that he may see them and consider.

In the gospel we do not get a silent testimony, but an *audible* one. Living messengers carry it out, who have known and believed the love that God hath to us. Boundaries of countries have nothing whatever to do with the scope of the gospel. Difficulties of language, variety of peoples, colours of skin, are all mere items by the way; they do not present scriptural barriers to its progress. *It is not designed to convert the nations, but to save souls out of them.* Paul winds up his magnificent Epistle to the Romans with *his* definition of the sphere of the gospel, accompanied by terms which render foolish and wicked any limitation of it, when he says, “. . . *my* gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ . . . according to the commandment of the EVER-LASTING GOD, made known to *all nations* for the obedience of faith.” He places the authority of the everlasting God in the way of any who would audaciously affirm of any part of the human race that the gospel need not go to them. Many see in Psalm xix. 4-6 a type or illustration of Christ risen and glorified. He comes out of the darksome chamber where He slept, but comes out as one who has a bride. He has left sorrow behind, He rejoices, and is both strong and swift to run the course marked out for Him in the purpose of God. He rises into the heavens, the

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS. 109

place of His tabernacle (v. 4), and upon every part of the earth does His light shine: "there is *nothing* hid from the heat thereof." The effect of this testimony may be hinted at in the verses that follow, but I need not speak of this now. "There is *nothing* hid from the heat thereof." Is not that clear? The testimony of and from a risen and glorified Christ must go down *warm* into every circle, and it must not be our fault if it does not touch *every* heart with whom we meet, though, alas! all will not be saved. W. H. W.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

PERPLEXED ONE.—Your heart, dear friend, seems to be in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to follow the Lord fully, and yet held back when you think of the possible consequences. It simply resolves itself into the question, *Who is to be first?* We earnestly commend unto your prayerful reading Luke ix. 57–62. The path of discipleship in an evil day is often rough and thorny. But the disciple is never alone in it, the Lord is with him, and he finds His grace sufficient. Remember Paul's words to Timothy, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord . . . but be thou partaker of the *afflictions* of the gospel according to the power of God." If we have partaken of the *blessings* of the gospel, now

let us be ready to share in its *afflictions*. Be of good courage, go forward with your heart fixed on the Lord, committing your way unto Him, and leaving the consequences. And do not suffer the thought of past sins and many shortcomings to hold you back. It is well that you are conscious of these. You mourn over them, and I doubt not have confessed them to God, and the recollection of them may keep you from self-confidence and lead you to trust the Lord for strength. Only let your manner of life be such as shall commend the truth you have embraced and desire to follow, so that no occasion be given to others to speak reproachfully of it. Be gentle, kind, patient, self-denying, ever ready to serve the necessities of others, especially of those with whom you are in immediate contact. In short, let Christ shine out of you. Possibly the consequences you dread may never come to pass. Satan often works upon our fears, and suggests a hundred difficulties to keep us from being faithful to Christ. At all events, Christ must be first, and if we would honour Him and maintain a good conscience we must be true to the light He has so graciously given. The Lord be with you, strengthen you, and lead you on. Keep your eye on Him as you leave the boat, and you will find the waves as firm as rock. We shall be glad to hear from you at any time.

A. B.—We believe it to be a happy thing, when we are gathered together for prayer, that the sick and sorrowing and any in circumstances of peculiar trial should be prayed for by name. Other things of course claim a place, but these should not be forgotten, for the saints are members one of another,

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS. 111

and the sorrows and burdens of one are the sorrows and burdens of all. And in the measure in which the grace of Christ works in our hearts we shall feel them to be so. These subjects of sympathising prayer hardly come in at the close of a meeting for "Breaking of Bread," nor would they have place when we are together specially for prayer in connection with the gospel. In saying this we do but express our individual judgment, and lay down no cast-iron rule.

ANXIOUS TO LEARN.—The holy mystery of the Person of our Lord is not to be defined in human speech. That which is beyond our knowledge is necessarily beyond our power to express, and it is written that "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father." Let us remember *that* as we speak even a word on so profound a subject. Now in many places in Holy Scripture He is spoken of as man—"the Man Christ Jesus"—while other passages declare His deity in emphatic terms. But we must carefully avoid the thought of two personalities. It is one blessed Person—the Son—whose deity and manhood are alike affirmed, and which the Christian guards with reverent and jealous care. And it is *that One* who died upon the cross, who gave Himself for us. Therefore in speaking of His mighty sacrifice we cannot, must not, divorce His deity from His manhood. He, who once suffered for sins—Son of man, Son of God—was **THE SON**. More than this we do not feel called upon to say, for in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.

Answering your second question, it is never said in Scripture that the Lord Jesus was forsaken of *the*

Father. His cry upon the cross was, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me"—not *My Father*. The difference may be illustrated thus: Suppose a father, being also a judge, should have his son brought before him guilty of some offence. It is as judge and not as father that he passes sentence on the prisoner at the bar. It is true the prisoner is his son, but that fact does not come into view; nor, if the judge be impartial, is it allowed to sway his judgment. In the court of justice it is as prisoner and judge, not as father and son, that they have to do with each other.

Your third question as to the difference between new birth and salvation has been often answered in these columns. Cornelius, no doubt, was born again before he was told to send for Peter, "who," said the angel, "shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." Salvation is more than new birth; the latter is indeed absolutely needful, for without it no man can see and enter into the kingdom of God. But salvation implies the knowledge of Christ as one's own personal Saviour. This Cornelius clearly had not before he heard from the apostle's lips the gospel of his salvation. As to verse 35 of Acts x., it simply states a fact, that in *every* nation—not alone in Israel—the man who feared God and wrought righteousness is accepted of Him; but if a man fears God and works righteousness it is evident he is born of the Spirit, no matter what his nationality. How glad Cornelius must have been to hear this we can easily imagine. For an answer to your last question see Acts ii. 36.

AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW.

“Go, and do thou likewise.”—LUKE x. 25-37.

WE have often read this parable of the Good Samaritan. We love to dwell upon the grace of Him who came where we were, who bound up our wounds, who gave us His own place of blessing, and who made provision for us till He come again. But what about the application of it to ourselves? What about those last few words, “Go, and do thou likewise”? They are very searching; we do not know much about them, if one may speak for others. Let us ponder them a little and ask, What have they to say to us?

GO.

Let us look back at the parable and see what this refers to—“came where he was,” and “went to him.” We know well of whom the words are written; we know it is our Lord Jesus Christ. He came from heaven’s brightest glory, from that scene of untold joy which we get depicted for us in Proverbs viii. 25-31. “Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor.” (2 Cor. viii. 9.) He “made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant.” (Phil. ii. 7.) Such was His stoop, such was His

XVI.

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grace. He saw us in our ruin and degradation and sin, and He came to us. And now let us ask ourselves, Do we know anything of this? There are souls around us in darkness and sin, with lives so full of care and trouble, with hearts so sadly aching. They sorely need a kindly voice to whisper the story of a love which never changes, of a work which can cleanse their sins, of a Person who can satisfy their weary hearts, and fill them with joy and gladness. Let us go to them and seek them out. Never mind if we are not fitted for it; His is the fitness. Never mind if we are weak; His is the strength. And He will use us as messengers to these weary ones if only we are humble enough, and empty enough for Him to fill us.

DO.

What shall we do? It is a vexed question. Some are so afraid of doing too much that they do nothing. Others have so filled their lives with their own things, their own cares and troubles, that they have no leisure to do anything else. And others, again, in their zeal to do much, have overstepped the limit, and do so much that they cannot give sufficient time to anything. And yet others go on quietly, patiently filling up the moments with service for the Master which will stand when all the bustle and turmoil of this world are over. But let us

AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW.

115

ask ourselves for a moment, What did He do? We love to gaze, as it were, upon the picture. The poor man is lying on the road, stripped, robbed, wounded, and half dead. But there is one who cares for him. The good Samaritan is bending over him; he pours in the oil to heal, the wine to cheer; he brings him to an inn; he takes care of him.

Fellow-Christians, this is our example; this is what we are to do. How few of us have learned the lesson! We shrink from scenes of pain and suffering; we are too selfish to lay aside our own feelings and follow our Master here. We say it is best to leave people alone in their sorrow, and oftentimes it is too true. But why? Because we know so little how to comfort; we know not how to pour in that oil of divine comfort, that wine of heavenly joy. Let us take these things to heart.

LIKEWISE.

It seems a long way beyond us, certainly, to "go and do *likewise*." But it is our Lord's command, and He will teach us as we go; and we may be sure too that the more we learn to know Him, the more we shall grow into His image. We love to trace His ways of grace as He walked this earth, the tenderness that bade the widow dry her tears as He gave her back her son (Luke vii. 13), the sympathy that could weep with those bereaved sisters at their brother's grave

116 "THINE EYES SHALL SEE THE KING."

(John xi. 35), the thoughtfulness that could bid that something should be given to the little maid to eat (Mark v. 43), the compassion that could weep over the rebellious city as He foresaw the terrible destruction that would so soon overtake it. (Luke xix, 41.) Such were some of the ways of Him who, we love to say, is "the chiefest among ten thousand . . . the altogether lovely." (Cant. v. 10, 16.) May we know Him better and follow Him more closely, that it may be more true of us, as it was ever true of our Lord and Master—"He went about doing good." (Acts x. 38.)

J. L.

"THINE EYES SHALL SEE THE KING
IN HIS BEAUTY."

ISA. xxxiii. 17.

"THE King in His beauty"! Oh, glorious sight!
Mine eyes shall behold Him, unspeakably bright,
All sorrow forgotten, and darkness all past,
A morning quite cloudless, all sunshine at last.

"The King in His beauty"! My Saviour and Friend,
The One who has loved me, and loves to the end,
Who bore on the cross all the judgment for me,
The face that was marred in the glory I'll see.

"The King in His beauty"! My glorious Lord,
With rapture I hail Thee: Thy name be adored;
Thou only art worthy of homage and praise,
To Thee all creation the anthem shall raise.

J. V.

“GOD TESTIFYING OF HIS GIFTS.”

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.”—HEB. xi. 4.

“Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain.”
JUDE 11.

CAIN and Abel in their approach to God, as expressed in their offerings (Gen. iv.), are two typical men. At the present moment there are untold thousands of their followers. Indeed, Christendom is split up into two great camps—Cainites and Abelites.

They were both born outside of Eden, both born in sin and shapen in iniquity, both born of fallen parents, both were sinners as to their own deeds, and both sought a way by which to approach God.

Observe closely the different ways they took. Cain was a tiller of the ground, and brought of the fruit of the ground. Abel was a keeper of sheep, and brought of the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof. Cain's offering was rejected; Abel's accepted. Why?

Cain brought of the fruit of a cursed ground, the product of his own skill and labour. He was rejected, not because he was a sinner merely, but because his gifts were unavailing. They came from

118 "GOD TESTIFYING OF HIS GIFTS."

a wrong source. Cain as much as said, "I can bridge the distance between my soul and God. I can bridge it from my side to His. I can by my own efforts and works retrace my steps to God." What arrogance and ignorance!

This is what thousands are doing to-day. They are presenting Cain's offering to God. Perhaps you, reader, are amongst the number. *You* seek to bridge the distance between your soul and God by turning over a new leaf and doing the best you can. God calls all your righteousness "FILTHY RAGS." Such is the description God gives of your offering. You can never reach heaven that way, and to persevere is to ensure your own destruction.

Let us now turn to Abel. See, he rears an altar, and upon it he binds of the firstlings of his flock. He slays his lamb, and the fire consumes the victim and the fat thereof.

Abel said, "I cannot approach God on the ground of what I can do. I acknowledge I am guilty, and I offer up this victim as my substitute."

Dimly his faith pointed on to "THE Lamb of God." It pointed on to the sacrificial work of Christ upon the cross, when the fire of God's judgment against sin should fall on Him, and when His precious atoning blood should be shed. On the ground of *that* Abel was accepted.

Hebrews xi. 4, quoted at the head of this paper, gives us in the light of the New Testament the

"GOD TESTIFYING OF HIS GIFTS." 119

full results of Abel's offering. Abel obtained witness that he was righteous, "God testifying of his gifts." Notice, God did not testify of Abel. If He had He must have testified of his guilt, for Abel was a sinner, as was Cain. But God testified of his gifts, and because of the One whom they foreshadowed, even the Lord Jesus Christ, God accounted Abel righteous.

In the same way God can account the believing sinner righteous. He will not testify of you and me, but of Christ. However black we may have been in the past, however failing in the present, God's unvarying testimony is to Christ. And that testimony must be always the same, always an expression of eternal satisfaction in the One who died upon the cross, the just for the unjust, a testimony rendered all the more full and complete by God raising Christ from the dead and giving Him a place of righteous acceptance in His presence, a testimony not so much in words, but in such definite acts as the resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Christ on high. What a blessed, immutable ground of peace, as unchangeable as Christ Himself!

Where then is room for doubts and fears? There is none. Oh! the relief in taking one's eye off wretched, disappointing self, and fixing it on Christ, and in knowing that "as He is, so are we in this world."

A. J. P.

Port Antonio, Jamaica.

MANY MIRACLES, BUT NO FAITH.

WE would suppose that a man who proved his mission by doing great works would be generally and readily credited.

Yet we read of the Lord Jesus Christ that "though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him." (John xii. 37.)

Now, is this not remarkable?

John the Baptist did no miracle, and yet all believed that he was a prophet.

But in the case of Christ, by whom miracles so many and so great were done, He was not believed in.

Why the difference?

John, though a highly blessed servant, and the forerunner of the Lord, was only a man.

Christ, while truly man, was also "God manifest in flesh"; and therefore, alas! His rejection.

The carnal mind, though it may garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, is essentially "enmity against God," is not subject to His law, nor can be!

Hence, when here and attested by miracles, He was discredited. Such is man!

A credence that is begotten of miracles is of no saving value; it is not faith at all.

Miraculous demonstrations appeal to the senses, but do not reach the conscience. They may

MANY MIRACLES, BUT NO FAITH. 121

terrify, as in the case of the gaoler at Philippi, but they do not in themselves produce conviction of sin, or lead the soul to God. Their effect is but superficial and transitory. "Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" is certainly true. The greatest miracle cannot thus "persuade." If otherwise, then the blessed Lord would have been universally accredited.

Alas! the case stood differently—"so many miracles."

1. Turning water into wine. (John ii.)
2. Healing the nobleman's son. (John iv.)
3. Curing the impotent man. (John v.)
4. Feeding the five thousand. (John vi.)
5. Giving sight to the blind man. (John ix.)
6. Raising Lazarus from the dead. (John xi.)

And yet "they believed not on Him"!

Why not?

The evidence was enough, and the proof more than abundant; but the heart was impregnable to such external means.

As then, so now. We see no miracles, but we hear the story of divine love.

Christ incarnate, heard, seen, and handled, having come in grace to man, was the only magnet then.

Christ dead, risen, glorified, having made expiation by His precious blood, is the only Mediator now.

Love is the loadstone; there is no miracle so effective as the "omnipotence of loving-kindness."
 "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." (John xii. 32.)

J. W. S.

HOW AND WHEN ?

"YOU ask me how I gave my heart to Christ?
 I do not know ;

There came a yearning for Him in my heart
 So long ago.

I found earth's flowers would fade and die ;
 I wept for something that would satisfy ;
 And then—and then somehow I seemed to dare
 To lift my heart to Him in prayer.

I do not know,
 I cannot tell you how ;
 I only know
 He is *my Saviour* now.

You ask me when I gave my heart to Christ?

I cannot tell ;
 The day, or just the hour, I do not now
 Remember well.

It must have been when I was all alone,
 The light of His forgiving spirit shone
 Into my heart, so clouded o'er with sin ;
 I think—I think 'twas then I let Him in.

I do not know,
 I cannot tell you when ;
 I only know
 He is *so dear* since then."

ANON.

THE ADVOCATE OR THE ACCUSER: WHOSE SIDE DO YOU TAKE?

THIS is a practical question for us. It is not a question of whether we are Christians or not, though it may often test the fact. Happily, simple faith in the person of the Son of God and His work settles that. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) We are "justified by His blood." (Romans v. 9.) These and numberless other passages settle that point. But the question is, Do we take sides with the Advocate, or with the accuser of the brethren?

The advocacy of Christ is founded on His righteous person and His perfect work. (1 John ii. 1, 2.) His work clears us from all the guilt of our sins, and in Him we have entire deliverance from our Adam state, He Himself—the dead, risen, and ascended One—being our righteousness before God. It is on this ground that He intercedes and does the work of an Advocate. If we sin after our relationship with the Father as children has been settled, then the advocacy of Christ applies. "My little children, these things

124 THE ADVOCATE OR THE ACCUSER.

write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we [children] have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins."

The office of the Advocate then is neither to get righteousness for us, nor to put away our sins, nor to make us children. That is all settled by Christ's death and resurrection, by faith in Him. It is to maintain us as children before the Father without sin in the face of the accuser of the brethren. (Rev. xii. 10.) When a child of God sins, communion is interrupted; the relationship remains, but the Father has no fellowship with the sin of His child. The Advocate pleads against Satan, who accuses. The Father hears the pleadings of the Advocate, who thereon applies the word to our walk (John xiii. 4, 5), and brings us to the confession of the sin, upon which the Father is faithful to the righteous Advocate, and just to the Advocate who made propitiation, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John i. 9.) Thus communion is restored, and the child of God walks in the joy and light of his Father's countenance.

Satan, on the other hand, is the accuser of the brethren. He accuses them before God day and night. (Rev. xii. 10.) He is the author of divisions between the children of God by accusing them one to the other. (Romans xvi. 17-20.) He would hire Balaam to curse the

THE ADVOCATE OR THE ACCUSER. 125

people of God, and failing in that, he would use the same prophet to teach Balak to mix them up with the nations around, and partake of their sinful practices. He would excite Jehovah to try Job, speaking bad things of him before Jehovah's face. (Job i., ii.) He would tempt David to sin in numbering the people of Israel (1 Chron. xxi.) and move Jehovah again to destroy them. (2 Samuel xxiv. 1.) He would resist Joshua the high-priest, and seek to prevent his filthy rags being taken from him, and his being clothed in new raiment. (Zech. iii. 1.) This is the accuser's wretched work. Those that follow him are called false accusers, slanderers, because doing the devil's work. He whispers in the ear of the minister's wife (1 Timothy iii. 11) some false story about some brother or sister in Christ. She spreads it about, and so the evil spreads, which perhaps may end in an assembly being broken up. Some aged sister sits leisurely at home (Titus ii. 3), and not having much to do, is ready to hear stories, perhaps from some worldly person, about some child of God. She spreads it about to others who come to see her. It is a slander, a lie, and so the devil does his work, and perhaps some child of God gets a wound, or gets hindered in the work of the Lord for years.

I would solemnly ask every child of God who

126 THE ADVOCATE OR THE ACCUSER.

reads this paper, On whose side are you working? When some slander is uttered about a child of God, do you plead for him, go home and pray for him? If you know he has failed, do you go in love and humility, and take the word to him, and wash his feet? (John xiii. 14.) This is the blessed work of the Advocate. Or do you listen to the story, go and speak of it lightly to someone else, without knowing whether it is a fact or not? This is to do the devil's work.

But how happy it is for us to be associated with the blessed Advocate; on the one hand pleading for our brethren if they sin, on the other hand carrying the word to them and washing their feet. May the Lord grant His people increasingly this grace, so that the saints may see their blessed privilege of love to cover sins (Prov. x. 12), plead for their brethren if they sin, and act in faithfulness to them in carrying the word to them, washing their feet, so that they might be cleansed from all defilement.

A. P. C.

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.” (1 Cor. xiii.)

CONFUSION IN THE WORKSHOP.

AN ALLEGORY ADAPTED AND ENLARGED.

YES, sad to relate, there was confusion in the workshop. Tools *designed* to work together in harmony were, instead, grumbling and fault-finding, if not, indeed, actually set by the ears.

The discussion concerning the great questions of the day had produced heated feelings, and had degenerated into positive wrangling as to individual labour and its methods.

"I contend," exclaimed the Auger, "that the Plane is superficial in his work. He makes certainly a great flourish of shavings, but does not go beneath the surface! I have no patience with him! I believe in going to the depth of things."

"I acknowledge," said the Hammer, "the depth of your wisdom, and I admire your penetration; but you must confess *your* powers of influence are limited to a very small circle."

"Stop, stop, Mr. Hammer," cried the Nail. "I grant *you* make a great noise in the world; but *my* experience is that your performance affects only the head after all. Many a time has *my* head ached after your blows, till I was fain to hide it in the wood *you* forced me into."

Little Gimlet, a preacher of very small calibre, here put in a protest against the surface-work so

128 CONFUSION IN THE WORKSHOP.

sadly prevalent. He did not think there was much heart-work accomplished by all this excitement and noise, but his feeble voice was drowned in the angry contention raging in the workshop.

A couple of old Saws put their heads together ominously, while one mumbled to the other through his broken teeth:—

“I have long been dissatisfied with the state of things in this workshop. In *my* day the motto was, ‘Slow and sure.’ I went to work on a log of wood, not expecting to convert it in a minute into a pile of timber. Back and forth, through and through, I tore away, until every fibre yielded, but it was tough work and slow. Nowadays, it seems to me, you just turn a crank, hear a shriek, see a puff, and the thing is done.”

“Well now, Father Saw, we are not talking about old times,” said bright Brother Chisel. “We have heard all you have to say on that subject over and over again. The question of to-day is, ‘Which is the best mode of working?’ or rather, ‘What is it that is lacking in our instruments?’ The Hammer has been severely criticised, but *my* experience—and I have worked under his direction a good deal—is that his style is powerful and his arguments convincing. Every blow tells.”

At this juncture Horseshoe, who had crossed over from the blacksmith’s shop over the way, entered into the contest.

CONFUSION IN THE WORKSHOP.

129

“Permit a stranger,” he said, “to say a few words. I have often felt the full power of Brother Hammer’s arguments, but I acknowledge I have been more benefited by the influence of Brother Bellows. It is *warmth* that is required to melt the heart that will not yield to force. Where should *I* have been were it not for the fire and fervour which *he* brings to the work?”

There arose a general cry for Mr. Bellows, which puffed up that functionary considerably. Having a good deal of wind, he was enabled to shout across the way from the blacksmith’s forge, so that the tools in the carpenter’s workshop could all hear without effort.

He forgot, too, in his pride that *he* had to do with iron and not with wood, and in a place where the Plane scattered so many of those shavings about that Auger complained of as evidence of his superficial work, there would be considerable danger in his blowing a spark into a flame.

“Ah, yes!” he bellowed out, “could we but have a forge in every workshop, could the fire of zeal but spread, what might we not accomplish! Warmth, warmth is all that is needed!”

Professor Grindstone, who had been listening with a somewhat contemptuous expression, turned round slowly upon this and addressed the company. He had been engaged in sharpening the intellects of a class of young Hatchets of

130 CONFUSION IN THE WORKSHOP.

different grades. The dulness of some had exhausted his patience.

"Excuse me," he said in cold, chilling tones, "warmth is *not* all. If thoroughly effective work is to be done more than mere fervour is required," and there was a sarcastic tone in his voice as he said it. "I have had large experience, and have seen many sparks fly, which did but light a little tinder. Acuteness, polish, culture in its widest sense, must contribute to the qualification of every truly competent instrument. The times demand culture. It is edge we want."

Upon this the Screw looked significantly upon the Vice, who was totally unpolished, but a faithful and successful worker.

Stung to the quick, the Vice said rather roughly, "*My* plan is to get a good grip, and then hold fast. I seize upon everybody that comes in my way, and as I draw them in, Brother Screw just turns round and keeps them from slipping away. We work together."

At that the Screw smiled complacently, looking upon his rough old friend with delight. But he forgot that he never could have turned round unless the Screw-driver took him in hand and helped him.

"Yes," eagerly broke in the Plane, who had been taken quite aback by the remarks made at the beginning upon his superficial work, "yes, *we* believe in co-operation. When I see a subject

CONFUSION IN THE WORKSHOP. 131

in the grip of Brother Vice I know it is my turn to work. You must confess that in smoothing away difficulties none of you excel me."

He, too, as they all had done in the heat of the moment, had forgotten that a Hand, a Master-hand, held and directed him.

Here the Rule and Compass, who had kept their places on the bench in silence hitherto, now expressed concern that none in undue zeal should go beyond proper bounds. As far as their memory served them, there was no instance on record of work prospering that was not in the line of duty. It must be clearly marked out. They spoke in a cool, calculating way, but there was much truth in what they said.

"I am sure," soliloquised the Hammer, "*I* have fastened a nail in a sure place many a time without any such restrictions."

He, too, seemed to forget for the moment the Hand of the Master Builder that controlled him.

Just at this juncture the Master Builder* entered His workshop. The talk among the tools ceased. No work had been going on during the discussion. But now, strange to say, the presence of their Master brought vigorous and harmonious activity.

* This expression is found in 1 Cor. iii. 10, referring to the apostle Paul, but it is here used with allegoric freedom as referring to Paul's Master, the One under whose direction he laid the foundation.

132 CONFUSION IN THE WORKSHOP.

It was a model of a temple upon which He was engaged, and as it grew under His hand each in turn, without remonstrance, took his part in the work assigned him. Saw and Hammer, Plane and Chisel, Vice and Grindstone dropped all distinctions, and yielded each to the other as his turn of service came. And thus in time, under the skilful, guiding, and forming hand, the temple grew in beauty and strength *unto perfection.*

* * * * *

“Except THE LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it.” (Psalm cxxvii. 1.)

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together *in unity!*” (Psalm cxxxiii. 1.)

“God set the members every one of them in the body, *as it hath pleased Him.* . . . And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary . . . that there should be *no schism* in the body.” (Read 1 Cor. xii.)

“Ye . . . are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; IN WHOM all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.” (Eph. ii. 19–21.)

ANON.

SHINING MORE AND MORE.

“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”—PROV. iv. 18.

IN our natural state all are *unjust*. Solomon says in Ecclesiastes vii. 20, “There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” And Paul confirms it in Romans iii. 12, saying, “There is none that doeth good, no, not one,” etc. Who then are the just? Everyone who, bowing in self-judgment before God, believes the testimony that He has given concerning His Son and His finished work. God is “just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Rom. iii. 26.) The true believer is accounted just by God Himself.

Now, in most cases, the just are left on earth for a while after their justification as witnesses for God. John the Baptist in his day was a burning and a shining light. Christ, the Light of the world, was refused by men, who loved darkness rather than light. From the glory where He is now seated light shines into the soul of believers, and they should be a reflection of Christ here till He comes. Each Christian is called to be a shining light in the midst of the darkness, and this light should expand. He should shine

more and more. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth *more and more*. If our light has shone a little, we should not be content therewith. It should ever shine brighter. And so it will if our hearts are in occupation with Christ in glory. We have no light apart from Him, and it is only in heart-occupation with Him that light streams first into our souls, and then out from us.

And the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more till the perfect day. How blessed a goal! What a glorious end to a glorious pathway! Alas for those who do not enter upon it! Their path is one of darkness, thick darkness, and leads to darkness without light for ever. Fearful end! *The perfect day* awaits the Christian, the day of Christ and of God, when every just one will be in glory—eternal glory. In the resurrection and translation of the just will everyone surely be found who has been justified by God in grace. Then we shall enter upon a day that shall have no night. There all will be light and blessing for ever with Christ in the glorious presence of God.

Now many enter upon this blessed pathway. They start off with a bright conversion, and many rejoice over them; but how different the paths! Some press on, shining more and more, till their path ends in perfect day. They are a joy

to the heart of God and to all who are spiritual. Others, after a while, seem to stand still. They see light before them, talk of it, but, crippled through pleasures, riches, and cares of this life, they make no progress, and are often a hindrance to others. They seek to satisfy themselves by feeding on past experiences and successes.

Then there is a third class, who started on the path full of zeal and devotion. The light of the coming day shone brightly before the eyes of the soul. But things seen and temporal engage them to such an extent that joy soon dies down, faith weakens, and the taste for heavenly things palls. Instead of progressing they gradually lose ground to such an extent that one scarcely knows whether they ever were converted at all. This is a sad condition indeed! If the love of Christ has ever been really enjoyed in the soul, they become thoroughly miserable. How could it be otherwise? The knowledge of heavenly things spoils the taste for things here. The pleasures of sin are not real pleasures for them; and what is sad above measure is, that the Lord, whose name they have professed to love and honour, is now brought into reproach through them before others who are only too ready to justify their own shortcomings by the failure of professed Christians.

These three classes may be compared to three men in a tunnel. In the far distance they per-

ceive a light; it is the light of the bright day, for the sun is shining in perfect splendour at the other end. They all three start forward to reach it with joyous heart and elastic step. But the tunnel is long, the energies of two out of the three begin to flag, and the other is in danger of being discouraged by the half-heartedness of his companions. Nevertheless, firm in his resolve, he keeps his eye steadily on the bright goal and presses forward, *the shining light ever beaming more and more brilliantly*, until he emerges from the tunnel into the perfect sunshine. He is a picture of the just one whose path is as the shining light, that *shineth more and more* until the perfect day.

The second wearies of the way, excuses his weakness, and settles down with light before him, but surrounded with darkness. He ceases to progress. The "more and more" of Proverbs iv. 18 he knows nothing about; he seeks to satisfy himself where he is, and there is no clear evidence at all that he is bound for the scene of light and sunshine at the other end of the tunnel.

The third not only follows the example of the second, but gradually loses heart altogether, and, almost unconsciously to himself, retraces many of his steps. The light from the goal shines less and less, instead of more and more, till to his eye it becomes almost imperceptible, and one begins

to wonder whether he will eventually turn up at the end of the tunnel at all!

Dear Christian reader, which of these three in our little figure do *you* most resemble? Are you pressing on with real spiritual energy to the goal? Is Christ in all His glory before you, and every step bringing you nearer to the perfect day of His presence? Or are you wearying and settling down on the road, occupied at heart with things visible, so that you make no progress, and *the shining more and more* is completely foreign to you? Take care. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" says the Lord's warning voice. (Matt. vi. 23.) The believer's life, blessed be God, is secured. But sin is deceitful, and the heart deceitful, and Satan is deceitful. And it is easy to persuade ourselves that we are Christians, and yet after all to delude ourselves.

Or are you like the third? Have you become so careless as to what is before you that Christ and the perfect day have lost their hold upon your heart, and, not content with settling down here like so many, you are gradually slipping back, every step taking you morally further from, instead of nearer to, the glorious light of day? How sad a condition! One wonders, if such is your state, whether you ever really were converted, and whether after all you will reach the goal where all is light.

Wake up then, dear soul, whoever you may be;

it is not too late. If Satan has succeeded in beguiling you, judge yourself before God, own all, hide nothing, and in His strength start afresh with girded loin upon the heavenly road. You may yet be found pressing on in that bright pathway of faith, with Christ Himself as the glorious goal of your desire. May it be so, that you may glorify Him, have a bright finish, and meet with an abundant reward at His all-gracious hand.

E. H. C.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. H. D.—Exodus xii. 9, 10.—These injunctions served to impress the Israelites with the solemnity of that night—"a night to be much observed unto the Lord"—when they were brought out from the land of Egypt. Under the shelter of the sprinkled blood, and ready to start, they ate the lamb, not sodden with water, but roast with fire. And if any of it remained till the morning, it was to be wholly burned. Thus the feast of the passover was marked off from everything ordinary and common. The teaching for us is plain. We through grace are under the everlasting shelter of the precious blood of Christ. Shed blood speaks of life surrendered, "for the life of the flesh is in the blood." So Christ laid down His life, yea, He was the true Passover slain for us. Therefore we know and are sure that—

"The wrath of a sin-hating God
With us can have nothing to do."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

139

But while this gives us unspeakable joy, we do not, must not forget what the Saviour *suffered* to place us beyond the judgment our sins deserved. So far as a creature can, our souls seek to enter into the reality of those sufferings. We remember that it was for *our sins* He endured the cross and had to drink the bitter cup of death. The soul feeds on Christ as the One on whom the fire of divine judgment fell. We hate the sins that made His sufferings and death an inexorable necessity, and take our place in the dust before God, for with unleavened bread and bitter herbs the lamb was to be eaten. To eat of it raw or sodden at all with water is to turn from the sacrificial aspect of Christ's death, to refuse its atoning character, and to walk in "the way of Cain." Of what more solemn sin could anyone be guilty?

H. T.—Colossians i. 24.—The apostle alludes to the sufferings he endured in the fulfilment of his ministry towards the Gentiles — sufferings for the Church's sake. For the great truths connected with the Church, by which it was shown that Jew and Gentile were one without the least distinction, exposed the apostle to fierce hatred and opposition from the Jews. These sufferings he calls "the afflictions of Christ," inasmuch as they were not for the Church's sake alone, but for His sake to whom the Church belonged. In enduring these he helped to fill up the full measure of them. You may compare 2 Timothy ii. 10. With reference to Mark xiv. 51–2, it is generally supposed that Mark is speaking of himself. He was that young man. If so, in recording the fact of others having fled he is led to state that

he also did the same. He was no better than the rest. We are ignorant of its having any prophetic meaning as you suggest.

E. L. P.—Revelation iii. 7.—Is there not a reference here to Isaiah xxii. 22? In the genealogy of our Lord in Matthew, David is the only one called “the king,” for kingly power in Israel began with him, at least kingly power according to God. Saul might persecute and seek to slay, but his intentions were futile, and David triumphed, for God was with him—the key was his. And David was a figure of Christ, in whose hand is all administrative power. He holds the key, and opens and shuts at His pleasure. If then we have but “little strength,” and can neither open a door nor shut it, we know the One who holds the key, and to Him we look and to no other. It is indeed a word of great encouragement in a day of weakness such as ours.

ELAKISTOTEROS.—In very much of what you say we entirely concur. But we have no wish to press our view. Having fully stated it we have nothing further to add.

W. W. L.—Matthew v. 42.—We shrink from any explanation that weakens the force of these words. It is easy to explain them away, and our hearts are so selfish that they readily lend themselves to the task. We have heard of some who receive the passage just as it stands in all its literal force, and act upon it, trusting God to shield them from imposition so far as it is His pleasure to do so. We honour their faith even if we cannot fully follow it. But everything kind, thoughtful, unselfish, generous, and compassionate is found in the Christianity of the Bible.

MILLIONS GOING NOWHERE.

A WELL-KNOWN evangelist was preaching the other day in the north of London. He had for his audience a very respectable, well-dressed congregation, most of them probably converted, moving day after day in their own little circle, contented and thankful that they themselves were saved. But many were possibly startled when the preacher told them that in the very city where they lived, lying all about their doors, there were three and a half millions who went nowhere, and on whose ears the Word of God never fell from one year's end to the other!

Let us try to grasp the magnitude of those gigantic figures and realise, if we can, that appalling fact. A million! It is easy to pronounce the word, a child can lisp it, but what does it mean? Gently, good reader! We must advance towards the goal of a million by measured steps and slow. Ten thousand, twenty thousand, fifty thousand, hundred thousand, ten hundred thousand! Now multiply these amazing figures by three and a half, and let your eye rest on that vast crowd of human beings, living in one city alone, who from January to December never hear either of the terrors of eternal judgment or the wonders of redeeming love!

Think of that seething sea of humanity, men and women of the same blood as ourselves, who sprang from the loins of the same Adam, destined to spend SOMEWHERE years that shall never, never end. Think, I say, of that seething sea of humanity rolling on to its eternal doom, and never hearing—never caring to hear—of the love of God, and of Christ's wonderful redemption, from winter to summer, from summer to winter, all their life long !

And what is true of London is equally true, in proportion, of most cities and towns of Christendom—for we say nothing of heathen lands—multitudes upon multitudes living careless, selfish, worldly, sinful lives, whose souls will be SOMEWHERE when the parson's lips shall say, "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," and the gravedigger cast his melancholy handful of earth down upon their coffin-lid.

Yet for them, as for us, did Jesus die. Did He not, good reader ? He gave Himself a ransom for all, and they, even as we, are encircled by those sweet, heavenly, life-giving words, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And if but *one* solitary soul out of these millions be brought to repentance, there is joy in heaven over that *one* more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance, if such indeed there are.

MILLIONS GOING NOWHERE.

143

Oh, it is wonderful! Joy in heaven, joy in the presence of the angels of God, over ONE SINNER that repenteth! And this joy is not reserved for heaven alone. It flows down from thence to earth in crystal streams, and *they* drink of it, and *only* they, whose hearts are in fellowship with heaven and with God, and to whom it is given to understand something of the deep meaning of the words, "Rejoice *with Me*, for I have found My sheep which was lost," and of these, "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this *thy brother* was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." (Luke xv.)

But what can we do to reach these multitudes? Or, rather, what would our gracious Lord and Master have us do? For surely no one is so heartless, so un-Christlike, as to say that we have no manner of responsibility towards those who are still in the broad paths of sin from which we ourselves have been rescued. How are they to be reached? Ah! that is the question, and it is one we feel so incompetent to answer.

One thing seems certain. The utmost we can do will be but little. Still that is no reason why we should do nothing. The ocean is made up of drops, the sea-shore of single grains of sand, and yonder spreading oak was but a tiny acorn once. Out of small beginnings great things sometimes grow.

Let me suggest certain ways in which all can help.

1. We can give ourselves to more prayer. This is always the precursor of blessing. It is like the cloud which the servant of the man of God saw from the heights of Carmel—the harbinger of abundance of rain. When God's people are stirred up to earnest, persevering prayer for the unsaved, when their spirit gives them no rest, when they cry and groan and plead with God to make bare His holy arm, the answer is sure to come. It is said the great American revival of a few years back began with the fervent prayers of one man. Think how Abraham interceded for Sodom, and Moses for rebellious Israel. How mighty too were the prayers of Elijah! By these he sealed up the clouds so that they rained not, and by prayer he opened them again. Prayer is the confession of our own weakness, the acknowledgment that power belongeth unto God. Do we long to see Omnipotence working among dying men, showers of blessing coming down on the hard, dry land? Let then the walls of our rooms witness that we know how to plead before the throne of grace.

2. We can try to take someone with us to hear the gospel plainly and fervently preached. Some will be only too glad to go; others are harder to get. How many have we known to be converted who were with the utmost difficulty per-

suaded to come. They would not have come at all but for the repeated invitations and persistent entreaties of personal friends ; but having come, God graciously blessed them with His salvation. "I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me." (Rom. x. 20.) We do not hesitate to say that the divine blessing *specially* rests on efforts of this kind.

3. A handful of good gospel tracts and booklets may be bought for a few pence, and these we can give away, or send some of them through the post. More are blessed by these means than many dream of. We are constantly hearing of such cases, and no time, or labour, or money should we begrudge that is spent in this happy line of service. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Eccles. xi. 6.)

" Sown in the darkness or sown in the light,
Sown in our weakness or sown in our might,
Gathered in time or eternity,
Sure, ah, sure, will the harvest be."

4. We can regard with prayerful sympathy every endeavour to carry, in a larger way, the word of life to these multitudes who go nowhere. Some men are specially fitted for such work; may their number be multiplied! We should

uphold their hands and sustain them with our prayers, and in every possible way help speed the gospel plough as it goes over the hard, rough soil.

Their mode of action, in every detail, may not *seem to us* the best ; but then, earnestness, when blended with faith, never binds itself too rigidly to ancient forms. The four who brought the paralytic to Jesus, when they could not attain their object otherwise, broke up the roof of the house, and let him down from the top. It was not an every-day way of doing things, but thus *their* faith expressed itself, and the Lord honoured it.

And when the men of the fire brigade are bravely bent on rescuing the inmates of a burning house, when we see one after another brought out of the suffocating smoke and scorching flame, we are in no mood to criticise the methods of the men who have saved others at the jeopardy of their own lives. Still less shall we be disposed to do so, if it be *our* house that is on fire and *our* kindred that have been rescued from so dire a death. Yet there is a word to which the most devoted labourer should give heed, and weigh in all seriousness : " And if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully. . . . Consider what I say ; and the Lord give thee understanding." Such were Paul's words to Timothy ; and the most passionate lover of souls,

if wise, will earnestly inquire what *striving lawfully* means. How much sympathy has been lost and how many hearts have been estranged through neglect of this apostolic word !

Finally, we must give the Holy Spirit His place. Every effort, small or great, comes to nought without Him. A man may preach with the tongues of men and of angels ; he may have the fervency of a Peter, Paul, and John, and plead with men with burning words and many tears ; but all is nothing without the Holy Ghost. If we recollect this, it will keep us from self-confidence, and also from thinking little of little means. Clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit, the feeblest voice raised in testimony to Christ may accomplish much ; without Him the most powerful will die away like an echo upon the ear.

Oh that a pentecostal wave of blessing might roll in among the millions of non-church-goers with whom our land is thronged !

“ Oh ! can it be that we believe the story
Of Him who came from heaven His all to give ;
And in His cross of shame profess to glory,
And yet for others do not live !

“ Go forth at once, the love of Christ constraining,
Weep, plead, and pray till precious souls are won ;
Then we, with songs of joy and praise returning,
Shall hear the Master say, ‘ Well done ! ’ ”

“THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.”

PHIL. iii. 10.

OH! to know more of Christ! be this our aim;
 Oh! let us not seek earthly praise or fame,
 But let us live to Him, and Him alone,
 For we are His, and we are not our own.
 He gave for us His life of peerless worth:
 Would we not gladly part with things of earth,
 Our one desire, our object here below,
 More of Himself, more of His love, to know?

Oh! to be more for Christ in this dark scene,
 To be a vessel sanctified and clean,
 Ready to do His bidding at His will,
 Or, if He should desire it, to be still,
 Shining for Him a clear and steady light
 Amid the thickening darkness of the night;
 Ready to tell poor sinners of His love,
 Ere we are with Him, in His home above!

Oh! to be more like Christ, that thus we may
 Show only Him in every act and way;
 Much in His presence, sitting at His feet,
 Dwelling with Him in intercourse so sweet,
 That not ourselves, but only Christ, may speak,
 That every word be gentle, lowly, meek!
 Thus shall we give Him joy, and we shall be
 A witness for our Lord, who set us free.

Oh! to be filled with Christ, that so we may
 Be satisfied along our pilgrim way!
 We should not draw from this world's failing springs,
 Nor have our minds be set on earthly things.
 The time is short, the journey soon will end,
 And we eternity with Christ shall spend;
Lord Jesus, take our hearts, and may we be
Completely satisfied alone with Thee.

M. J. M.

DOES GOD LOVE SINNERS?

THIS is an important question. Too many people in the world think God has no love for them. And the devil is very well satisfied they should think so. It is what he has for six thousand years been instilling into men's minds. How well he has succeeded is only too evident. It may safely be affirmed, however, that God would not have men thus think of Him. And it is important that all who preach the gospel should make this clear. If God had no love to man as man, there would be very little gospel left to preach.

There are, however, different kinds of love, and if this is borne in mind there need be no difficulty in answering the above question in the affirmative. There is the love of compassion and the love of relationship—the love of John iii. 16 and that of 1 John iii. 1. Is this distinction always preserved?

Another thing that needs to be remembered is that a person, and what that person is and does, are not altogether one and the same thing. God does not love a sinner's state nor his ways. About that all will be agreed. The point is that God loves the sinner, and that the sinner and his state are not one and the same thing. Is this always kept clear in our minds? What

God has condemned in the cross is not the individual pure and simple, but his state. If Scripture speaks of the individual being condemned, it is only because he is looked at in connection with that state. Thus in Galatians ii. 20 the apostle says, "I have been crucified with Christ," but, to show that it is the "I" looked at in a certain connection, he immediately adds, "nevertheless I live." Should anyone suppose that the words which follow, "yet not I," alter that, let him still read on, "Christ liveth in me." Who is the "me"? None other than the same "I" that was going to Damascus to imprison the saints. If any further proof were needed it is given us in the closing words of the verse, "who loved *me*, and gave Himself for me." The apostle does not say it is the new man in him that Christ loves. He had no new man when Christ gave Himself for him, nothing but the old; but it was neither the "new" nor the "old" that Christ loved, but the individual, once Saul the injurious persecutor, now Paul the devoted apostle, but the same living, conscious personality in both cases, and the Son of God loved *him*.

In keeping with this we have the statement as to having put off the old man and put on the new. But *who* has done it? The "new" has not put on the "new," for had it been there it had been already done, and it is quite certain the "old" would never put off the "old." Is it not

the individual who has done it? Again, to whom are all the exhortations and warnings in the Epistles addressed? Not to the "old man," for such is not recognised by God, nor to the "new man" exactly, for the "new man," looked at apart, does not need them. But the individual in connection with the "new man" needs them, and it is to him they are addressed. Just one example: "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." (Col. iii. 19.) The "new man" in the abstract has not a wife, and certainly could never be bitter against her even if such were the case; but the individual has a wife, and is responsible to love her.

Thus the fact of responsibility proves the unchanging existence of the individual. Where would responsibility come in were it otherwise? But this individual may be in one of two conditions: lost or saved, regenerate or unregenerate, in the flesh or in the Spirit. And the one individual may during his sojourn here, through divine grace, change from one state to another. But the state is not the individual, nor the individual the state, though always looked at as connected either with the flesh or the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 5, 9.)

Now it is *individuals*, or persons, if the latter word be preferred, that God loves. And He loved them when they were yet sinners; therefore it is clear God does love sinners. To deny this would

be to rob God's love of its glory. For what is the argument in the fifth of Romans, but that God's love is superior to every other in just this, that it is love to sinners ? "Peradventure for a *good man* some would even dare to die, *but* God commendeth His love toward us, IN THAT, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Will any try to nullify this by saying that these words are addressed to those who, though once sinners, afterwards became saints ? To say so would mean, if it meant anything, that He loved them because they were to become saints, or else that God loved some sinners and did not love others. Either doctrine would vitiate the character of God's love. The latter supposition is completely set aside by the statement that "God so loved the WORLD." As to the former, it would suppose that God loved us because of some change in us, the very opposite to what the passage teaches.

Does God love only those who are agreeable to Him ? To suppose such a thing would, again let it be said, deprive this love of its glory. His love is true love, the very essence of it ; and He Himself teaches us wherein love consists : "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John iv. 10.) Here it is clear that true love consists in loving those who are the very opposite to ourselves, and in whom there is nothing to excite love. In God there is every-

thing to excite love, and consequently our love to God is not love in its essence; that is only seen in the fact that God loved us, and loved us in our sins, sending His Son a propitiation. Now let us ask one question, the answer to which must surely settle the whole matter for every unbiassed mind: Was Christ sent the propitiation only for a special class? If He was, then it must be admitted He loved only a special class. Scripture can best answer the question: "And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours *only*, but also for the whole WORLD." (1 John ii. 2.) It is clear then that God loved some, but here we see what He did for some He did for all, therefore God must love all; for it was in what He did His love was shown.

One further proof. Has not God taught us to love our enemies? Would He teach us to do what He has not done Himself? or would He teach us to act contrary to Himself? And when we love our enemies, is it because we know they are one day going to be Christians and love us? Would not all the virtue of our act be gone if this were so? God would have us do it without any thought of return, because that is the way He loves all men. "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you. . . . For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? . . . But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, HOPING FOR NOTHING AGAIN." (Luke vi. 27-36.)

All will agree that the gospel is world-wide in its aspect, and is addressed to every creature under heaven, so that we may preach the gospel to all. And may we not tell all God loves them? Fancy preaching the gospel with no love in it! Ask the evangelist if he can do it. Is not his chief mark love to men's souls? And is that love begotten of himself, or contrary to God? For ever blessed be His name, neither one nor the other. That love which burns in the bosom of the servant until it well-nigh consumes him, that leads him to sleepless nights and toilsome days, that love which impels him across the sea to distant lands, or to enter the dwellings of the sinful and degraded nearer home, that never leaves him, and never allows him to rest until wanderers are brought to God, is no mere human love; its source is in the heart of the One who "*so* loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son."

There is no greater work on earth than the work of an evangelist, and for this reason it is more Godlike than any other. An evangelist loves souls, and so does God. One of the grandest utterances in the whole of the inspired record, and which bows the soul in mute admiration and wonder, is this: "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." This is what the apostle testified, and no one is in the testimony who has not in some measure caught the spirit of this verse. In keep-

ing with this we find another apostle, and this at the close of his career (for the older we are the more evangelical we should become; it is a bad sign where the reverse is true), impressing upon Timothy that he is to do the work of an evangelist. What led these great ones amongst the apostles to do this? They had been much in the company of the Father and the Son, and they knew that the "Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." They had caught the spirit of the Master when, before His ascension, He stood in the midst of that little band that were soon to become world-wide missionaries, and the words of the great commission had sunk deep into their hearts. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke xxiv. 46, 47.)

The evangelist has a glorious message to deliver. He is something better than a teller of tales. Anecdotes do very well to flavour the dish, but should not be the dish itself. Neither should preaching be all hell and damnation. We are sometimes reminded of the servant who one day told her mistress she had made the tea, but had forgotten to put the tea in; she had only poured *boiling water* into an empty teapot. May we not preach the gospel sometimes without putting much gospel in? Sinners are empty

enough ; they need the gospel. The evangelist should not be afraid of telling his audience what God has done for him. Thrice is the conversion of Saul recorded in the Acts. When the Lord Jesus Christ sent forth the man out of whom He had cast the legion, He said to him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for THEE, and hath had compassion on THEE. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how *great things* Jesus had done for HIM." (Mark v. 19, 20.)

And, finally, what does Hezekiah say when he was brought back from the gates of the grave? "The Lord was ready to save me." This is what the evangelist can say, and he can tell all who come within reach of his voice that the Lord is just as ready to save them. But, above all, it is God's love that must be the principal and prominent theme of the one who wishes to win souls. It is true he must be able to reach the conscience and bring man's sin home to him, but after he has done that his success will chiefly depend upon how forcibly and how fully he can present the love of God. Hezekiah could speak of that love. "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption," he says, or, as the margin reads, "Thou hast loved my soul from the pit." Yes, here is the secret. God would *love* men away from hell, and love them into heaven. Oh, to be impressed more and more with this great fact!

R. E.

GIVING.

THE loudest sound to-day in Christendom is the rattle of the collection-plate. Above the raging shibboleths of party strife its clang is heard. Ritualism and rationalism may be, and surely are, sapping the foundations of Christianity, but the commercial aspect of things is much more serious than either.

No matter how unclean a man may be, *money* "covereth a multitude of sins." His way of procuring his wealth may be more than questionable. Once his money touches the collection-plate, it is consecrated, and the person of the unconverted, the publican, the extortioner, is received provided his purse is long enough. Often the largeness of his gifts raises suspicion that it is conscience-money he is giving—a bribe to God to quiet the neuralgic twinges of a guilty mind. But no matter; money is money, and the rich man's pounds go a great deal further than the widow's mite.

Then again bazaars, lotteries, gambling, private theatricals, got up to help on the funds of many a church, open the door to the debasing and lowering of that which bears the name of Christ.

Considerations such as these make one loath to touch the subject of giving. This article shall, therefore, be anonymous. When anonymity is

used, like the mask of the highway robber, to enable a man to give a stab in the dark without being discovered, then such a practice is base and cowardly. But God's truth is not anonymous, for God Himself is its Author, and its weight and force are not helped by being labelled by the writer's name. Facts such as I have stated are a matter of general knowledge. Now to the truth.

* * * * *

One great thought lies affectingly at the root of this subject. It may not strike you as having great force. If it does not, weigh it over, ponder it, until the thought fills your mind with its vastness and wonderfulness.

GOD IS THE GREAT GIVER.

Indeed, God is the only Giver. David, probably the most munificent of all givers, had to say, "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, *and of Thine own have we given Thee.*"

True, the apostle Peter could say to Ananias of the land he lied about, "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" God recognises in the ordered state of society the rights of property, and hence comes in our responsibility, but behind everything God is the great Proprietor, and we are but stewards—poor unfaithful stewards indeed!

To put it on a low level before proceeding to the higher, Who gives the air we breathe, the water we drink, the health we enjoy, and ten thousand things besides, and that both to the unjust as well as the just? GOD. Who loads the table of the rich man with delicacies and gives the beggar his crust? GOD.

But the rich man may say, "I secured all this by my industry and skill and labour." Indeed! Who gave your brain its cunning and your right hand its strength? Answer me.

"But my money commands the markets of the world," still urges the rich man. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts."

GOD is the great Proprietor of the world and all that therein is—their Creator. The store of the rich man and the wallet of the beggar, the delicacies as well as the crusts, are His.

GOD IS THE GREAT GIVER,

we repeat, giving on a vast, boundless, measureless scale, giving always, giving everywhere, giving to all, irrespective of age, rank, country, condition, gratitude, or aught else.

But, to take things to a higher level, listen to this amazing, incomparable verse. It is well known, so well known that Christians repeat its golden words glibly, little enjoying the greatness of the thought. Listen! "God so loved

the world, that He GAVE His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Again, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely GIVE us all things?"

The Corinthian Christians have often been said to have been characterised by their surroundings—worldliness and wealth. They were carnal. The apostle Paul had written his first epistle to them, and had reached their consciences about the sin in their midst, had corrected their bad doctrine, and given a blow to incipient sectarianism. In the second epistle he is free to exhort them not to be behind the Macedonian churches, who, in the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality. I know nothing more touching than the appeal, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." To touch their hearts and pockets the apostle would appeal to them by the inciting example of One who gave up untold riches, and became so poor that He could say when on earth, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." Still He was rich in His Father's smile, but poor indeed when, in that terrible hour of

darkness, He cried out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" What an amazing text to found an appeal for giving upon!

God is a giving God, and all who are in communion with Him have the same spirit. "The Lord LOVETH a cheerful giver." He Himself is a cheerful Giver, and He loves those who exhibit the quality He so pre-eminently displays. "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity," is the exhortation of Romans xii. 8.

If the cheerful giver is loved by God, how it lets a flood of light into our minds as to God's thoughts about the great privilege of giving.

Why, even the Jew had to give a tenth of his income to God; had to care for the widow and stranger and Levite. Are we Christians behind the Jews? I am afraid so.

And then it is not what we give, but what we have left, that is the great question. And what is the final test of good giving is the *motive*.

The widow threw in her two mites—it was *all* her living. Scripture is careful to tell us it was two mites. How easy to have given one and retained one, and even then to have exceeded the rich in their gifts. But no, all was flung into the temple treasury, for her heart was wrapped up in the service of God. He whose omniscient eye counted the coins and weighed them, counted them according to heavenly arithmetic, and weighed them according to the balances of the

sanctuary—He declared, “This poor widow hath cast in more than they all.”

I know no coins so traduced as the widow’s mites. The rich man thrusts his hand into his well-lined pocket, draws out a coin he will never miss, and smugly says, “Here are the widow’s mites.” The widow’s mites in his case would mean his whole fortune.

Then it is not what a man leaves in his will that constitutes his true wealth. It is what he has sent on before, what he has invested in the heavenly bank, where neither moth nor rust corrupts, and where thieves break not in nor steal. “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” (Proverbs xi. 24, 25.)

After all, it is the heart in communion with God, counting it a privilege, a luxury, to give, that constitutes the real spring of giving.

Money is a convenient way of giving, but it is often a greater sacrifice to give our time, our labour. Easier far to bestow a sovereign, in many cases, than sit up with a sick child all night. Each can apply these remarks in a multitude of ways.

The great point is to be in communion with God, and all falls into its right and beautiful proportions. “The Lord loveth a cheerful giver.”

ANON.

HOW GREAT NAMES ARE GAINED.

A VERY common question amongst men to-day is, "How are you getting *on* in the world?" The answers are legion, and show that there are plenty of people prepared to compass land and sea for a *great name*. They even combine for the same purpose. Take, for instance, that bold "Eiffel Tower," in the Champ de Mars, Paris, over three hundred yards high, and said to be by far the highest building in the world.

Yet, wonderful in human skill as it is, where do you see a trace of *God* in all its calculations? At the very root it clearly means, *Exalt man and exclude God!*

Nor is there anything very new about this name-making and doing without God, for as far back as a century after Noah's flood, when the inhabitants of the whole earth were of one language and of one speech, dwelling in the plains of Shinar, they "said one to another, Let us build us a city and a *tower*, whose top may reach unto heaven; and *let us make us a name*."

Yes, a name for *themselves*! But observe, having left *God* out of their name-making arrangements, the Lord said, "Let us go down, and confound their language, that they may not

164 HOW GREAT NAMES ARE GAINED.

understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth. . . . Therefore is the name of it called *Babel*." (Gen. xi.)

It is a very solemn thing to leave God out of any of your plans and purposes, for, alas! what shall the end thereof be? Bless God, however, there *is* a Man—and *only one*—who has on earth gained the greatest and sweetest name that even heaven ever knew or could bestow; and note, it is the only name really worth being connected with (and, oh, how well connected!), for it will stand you for ever.

That name was not attained by exalting Himself, but by humbling Himself, because "every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke xviii. 14.) It is written of the Son of God, that He "made Himself of *no reputation*, . . . and, in fashion of a man, humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him *a name which is above every name*, that at the name of JESUS *every knee should bow*, and that *every tongue should confess* that Jesus Christ is *Lord*, to the glory of God the Father."

If any reader of these lines desires to be connected with this blessed Person and His saving name, let him mark, "The word is nigh *thee*,

HOW GREAT NAMES ARE GAINED. 165

even in *thy* mouth, and in *thy* heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if *thou* shalt confess with *thy* mouth the LORD JESUS, and shalt believe in *thine* heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, *thou* shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x.) "Neither is there salvation in any other, for *there is none other name* under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." If you reached the very pinnacle of all *earthly* names, it would, in the end, yield you sad disappointment, as it did Alexander the Great, who, when he had conquered the whole world, sat down and wept, because there was nothing left for him to conquer!

Notice, all who know themselves deserving of what Jesus, who was sinless, bore on Calvary's cross, who accept Him as their only Saviour and Sinbearer, will in due course be exalted to be with Him, and like Him, in His own endless glory. But, remember, all who refuse Him now in grace will be abased to the dungeons of eternal judgment, where owning *Jesus* as *Lord* by knee-bowing and tongue-confessing will be compulsory, but, sad to say, *unavailing*.

Dear friend, be warned; be encouraged to make sure of that loving Saviour and His precious name while you may.

J. N.

HINTS TO OPEN-AIR WORKERS.

LUKE xiv. 23.

“We speak, not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.”—1 THESS. ii. 4.

ALWAYS go to God about sinners before you go to sinners about God.

Go *with* God rather than with your fellow-labourer, ready if called upon to stand up *alone* for Jesus.

Go in the deepest humility, realising that all results are with God, and do not be depressed or unduly elated by outward appearances.

Do not go with a settled plan of your own, but look to the Lord to arrange and order everything. He may bring to you adults or children, or both, a settled crowd or a moving one, few or many, tumult or quiet.

It is well sometimes to begin by simply quoting texts; one may then strike you, and you may be led to comment upon it.

Preach CHRIST, His person and work in connection with His *death, resurrection, ascension, and coming*.

Be ashamed of yourself, but do not be ashamed of the gospel. Therefore let self have no prominence, and speak boldly as you ought to speak.

For your encouragement bear in mind that God takes up poor weak and despised things to effect His glorious purposes.

HINTS TO OPEN-AIR WORKERS.

167

Be most reverent in your preaching and manner.

Remember that you do not come out to *prove* anything, but to deliver a message, whether they will hear it or not.

You cannot be too simple. Try and not use any peculiar phraseology. Do not stretch beyond your measure. Be real.

Avoid carefully all appearance of *lightness*. Remember it is a most solemn thing to preach or to hear the gospel.

Directly one speaks let the other workers as far as possible arrange themselves in an orderly manner around or in front of him, and show earnest attention themselves to what is said.

Workers should not engage in conversation with one another, so as to appear inattentive themselves, or distract the hearers.

If any workers come or go during the meeting, let them do it as quietly and unnoticeably as possible, not shaking hands all round, etc.

Do not give away tracts, etc., during the preaching to those who are evidently listening. It is well on the outskirts of the crowd to look after any who are leaving, and judiciously and quietly give them a word or tract.

It is happy sometimes to *offer* little books to those who will *come and take them* after the preaching.

Let our object appear to be the glory of God and the good of the people, not to bring ourselves

into prominence in any way. Be ready to be "fools for Christ's sake."

As a rule do not deal with any interruption in a direct manner. Ever show a spirit of grace and love.

If any persistently interrupt, requiring answers to (perhaps infidel) questions, ask such to kindly wait until you have finished, and say you will then speak to them by themselves.

Be very careful how you attempt to answer infidels publicly during your preaching.

Remember that preachers and all who occupy a prominent position are in danger from special temptations. Keep under your body mentally and physically.

Do all for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the eternal blessing of souls.

Selected.

ANSWER TO A CORRESPONDENT.

F. B. T.—We presume it is meant by the phrase about which you inquire, that just as baptism is a sign of death, so the Christian is to hold himself dead to sin, the flesh, and this present evil world. We cannot understand it in any other sense. But why not ask the one who used the phrase to explain it? It is a grievous day for obscure phraseology and religious jargon. Plainness of speech and words easy to be understood, which the apostle Paul thought so highly of, seem to be at a discount now. Hence the bewilderment of many minds with whom we deeply sympathise. May there be a speedy return from the dusk of obscurity to the lovely light of noonday.

SELF-OCCUPATION.

IT is not the inward look at self, but the outward look at Christ that brings true happiness. Oh, the misery of self-occupation! It binds the soul with fetters of iron and imprisons it in dungeons dark and cheerless. The Holy Spirit would lead us from self to Christ, from our failures to His faithfulness, from our coldness to His warmth, from our want of love to His love, that never, never changes, and which burns like "coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."

Self-occupation keeps many souls from finding peace. They look upon God as a stern, unbending Judge, whose eyes are ever upon them, searching them through and through. They are painfully conscious of being far from what they should be, and the coldness and distance they feel in themselves produce, so they think, coldness and distance in God toward them. Thus they place themselves under the principle of law which always leads us to believe that what we are for God will determine what He will be for us. So if they love Him He will love them, and if they do not neither will He. Now, whatever shred of truth there may be in that, there is no truth in it

in relation to the things of which we speak. Our salvation is all of grace. And if it be all of grace, then is it for the good-for-nothing, for those who have never brought one look of love to Christ, for the altogether bad, for those in whom there is no trace of moral loveliness, for the unclean, the leprous, the vile, the outcast. If from centre to circumference of our moral being there is nought but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, then are we such as grace can bless. It must be great grace to meet a case like ours, but God's grace is indeed great, and great is the worth of that atoning sacrifice through which grace flows so freely to sinful men.

Unhappy soul, rest thou only upon Christ. No one ever did so and was lost. He has pledged His word never to cast out any who come to Him.

"Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him.
This He gives you ;
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

Self-occupation is the bane of many a Christian. By being occupied with self they play into Satan's hand. "You are only a professor," says he, "a hypocrite, a whited wall, a barren fig tree, nothing but leaves, leaves, leaves, no fruit. I wonder your hand is not withered when you stretch it forth to take the sacramental cup." Oh, what

SELF-OCCUPATION.

171

agony such words beget ! They are like drops of molten lead, burning their way into the inmost soul. Then the evil one, rejoicing in our misery, stirs up the remembrance of broken vows and frequent falls, of wasted opportunities and vain resolves, of times when we have been ashamed of Christ and preferred the world to Him. We plead guilty to these serious indictments, and dare not lift up our eyes to heaven. And if the adversary can keep us in this dark prison, blinding us with the thick bandage of self-occupation, he will. Many a soul has been languishing there for long, long years.

Unhappy Christian, pour out your tale before God and have done with it. He knows it already, but it will relieve your heart to tell Him all. And then look away to Christ. In Him you are accepted. (Eph. i. 6.) In Him you are complete. (Col. ii. 10.) And He of God is made unto you wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. i. 30.) In Christ you have everything ; apart from Him you have nothing.

“ Oh, eyes that are weary, and hearts that are sore,
 Look off unto Jesus, and sorrow no more ;
 The light of His countenance shineth so bright,
 That on earth, as in heaven, there need be no night.”

And seek to understand that not only are the believer's sins forgiven, blotted out, remembered no more for ever, but he is created anew in Christ Jesus. He is God's workmanship (Eph. ii. 10),

and thus he is reconciled to God and made such as God would have him be. I am not speaking now of practical conduct, but of what the Christian is in Christ, a new creation in Him. (2 Cor. v. 17.) Do you object, and say, "But how can this be, seeing I am what I am"? I answer, This is how Scripture speaks of the Christian, and faith receives what God reveals. And that is the first step to the enjoyment of anything divine. Surely there is some blessedness in knowing that "our old man" has been crucified with Christ, yea, that I have died with Him, and thus all that I am as of Adam, morally speaking, is gone from the sight of God in the death of Christ. Thus the old is cleared away, and there is a new creation in Christ, a "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. iv. 24.) In "the new man" every believer has his part. That is the true "I" now, and of the old we can say, "It is no more I." The true "I" is the new creation, which is after God, and bears the moral image of the One whose workmanship it is.

Receive then these great truths, dear Christian reader, on the authority of God's own word. Ask Him to teach you by His Spirit. He will show you that *new* creation is indeed *new*. It is neither reformation nor restoration to the image of Adam in innocence, nor a readjustment of something that had become disorganised through Adam's sin

WORKING IN THE VINEYARD.

173

and ours, but a *new creation*. "So if anyone be in Christ, there is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. And all things are of the God who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. v. 17, 18, N.T.)

Although when viewed as "in Christ" the Christian is seen apart from "flesh," yet in point of fact he has "the flesh" still in him, a principle of evil on which Satan may act if allowed. But strength against it never lies in being occupied with it. Knowing its incorrigible nature, that it is only evil and cannot be anything else, we never give it another character, and can thankfully say, "It is no more I." And now it is Christ with whom the Holy Spirit would engage our hearts, and in being occupied with Him, self becomes displaced, and we learn experimentally that "the kingdom of God is . . . righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xiv. 17.)

WORKING IN THE VINEYARD.

IN every true convert's heart there is a desire, often intensely fervent, to bring others to Jesus. He must speak of what he knows; he must tell what he has found; he would fain share his joy with everyone he meets. This desire is born of the Holy Ghost; it is love, and

to quench it, therefore, is great wickedness. It is extreme folly on the part of any believer, and a great loss to his own soul, and it may also be a grievous loss to the souls of others, if, from a carnal policy, a spurious humility, or the fear of man, he suffers the desire to win souls to languish and die. It is not possible to have bowels of compassion or to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and behold with cold indifference the great crowd of the unsaved sweeping past to hell.

“Once on crossing a lake,” said a venerable Christian, “a sudden squall upset our boat and threw us all into the water. I forgot everything in the world, and thought only of my life. I forgot about everyone else; I thought only of myself. After a desperate struggle I reached the shore, and no sooner had I wiped the water from my eyes than I remembered my poor companions who were still in the deep water, and at once rushed to help them.” So the man who but the other day escaped, as by a miracle of grace, eternal death will feel for those who are perishing, and hasten to their rescue. “Ye are My witnesses,” saith the Lord, and a witness needs not talent or influence, nor learning or eloquence; it is only required of a witness that he speak the truth. The truth as it is in Jesus is a talent possessed by every true believer, and he is not at liberty to tie it in a napkin or hide it in the earth.—*Extracted.*

WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?

EVERY devoted Christian would surely desire to be used of the Lord in some way or other, and there is very much to encourage anyone in such a desire. In 1 Cor. i. 27-29 we see that God pours contempt on much in which man can boast, and uses the humblest things in the accomplishment of His purposes. Let none, therefore, sit idly by, feeling they have no part nor lot in this matter. A heart for the Lord is the only qualification, and the more insignificant you are in your own eyes the better; for "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: *that no flesh should glory in His presence.*"

It is interesting and extremely encouraging to follow this principle through Scripture, for it abounds in incidents which illustrate it. Let us look at a few of them:—

"And the Lord said unto him [Moses], What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod." (Exod. iv. 2.) Here was the chosen deliverer of

176 WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND ?

the Israelites, after forty years' sojourn in the wilderness, standing in the presence of God. He had just received his commission to go to Pharaoh, and was very loth to obey. He had abundant excuses as to his insufficiency, so God had to teach him that, after all, every bit of power must come from Himself. Therefore God bade him take the rod in his hand, and with that rod he should do signs. This was an insignificant thing, surely, yet God chose it, inanimate as it was, and used it in working miracles in the deliverance and support of His oppressed people. (Exod. iv. 2, 17, 20; vii. 15; xiv. 15; xvii. 5, 9.)

What is that in thine hand, David? A sling and a stone. Thoroughly despised was that shepherd-lad's weapon by the warriors of Israel, and especially by the giant of Gath; but God was pleased to use what the lad had, and we know the result. "So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him." (1 Sam. xvii. 50.)

What is that in thine hand, lad? "Five barley loaves and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" Not very much, truly, with which to feed five thousand men; but the lad parted with them, and Jesus took them, and they multiplied in His hands till there was abundance for all. (John vi.) Truly the Lord can make a very little go a long way.

WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND? 177

Widow woman, what is that in thine hand? Only "two mites, which make a farthing." (Mark xii. 42.) It was all her living, though, and she contributed that to the Lord's interests heartily, and what has been the result? The record of her devotion and unselfishness has come down the ages, and its influence has been felt on rich and poor. To the rich it has bidden them give to the point of sacrifice; to the poor it has been an encouragement to give what little they have, knowing that that is valued highly by the Lord.

Thus we might go on multiplying illustrations, but these are suggestive enough. Do they not speak eloquently to every Christian? Is there not a danger of looking at others and thinking what great things we could do if we only had their gift or opportunity? God asks you not, "What has the other person got?" but "What is that in *thine* hand?" In other words, God uses what a man has, not what he has not. There is a danger of looking so far afield for opportunities, that you never see those lying at your feet. The men who have succeeded in business as a rule have been those who have seized the opportunities that presented themselves. Are not the children of this world in their generation wiser than the children of light?

"There is nothing I can do for the Lord," said a mother to a servant of Christ. "How about

178 WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?

these children?" said he, pointing to her family. Oh! mother, what is that in thine hand? A most solemn responsibility, yet a most exalted privilege. It is yours to so guide and train those children that they may grow up an honour to the Lord (1 Tim. v. 14; 2 Tim. i. 5), to so live before them that they may rise up and call thee blessed.

Business man, what is that in thine hand? "Only the ordinary routine of business, day in and day out; not much chance in my life to be used of God." Hold, man; don't you know that you can preach far more eloquently by *walking* than by *talking*? Earnest, consistent Christian business men are at a premium these days. You cannot *live* Christ without others seeing it, and by living Christ in the office, or store, or workshop, you may be able to impress those who are not affected by what is *commonly called* preaching. "That man practises what other men preach," was a testimony we once heard of a business man. Don't you covet a testimony like it?

Invalid, what is that in thine hand? "Oh, nothing but to lie here and be ministered to by others!" Cannot you pray? "Yes, I can pray, of course." Well, God never asks impossibilities; use the power you have. If you can pray, there is a resource in your hand which is unlimited. Many a work of God has been begun and carried on through intercessions that have gone from sick-beds. We would exhort you to use your privi-

WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND? 179

leges. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. v. 17); pray importunately. (Luke xi. 5.) Pray expectantly, and God may use you more in weakness than He ever would in strength.

Christian reader, what is that in thine hand? There are powers there latent somewhere; small they may be, but still they are there, and a little more devotedness to Christ would soon bring them out. Are you embracing your opportunities to bring that soul under the sound of the gospel; to give a little pecuniary aid to that one in need; to visit another in sickness; to cry to God mightily for others; above all, to seek to express Christ in your words and ways, so that you may be a living exponent of Him who so well deserves all we can give Him? Well it is for each one to covet earnestly the best gifts, but better still would it be if each one would seek to use to the full that which he has, and cast at the Lord's feet, in devotedness of heart, that which is in his hand. Then should we see the principle fulfilled, To him that "hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." (Matt. xiii. 12.) May the Lord give both reader and writer to act on this more fully for His glory. H. G.

A BRIGHT HOPE.

HEB. x. 22, 37.

REJOICE, ye waiting saints, rejoice,
 The time draws near, our hearts to cheer
 When we shall hear the Saviour's voice,
 Called to the skies with glad surprise,
 To meet our Master whom we love,
 And serve and worship Him above.

How blest through all eternity
 To serve Him there in that bright sphere,
 To dwell in light and purity,
 And on His face adoring gaze,
 Whose precious blood has made us meet
 To serve and worship at His feet.

We'll serve and praise and worship Him,
 Our glorious Lord, by all adored :
 Not heaven's host, nor seraphim,
 Will praise as we for love so free ;
 Honour and glory they will bring,
 "To Him that loved us" we shall sing.

"A little while," He soon will come ;
 The day draws near, to Him so dear,
 When He will call us to His home,
 His joy complete when we shall meet
 In His blest presence to adore
 And praise and worship evermore.

Oh, may this hope our spirits cheer,
 And lift each heart to take our part
 In worship now, to God brought near,
 All free from sin, to enter in
 The holiest of all through grace,
 Where now in Christ we find our place.

M. T.

THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S WORK.

HOW sorrowful it is that, notwithstanding all the light that God has been pleased to give, in spite of the fact that the gospel of late has been set forth with such clearness and fulness, yet there are numbers of God's people who do not enjoy *settled* peace. They are either occupied with the past or the future, and hence are not in the enjoyment of God's unchanging love.

If the truth were known it would be found that in the majority of cases where little spiritual progress has been made or where backsliding has set in, solid rest of heart has not been known. What a wonderful thing it is to be in the enjoyment of settled peace in God's presence!

With a view to help those who do not enjoy this blessing, I propose to look at the work of Christ in three aspects:—

1. What Christ has done. 2. What He is doing. 3. What He is going to do.

1. WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE.

It is of all importance to be clear about the work of Christ. No one can enjoy peace with God until he knows what Christ *has* done. "He appeared once." What for? "To put away sin *by the sacrifice of Himself*." Words have no meaning if these do not teach atonement by blood.

182 THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S WORK.

Besides, death as God's judgment lay upon us. "The wages of sin is death." Christ must pass through death as a Sin-bearer and meet that judgment if we are to be saved. All Scripture bears witness to the necessity of Christ's atoning death. Our sinful condition and God's holiness alike demanded it.

Look at that cross of shame and agony. See the Son of God hanging there forsaken of God. Account for that if you can, ye who deny the atoning value of His death. Why did God forsake Him thus? And, as if to intensify the solemnity of that moment, the very sun withheld his beams, and Nature clothed herself in robes of darkness.

There is only one way to account for all this; namely, sin must be judged, the wrath due to our sins borne, and God's righteousness maintained.

"He was once offered to *bear the sins* of many." Can you in simple faith put yourself among the "many"? If He bore the judgment due to your sins His death was a perfect settlement of the whole case. Did I say a perfect settlement? It was more, much more, than that. Through the death of Christ God has been more glorified than if sin had never come into the world. The resurrection and glorification of Christ in heaven is the abiding proof of God's satisfaction with His finished work. And now He says, "Their sins

THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S WORK. 183

and iniquities I will remember no more." What peace-giving words!

2. WHAT HE IS DOING.

The One who bore our sins is now in heaven without the sins He bore; He ever appears before the face of God as our living Representative. He is our great High Priest with God; He is also our Advocate with the Father; His priestly grace succours us in our weakness here. When we are passing through trial, He endears Himself to us by His sympathy and by His unchanging love. However great the pressure and deep the trial, when He draws near all is bright. When trouble comes, and we get our eye on the boisterous waves, like Peter we begin to sink, but He puts forth His hand and saves us.

We often think we could get on better without certain trials; but we may rest assured the Lord knows what is best for us. Paul once thought so when he prayed thrice for the removal of the thorn. He got what was better than its removal. The Lord said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: My strength is made perfect in weakness." So he was made a more efficient servant with the thorn.

Trial is like weights to a clock or ballast to a ship. It helps to steady and sober, as well as soften and mould us into the likeness of Christ, and it makes us able to sympathise with others.

184 THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S WORK.

As our Advocate, He is with the Father for us; He is the righteous One. When we fall into sin and wander out of the right path, He restores us. If the devil accuses, He maintains us; His love does not change toward us when we do what is wrong, though He may be deeply grieved. It did not change toward Peter, though he denied Him. If we wander from Him, He loves us so much, that He patiently goes after us. He loves our company; He died to secure it, and lives to enjoy it; He cleanses from all defilement or whatever would bring in the least shade of distance between our souls and Him.

3. WHAT HE IS GOING TO DO.

Thank God, He is coming back again! He will appear the second time, not to raise the question of sin with those whose sins He bore, but to save us, spirit, soul, and body. We wait for the redemption of our bodies. In that sense salvation is spoken of in Scripture as a future thing: "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

If you have looked to Him as the object of faith on the cross and seen Him bear all the judgment due to your sins, if you see Him now in heaven as your Representative, it is your blessed privilege to be waiting for Him as your hope. The sleeping saints shall be raised and the living changed by His quickening power. All shall be

THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S WORK. 185

caught up to meet Him in the air and enter the joy of the Father's house. Our bodies shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body. We shall come out of heaven with Him and be manifested in the same glory. Then the world shall know that the Father loves us even as He loves the Son. (See 1 Thess. iv. 13-18; Phil. iii. 20, 21; Col. iii. 4.)

Christian reader, what could possibly give your heart greater joy than the thought that the One who died to save you and lives to keep you, who has saved you through all your stumbling course here in this world, is coming again for you?

Such a hope should make our hearts burn within us and quicken the pulse of our whole moral being. The gloomy night of our Lord's absence will soon be past, and He, the "Bright and Morning Star," appear.

As the morning star is the harbinger of the day, so Christ's coming for the saints is the forerunner of the bright millennial day when Christ, the long-rejected King, shall shine forth in all His glory as the Sun of righteousness. The brightness of His radiant beams shall dispel all darkness and fill the whole world with gladness and joy.

"What a world when all its sorrow
Shall have ever passed away!
What a world when each to-morrow
Shall be brighter than to-day!"

P. W.

GOD MADE KNOWN.

MAN through sin lost the knowledge of God. Satan has filled his mind with evil thoughts of God. He looks upon him as the cause of all his misery. Now, to die thus is to be lost for ever.

Man, by searching, cannot find out God. No scientific research can discover Him, no philosophic speculations bring Him nigh. God must reveal Himself if He is to be known; and this He has done, blessed be His holy name for ever.

We are introduced to God in this marvellous verse (John iii. 16), marvellous in its fulness, and glorious in its statement of God.

It reveals the fact that "God is love," that love is the nature of God, the essence of His glorious being.

Satan's lie, believed by man, is exposed, and the truth as to God's nature recovered.

As revealed in Christ we can know God. He was the perfect revelation of God in this world. "God was in Christ." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are

heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (2 Cor. v. 19; John i. 18; Matt. xi. 28.)

Wonderful fact for a lost and awakened sinner! To such He reveals the Father, and blessed rest is the happy consequence.

But notice, not only is love the nature of God, but love has gone out after a lost and ruined world. The heart of God has been revealed by the gift it gave. For four thousand years man's heart—"Satan's workshop"—had been revealed as "desperately wicked," but now every barrier is swept away, and there is the fullest manifestation and the most perfect expression of the love of God. Pent up before, it now breaks forth like mighty waters, having for its object a lost and ruined world.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son."

The motive was in God, for "God is love." The misery of a lost world was the occasion of its activity, the gift of "His only-begotten Son" the measure and expression of it.

Well it is when the soul ends its fruitless attempts to love God, and its misery too, by learning what God is, and bathing in the ocean fulness of His mighty love.

There is no love in man naturally for God, and all attempts at producing it are fruitless. Man's condition was revealed in the treatment the Son of God received at his hands. Man slew Him

in his hatred; but that which was the awful expression of man's hatred to God becomes the expression of the infinite love of God to man. In the cross man said, "I hate God," and in that same scene of death God said, "I love man." Man is fully revealed; but, thank God, He Himself is revealed also.

Was man a sinner? Ah, yes; beyond a question he was. But in the cross is revealed how sin was put away; for "He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. ix. 26.) That which was the fullest expression of man's sin was that which put it away.

It is the great point of attraction: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me." (John xii. 32.) Jew and Gentile, feeling their need, are drawn by divine attraction to the uplifted Son of man. Where can a sinner meet God, who is infinitely holy, in peace but at the cross? God's love was expressed there; the blood was shed there which made expiation for sin; the Lamb of God was slain there; and there God can meet the sinner in all His saving and justifying grace; and there the sinner can meet God, and obtain pardon and peace. Blessed meeting-place!

See the blessed consequence of the gift and death of God's Son: "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Thrice blessed statement!

There is no need of man perishing. God loved and gave; I believe and have. What? Everlasting life. Wondrous blessing! It is "whosoever believeth." Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, high or low, white or black, all who believe on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Oh, reader, are you one of the whosoever? Does that word take you in? Have you looked to the crucified One? Have you trusted the One who in love died for you, and bore sin's heavy load, that you might be free? If so, awake to your present and eternal portion. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"; "shall never perish"; "shall not come into judgment"; "is not condemned"; "justified from all things"; "accepted in the Beloved." (John iii. 15, 16, 18, 36, x. 28; Acts xiii. 38, 39; John v. 24; Eph. i. 6.)

But see the awful opposite: "And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.) Tremendous fact! If that is you, my reader, may God awaken you; may He so alarm you by the sense of His wrath, that you shall be compelled to flee to Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, and putting your trust in Him, be eternally saved.

But make haste, lest that wrath overtake you. "Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." (Job xxxvi. 18.)

E. A.

THE ETERNAL LIFE.

1 JOHN i. 1, 2.

THE Epistle of John has a peculiar character. It is the eternal life, manifested in Jesus, and imparted to us—the life which was with the Father, and which is in the Son. . . . This life is so precious, manifested as it is in the person of Jesus, that the Epistle has in this respect quite a peculiar charm. When I turn my eyes to Jesus, when I contemplate all His obedience, His purity, His grace, His tenderness, His patience, His devotedness, His holiness, His love, His entire freedom from all self-seeking, I can say, that is *my* life. This is immeasurable grace. It may be that it is obscured in me; but it is none the less true, that that is *my* life. Oh, how do I enjoy it thus seen! How I bless God for it! What rest to the soul! What pure joy to the heart! At the same time Jesus Himself is the object of my affections, and all my affections are formed on that holy object. And this is morally very important, while it is in *Him*, not in myself, that I rejoice and delight. . . .

The law *promised* life on obedience, but life *came* in the person of Jesus, in all its own divine perfection, in its human manifestations. Oh, how precious is the truth that this life, such as it was with the Father, such as it was in Jesus, is given to us! In what relationships it sets us, by the

power of the Holy Ghost, with the Father and with the Son Himself! The life has been manifested. Therefore we have no longer to seek for it, to grope after it in the darkness, to explore at random the indefinite, or the obscurity of our own hearts, in order to find it, to labour fruitlessly under the law, in order to obtain it. We behold it: it is revealed, it is here, in Jesus Christ, and he who possesses *Christ* possesses *that life*.

Now inasmuch as that life was the Son, it could not be known without knowing the Son, that is, that which He was, entering into His thoughts, His feelings; otherwise He is not really known. It was theirs, they had communion with Him—with the Son. Precious fact! to enter into the thoughts (all the thoughts) and into the feelings of the Son of God, come down in grace; to do this in fellowship with Him, that is to say, not only knowing them, but sharing these thoughts and feelings with Him. In effect, it is the life.

But we cannot have the Son without having the Father. He who had seen Him had seen the Father, and consequently he who had communion with the Son had communion with the Father, for their thoughts and feelings were all one. He is in the Father and the Father in Him. We have fellowship therefore with the Father. And this is true also when we look at it in another aspect. We know that the Father has entire delight in the Son. Now He has given us, by revealing the Son, to take our

delight in Him also, feeble as we are. I know when I am delighting in Jesus—in His obedience, His love to His Father, to us, His single eye and purely devoted heart—I have the same feelings, the same thoughts, as the Father Himself. In that the Father delights, cannot but delight, in Him in whom I now delight, I have communion with the Father. So with the Son in the knowledge of the Father. All this flows, whether in the one or the other point of view, from the person of the Son. Herein our joy is full. What can we have more than the Father and the Son? What more perfect happiness than community of thoughts, feelings, joys, and communion with the Father and the Son, deriving all our joy from themselves? And if it seem difficult to believe, let us remember that in truth it cannot be otherwise; for in the life of Christ the Holy Ghost is the source of my thoughts, feelings, communion, and He cannot give thoughts different from those of the Father and the Son. They must be in their nature the same. To say that they are *adoring* thoughts is in the very nature of things, and only makes them more precious. To say that they are *feeble* and often hindered, while the Father and the Son are divine and perfect, is, if true, to say the Father and the Son are God, are divine, and we feeble creatures. That surely none will deny. But if the blessed Spirit be the source, they must be the same as to nature and fact. J. N. D.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

B. H. (1 Tim. v. 8).—This passage, with its context, lays Christians under obligation to provide for the necessitous poor of their own families and households, and not to leave this duty to others. We say “families and households,” as, in apostolic days, a man’s “own” included slaves and dependants, and in that broad sense we use the term now. These then the Christian is to provide for so far as he is able. Indeed, his piety is *first* to be shown in this way, and to ignore the obligation is to deny the faith, and to sink lower than an unbeliever. For whatever blessing Christianity confers, whatever sources of spiritual joy it reveals in connection with the unseen world, it maintains with a high hand every moral propriety, and every claim of the life that now is. These cannot be set at nought with impunity.

But whether, in order to provide for “his own,” a man should resort to life assurance and other kindred methods, he must determine for himself in the fear of God. Some men do so in all good conscience. To them it is a commercial transaction, and nothing more. They see in it a means of providing for their own family; they avail themselves of it, and are at rest. But each must act before the Lord according to his measure of faith. We cannot impart our own faith to another, nor can we walk for long in the path where another’s faith has led him, if we have not the same measure of faith ourselves. If a man can count on God to meet every need both of the future and

the present without his having recourse to means of that kind, if those dependent on Him share that faith, let them act accordingly, only it must be faith indeed, and not the mere saying they have faith. Words are nothing.

But if another act differently we hardly think it would come under the unequal yoke of 2 Cor. vi. The passage is indeed both plain and searching, only let us remember that it is the spirit of the passage, and not the letter, that we should follow. We have to guard against toning it down to suit our own practices, or making it a rigid, legal rule, and applying it to details of life on which it may have no bearing. Here we need the Spirit's teaching, together with faith, and a heart upright and truly subject to the will of God.

PERPLEXED (1 Tim. ii. 1-3).—We cannot but confess that this exhortation is too often forgotten. The direction is plain enough. Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks are to be made for all men, while kings and dignities are expressly named. The too frequent omission on the part of those you speak of is due, we should suppose, to forgetfulness rather than to any other cause. For the august lady who rules these kingdoms, and under whose reign we enjoy great privileges, we may well thank God. And indeed we do, while earnestly praying that every spiritual good may be hers both now and hereafter. Perhaps your inquiry may lead to a more frequent remembrance of this apostolic injunction.

R. G.—You ask us for “the *full* meaning of cherubim and seraphim.” We fear our answer will be necessarily meagre. The only place where the

latter are spoken of in Isaiah vi. Some regard them as the same order of high created intelligences. From Genesis iii. 24 we gather they are the executors of the judicial power of God. In Ezekiel they are connected with the throne. "Living creatures" they are called in chap. i., and cherubim in chap. xi. Their four faces symbolise "intelligence, strength, stability, and swiftness in judgment." But we cannot say much about these exalted beings, for Scripture does not, and what profit is there in the speculations of the human mind?

H. S. O.—In the first days of the Church, the apostles were here, and the appointment to the office of an elder always rested with them or their delegates, such as Timothy and Titus. No instructions are given to the Church to appoint to such an office. The reason and wisdom of this is manifest as we behold the ruin into which the Church has fallen. In speaking of ruin we do not refer to the Church as the body of Christ. No ruin can overtake her in that aspect. But it cannot be supposed that the divisions which afflict the Church are any part of the divine intention. God would have His assembly manifestly one. At first it was so; now it is broken into sections. And even if all these were sound in the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, their very existence is our common shame and sorrow. Does it, then, become us in this low estate to claim authority to appoint to office which the Church did not claim in her unbroken days? Is it meet, is it right, to ignore the ruin, and essay to act as if nothing of the sort had befallen us? In such a path of pretension we could not count on divine support. Infinitely

better to pretend to nothing, but rather to own before God, with trembling lips and broken hearts, the evil that has overtaken the Church because of her sins. Repair the ruin we cannot, and our only outlook is the return of the Lord to call His own away. Meanwhile the Lord's feeble and scattered ones may encourage one another to look to Him who has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." In weakness they may be thus gathered, feeling the ruin, and confessing that the failure of the Church is their failure, but He will be with them. And if they pretend to nothing in the way of authority to appoint to office, they will nevertheless find that the Lord will raise up men possessing the moral requirements that elders should have, and who will seek to care for the interests of Christ among His saints, without desiring any official position whatsoever. We need hardly say in conclusion that *gift* and *office* are totally different things. If a man were an elder at Ephesus he would not be an elder anywhere else. It was a local charge. But an evangelist or teacher would exercise his gift anywhere and everywhere, under the Spirit's direction of course. If this is not clear, write again.

S. H. (1 Tim. v. 24).—We understand this to mean that some men's sins are open, flagrant, manifest, to every eye, and go before them, so to speak, to judgment. The sins of other men are hid, done in secret, concealed from public view, covered under the cloak of respectability; these follow after, and will confront them at the judgment seat. For nothing is hid from God, and the darkness and the light are both alike to Him.

WORLDLINESS: ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

SOME seventy years ago the Lord was pleased very signally to awaken some of His people to the fact that He was coming again. Other truths were also recovered relating to the body of Christ and the presence of the Holy Ghost, with the result that many believers saw that separation from the world in its threefold form—social, political, and ecclesiastical—was the only path for the Christian. Those who thus realised the true character and calling of the Church began to meet together in all simplicity to remember the Lord Jesus Christ in the breaking of bread, and sought to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

It is of all importance to observe that it was in connection with entire moral separation that this state of things was revived. Is it not equally true that there must still be the same separation if it is to be maintained? Undoubtedly. And yet are there not signs that the world is again encroaching? Things are much more relaxed than they were. What would have been challenged even a few years back is now allowed

198 WORLDLINESS: ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

to pass, or is perhaps commended. The proneness to adopt the fashion of this world, and the *rapidity* with which anything popular is taken up by the people of God, under the plea that it is healthful, are indications more or less marked that the line of demarcation is gradually but surely being wiped out.

We read of the children of Israel after they were established in the land: "The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that He did for Israel. . . . And there arose *another generation* after them . . . and served Baalim." (Judges ii. 7-11.) Have we not here both a lesson and a warning? Sad will be the day when the truth ceases to produce any separating effect. Indications are not wanting that this danger already threatens us.

In considering, therefore, the subject of worldliness it may be helpful to inquire, first, its causes, and next to point out some of its effects.

First, the causes. A primary cause of worldliness lies deep-rooted in every human heart. *It is love of self.* For what is worldliness but ministering in some form or other to self? If only there were an entire absence of self-seeking, worldliness would be an impossibility. But this base principle is as old as the human race. It first showed itself in the garden of Eden, for

WORLDLINESS: ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS. 199

what underlay the act of our first parents was selfishness. And the principle that underlies the whole worldly system was first set in motion when Eve "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise," and "she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." God was here left out of consideration, self became the centre and object; and with man as man this has been so ever since. How different with the Lord Jesus Christ when He was tempted! Satan appealed again and again to self-interest in Him, but in Him it did not exist. If we would understand the difference between worldliness and "not of the world," let us ponder well these two pictures.

If we ask, then, "Why are we worldly?" the answer is, first of all, "Because we are selfish." And not until God becomes the centre, instead of self, can one be truly unworldly. Would that we were impressed with this all-important yet simple truth. If, however, the first and chief cause must be looked for in our own hearts, others may be found in what surrounds us. Never did the world wear a more fascinating appearance. Satan seems making a supreme effort just now to polish it and improve it, so that he may get even Christians to believe it is not so bad after all, and take them off their guard. Sermons are embodied in dramatic representations, and religion appears at the play.

200 WORLDLINESS : ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

The children of God are always liable to be affected by the prevailing influence. This is decidedly an age of pleasure. In referring to these very days, Scripture not only tells us "men shall be lovers of their own selves," which, as we have seen, constitutes the very essence of worldliness, but it describes them as "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." Now if this is the atmosphere that surrounds us—and alas! it characterises even the religious world—are we not in danger of becoming infected by it? Nay, are we not already infected by it? Mark, Scripture does not condemn all pleasure. Bodily exercise is a pleasure, and "profiteth," the same authority tells us, even if only for a little while. But what is to be guarded against is the undue proportion—lovers of pleasures *more* than lovers of God. Oh that we more often asked ourselves, Is there anything I love more than God? It is not so often the harm of the things themselves, but they are allowed to shut God out, and occupy the place that He ought to fill.

Other things beside "pleasures" (though we question whether the word in the above passage has not a wider meaning than the common acceptation of the term) are having their effect upon us unless on our guard against them. Only a few can be just enumerated. There is dress, for instance. How many a young Christian is ensnared by it! And this not merely because

WORLDLINESS : ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS. 201

the craving is already there, but also because shopkeepers have little else to show but the latest fashions, so that a real effort has to be made to dress neatly. Then there is the all-engrossing matter of business, demanding the exercise of every faculty and the straining of every nerve, in order to keep abreast of the times, so that everything else is swamped, unless there is the determination to "seek *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and the faith to believe that all other things will be added. Further, the absence of persecution and the possibility of living on such easy terms with the world too often become a snare, while how many can attribute their soul-declension and worldliness to success in this life. It is hard to be unworldly under the smile of prosperity.

Are not these some of the causes of worldliness? And shall we not do well to ask ourselves, as in the presence of Him with whom we have to do, how far we have already been affected by them? With so much around us enticing us from the narrow path of separation, how much we need to be on our guard, especially against the tendencies within. Worldliness is in our hearts before it is on our backs or in our houses. It is the heart we need to keep with all diligence. If we are not worldly there, we are hardly likely to be anywhere else.

202 WORLDLINESS: ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

THE EFFECTS OF WORLDLINESS.

Worldliness leads to decreased power in preaching, prayer, worship, and testimony for the Lord; and some are infected with it who are scarcely aware of the fact. It is seen in the way in which they are *more and more settling down*. This is perhaps one of its most subtle forms. They are in the position of Lot after he left Abraham, and before he entered Sodom. The well-watered plains have the same attraction for them as for him. They talk in the language of Abraham, but their faces are toward Sodom. The Lord's coming is still a doctrine they hold, but not the expectation of their hearts. They enjoy their newspaper, but know little of what it is to plead with God on behalf of others as Abraham did.

These and similar effects resulting from worldliness might be dwelt upon at length. But instead we wish to focus our remarks upon one point, namely, *the loss* which is the inevitable result of worldliness.

How real it is very few imagine. It is true it cannot be tabulated in the same way as losses in business can at the year's end, for figures cannot express this loss, but we deceive ourselves if because of this we imagine no loss has accrued. *Worldliness is total loss!* for the

WORLDLINESS : ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS. 203

simple reason that the "world passeth away, and the lust thereof." In Genesis xii. we read that "Abram went down into Egypt." In chapter xiii. it tells us how he left Egypt: "And he went on his journey from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his *tent had been at the beginning*, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the *altar, which he had made there at the first*." All between his departure and his return was lost. He has to come back to the same point he left. Naomi, her husband, and two sons went to Moab (the world), but when she comes back what is her confession? "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty."

But who could sum up the loss to themselves and to men generally through the worldliness of Christians? One has only to contemplate the effect of well-nigh eighteen centuries of worldliness to be absolutely appalled. Someone has said, "I do not wonder at what men suffer, but I do wonder at what they lose." In the early period of the Church's history believers were content to suffer rather than lose; we seem content to lose rather than suffer. And what a loss! There is, first of all, the loss to God, in being deprived of the communion of His people, because they are defiled by the dead. And if of communion, also of their worship. Next there is the loss to the individual, the

204 WORLDLINESS : ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

loss of joy and strength and progress. The loss of spiritual power and freshness; instead of being anointed as with fresh oil, everything is stale and insipid. The loss of deepening acquaintance with God and all that it involves. And there is the loss, too, of time—that is only ours to use once—wasted upon what yields no result but disappointment, while all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge lie almost unnoticed at our feet.

All this were enough surely, but we have yet to consider the loss to others; for we must not think our worldliness only affects ourselves. Children are very quick to detect it in their parents and to imitate it; and how many homes that might have borne witness to the powerful grace of God are left desolate, the children having gone off into the world! And in nine cases out of ten the children are not alone to blame.

Moreover, what shall be said of the effect upon the world of a worldly Christianity? We have only to look around us to see. In the dearth of conversions, in the widespread indifference, in the utter contempt that many have for present-day Christianity, we learn only too well the level to which the Church has sunk, and her utter powerlessness either to save or bless. Are any amongst the various denominations of professing Christians beginning to find this out? Are they beginning to discover that all the worldly para-

WORLDLINESS : ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS. 205

phernalia of their so-called church life—the bazaars, the concerts, and the various other means of raising money, and of amusement—are, after all, profitless, except as a means of ministering to the flesh? It is to be hoped that upon some few, at all events, the truth is slowly but surely dawning that in adopting such methods they have been labouring under a terrible delusion. Surely it is better, like Peter, to say, “Silver and gold have I none; *but such as I have give I thee*,” than to be identified with a system that boasts, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” and yet is without anything to give that is worth the having. (Compare Acts iii. 1–7 with Rev. iii. 14–18.)

Whichever way we contemplate the loss through worldliness, whether to God, to ourselves, or to others, we are surely impressed with the fact how great it is, and may fitly recall to our minds the words of another already quoted, “I do not wonder at what men suffer, but I do wonder at what they lose.”

R. E.

Worldly Things in a Dying Hour.—When Garrick showed Dr. Johnson his fine house, gardens, statues, pictures, etc., at Hampton Court, what ideas did they awaken in the mind of that great man? Instead of a flattering compliment that was expected, “Ah! David, David!” said the doctor, “these are the things which make a death-bed terrible.”

THE “COMFORT” OF HIS PROMISE.

THE sun still shines in strength,
And all the earth with wondrous beauty
fills ;
The glow still fades at eventide
Behind the hills.

The night still follows on
With chastened glories in its mystic skies ;
The day still dawns with new-born light
In sweetest guise.

The mercies of our God
Still fall in plenty from His outspread hand ;
The seasons still pour out their wealth
O'er yielding land.

But one great truth yet stands
With unchanged force through all the changing
years ;
His promise still lifts up our hearts
Through smiles or tears.

As surely as our Lord
Still holds creation, as in ages past,
So surely shall He rise, and call
His Church at last.

W. J. W .

“TARRY YE”—“GO YE.”

AN inspired writer of old has said, “To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose [occupation] under the heaven.” (Eccles. iii. 1.) This principle is clearly recognised in the following weighty words, addressed by the Lord to His disciples just before ascending to heaven: “And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but *tarry ye* in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke xxiv. 49); and again, “*Go ye* into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark xvi. 15.) Distinctly, then, there is a time to tarry and a time to go forth.

The Lord spoke these words to the disciples before the descent of the Holy Ghost. (John vii. 39.) They had been chosen as the Lord’s witnesses, and by virtue of their companying with Him during His active ministry on earth were eminently qualified for that work. But they were sadly deficient in power, for they had not yet received Him who alone is the life of all true service. (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5; Romans xv. 19.) The Lord had promised to send the Spirit, after His departure (John xv. 26, 27), that He might dwell *in* the saints (an entirely new thing) (John xiv. 16, 17; Romans viii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 14), and be their Guide and Teacher during His

absence (John xvi. 13), their encouragement amid every persecution (Acts xiii. 52), and their power as living witnesses to an earth-rejected but now glorified Christ. (Acts i. 8.) Having made this wonderful promise, He bids them tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Apart from that power it was utterly useless their going forth to witness. With that power, which was to come after Christ had gone to the Father, they were to do even greater works than the Lord had done in His life on earth. (John xiv. 12.) It was therefore well worth their while to spend in continued prayer and supplication those ten days which lay between the Lord's ascension and Pentecost.

Some might have thought it a waste of time, but Peter's first sermon after the coming of the Holy Spirit proved the opposite. Three thousand souls were converted through that one sermon, evidence enough surely that the tarrying-time had been well spent. Not only this, but the mighty energy displayed in the early chapters of the Acts, wherein those “greater things” were accomplished, was the result of those ten days' tarrying.

But some may ask, is that same waiting necessary for us to-day if we would be effective in service? To this we would reply, No, and Yes. If you ask whether believers need now

to tarry for the Holy Ghost to come upon them, we would certainly say, No. Everyone now who is a believer in the gospel of a crucified, risen, and ascended Saviour is sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption. (Eph. i. 13; iv. 30.) The Holy Ghost dwells in their body (1 Cor. vi. 19); and by virtue of being indwelt by the same Spirit, all believers are baptised into one body, having been made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Cor. xii. 13.) The Holy Spirit *has* come, and it is really a denial of this blessed fact when people pray for Him to come. As well might they pray for the Saviour to come and die for sinners, although He did this over eighteen hundred years ago.

It is therefore a sad mistake to look for another pentecostal *manifestation* such as was given at the inauguration of Christianity. We do, however, maintain most distinctly that every believer has in the Holy Ghost a resource just as mighty as any in early days. The great hindrance is that He is so often grieved by the flesh being allowed, and instead of people being filled with the Spirit, as they are exhorted in Eph. v. 18, too often they are filled with wine. Wine in Scripture is a figure of earthly joy. Wine, too, is that which intoxicates and excites. How many there are who are continually running after religious excitement! That is not of the Spirit, but of the flesh—religious flesh. The

Spirit of God is set against the flesh (Gal. v. 17), and the mark of a spiritual man is that the flesh in him is subdued.

Again, if souls are seeking their joys here, rather than in heaven where Christ is, by so much is the Spirit grieved. The Spirit has come from heaven to link our hearts with Christ in glory (Acts vii. 55), and He will never link them with a scene out of which Christ has been rejected.

For what, then, do believers need to wait now that they have the Holy Spirit? The answer is simple. Though indwelt of the Spirit, they can never get on in independence of God. The more spiritual, the more dependent; the more dependent, the more prayerful; the more prayerful, the more active. Who was so Spirit-filled and active as the apostles, and yet who so prayerful? They said, “We will give ourselves *continually* to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.” (Acts vi. 4.) They believed in tarrying before going, and they believed in going after tarrying. If faith without works is dead, works without prayer are doubly so.

And why is prayer so needful for a servant of Christ? Because it is in prayer and waiting on God that His mind is learnt. If we are to be *workers together* with God (Mark xvi. 20) we must be in His mind, or we shall be at cross purposes with Him. One who is intelligent as to the Lord’s mind will do everything in view

of what the Lord has before Him, and there will be no waste energy. The Lord will lead him where the opened doors are. There may be difficulties in the way, but they will be overruled for God's glory. Look at Paul as an example of this. The Lord had opened a door in Macedonia, and His servant Paul gets a vision in regard to it. (Acts xvi.) At once he leaves for Philippi, in Macedonia; and Lydia, *whose heart the Lord had opened*, is quietly converted shortly after his arrival. A little later he and Silas are thrashed and imprisoned, but that is overruled to the conversion of the gaoler and his household. A bright gathering of saints was formed there, which was a great joy to the apostle's heart, as is indicated in his letter to them afterwards.

Depend upon it, there is no time lost in tarrying before the Lord. There may be great activity, and yet little really accomplished for God, because of lack of intelligence as to His mind.

You get a very suggestive illustration of this in the case of Ahimaaz, in 2 Samuel xviii. 19-32. Absalom had rebelled against his father David, and the two armies were fighting. David had given his chief captains special instructions to deal gently with Absalom. Spite of this, Joab killed him when he was hanging by his hair in the oak. Then Joab blew the trumpet, and stopped the people pursuing further after Israel.

“Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the Lord hath avenged him of his enemies. And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day. . . . Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready? But howsoever, said he, Let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cush.” There was plenty of activity in Ahimaaz; but when he reaches David, and the king asks him as to Absalom’s safety, all he can say is, “When Joab sent the king’s servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, *but I knew not what it was.*” He has to turn aside and stand still until Cush arrives and brings the tidings. He had his run for nothing. So it is with everyone that runs unsent.

If a man is to be used of God in public he must be much alone with God in private. It was said of Martin Luther that he devoted regularly so much time every morning to prayer and meditation before commencing the day’s activities. On one occasion his servant told him there was double

work before him that day, and that he must cut his devotions short for once. But Luther replied that he should require twice as long as usual that morning, so as to be prepared for the day's work. No doubt he had learned that such time spent alone with God was time gained. As another beloved servant of Christ has remarked, "There is nothing to be more dreaded than great activity without being much in prayer."

It is a wonderful thing to wait on God. In His blessed presence the servant gets his instructions; he receives guidance as to where he should go and to whom; he gets his message, too, oftentimes direct; he receives refreshment for his own soul; he learns, too, his own measure and his utter dependence; above all, he learns God and the mighty resources he has in Him, and he comes forth from His presence subdued yet energised. Weak in himself, but mighty in Another's strength, he goes forth with confidence and in faith, and his service will not be in vain in the Lord. He will go forward with the blessed consciousness of being sent of God, and that will sustain him amid the bitterest opposition.

This is a great day for activity in the Lord's things. Surely we can rejoice in it where it is of God. But amid all the activity may we be found quietly waiting upon the Lord, learning what His mind is as to the world at large, or as to the Church which He hath purchased with His own

blood. Let us seek so to answer to His mind, that when the Lord shall come we may be *approved of Him*, as those who have been faithful and true witnesses for Him during His rejection from this world. This is what will cheer His heart *now*; and though we may walk in comparative obscurity, He will publicly approve our course *then*. To the very end He will work, and He would have us to work with Him; and if we are close enough to Him, He will give us opened and effectual doors. May the Lord give us to know better what real tarrying is, for this alone can make our going forth effectual.

H. G.

Christian Boldness.—“Simeon was once summoned to the death-bed of a dying brother. Entering the room, the relative extended his hand, and, with some emotion, said, ‘I am dying, and you never warned me of the state in which I was, and of the great danger I was in of neglecting the salvation of my soul.’ ‘Nay, my brother,’ said Simeon; ‘but I took every reasonable opportunity of bringing the subject of religion before you, and frequently alluded to it in my letters.’ ‘Yes,’ said the dying man; ‘but you never came to me, closed the door, and took me by the collar of my coat, and told me I was unconverted, and that if I died in that state I should be lost; and now I am dying, and, but for the grace of God, I might have been for ever undone.’ It is said that Simeon never forgot this scene.”

PREDESTINATION.

NO one can seriously suppose that the Creator of the universe could ever act with no definite plan or purpose.

Being supreme, He must necessarily "work all things after the counsel of His own will." (Eph. i. 11.) Hence that which is named at the head of this article, a subject which it is to be feared is greatly misunderstood.

We are all so much in the habit of drawing our thoughts from various systems of theology and doctrines of men, that we too often go to Holy Scripture not so much to *learn* what God has to say to us, as to *prove*, if possible, what we have already received from some other source.

Then, again, we must ever remember that we as much need the Holy Spirit as receptive power, as the "holy men" who wrote God's Word needed Him for its composition.

"They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter i. 21.) If we will be content to receive only what God Himself teaches in His Word about this important matter, we shall find the subject most instructive and edifying.

One thing more, which it is important we should keep constantly before our minds, Christ and His glory, and not ourselves, are the objects of God's purposes and counsels. Through

sovereign grace we and our blessing are made part of that glory, and thus become the objects of counsel; yet God's purposes all centre in His Son, and have for their object His eternal glory and that of God Himself.

Predestination is thus in Scripture never looked at apart from the Son of God, and we may now profitably consider the four aspects in which it is presented in Scripture.

(1) "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children [sonship] by Jesus Christ *to Himself*, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted [taken us into favour] in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 5, 6)

These marvellous words, expressing as they do a depth which none but the Spirit of God can fathom, go far beyond a well-known theological statement in which "predestination to life" is defined as God's purpose "to deliver from curse and damnation . . . and bring to everlasting salvation." Of course, all this may be involved; but Scripture shows the surpassing blessedness of God's purposes *concerning His Son* and concerning believers as associated with Him.

We are familiar with the thought that a person may be marked out beforehand for a certain course in life. A father, it may be, decides the profession his son shall follow in the future, and has him trained accordingly. The heir to a king-

dom or an estate is educated according to what his position, privileges, and responsibilities will be when he enters into the possession of his dignities. So God has marked us out beforehand for sonship by Jesus Christ unto Himself, and He will take care that our training here conduces to this His blessed purpose for us. (Rom. viii. 28.) He will be glorified by having us as sons in His own presence and to Himself. Thus His glorious will shall be accomplished, and He will find His own delight and satisfaction in the many sons whom He is bringing to glory in association with Him who so fully glorified Him on the earth.

Meanwhile we are "taken into favour in *the Beloved*." Well may we ponder the significance of this. Does it not intimate that we are taken into God's favour according to the love He has for His own beloved Son? As He Himself says, "Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me." (John xvii. 23.)

(2) "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. viii. 29.)

Predestined to sonship, we see that this marvellous favour associates us with the Lord Jesus Christ, who is pre-eminently *the* Son. In this way He becomes the Firstborn among the many brethren. This could only be brought to pass through His death and resurrection, for He could

have no part with us nor we with Him until He had removed all the distance between us and God, and we were made nigh in Him and by His precious blood. This, then, was God's great and gracious object in sending His own Son into this world, and which the Son had in view in all that He accomplished here for His Father and for us.

No sooner had the Lord risen from the dead than He uses this new term of relationship, and says to Mary, "Go to My brethren." Our hearts are surely bowed by such wondrous grace. "What shall we say unto the Lord for all His benefits toward us?" This is surely to "take the beggar from the dunghill, to set him among princes, and make him to inherit the throne of glory." (1 Sam. ii. 8.)

How shall we praise Him through eternity for the "riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus."

(3) But again, the scripture already quoted speaks of a third aspect of predestination. We are to be conformed to the image of His Son. If fallen Adam begat a "son in his own image" (Gen. iv.), the blest sons of God and brethren of Christ are one day to be fully conformed to His image. The beauties and perfections of the risen and glorified Man, Christ Jesus, are to be displayed in them. All that God looks for and desires to see in man—the reflex of His own moral

PREDESTINATION.

219

glories, and that in which He can find His full complacency and delight—will be reflected by this heavenly company. Christ will be its Centre and Chief, and each member of it will exhibit some trait or characteristic of Him, and all together shall be resplendent with the glory of God. “We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

“All like Thee, for Thy glory like Thee, Lord,
Object supreme of all, by all adored.”

(4) Lastly: “In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory.” (Eph. i. 11.)

We have seen that Christ is the Centre of all God’s purposes and counsels, and He has been made “Heir of all things.” How wonderful, then, that those who are through grace brought into His company—sons of God, brethren of Christ—should also be predestined to the same inheritance! We are to share with Him this glory, and He will not take His kingdom and dignities alone. We are begotten again . . . unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. We are co-heirs and fellow-heirs with Him.

“ . . . He will not wear
His crown of joy alone,
But earth His royal bride shall see
Beside Him on the throne.”

We shall have His company and He ours in all that future glory in which He is to be displayed ; and even creation waits for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, for the manifestation of the "sons of God."

Oh, thrice blessed destiny ! All worship and honour unto our God and Father, and to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us ! May our souls enter into these eternal realities, and may we thus be captivated for Himself and necessarily estranged from this world and all its pomp and glitter. The path of His rejection and sorrow has led to the throne, and shall we shun the same path ? How can we be with Him except by walking the path He walked ? "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honour." (John xii. 26.) No ! let us rather accept it as the gift of His own love, an honour to which He calls His own, for if we suffer *with Him* we shall also reign *with Him*. Oh, joy unspeakable and full of glory ! His own blest company our eternal portion, and He Himself dwelling in the repose of His satisfied affections throughout the eternal ages. Lord, make us NOW *wholly Thine*. J. V.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

N. B.—Yes, there is a difference in the meaning of the two terms *children* and *sons* as applied to believers. We are children of God *now*, as the apostle John so plainly tells us in chapter iii. of his First Epistle; and we are sons too, though it is a matter of faith rather than anything else, seeing that sonship looks on to the day of glory. As *children* we are individually the objects of the Father's gracious love and care. He thinks of our every want, trains us in His school, disciplines us for our good as a wise earthly parent his child, and in numberless ways considers our feebleness and tenderly provides for our recurring need. As *sons* we are viewed in association with Christ, He the Firstborn among many brethren—the sons who are being brought to glory. (Hebrews ii.) And in that day of glorious display for which the groaning creation waits we shall be manifested as the sons of God according to Romans viii. 18–21. Connected with *children* is the thought of life, nature, and relationship; with *sons*, position, honour, dignity as associated with Christ. We may just say, in passing, that in the writings of the apostle John the word *sons* should be *children*, both in the Gospel (chapter i. 12) and the First Epistle (chapter iii. 2). It is *always* children in John.

Referring now to another point in your inquiry, we believe that no one can attentively peruse the Gospels

without observing that in the ministry of the Lord on earth He was revealing the Father's name to His own. Look, for example, at Matthew v. 43, 48, and several other instances in chapters vi., vii. No doubt after the resurrection of our Lord, and as time went on, things were connected with the Father's name that were not brought out before, though some of these are undoubtedly alluded to in the Gospel of John. But the declaration of the Father's name was a very material part of the Lord's ministry, little as the disciples may have comprehended it, till the work of redemption was accomplished and the Holy Ghost was given.

As regards your final question, *deliverance* is a large subject, and varies in its meaning according to the truth that is being dealt with at the moment. In Romans vii. the deliverance so earnestly desired is that of a soul who, having been born again, and therefore possessing holy desires which it finds itself powerless to fulfil, cries aloud for a deliverer from the bondage under which it groans. It is the experience of one in earnest, who is learning the inherent badness of fallen human nature, but who has not yet seen by divine teaching what is meant by being "*in Christ*." The consciousness of this deliverance, once known, is rarely if ever lost.

Deliverance from this present evil world and from self is a different matter, and though connected, it works out in another way. It can only come about by having the heart continually engaged with Christ and with those things which are of Him. And this needs to be maintained—in the power of the Spirit surely—but it is not apart from prayer and the soul's

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

223

feeding, meditating upon, and delighting in the Holy Scriptures—the veritable Word of God.

B. E. A.—If you are quite clear as to the wisdom of the step, there is nothing that we know of in Scripture to forbid it. In this, as in all other matters, divine guidance is to be had if sought with a heart truly subject to the will of God.

SOLO.—The Word of God admonishes us to be “wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.” Heeding such an admonition, we shall not give ourselves too much to the study of such literature as that which you send, and we seriously warn you against it.

The tract is pretentious in its title, and its array of texts may possibly impose on the understanding of those who do not search the Scriptures for themselves. Nothing is easier than to prove all manner of evil doctrine from the Scriptures if men are base enough to tear out passages from their connection and apply them without any reference to what they were intended to teach.

To refute the errors of this tract would absorb more space than we can spare. It is full of them from beginning to end. And this is not the worst. Its principles are called “first principles,” and they are indeed but the first. What follows when these “first principles” have been imbibed is only known to those who have sounded Mormonism to its dark depths, and found them to be “the depths of Satan.” (Rev. ii. 24.)

Can that be “the true gospel of Christ” which tells us that “salvation is won by the works of a lifetime”? Is salvation, then, of works? Ephesians

ii. 8 tells us, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast." Romans xi. 6 speaks thus: "If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace."

Can that be "the true gospel of Christ" which declares that "baptism is essential to salvation," and that men "cannot be saved without it"? In Christianity baptism has its place, but let it be kept there. Is it likely, if baptism is essential to salvation, and men cannot be saved without it, that the apostle Paul should have gloried in saying that "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel"? (1 Cor. i. 17.) And, according to this tract, for baptism to be effectual "it must be performed by one authorised to act in the name of the Lord." The writer does not condescend to tell us who the authorised individuals are, or from whence they derive their authority. We presume they are Mormon elders, or some officials fresh from Salt Lake City. If not baptised by one of these, and a man dies, he is consigned to "the prison of the spirit world" till the gospel is again preached to him, but by whom and when it is to be preached we are not told.

We hardly think it would be edifying to our general readers to pursue this further. But heed this word, "Be wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil."

J. C.—We regret that both time and space prevent our answering your interesting questions till next month.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

WHAT does God require as an atonement for my sin? *Is it tears?* The tears of the blessed Lord went up to His Father as "an offering of a sweet-smelling savour," as He wept at the grave of Lazarus and over the beloved but apostate city of Jerusalem. The tears of the aged Paul and the youthful Timothy were well-pleasing to God as they wept with anxiety over those whom the Lord had committed to their charge. (Acts xx. 19, 31; 2 Cor. ii. 4; 2 Tim. i. 4.) But where, in the whole canon of Scripture, do we find that *tears* were ever an atonement for sin?

Will fastings avail? The blessed Lord fasted forty days and forty nights while He was tempted of the devil; and He, as ever, in this was doing what was well-pleasing to His Father. The prophets and teachers of Antioch fasted as they waited upon the commands of the Holy Ghost. (Acts xiii. 1, 2.) But where does God tell us that *fasting* will procure the pardon of sins? On the contrary, though the self-righteous Pharisee of Luke xviii. fasted "twice in the week," he went not down to his house justified.

Will prayers avail? Jesus "continued all night in prayer to God." (Luke vi. 12.) Cornelius, a just man, and one that feared God, "prayed to God

always." His prayers came up for a memorial before God, and Peter was sent to deliver him by the word of salvation, and thus introduce him into the blessed liberty wherewith Christ doth make His people free. The poor publican, too, was heard acceptably in his groan of bondage; he went down justified rather than the Pharisee. But where does God reveal that *prayers* can come up to Him as an atonement for sin?

Will sorrow for sins profit? The soul of the blessed Saviour was "exceeding sorrowful even unto death." (Matt. xxvi. 38.) The disciples of Matthew xvii. 23 and the elders of Acts xx. 38 were "exceeding sorry," the former at hearing of the approaching trouble of their beloved Master, the latter because they should see the face of their instructor no more. The Corinthian assembly sorrowed after a godly sort, and "carefully" cleared themselves of the sin which was amongst them. But where does the Word of God teach that any amount of *sorrow for sins* will take away their smallest stain? Judas sorrowed in vain; Esau sorrowed in vain. *Life* alone produces that "godly sorrow" that "worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of"; and they were lifeless!

Will works do nothing? Jesus worked the works of Him that sent Him while it was day, for the night was coming when none could work. Of His great atoning work we will speak presently. Rahab, in the full persuasion that the

God of Israel was "God in heaven above and in earth beneath," and knowing that He had given them the land, "received the spies in peace," and perished not with them that believed not, thus proving her faith by her works. Abraham staggered not at the demand of God for his son Isaac, but endured the trial of his faith by offering his only son on the altar. But where does Scripture ever tell of any amount of *works* serving as a recompense for sin? On the contrary, "by works of law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. ii. 16.) Righteousness is "to him that worketh not." (Romans iv. 5.)

Will ordinances do? We read that those who gladly received the Word under the preaching of Peter were baptised and broke bread. (Acts ii. 41.) Paul himself was baptised, and ate the Lord's Supper with the disciples of Troas. (Acts xx. 7.) But where did God at any time provide that either *baptism* or *the Lord's Supper* should be for a moment thought of as an escape from the righteous penalty due for sin?

Dear reader, if you are resting on your *tears* or your *fastings*, your *sorrow*, your *prayers*, your *works* or your *ordinances*, as a means wherewith to get rid of your sins, or aid in doing so, I most solemnly warn you that you are building on a foundation of sand, that you are presenting to God that which He will not accept from any unsaved sinner!

His requirement for sin is *death*! Not any

of the things which I have named, which are right and good in their proper place.

And now let me assure you that Jesus, eighteen hundred years ago, met the righteous judgment of a holy God for sin—gave up His precious life for us. His presence at the right hand of God is a witness to you that God is eternally satisfied with the atonement He has made for the sins of the vilest sinner. Do you then believe this?

May I then entreat you to turn away from those things in which you have been vainly trusting hitherto, and rest your soul henceforward on CHRIST as the all-sufficient ransom for your soul—the already accepted propitiation for your sin?

I tell you that had He left one atom of His work unfinished He could not be now where He is, at the right hand of God. Oh, look at Him *there*, and be satisfied that He is the same Jesus that died for you! His wounds show it—His words tell it. Acknowledge Him then as your Saviour, and know that you are saved! Believe on Him in your heart, confess Him with your mouth, and righteousness and salvation are alike *yours* this moment.

Continue then to gaze on Him, and, as Stephen, you will be inwardly and outwardly conformed to His image. (Compare Acts vii. 59, 60; Luke xxiii. 34, 46; Acts vi. 15; 2 Cor. iii. 18.)

“The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John i. 7.)

D. T. G.

CHRIST—AN OBJECT FOR THE HEART.

WHEN the question of our sins is settled between our soul and God, when we know Christ as having been delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, when we know that we are justified, and have peace with God, then it is that Christ becomes an Object for our heart. But the question of our sins must be settled first. Thank God, it was settled for every true believer when Jesus died, and it is settled for his soul the moment the Word of God about the work of Christ is believed.

To such a one Christ presents Himself as an Object surpassingly beautiful and glorious. He is the perfect revelation of all that God is, and He gives even here perfect satisfaction.

In Ecclesiastes ii. Solomon set his heart on finding satisfaction in things that are under the sun. It ended in absolute failure. "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." But in the Song of Songs he finds an Object, and eighteen times over he can say of Him, "My Beloved."

The heart of man—redeemed man—never finds an adequate object until he finds it in the Person of Jesus, the Son of God. He knows Him as Saviour first; then as "my Beloved." He has

230 CHRIST—AN OBJECT FOR THE HEART.

now reached One who can satisfy the deepest longings of his renewed nature.

Christ is incomparable. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons." (Chap. ii. 3.) There may be much that is beautiful and attractive in the "sons," but the "Beloved" is beyond them all. The "many sons" have their place, doubtless, but the pre-eminence is His who in grace and glory eclipses all others. Never for a moment should any of the "sons," however gifted, be permitted to take His place. With holy jealousy should we watch our hearts as to this. He and He alone should be supreme. The throne of our hearts must always be reserved for Him.

Then rest, delight, and satisfaction are found in Him. "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." (v. 3.)

"I sat down." Perfect rest and composure of soul. This could not be if there were not the knowledge of forgiveness of sins and acceptance in Christ. That being known, we can sit down "with great delight," and in the abundance of "His fruit" find our deepest satisfaction.

Is not this the very experience of one who has turned from the unsatisfying pleasures of this passing scene to Jesus, the Son of God? He finds Him to be "God's Beloved," and has the privilege of saying, as something known in the soul, "My

CHRIST—AN OBJECT FOR THE HEART. 231

Beloved is mine, and I am His" (chap. ii. 16); and again, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine" (chap. vi. 3); and better still, "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me." (Chap. vii. 10.)

This mutuality of pleasure as expressed in these three lovely verses is very beautiful. It shows what pure and holy intimacy exists between the redeemed of the Lord and the One who has redeemed them with His blood. If His desire is towards us then all is assured; affection, to be true to itself, can only find its satisfaction in the good and blessing of its object. This is true in a human way; how much more so in a divine way! The Saviour in John xvii. 24 says, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

The way of divine love is that we shall ever be with Him who has loved us unto death, who lives for us, and who will come again and conform us to His own likeness, so that we shall be the joy and satisfaction of His blessed heart for ever. In this way will His affection be satisfied. He shall indeed "see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied." The sufferings of Calvary but serve to give birth to a joy that will fill His heart for ever.

232 CHRIST—AN OBJECT FOR THE HEART.

“Thine eye in that bright, cloudless day,
 Shall with supreme delight
 Thy fair and glorious bride survey,
 Unblemished in Thy sight.”

But again, the bride of the Canticles says, “He brought me into His banqueting house, and His banner over me was love.” (Chap. ii. 4.) A banqueting house is where joy and abundance are found. Is not that what the heart finds in that marvellous place into which the grace of our God has brought us? Joy and abundance surely. Did not the prodigal find it so in the father’s house? Was there not abundance, and did not joy fill the whole house?

“And His banner over me was love.” This banner is never furled or taken down. It expresses in figurative language what is told out in Jeremiah xxxi. 3, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”

“An everlasting love.” The love of our Saviour, of our Beloved, is an unchanging and everlasting love. “His banner over me was love.” In this the heart rests with unspeakable delight, and by this every attempt of the enemy to disturb our repose is foiled. We have but to point to the ever-floating banner, and say, His love is an everlasting love, and Satan is defeated. In that love may the reader and writer ever rest—

“Till travelling days are done.”

E. A.

WORLDLINESS: ITS ANTIDOTE.

HAVING dwelt in a former paper upon the causes and results of worldliness, we would now, with the Lord's help, endeavour briefly to suggest the antidote. It is necessary, however, that the Christian reader should be duly impressed first of all with the way in which worldliness saps the spiritual life.

Let it then be distinctly understood that the Christian *is not of this world*. The words of our Lord leave no doubt upon this point: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." The Lord here definitely separates His own from the world and associates them with Himself. Surely if we profess to be followers of Christ we are in honour bound to accept the position He gives us. And He does not ask us to be anything different from Himself, for He says, "*even as I am* not of the world." If I am worldly then I am separating myself in heart from Christ, the One who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Next, look at what He did in order that we might be unworldly: "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." (Gal. i. 4.) Here we see His purpose

in giving Himself was to deliver us from the world. Why should we accept the first part of the verse and ignore the rest? Why accept forgiveness of sins and not deliverance from the world? The world is evil and therefore unsuited to the Father, and consequently unsuited to His children, and Christ gave Himself expressly to deliver us from it. Ought the children to seek a place where the Father has none? Many would say they could not go on with their sins because Christ died for them. He equally died to deliver us from the world. How then can we go on with it? This text does not mean, as many would seem to read it, that Christ gave Himself for our sins that we, having lived in the enjoyment of this world all our life, might at death be taken to a better, but it means a present deliverance, as indicated by the apostle's words in the same epistle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world *is* crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Here then are four things that stand between the Christian and the world—

1. Christ's words: "They are not of the world."
2. Christ Himself: "Who gave Himself . . . that He might deliver us." (Gal. i. 4.)
3. The Father's will: "According to the will of God and our Father."
4. The cross: "Whereby [see margin] the world is crucified unto me."

Surely if we had nothing more these four things should in themselves prove a sufficient antidote. We must *trample* on them before we can become worldly. Are *you* prepared to do this?

But further: *The enjoyment of fellowship with the Father and the Son* will be an additional safeguard against worldliness. If we knew this joy we should not allow the world easily to rob us of it. It means fulness of joy. "These things write we unto you," says the apostle, "that your joy may be full." The Father's joy is full, the Son's joy is full, and if our fellowship is with them our joy must be full. We have only to taste this and the world will cease to have any charm for us.

Two spheres are presented to us in the First Epistle of John, and one or other of these we must be living for. There is the Father's sphere and there is the world's sphere. Christ fills the one and Satan the other. Into the circle which Christ fills we are introduced, that we may taste divine joys in learning what the Son is to the Father. The other sphere is ruled by the god of this world. It is characterised by darkness (chap. i. 5), *i.e.* nothing is really known of God; all that is in it is described as "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." (Chap. ii. 16.) In verse 17 we are told it "passeth away and the lust thereof"; in chapter iii. 13 we see it is full of hatred to what is of

God, and finally it is declared "the whole world lieth in the wicked one." (Chap. v. 19, N.T.) Which are we choosing? Christ is said to be "in the bosom of the Father." The world lieth in the bosom of the wicked one. What a contrast! And yet our affections are most certainly set upon one of these two spheres, and cannot be upon both at the same time. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Did we but consider the true character of the world, that it lieth in the wicked one, and what it deprives us of—the love of the Father—how we should shrink from it!

There is also another circle: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Should any young believers read these lines, be persuaded to cultivate friendship with godly Christians. "Love the brethren," and you will find it an effectual barrier between you and the world. It is always the mark of a healthy state. A sickly sheep generally gets alone.

In addition then to the four things which separate us from the world, viz., Christ's own words, Christ Himself, the Father's will, and the cross, we see that the believer finds his portion in a sphere outside the vast system called the world.

But there is something more. We are distinctly told the world is overcome by the one that believes

that Jesus is the Son of God. (1 John v. 5.) And as with each one of us, either we overcome the world or the world overcomes us, it is of deep importance we should understand what is meant by believing that Jesus is the Son of God. Without pretending to fully explain what this means, it may be said that when we know Jesus as Son of God we are consciously in the presence of One who is sufficient for, and altogether according to, God, and great enough to express God to us. This is what underlies the title Son of God. And it is in the power of such a revelation we overcome the world.

It is impossible to conclude these remarks without an allusion to the Lord's second coming. This is at once one of the clearest proofs that the Christian is not of the world, and also, when held in power in the soul, one of the strongest inducements to live in separation from it. For, on the one hand, we are looking to be taken out of this scene at any moment, and on the other, waiting for God's Son from heaven to overturn the present system of things and establish His kingdom. In regard to the former, it is sufficient to remind the reader that at any moment the Lord may descend into the air, and we be caught up to meet Him, leaving behind us for ever all our possessions and everything that occupies us here. They will not be one particle of value to us then; surely we should hold them with a light hand, and so use

them now that they will not be altogether lost by-and-by. In regard to the other aspect, there are two scriptures, presenting a striking contrast to each other, which may just be referred to. Both are found in 2 Timothy iv. In verse 8 we read of those who "love His appearing." Only two verses lower down we read of one who "loved this [present world]." One or other of these every Christian is doing. The solemn question for each one is, Which?

There are two things we beseech every reader of these lines to ask God to do. To show you from His Word, first, the true character, course, and close of this present world; and secondly, to fix your heart upon the One who is coming to overturn it all, and establish what is according to God. To this end study particularly the prophetic portions of Scripture. This will unsettle you as regards present things, while His appearing will be what you will necessarily long for.

Finally, let us remember that mere outward separation is not all that constitutes unworldliness. It consists in something more than abstaining from card parties and the ballroom. These may very easily be dropped off and a great deal of the world remain. The man who is guilty of a mean act—the man who is always beating down the price and driving a hard bargain—and the one who saves all he can for himself and his

family and gives as little as he can to the Lord may, in God's sight, have as much of the worldly spirit as the one who is sometimes seen at the play or the dance. How apt we are to forget these things, and to make the outside of the platter clean, while overlooking what is within.

May the Lord be pleased to deliver both reader and writer not only from every form of worldliness, but from its spirit, remembering that "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself *unspotted from the world.*"

R. E.

THE ACTIVITY OF GRACE;

OR,

"LIFT UP YOUR EYES."

THE Scriptures are not *hyper*-Calvinistic. Whilst they plainly teach that man will not come to God unless God in sovereign grace works in him first, they quite as plainly show God's gracious disposition towards the world at large. He commandeth "all men everywhere" to repent, and reveals Himself as a Saviour-God, "who will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.)

On the one hand, God is sovereign, else none were saved. On the other, man is responsible,

else none could be judged. You may not be able to explain God's sovereignty in relation to man's responsibility, but you are called upon to believe both, for both are clearly stated in Scripture. Romans xi. is the plainest, strongest statement as to God's sovereignty. Responsibility is emphasised throughout the entire Word of God.

In the fact that God is sovereign we find that which calms the heart; and whilst doing all we can to spread the gospel, we thankfully leave the rest with Him. Else we might be overwhelmed with the tremendous need at our own door, and that of whole continents lying in heathen darkness—a need that we personally can only touch the fringe of, however devoted and ready to sacrifice ease, friends, comforts, and health in going to “the regions beyond,” to carry the good news where Christ is unknown.

Let it be remembered that if God is sovereign, He *acts* in every case of blessing. God's sovereignty is active, not passive. He *wills and He works*. God's sovereignty, held in an undue and unbalanced way, may lead us to fold our hands and do nothing for souls; but that same sovereignty leads Him to the FULLEST ACTIVITY. And if God is active in grace, those in communion with Him *must* be active too.

Christ said to Simon and Andrew, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Now Simon and Andrew were fishermen. In catching

fish did they wait for the fish to swim into their net, or did they cast it where the fishes were and enclose them? Or when the net was full, did they say, We will not throw it again into deeper and untried waters? And shall they act less wisely or energetically when serving a divine Master, and fishing for *men*? Most assuredly not.

Yes, God, the Sovereign God, is active, active in every case of blessing. Luke xv. contains but *one* parable, and from beginning to end it is full of sovereign activity. The shepherd (picture of the Lord Jesus Christ) *active* in seeking the sheep; the woman (picture of the Holy Ghost) *active* in seeking the lost piece of silver; the father (picture of God Himself) *active*, RUNNING, to welcome the returning prodigal.

CHRIST'S ACTIVITY.

He Himself said, "For the Son of Man is come to *seek* and to save that which was lost." He was not content with the work of the cross—mighty though that was—a work that righteously opens the way to heaven to the vilest who comes through Christ, but He SEEKS as well as saves—blessed be His name.

You have but to read the four gospels and you will get a picture of His ceaseless activity. True, for thirty years we have no record of service, but when anointed for service we find Him the untiring Servant of the sovereign will of God till

His blessed life closed at the cross. And now as risen from the dead He is active in resurrection life and grace.

The contemplation of the holy life of Jesus is enough to shame us out of our useless, aimless lives—out of our apathy and indifference—to drive us to our knees with the earnest importunate prayer that we might be like Him.

But if one objects, and to show that all this gracious activity towards sinful men is over quotes Rom. vi. 10, "In that He liveth, He liveth unto God," what shall we say? The words are indeed the words of inspiration; but shall we construe them to mean that the blessed Lord has naught to say to sinners *now*? Nay, He who could touch a leper and be undefiled when on earth, can *now* morally touch the sinner and bless him.

"*He liveth unto God.*" True, but when here on earth He ever lived unto God. In healing the sick and feeding the thousands, and raising the dead, and preaching the gospel, and rebuking the hypocrite—in all this, we repeat, He lived unto God. Every breath He drew was in dependence upon God, every step He took, every act He did. He had meat to eat which the disciples knew not of—He lived by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. But He came to die. Sin had to say to Him, not in its committal surely, but as entering into the sinner's place and God's

THE ACTIVITY OF GRACE.

243

judgment of sin, "He died unto sin once." Now that is all past and "He liveth unto God," as a contrast to the cross, and as affording an argument to the apostle that *we* should "reckon" ourselves "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

A single passage of Scripture proves the *present* activity of the Lord Jesus. "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, *the Lord working with them*, and confirming the word with signs following."

And it is worthy of note that the four gospels do but contain a *partial* record of the activity of the Lord Jesus, for the very last lines of the Gospel of John read thus, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

THE HOLY GHOST'S ACTIVITY.

"The Acts of the Apostles," it has often been said, would have been more correctly christened "The Acts of the Holy Ghost." Anyhow, every divine work, as recorded in the Acts, was the work of the Holy Ghost. The first open result of the Holy Ghost's descent was a triumph over Babel. Many nations heard in their own tongues

the wonderful works of God ; and Peter, who had trembled before a servant-girl's question, was turned into a bold evangelist, whose first sermon was blessed to no less than three thousand souls.

The Holy Ghost's activity is very clearly seen in the service of the apostle Paul. Very distinctly does He both call and send him forth. *The Holy Ghost said*, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." "So they, *being sent forth by the Holy Ghost*, departed unto Seleucia," etc. At once there arises before the mind the Holy Ghost's record of the great apostle's labours—record of ocean travelling and shipwrecks, land travelling and perils of robbers, perils by the heathen, perils in the wilderness ; in weariness and watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—record of his service bringing upon him scourgings, stonings, perils among false brethren, prisons, and, last of all, the martyr's end. All this was from without. In addition, the care of all the churches, the agonising in prayer, the writing of epistles fell to him.

He had the true spirit of an evangelist, also that of a pastor and teacher. By birth and training a Jew, he preached the gospel in Athens, Corinth, and imperial Rome. His missionary map was the map of the known world, and his ardent spirit led him to regard himself as debtor in the gospel to Jew and Gentile. He fixed his eye on Spain,

though we believe he was never permitted to reach that most westward point of the known world. To the last he was full of energy—the blessed energy of the Holy Ghost. Now we do not plead for *mere* activity, but oh! to be controlled, equipped and sent forth by the Spirit of God to labour in a world where He is working for the accomplishment of God's sovereign will and pleasure.

A last word. Our Lord had met and blessed a poor Samaritan outcast. Forgetful of herself, she left her waterpot and went into the city, saying, "Come, see a Man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

Her invitation had power. She spoke with the persuasiveness of one who was not only blessed, but attracted beyond measure to the One who could give such blessing. Her invitation had power, for many of the men flocked out to Jacob's well to see the Christ. His disciples in the meantime rejoined the Lord, and doubtless, as He saw the crowd of seeking souls draw near, moved with compassion He turned to His disciples with the memorable words, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

Nearly nineteen centuries have passed away since then. Are the words then uttered by the Saviour of the world less forcible, less pregnant in their meaning now? Assuredly not. I would

that I could sound them in your inmost heart with something of the power and sweetness of their first utterance. "*Lift up your eyes.*" In so doing you may see your next-door neighbour's house, or the next street, or neighbouring town or country, long neglected by you.

Look at the map of *the world*. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of *the world*." Look at priest-ridden, infidel Europe. Look at America with its teeming multitudes. Look at South America with its dark superstitions and wicked lives. Look at the far-off islands of the sea. Look at China and Africa with their millions who have never heard the name of Christ.

We may not be free to follow the tactics and organisations of the missionary world, but it has a very good motto divided into three parts—

- (1) Go.
- (2) Let go.
- (3) Help go.

(1) *Go*. But not unless you are constrained by the Master of the harvest field and sent forth by the Spirit. But if so constrained and sent, let no considerations of business, home comforts, or ease stand in the way. The woman left her waterpot, so leave yours.

(2) *Let go*. Let no one hinder the setting forth of those who seek to carry the good news of the gospel far and wide. Put no hindrance

in the way. Throw no cold water on your zealous brother or sister who seeks to go forth in the strength of the Lord.

(3) *Help go.* Help by your encouragement, by your prayers, by your purse, as guided of the Master. It is a sin for any Christian to live in luxury. The richest is but a steward of his possessions to the Lord. Everywhere the need is great, at your very door, in the next street, town, country, or across the seas. Money is the smallest help in one way of all. Prayer, sympathy, encouragement greatly help, and if these are not lacking, neither will the means necessary for carrying on the work be wanting.

The Lord is coming quickly; everything declares it. Christians world-wide are expecting Him. What a moment when He comes! Oh, for hearts to serve Him with our all till He come! He is indeed worthy.

A. J. P.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. H.—Luke iv. 24–29.—What excited the wrath of the synagogue was the Lord's reference to the widow of Sarepta and to the Syrian leper. The Jews could not endure to hear of the grace of God extending beyond the limits of Israel. Their anger was always stirred at any mention of this. With self-righteous complacency they would listen all the day long to God's favour to themselves, and wrathfully

resent any intimation of the same favour being shown to the Gentiles. See a striking example of this feeling in Acts xxii. 21-23.

With the remainder of your letter we deeply sympathise. We bless God for all the earnest, devoted men who are seeking to make the Lord Jesus known in the glories of His person and in the various offices He fills. To all such our heart goes out in the most fervent affection. But it is a serious question as to how far we should suffer even honoured names to hold us in religious connections contrary to the testimony of our Lord. The doing of His will should be our great concern, and we need to watch lest we place the servants before the Master. Fidelity to Christ, to His name and word, necessarily sets our feet in a narrow path. But it also gives true enlargement of heart. It leads us to regard with unfeigned affection all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and to acknowledge with joyfulness everything that is of Him, wherever or in whomsoever it is found. All this we would deeply cherish, while humbly seeking to be more and more conformed to the will of God, both in our private walk and public associations.

J. C.—Gal. iv. 7.—The contrast here is between the position and privileges of saints in Old Testament days and those of believers in the Christian dispensation. The position of the former was that of children under age. They differed nothing from a servant, and were in subjection to tutors and stewards. But the saints of the present day are regarded as those who

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

249

have attained full age. They are recognised as sons. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son." Such is the argument. But we must not use this passage to deny that the believer is a servant of God. No one could maintain such a position for a moment. Scores of other passages would compel him to abandon it, and prove that he was wresting the Scriptures to his own confusion. The difficulty you feel in connection with Matthew xxiv. 48-51 is not to be got over in that way.

If a man take the place of servant, though he be himself unsaved, if he profess the Lord Jesus Christ as his Master, then shall he be dealt with on his own ground, and held responsible to be faithful to the place he has assumed. This is exactly what has happened with the great mass of profession to-day, especially that part of it claiming an official standing. Servants of Christ they loudly declare themselves to be, and yet how many of them lord it over God's heritage and associate themselves with the world—eating and drinking with the drunken! What can be the end of such "servants"? They shall have their portion with the hypocrites. They reign as kings now, then judgment shall overtake them, and weeping and gnashing of teeth shall be theirs.

Dealing now with your second question, there *is* a distinction between "the gospel of the kingdom" and "the gospel of the grace of God." Both John Baptist and our Lord Himself preached that the kingdom was at hand. But the King was rejected,

and instead of being crowned He was crucified. The establishment of the kingdom in power and glory is therefore postponed. When set up it shall bring with it untold and universal blessing, for out of *the throne* of God and of the Lamb shall flow "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal," on whose banks shall be "the tree of life" yielding her constant fruit, and whose leaves shall be "for the healing of the nations." Meanwhile the kingdom of God assumes a moral form, and to enter it a man must be born again, as we learn from John iii. Its salient features are "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." But "the gospel of the grace of God" is rather the declaration of that grace which comes down to the deepest depths of our guilt and ruin and raises us to the highest possible heights of blessedness, making us one with Christ, children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Him who is Firstborn among many brethren.

Referring to your final point, you will find it helpful to remember that there are two lines of truth with which the believer has to do. One of these only relates to those who are believers indeed, while the other has a wider application, and embraces in its scope not only true believers but all who belong to the Christian profession. It is in the latter line that the *ifs* of Scripture have their place and our responsibility comes in. Let me endeavour to distinguish these. If we quote John x., "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of

My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." No "*if*" is found there. All is sure. The sheep shall *never* perish, and their security wholly rests on the power of the Father and the Son to keep. There is no room for the least possible doubt, for no devilish art shall ever succeed in snatching them out of God's omnipotent hand. Or suppose we cite Romans viii., "Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." There is no "*if*." We are on the line of God's eternal purposes, which cannot be frustrated. So with many other passages, all of which unite to set our hearts at rest. Now we may be quite sure that whatever object the Holy Ghost has in view in saying, "If ye continue," "If we hold fast," "He that endureth to the end," and so on, He never leads us to doubt either the everlasting efficacy of the blood of Christ or the immutability of God's word and counsel. These are steadfast and endure to all generations. Still we have to continue, to hold fast, to endure to the end. Why so? Because we are not yet in heaven and only on the road there. The way lies through an enemy's land, dangers lie thick on every side. The world, the flesh, and the devil are in league against us, and hold themselves ready to employ every artifice and threat and terror to induce us to give up. Against these we have no might, but we know the Lord is on our side. He never withdraws His eyes from the righteous, and we, feeling our need to be kept,

trust Him to keep us moment by moment. We continue, we hold fast, we endure. This is our responsibility. But the same One who assures us the sheep of Christ shall never perish, and that whom God justifies He glorifies, also tells us that we are "kept by the power of God." We need to be kept, but we trust God to keep us, knowing that no power but His avails, and at the same time we watch and pray and "hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Now these two lines of truth must ever be kept distinct. Both are of the Holy Ghost, both have their place, but we are not to set them against each other as if the Spirit of God would build up only to throw down.

A. H. Y. S.—John xv. 2.—The great point seems to be that God must have reality. A man may claim to be a disciple of Christ and be accepted as one by others, but if the Husbandman sees no fruit his claim is disallowed, he is taken away and his profession goes for nothing, he is only a fruitless branch. His name may remain on the roll of church membership, and he may actively engage in so-called Christian service, but if there is no fruit—the outcome of sharing in the life of the Vine—it is all worthless. Reality God must have, and nothing else is of any value in His sight. This passage, and others of a similar nature, are examined and explained in a pamphlet entitled *Fallen from Grace*, price 2d., published at the office of this magazine, and may be ordered direct or through any bookseller.

NICODEMUS THE PHARISEE.

JOHN iii.

THE sun had sunk low down behind the distant hills, and the shadows of the evening had deepened into night, when Nicodemus the Pharisee left his home to go to Jesus—the *Lord* Jesus, as the Christian loves to call Him. It was an unusual hour for such a visit, but reasons weighed with him which we can easily divine. He was a man of some distinction, enjoying a religious reputation that placed him on a platform high above common folks, who have but little if anything to lose. And at that moment his eye discerned not the glory that lay hid beneath a covering of flesh and blood. The One whom he sought was but “a teacher come from God,” nothing more, and Nicodemus wished not the world to know whither he went. There is reason to believe he grew bolder afterwards; but in every subsequent mention of him he is distinguished as the one “who came to Jesus by night.”

He whom Nicodemus sought was indeed “a teacher come from God,” and something infinitely more than that. But if He be such a teacher, what are the lessons He teaches, and which He

XVII.

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would have all to learn? These Nicodemus is soon to know. The first is this—Unless a man be born again, he can neither see nor enter into the kingdom of God. Was Nicodemus then outside of it? A man of his position and acquirements, who had given so much thought to religion, who anxiously endeavoured to lead a religious life and to induce others to do so, was *he* outside the kingdom of God? Who, then, could be in it if he were not? Besides, what was meant by being “born again”? How could a man with whitened locks and furrowed brow be born again? So he reasoned and argued and demanded how such things could be? And the answer given by this “teacher come from God” did but emphasise the truth He had already announced, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, **YE MUST be born again.**”

Let Nicodemus be dismissed, while we ourselves stand face to face with that tremendous fact, “**YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.**” Into the kingdom of God no man on earth can ever enter unless he be born again, no part in it can he ever have. And why is the new birth so absolutely necessary? Because fallen human nature, even in the very best of men, is incapable of seeing, appreciating, enjoying the things of the kingdom of God. And after all, human nature in the best is no better than human nature in the worst. In some it is rough and

uncultivated, in others smooth and polished; but fallen human nature all the world over is just the same: whether we see it in the robes of a peer or in the rags of a mendicant, educated in the universities or brought up at a village school, it is all the same.

Into the mystery of the new birth we do not attempt to enter, but we insist on its necessity, or rather the Lord insists upon it. "Ye **MUST** be born again." The **MUST** is most emphatic. Let us face the fact without blenching,—no new birth, no kingdom of God then, either for us or any other.

Against this essential truth Satan is stirring up a bitter revolt and bringing his heaviest artillery into the field. What! Is there no germ of good in man anywhere? No point in his whole being where the virus of sin has not gone? And even if it be so, are all our nineteenth-century remedies powerless to purge it out? Do light and knowledge go for nothing? Education, material progress, scientific discoveries, sanitation, the spread of temperance principles, beneficent legislation, and better homes and pensions for the poor, do all these good things leave man just where he was, wounded, naked, and lying in the ditch? We answer, You have bettered him for earth, brightened the few years of his sojourn here, smoothed perhaps his pathway to the grave, but after you have done all

he MUST be born again, or God's kingdom he will never see and enter.

To effect this something more is needed than lies in the power of man. Religious ordinances, fastings, prayers, penances with many tears can do nothing. The Spirit of God alone is able to accomplish it, and the Word of God is the instrument He employs. To the individual who is thus born again He imparts a new nature, a seed of God is implanted within him. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In its moral features it resembles the One who gave it birth. Fallen Adam begat a son in his own likeness, and when born again it is in the likeness of Him who begets. Here, then, is a question each should seriously ask, Is there reason to think that *I* have been born again?

But there is something more. It is because a man is what he is that he needs to be born again. What about the things he has done and left undone?—his sins. What of these? Who shall blot them out? Who or what can satisfy the claims of the Eternal Throne in respect of these offences? Here we are equally powerless. Were it a matter we had to settle, then nothing but everlasting ruin would stare us in the face. It is well to be clear about this. Look at it steadily until the truth of it stands out before your eyes with outline sharp and well defined. If on the side of the new birth you are wholly

cast upon God, so are you on the side of expiation for your sins. Nothing will suffice but a ransom of infinite worth. But where shall such a ransom be found?

To answer this we refer to another MUST in the same chapter. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so MUST the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." This second MUST is as emphatic as the first—more so were it possible. What can God's thoughts of sin be, what its gravity, if nothing less than this can atone for it? For think, Who is this Son of Man? And when you have made me know Him whom none but the Father knows, then tell me what His being "lifted up" means. Take me to Gethsemane and Calvary. Bid me gaze upon that cross where the Son of Man is crucified. Show me Him forsaken of God, drinking the awful cup of judgment, sinking beneath the dark waves that would have engulfed us for ever. O my God, was all this needful for one poor sin-sick soul to have pardon, peace, and eternal life? Is sin so black? Is Thy righteousness so high?

Nor does this "teacher come from God" stop there. He goes on to let the light of "heavenly things" fall on the wondering soul of Nicodemus the Pharisee. He unfolds the amazing fact that divine love has risen high above the creature's

sin. If innocence and Eden be gone never to be regained, something immeasurably better has come in. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The only begotten Son, in the bosom of the Father, was there declaring in imperishable words the love and purpose of God, so that we, who had lost all knowledge of God, might be brought to know Him as the Son reveals Him, and resting in His love might have everlasting life. As Nicodemus heard this, how astonished he must have been—that is, if he heard it aright. Truth to him had been but a narrow stream; now he sees it as a wide river broadening out towards the boundless deep.

But we pursue this no further now. I would only ask the reader how he stands in relation to these things. Have you been born again? Is fallen human nature, as you see it in yourself, such a hopeless ruin that nothing short of the new birth is of any avail? Is sin, your sin, such that nothing less than the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus could atone for it? Have you believed on the only begotten Son of God? Have you eternal life? Serious questions these. How do you answer them?

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.*

I HAVE a profound, unfeigned, and, I believe, divinely given faith in the Bible. I have, through grace, been by it converted, enlightened, quickened, saved. I have received the knowledge of God by it, to adore His perfections—of Jesus—the Saviour, Joy, Strength, and Comfort of my soul. Many have been indebted to others as the means of their being brought to God—to ministers of that gospel which the Bible contains, or to friends who delight in it. This was not my case. That work, which is ever God's, was wrought in me through the means of the written Word. He who knows what the value of Jesus is, will know what the Bible will be to such a one. If I have, alas! failed it, in nearly thirty years' arduous and varied life and labour, I have never found it fail me. If it has not for the poor and needy circumstances of Time, I am assured it never will for Eternity. "The Word of the Lord abideth for ever." If it reaches down even to my low estate, it reaches up to God's height, because it comes thence: as the love that can reach even to me, and apply to every detail of my feebleness and failure, proves itself divine in doing so. As

* From *The Irrationalism of Infidelity*, by J. N. DARBY.

Jesus came from God, and went to God, so does the Book that divinely reveals Him come from and elevate to Him. If received, it has brought the soul to God, for He has revealed Himself in it. Its positive proofs are all in itself. The sun needs no light to see it by.

We live in a heartless and sickly age, which finds its refuge from the cold and desolate waste of infidelity and human wilfulness in the more pleasing imagery of imposed superstition. The man of intelligence produces human infidelity. The man of imagination will give us human superstition, coloured over with the haze of antiquity, for fear lest what it really is should be too clearly seen. Both give me Man. The Scriptures alone give me God. Hence the peculiar form of modern infidelity is attack on the written Word—the Scriptures. Superstition takes exactly the same ground. The cry of "Bibliolatry!" sounds alike from the intellectual and from the superstitious infidel. Both have the same object of attack. Both are infidels. One an intellectual—the other an imaginative one. *Both would persuade me that the Bible cannot itself command my conscience and oblige me to faith, as coming from God.* Do they not both seek to do this? Is it not infidelity? Doubtless, through the sinfulness of man's will, without divine grace he never will really receive the Word, as it is in truth the Word of God. But is that his fault or the

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

261

Word's? Infidels and superstitious persons will both tell me that the Word itself has not divine authority over my soul—that I cannot receive it as such on its own authority without something more to prove it. It is hard to say who is guiltiest here—he who denies it is the Word, or he who, not denying that it is, nevertheless declares that what God has said cannot bind the conscience of man unless validated by some authority other than its own.

I desire to add one remark here in reference to inspiration. I beg to avow, in the fullest, clearest, and distinctest manner, my deep, divinely-taught conviction of the inspiration of the Scriptures. That is—while of course allowing, if need be, for defect in the translation and the like—when I read the Bible, I read it as of absolute authority for my soul as God's Word. There is no higher privilege than to have communications direct from God Himself.

My joy, my comfort, my food, my strength, for near thirty years, have been the Scriptures received implicitly as the Word of God. In the beginning of that period I was put through the deepest exercise of soul on that point. Did heaven and earth, the visible church, and man himself crumble into nonentity, I should, through grace, since that epoch, hold to the Word as an unbreakable link between my soul and God. I am satisfied that God has given it me as such.

I do not doubt that the grace of the Holy Spirit is needed to make it profitable, and to give it real authority to our souls, because of what we are. But that does not change what it is in itself. To be true when it is received, it must have been true before it was so. And here I will add, that although it require the grace of God, and the work of the Holy Ghost to give it quickening power, yet divine truth—God's Word—has a hold on the natural conscience from which it cannot escape. The light detects the "breaker-up," though he may hate it. And so the Word of God is adapted to man, though he be hostile to it—adapted in grace (blessed be God!) as well as in truth. This is exactly what shows the wickedness of man's will in rejecting it. And it has power thus in the conscience, even if the will be unchanged. This may increase the dislike of it; but it is disliked because conscience feels it cannot deny its truth. Men resist it because it is true. Did it not reach their conscience, they would not need to take so much pains to get rid of and disprove it. Men do not arm themselves against straws, but against a sword whose edge is felt and feared.

Reader, it speaks of grace as well as truth. It speaks of God's grace and love, who gave His only begotten Son that sinners like you and me might be with Him, know Him—deeply, intimately, truly know Him—and enjoy Him for

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT CHRIST.

263

ever, and enjoy Him now; that the conscience, perfectly purged, might be in joy in His presence, without a cloud, without a reproach, without fear. And to be there in His love, in such a way, is perfect joy. The Word will tell you the truth concerning yourself; but it will tell you the truth of a God of love, while unfolding the wisdom of His counsels.

Let me add that by far the best means of assuring oneself of the truth and authority of the Word is to read the Word itself. J. N. D.

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE COMPANY OF CHRIST.

I USE this word "Christianity" in its common application. It is a poor thing to be going through this world with only the *name* of Christian. We all know that the truest doctrines are not CHRIST, nor can you have Christ with you unless you are LIVING ACCORDING TO HIS MIND. We may be ever so correct as to doctrines, and be what the world calls "*orthodox*," but it is not doctrine, nor is it orthodoxy, that Christ condescends and desires to accompany—it is OURSELVES. And if Christ has to stand apart from you in your daily life, or from me in mine, we know that no amount of correctness or orthodoxy will make up for that. (John xxi. 5.)

264 CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT CHRIST.

The Lord stood apart from Lot in Sodom, from Eli when he did not restrain his sons, and from the Corinthians when they covered up evil in their midst. He stood apart from each as a *Rebuker*, and did not give to them *the joy of His daily company*. Yet Lot was a righteous man, and Eli was an honoured "prophet of God" in that day; while Corinth was planted by an apostle, was, perhaps, watered by an Apollos, and was, at any rate, *the true husbandry of God*. (2 Peter ii. 8; 1 Samuel iii. 13; 1 Cor. v. 7.)

Right doctrines separated from the everyday life of communion lead the soul into a spiritual desert. The Lord cannot identify Himself with us PUBLICLY if there is not companying with Him in PRIVATE.

Reader, I ask myself this question, and I ask you to put it to yourself, Does the Lord cheer this everyday desert life of mine with the consciousness of HIS presence and support? Or to put the question in another form, Is there anything that *I am in*, or that I allow *in myself*, which shuts HIM out?

"I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." *This is His desire for you*, though you may be among those who are neither "cold nor hot" (Rev. iii. 15); and if you do not know much about it, what is all this boasted *Christianity* worth?

H. C. A.

DIVINE GROWTH.

THOSE who labour in the gospel know how very little of the truth is often enough to bring peace to the heart of one who has been in trouble. Sometimes one verse of Scripture, or even half a verse, the Spirit of God makes effectual to change the whole state of things within, from *great distress* to *perfect peace*. This is looking at conversion from the sinner's side. On God's side it needed the Saviour's drinking the cup of wrath, dying and rising again, in order to lay a righteous basis for God to act in blessing towards sinful men.

Now while so little of the truth of the gospel may bring the believer into the enjoyment of peace with God and thus be enough *to die with*, the whole of it is needed *to live with*. Through not recognising this, many true converts have fallen under the power of the enemy, and thus the name of Christ has been reproached. In some cases the preachers themselves have been partly responsible, because they were not so earnest with these persons *after* they had peace as they were *before*.

If we study the writings of the apostles, we shall find how earnestly they wrote to those who had received the knowledge of salvation. They

evidently knew that new converts needed a fuller knowledge of Christ, and of their position in connection with Him; and warning, too, so that they might be kept from the power of evil.

When a believer is *dying*, he is *leaving* the scene of difficulty and danger, but when *living* he is *remaining* in it. This is why so little knowledge of the gospel is enough *to die with*, but all is needed *to live with*.

The believer is exhorted to overcome evil with good. And what makes it so important is, that either he *overcomes* the evil, or the *evil overcomes* him.

Evil takes different forms, and is very powerful, but the gospel reveals a greater power. "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John iv. 4.) Let us look and see how evil works, so that we may not be overcome by it.

THE FLESH.

The flesh is a term used not only to express that which covers the bones of the human frame, but also to describe the nature which belongs to every living person. This nature became an evil nature in Adam when he fell. In the Old Testament we see how God tested man, and the result of these testings is seen in Romans viii. 7: "The carnal [or fleshly] mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

If we learn from Scripture God's estimate of

the flesh, and how He has dealt with it, we shall be preserved from human notions as to its character and the possibility of its improvement.

When first a believer learns the forgiveness of his sins through the blood of Jesus, he thinks he has got all he needs. But he soon finds out that forgiveness is *not* enough. He may get under the power of the flesh and have to cry, "O wretched man that I am!" (Rom. vii. 24.) Then he discovers that true relief from the wretchedness *within* himself is in learning that Christ died unto *sin*, and that He is now a Man in resurrection beyond all question of the *sins* of His people, and of the *sin*, too, that produced the *sins*. Now all believers who have come to Christ have received Him as dead and risen, and they are thus identified with Him where *He is*, and are beyond all question of their sins, and sin too, *in God's sight*. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.) In this chapter we also see how the Holy Spirit is put in contrast to the flesh, and we learn the truth of the words, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." (Rom. viii. 9.)

The knowledge of this truth is most essential to the happiness of the believer. Otherwise he will fall under the power of his flesh, that is, he will be overcome by evil. Should he remain in this state, he will be outside all *proper* Christian

experience; and likely to become a *reproach* to the name of the Lord, a *sorrow* to all spiritually-minded believers, and a *stumbling-block* to sinners.

How is this sad state to be avoided?

The whole truth must be received regarding the cross. Not only the blood-shedding, but God's judgment of the flesh, and all that is of the first man, fallen Adam. Everything for God and for the believer is found in Christ, who in resurrection is called the Second Man and the last Adam. (1 Cor. xv. 47.)

The Holy Spirit connects all believers with Christ where He now is, and at the same time leads them into a right estimate of the flesh which they carry about with them so long as they are down here. This shows what exercise of heart the believer must pass through, as the Lord foretold in the words, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." (Luke xiv. 27.)

There is no escaping exercise of heart. But there are two sorts of exercise: one, in overcoming evil with good; the other, in being overcome by evil. He who is thus overcome falls under the chastisement of the Lord, which has in view the restoration of the wanderer.

It is a great loss to be overcome, both here and hereafter. For the Lord cannot reward unfaithfulness, and the judgment-seat of Christ (2 Cor.

v. 10) will bring everything to light. If we walk in the light of that day, it will be profitable both *now* and *then*.

Thus the truth is able to set the believer free from what otherwise would entangle him, and he learns to reckon himself "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. vi. 11.)

THE WORLD.

The world is an expression used in two ways, and the connection needs to be looked at to know whether it means merely a *place* in which we live, or a *system* composed of persons who are seeking happiness apart from God. In this last way we will consider it, and look at some passages of Scripture where its character is plainly shown to be evil, opposed to God, and a source of danger to believers.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." (John xv. 18.)

"I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John xv. 19.)

"He will reprove the world of sin, . . . because they believe not on Me." (John xvi. 8, 9.)

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." (John xvi. 11.)

"Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice." (John xvi. 20.)

"I pray not for the world." (John xvii. 9.)

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John xvii. 14.)

O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee." (John xvii. 25.)

"Love not the world. . . . If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John ii. 15.)

"The whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John v. 19.)

These are some of the passages which give God's estimate of the world as a system opposed to Him and His Son. If believers have the same estimate, they will separate themselves more and more from its influence, so that they may not be overcome by its smiles or its frowns.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John v. 4, 5.) It is well to notice how the word *overcome* is brought in, showing there must be conflict until the end of our life here below. How believers need to watch over their secret affections, which belong to Christ, lest they *love* the world when it *smiles* upon them, or *fear* it when it *frowns* upon them! If they are true to Christ they will enjoy *the Father's love, Christ's support, the Spirit's energy, and the fellowship of all unworldly believers* to help them to resist an evil world and walk in the true liberty of the *whole gospel*. Some persons think there is a sort

DIVINE GROWTH.

271

of half-way path. So there is, and not one only, but many. There is *only one* path where full liberty of heart can be enjoyed, and that path is one of dependence, where we are free from the power of *our own will*, and can be led on in the truth by an *ungrieved Spirit*.

We often hear of believers having very happy death-beds. What makes them so happy? Why, Christ is everything to their hearts, and the flesh and the world have no place; they are beyond both. Now let Christ be everything to our hearts while we are living, and we shall be able to say, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain." (Phil. i. 21.)

THE DEVIL.

The devil is the greatest enemy of God and man. God has given him many names, which help to describe his character, so that we may know him whenever he appears, and not be deceived, as Eve was in the Garden of Eden.

The Lord Jesus, in His discourses with the Jewish people, spoke of him; and the apostles spoke of him in their addresses, and mentioned him in their writings to the Christian assemblies.

When the blessed Lord was tempted by the devil in the wilderness, He answered him by the written Word of God, and such was its power that the devil was completely defeated in his object of getting Christ out of the path of

dependence, as he had done Adam in the Garden of Eden.

Some of the names which God has attached to him are very often repeated, while others less frequently. The names are as follows:—

Devil.	(Matthew iv. 1.)
Tempter.	(„ iv. 3.)
Satan.	(„ iv. 10.)
Wicked One.	(„ xiii. 9.)
Enemy.	(„ xiii. 39.)
Serpent.	(2 Corinthians ix. 3.)
Dragon.	(Revelation xx. 2.)

Satan, since his fall (the reason of which see 1 Timothy iii. 6), has been God's rival, seeking to hold possession of men's hearts, so that they should become morally his children. It is written of Adam's eldest son, "Cain, who was of that wicked one." (1 John iii. 12.)

In the days of the Lord's sojourn on earth, and also in the days of the apostles, we find demons possessed the bodies of men and women, and that the Lord cast out demons by the Spirit of God. He gave the same power to His disciples, not only during His lifetime, but after He had gone to heaven. (See Acts xvi. 18.)

In John's Gospel there is no record of demons being in men's bodies; but we get a deeper disclosure, men's hearts were influenced; so the Lord said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was

a *murderer* from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a *liar*, and the father of it." (John viii. 44.) Here is the devil's history during the many years of his connection with man. Violence and corruption are the two forms of his workings. Murder is *violence*, while lying is *corruption*. The roaring lion is the *murderer*; the angel of light is the *liar*.

Those who are under his influence practise his ways, as Ananias with Sapphira his wife, and Elymas. We read of Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" (Acts v. 3.) And of Elymas, the sorcerer, "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness." (Acts xiii. 10.)

All this shows how alive all believers should be to the *personality, character, and power* of the devil. "Satan is transformed into an angel of light." (2 Cor. xi. 14.) How many have been deceived by this appearance, and thought they were being led by the Spirit of God, while all the time they were being deceived by the liar.

Then we read of "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith." (1 Peter v. 8, 9.) This appearance is not so difficult to discern, for the martyrs of Jesus

Christ, as well as those who have endured violence, have suffered under this character of the enemy. Violence in the smallest degree against the saints is the enemy acting as the murderer.

This will not always continue, for "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Rom. xvi. 20), and finally "the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, . . . and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." (Rev. xx. 10.)

God gives His people the history and character of this enemy from the beginning to the end of his influence over mankind. Thus the saints need not be *deceived* by the angel of light, or *alarmed* by the roaring lion, but be steadfast in the Christian faith, not making little of the opposition of either *the flesh, the world, or the devil*, but meeting each in the scriptural way, so as not to be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good, in the power of the Spirit.

These are dark and evil days, so we need to walk humbly and carefully in the fear of the Lord, that we may enjoy the comfort of the Holy Ghost. Thus shall we be living witnesses to the power of heavenly grace, which our High Priest provides for His people while they are in this world, till He comes again to receive them unto Himself, that where He is, there they may be also. With longing desire may we be able to say, "Come, Lord Jesus."

G. W. GY.

“MY EXCEEDING JOY.”

“O send out Thy light and Thy truth : let them lead me ;
let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles.
Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding
joy : yea, upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God.”

PSALM xliii. 3-4.

FROM David's heart and harp there came,
In music soft and sweet to hear,
A note love still delights to name,
Which tells the Source of all true cheer ;
O God, my God, my lips employ
To tell this good without alloy—
That *Thou art my exceeding joy !*

The sunshine of Thy love has poured
Into my heart *that* love has won ;
Revealed in Jesus Christ the Lord,
I joy in Thee through Thy dear Son ;
In vain the world seeks to decoy—
I yield for Thee each earthly toy,
Since *Thou art my exceeding joy !*

O joy of joys ! what can excel
The gladness of my gladsome lot ?
What creature sorrow can expel
A joy affliction touches not ?
O God, my God, naught can destroy
My gladness, or my soul annoy
Whilst *Thou art my exceeding joy !*

S. J. B. C.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

EXERCISED.—We see no objection to the use of the blackboard or diagrams and lantern slides, in speaking to the young, though we would counsel a wise and even severe discrimination in the choice of slides. Many of these serve no useful end, and indeed do more harm than good. But when judiciously chosen, and their use kept within proper bounds, they may not only interest but instruct. On such points, however, everybody does not see alike, and what one person would be free to do another would not. We cannot force our views upon others, and divine charity, together with a recognition of the servant's personal responsibility to the Lord, will keep others from condemning every means save those they use themselves. To his own Master every servant stands or falls. Why then should we arraign him before our judgment-seat?

J. D.—John xx. 17; Matthew xxviii. 9.—These differences, that seem at first hard to reconcile, are entirely in harmony with the different gospels in which they are recorded. Matthew gives us things in Jewish, and therefore earthly, connections. John presents them rather in relation to heaven. The women of Matthew and Mary Magdalene in John show the difference between the Christian and the Jew. The hopes of the latter are connected with the bodily presence of the Lord on earth, while the Christian knows Christ and worships Him in heavenly associations. Hence in the former case they were permitted to touch His feet in worship, while in the latter it is denied. The women of Galilee represent the Jews of the latter day; Mary, the saints of the

present interval, whose worship is connected with the invisible, and who know Christ, not as One who can be touched with the hand, but as having gone into heaven, and only to be known, loved, worshipped, in the power of the Spirit. Each evangelist is led of the Holy Ghost to note that circumstance which is in most beautiful accord with the whole tenor of his gospel.

SINNER.—Are you quite serious when you speak of the Holy Scriptures as containing “so many contradictions and passages dishonouring to God”? Did you weigh your words when penning such a sentence? For ourselves, we believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” and that the Scriptures, as originally written, are free from all mistake. Behind the hand of the men who wrote them, guiding and controlling, was the Holy Ghost. Can it be supposed that He would affirm on one page what He would deny on another? Certainly not. And though we may not see how *this* agrees with *that*, we are certain it does agree. The darkness is in us, not in the Scriptures of truth.

But we distinguish between *inspiration* and *revelation*. In Scripture we find the sayings and doings of wicked men, and the foolish words and deeds of men who in the main feared God and sought to serve Him. No doubt the record of these is by *inspiration* of God, and not by the mere will of the one who writes. And the record is profitable. (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) But *revelation* comprises all that is revealed in the Scriptures that the human mind in its boldest and loftiest conceptions could never have conceived. And this revelation comes down to us in the very words which the Holy Ghost has chosen, though, because of what sin has wrought and man has become, the Holy Spirit is needed by us individually ere we can consciously know and enjoy what is revealed. (1 Cor. ii. 9–16.)

We hold, therefore, to the *verbal* inspiration of the Scriptures.

Christian evidences may have their value in their own sphere, but the Bible—the Word of God—carries its own credentials, the power of which is growingly felt by the spiritual mind. The more it is read, the more wonderful does it become, while those who prayerfully study it and drink deeply into its spirit feel their own littleness in the presence of this Book of God. In their own estimation they are no more than little children standing on the seashore and looking with wondering eyes across the measureless expanse of waters. To them the most convincing and astonishing evidence of its divine origin lies within its own bosom, and they ask for no other.

The insertion of words not found in the original copies is always marked in the Authorised Version by the inserted words being printed in *italics*. They are needful in many cases to make good English. The arrangement of chapters and verses is purely human, a convenient arrangement, but carrying no authority with it.

You cannot call upon us to justify and defend the formation of any theological system based on certain selected texts. Those who adopt the system should undertake its defence. But we say no more. Your questions, to be answered fully, demand more space than we can give in these correspondence columns. But we commend to your careful reading *The Irrationalism of Infidelity*, by J. N. Darby, which may be bought of our publisher. An extract from its preface we gladly insert in our current issue.

PERPLEXED.—We do not wonder at your soul being in darkness if you have been walking in self-will and in the lusts of the flesh. It could not be otherwise, for how should the Holy Spirit fill you with joy and peace when you are continually grieving Him

by unholy conduct? "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." It is a great mercy that your conscience gives you no rest, and that you feel, in wandering from the Lord, you have sunk into darkness and misery from which there seems to be no deliverance. And, indeed, there is no deliverance save in the grace of Him who saved you at the first. But, blessed be God, His grace is rich and unchanging. Whatever change there may be in us, in Him there is none. His heart yearns over His wandering children, though in their wanderings He cannot give them the shinings of His face. We exhort you, then, to let no failure shake your confidence in His grace. Return to Him in true, heartfelt confession of your sins. Conceal nothing. Bring everything into the light. And may you be helped not only to abhor your sins, but to abhor *yourself*. It is written, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso *confesseth* and *forsaketh* them shall have mercy." (Proverbs xxviii. 13.) So the prodigal found when he came back to his father, and so shall you find. And do not be discouraged should you not be brought at once into the light of day. Be low before God, and rest your soul on His grace, which is greater than our greatest sin. It may help you to read the story of the cleansing of the leper in Leviticus xiv. On the *first* day he was pronounced clean, but not till the eighth day was he restored to the full privileges of the congregation. Our sins are indeed gone from under the eye of God. The death and resurrection of Jesus, of which the two birds are a type, bear witness to that, but they must be removed from our conscience if there is to be perfect peace and communion with God re-established. This tarrying from the first day to the eighth rebukes the levity of our wretched hearts, which are ready to take advantage of grace to make little of the sin which grace forgives and puts away.

Hold fast grace then, justify God in His dealings with you, wait on Him, and you shall ere long praise with new songs the One whose gracious hand shall give you back the joy of His salvation. But, remember, the only safeguard against such a course as yours has been lies in your walking in the Spirit. Galatians v. 16 is clear and positive as to that. Walking in the Spirit we heed what the Spirit says, we follow His leading, our thoughts occupy themselves with "the things of the Spirit," and Christ in glory engages our heart. We sow to the Spirit, and of the Spirit reap life everlasting. You may read with profit Galatians v. 16 to the end. May our gracious God restore you to a sense of His favour through Jesus Christ. Do not hesitate to write again if needs be.

E. L.—Isaiah xix. 25.—This passage shows that Egypt shall not only have her part in the blessing reserved for the earth in connection with the glorious reign of Christ, but she will receive special favour at God's hand. We hardly think there is any connection between Isaiah liii. 8 and 1 Peter ii. 9. It is true that "*generation*" occurs in each, but something more is needed to prove the passages are related to each other.

BRIDPORT P. O.—We are very sorry to have mislaid your note, and cannot, therefore, send the books you ask for. Kindly write again and repeat your request.

NOTICE.—A correspondent asks us to state that he will gladly send, *gratis and post-free* to any address, C. A. Coates' review of *In His Steps*. Apply by post card to D. P., 10, Zion Place, Attercliffe, Sheffield.

A FINE EPITAPH.

“David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep.”—Acts xiii 36.

WE often read the epitaphs on the tombstones of the forgotten dead in the quiet churchyard, or those of the famous and noble in the grand cathedral, but they are frequently exaggerated and unreal. Men hasten to forget the evil of their fellows, and to invest them with virtues after death which they never possessed in life.

Far otherwise is it with the Holy Scriptures. There things are as they are. God reads the heart, and our lack of grace and discernment is oft rebuked as we find God praising such a man as Lot, calling him *righteous* Lot—praise deserved, or else God would not give it, for He is perfectly just. The infidel has often sneered at the failures of “the man after God’s own heart.” But he is so graceless as to be quite unable to trace the steep and rocky road of repentance which David trod with bleeding heart and tearful eye. To judge the sin is to be morally free from it, and that means a good deal.

But in Acts xiii. 36 we have a full, unqualified commendation of David’s life. No “but” comes in to mar the picture. The New Translation

gives a delightful rendering of the verse quoted at the head of this article, "David, indeed, having in his own generation *ministered to the will of God*, fell asleep."

It is an epitaph any saint might envy, as Enoch's is a biography we might well wish could be written of us, a biography the more significant because of its brevity, "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Four words suffice to tell us of the greater part of his life covering three hundred years. Eight words tell of his translation, which occupied a moment at the end of three centuries.

But to return to our epitaph. We notice David "served his own generation by the will of God," or "in his own generation ministered to the will of God." He could not minister truly to his own generation unless he ministered to the will of God.

Let me press this upon the notice of the feeblest, weakest believer. We expect the Lord to come and the saints to be translated like Enoch; but if He tarry, what then? Our generation is passing away. Thirty years is allowed for a generation. In a few brief years the millions of our generation will have passed away. We cannot minister to generations that have gone, to a Luther or Melanchthon, a Wesley or Whitfield, or the unknown, yet well-known, saints of bygone years. *Our opportunity lies in the present—the golden now; we cannot count upon to-morrow.*

A FINE EPITAPH.

283

More than that, if your work is left undone, *no one else can do it*, for each has his own particular sphere and work.

Does a brother read this who says, "I am not gifted, nor have I powers of speech. I am isolated, and in a forgotten corner of the earth"?

Dear brother, you have a blessed, wondrous opportunity. We hear of preachers "*holding forth*" at the street corner. But "*holding forth the word of life*" is living, not mere talking. It is translating the living word of life into deeds, and deportment, and ways.

Did you ever hear of the young man who, when asked, "By whose preaching were you converted?" promptly replied, "I was converted by my mother's practising"? Oh! blessed practising! Most powerful of all sermons! A translation of the Scriptures beyond the carping of the captious, or the criticism of the learned!

But *you* have a circle of interest that no other person has. *You* have circumstances that will never be repeated. May you serve God in *your* generation—day by day, month by month, year by year, till translation comes or you fall asleep.

This article is being written among the Darliston Mountains of Jamaica. Can the Christian young man, in a busy London office, serve the simple country folks in an obscure corner of this far-off island of the sea? Can the Christian young man, born and bred in these lovely mountains, serve the three and a half millions

of London that are said never to go to church or preaching-room?

Serve God in your home, in your place of business, in your town or district, as it may be the will of God. Do not *preach* a mile from your home unless you *practise* at home. Begin at the centre of the circle, and work out to the circumference: God's will shall determine the extent of it.

And to serve your generation, what a field it opens out! To serve sinners by the preaching of the gospel, or, if that be not your line, by speaking to individuals, by scattering the simple gospel tract, by helping on the work by your prayers and pocket, and above all by living Christ. Or it may be yours rather to serve the saints. Not to serve a sect or a shibboleth, but the saints. You may not be able to publicly minister to them, but you can speak to them individually of Christ, help them by caring for the weak ones, visiting the aged, washing the floor for a sick sister, or sweeping out the meeting-room. It is little things, done as if they were great ones, that bespeak the devoted heart, and tell that the little thing is done for Him who is infinitely great and worthy. And the greatest thing we can do is little, as we think of Him for whom it is done; yet a cup of cold water will not lose its reward.

What a Master! May love lead us to the practice of these things for Christ's sake.

JAMAICA, *June*, 1899.

A. J. P.

THE BOOK OF APPEAL.

HE is a fool who prefers a lie to the truth in matters earthly and temporal: how much more so in matters spiritual and eternal! Yet there are thousands to-day who make no attempt to test what they hear concerning the most momentous questions that can be raised. They either reject it without a thought, neglect it without a care, or accept it without inquiry. The folly of such indifference is all the more manifest when we consider that an *infallible* Book of Appeal is ready to hand.

Everyone will admit that there is an amazing amount of confusion in Christendom as to what is really TRUTH. Let Pilate's important question be put in Christian England to-day, "What is truth?" and beyond a doubt the inquirer's perplexity would be not relieved by the answers he would receive. The Roman Catholics, the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Wesleyans, and a host of others would each and all affirm that the truth is to be found in them or in their creeds. *What then is to be done?* The answer is simple enough for simple folk.

Back to the infallible, unchanging, and eternal

Word of the living God! Back to the simple faith in its inspired truth that characterised so many of our forefathers! Back to the spirit of the Bereans who would not receive even an apostle's statements until they had searched the Scriptures to find them undeniably true!

In the Great Book whose Author is God we may find rest for our troubled minds. There, and there alone, may we repose our fullest trust, for it is "the Word of God which liveth and abideth *for ever.*"

Once let it be granted that the Holy Scriptures are final, and that every question of eternal moment must be referred to them, and our course is clear. Though a man preach with mighty eloquence, and with the most profound learning, yet if that which he preaches will not bear the most searching examination by the light of the only book in the world that is inspired by the Holy Ghost, we will reject it at once without a regret, though we may have secretly hoped that it might be true.

Nothing can be more dangerous than to let other men think for us and carelessly follow their belief in such vital matters. Let every one of my readers put his "religion" to the supreme test. There is a growing tendency to substitute comfortable words for the uncompromising truths of Holy Scripture. Undoubtedly it is an easy matter to persuade one's self that what one would

like to be untrue *is* untrue. Yet is eternal punishment a myth because I dread the flames? Is God unrighteous because I love my sin? Is truth less true because unpleasant to my ear? Or must I not rather confess that God is true and what He says is the truth, and that I have not bowed to it yet because I wanted to live a little longer in self-gratification?

The day is drawing near, very near, when every cloak of unfounded profession will be torn to shreds, and every pleasing but truth-avoiding delusion be mercilessly exposed. Come into the light now, my reader, in view of eternal realities, and be honest before God. It is of no use to hide away from Him. Adam tried to do so, but God found out Adam, and He will find out *thee*. If He find thee now, He will bless thee for all eternity for the name's sake of His Son. In strictest righteousness He can do so, because every demand of His holiness has been met by the atoning death of Calvary, and through the merit of that Holy Sufferer, now raised from among the dead, He (the God against whom we have sinned) is able freely to proclaim forgiveness of sins.

Truly the "grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." It has brought salvation within *your* reach, and you may lay hold of it with the hand of faith this day. Be real, be earnest, and take it. W. B. W.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

IT is a very great privilege to gather together on the first day of the week in the faith of that scripture which says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii. 20.) It is the privilege of the assembly of God upon the earth; and in a day of ruin, when the truth of the Church is in a great measure ignored, and man's substitutes have been set up, it is the privilege of any given number to take that ground and gather in the faith of the Lord's presence.

The special object that brings us together on the first day of the week is to break bread in remembrance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Could anything be more precious? Called together by the express desire of the Lord, we remember Him in the breaking of bread. On our part it is an act of affection, a loving response to the words, "Do this in remembrance of Me." And they appeal strongly to the heart of every Christian. Rob it of this blessed character and you have the form without the spirit, the shadow without the substance, the shell without the kernel.

"There am I in the midst of them." Wonderful statement! The Lord of glory is there. Those

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

289

who gather unto His name—the name expressing all that He is—can count upon His presence. Let this blessed fact command our hearts and everything else will follow accordingly, inasmuch as He will order everything. If we are consciously in His presence, and our hearts are under the influence of His love, then there will be a true remembrance of Himself. This will result in the assembly rising in praise and worship to the Father, for the Lord is there as the Leader of our praises. (Heb. ii. 12.)

It follows, therefore, that all that is done in the assembly when gathered thus is to be under the leadership of the Lord by the Spirit. We must not act presumptuously, and force ourselves to do things without His leading. *He is there.*

Nor is the assembly the place of rules and regulations. Man's arrangements should be excluded. It is where the Lord is. Moreover a moral state is required to be there in the faith of that presence, and to act under His leadership. If this is lacking we must get back to self-judgment. Nothing will take the place of a right moral condition. To seek to carry on the assembly without it is to connect the Lord with evil, and to bring in spiritual death.

There may be, alas! an intellectual acquaintance with the highest truth, an utterance of orthodox expressions, even expressions of worship, and no corresponding moral state. What more awful,

hypocritical, and wicked than to address God in terms of worship when there is unjudged evil in the heart?

There is an important preliminary work to be done in the soul *before* assembling to the name of Him who is the Centre, the alone Centre, to which the people of God gather. Of this we shall speak hereafter. You could not speak of anything when gathered in His presence as preliminary, for He is there. And whether it be the breaking of bread or the worship that must follow, all is to be done under His leadership. One may flow out of the other, but the one is not inferior to the other, forasmuch as both are divinely ordered. In the breaking of bread we remember the Lord and His infinite love, while our hearts, having been touched by the Lord Himself, flow out in praise to God and our Father. No slight is to be put upon the former in order to magnify the latter; in fact, if there has not been a real remembrance of the Lord in death, there will be little praise flowing out to God. The mere singing of certain hymns does not constitute worship. "In spirit and in truth" is what characterises the worship of the true worshipper; and "the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

The great and all-important *preliminary* to the Lord's Supper is *self-judgment*. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

291

bread, and drink of that cup." (1 Cor. xi. 28.) Let this be lacking, though outwardly all may appear correct, there is little there for God.

There must be the individual getting back to the Lord in self-judgment. And oh, what need there is for this! The low state of all the assemblies of God's people lies in the lack of self-judgment, that faithful dealing with ourselves in the searching light of the holy presence of God. Oh, may God grant unto us this grace! For it is not further knowledge that is needed, but a right moral state, and an honest walking up to the light we have. Before we can get up we must go down; before we can be exalted we must humble ourselves. "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My word." (Isaiah lxvi. 2.)

And this is real work, conscience work, for which no stock of knowledge can be a substitute. The assembly is a holy place, and jealousies, love of place, love of the world, backbitings, evil-speaking, slanders, tale-bearing, misrepresentations, covetousness, deceit, the soul-debasing spirit of the miser, indifference to the Lord's interests, indolence in the Lord's work, ill comport with that holy place, or with the character of Him who dwells there. He will surely resent any attempt on our part to link the memorial of His dying love, and the worship of the Father, with things which loudly call for confession and self-judgment.

It is not the lack of light that has produced such alarming weakness in the assemblies of saints, but, we repeat it, the lack of self-judgment. And in connection with this there should be an honest confession of our sins to God, and, when necessary, to man. For if I have slandered, backbitten, or cruelly misrepresented my fellow, what more becoming than an open confession to him whom I have sinned against? And if this be withheld, though I have the tongue of an angel, I am as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. (1 Cor. xiii.) "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James v. 16), is an important word.

An unjudged state must greatly affect the condition of any assembly, more so than we are possibly aware of. And in this case honest prayer and supplication would be more in keeping than an attempt at worship when the condition to worship is not there. Above all things we should be real with God, with ourselves, and with one another. God will have reality, and if we have been unreal all the week, how can we be real when gathered together? If we have slandered one another during the week, how can we "worship in spirit and in truth" when gathered together?

The great preliminary then to the Breaking of Bread and the worship of the Father is self-judgment, without which there is no real remembrance of the Saviour, nor praise to the

Father. Unspeakably great is the privilege, but there is to be the fulfilment of certain inexorable conditions before that privilege can be entered into and enjoyed, and one of them is *self-judgment*. Let this be lacking, and our pretended remembrance and worship, if not repented of, will eventually bring down His chastening hand.

An unjudged state persisted in is the sure way to spiritual ruin. The path is strewn with those who have followed such a course. They have a voice for each, and that voice is, "Take heed unto thyself"; "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." (1 Timothy iv. 16; Proverbs iv. 26.) "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. xi. 30-32.)

Thank God for the privilege; but may we have grace to solemnly fulfil the conditions necessary for the enjoyment of it, and not pretend to the enjoyment of the privilege when the suited state is wholly wanting.

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*" (1 Cor. xi. 27, 28.)

E. A.

PRECIOUS WORDS FOR THOSE THAT FEAR THE LORD.

“**T**HE Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.” (Psalm ciii. 8-10.)

The Christian blessing is of a far higher character than that of the Jews of old; nevertheless there are precious things in the Old Testament which we share in common with them. The Lord Himself is immutable; He is ever *merciful* and *gracious*, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. Were it not so, where should we all have been to-day? Mercy and grace, yea, plenteous mercy He has shown to each of us. Had He dealt with us according to our sins, or rewarded us according to our iniquities, we should still have been under His judgment, and in danger of banishment from His presence for ever.

A striking figure follows in verse 11 to set forth the greatness of His mercy towards us:

“For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.”

Who, with the loftiest imagination, can realise or convey to others the greatness of His mercy in the light of such a comparison? Yet so great it is towards everyone that fears His name, who has received that heavenly wisdom of which the fear of the Lord is the beginning.

“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.” (*v. 12.*)

Can any of us—let our thoughts soar how they may—conceive the completeness of the putting away of all our transgressions as set forth by such a blessed and soul-assuring word? Where is the east? where is the west? Who can tell? Space is apparently infinite, and this is the forcible figure which the Spirit of God employs to assure our hearts that our transgressions are gone, gone completely and for ever. And God Himself has removed them. If we look up we see infinite mercy; if we look on either side our transgressions are no more! It is an immense thing for a soul to get clear as to that. Thousands are more or less occupied with themselves, but we need to forget ourselves and all our doings, and to simply rest in the faithfulness of His word who cannot lie. Do you fear Him? If so it is a sure sign God has begun His work in you. And if you believe Him *you* are the object of infinite mercy, and *your* transgressions are removed, as He only can remove them.

“Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb. x. 17.) “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” (Rom. iv. 7, 8.)

Then follow precious words of comfort:—

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so *the Lord pitieth them that fear Him*. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.” (*vv.* 13, 14.)

How deeply blessed! What touches a father’s heart more than the weakness, needs, and sorrows of his little children? And so the Lord pitieth *them that fear Him*. With our sins forgiven we are brought into relationship with God, and we are the children of God. He is our Father, and we are the objects of His perfect and unchanging love at all times. He knows us perfectly, cares for us tenderly, ministers to us graciously, helps, comforts, sustains in all our needs and sorrows here. He knows how weak we are, that without Him we can do nothing, that the smallest difficulty is too much for us apart from His aid. He knows we are ready to sink as we are called to meet the exigencies of this present life. He knoweth our frame. *He remembereth*. How surpassingly blessed! *He remembereth* that we are dust. Let us, then, walk in His fear and trust Him wholly. He

FOR THOSE THAT FEAR THE LORD. 297

will never fail us. Mercy, pardon, pity, all these are our happy portion now.

“As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.” (*vv.* 15, 16.)

Here we learn what man is. His days are as the grass and as a flower of the field. To-day it is, to-morrow cut down and cast into the oven. Man *flourisheth* like the grass, and suddenly death comes. That inexorable mower cuts him down in an instant. He may flourish as to wealth, honour, power, but death makes no distinctions. The wind passeth over the grass, another moment and it is not, and its place knows it no more. So it is with the one who flourishes in this world. At the zenith of his greatness to-day, and to-morrow he is carried to the grave. He fills his niche for the short space of life here, and in a moment he is gone. And how oft, except in the memory of a few, forgotten! And what is the worldling's portion hereafter? If any man live for himself, without the fear of God, his sure portion is misery without Him for ever.

“But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon *them that fear Him*, and His righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them.” (*vv.* 17, 18.)

What a striking contrast! No mercy for the poor, impenitent sinner who lives without God and only for himself. But untold mercy for all who fear Him! *From everlasting to everlasting* is His mercy, and His righteousness from generation to generation. "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, *they are more in number than the sand*: when I am awake, I am still with Thee." (Psalm cxxxix. 17, 18.) What worse than folly, then, to pass on indifferent to the claims of Him who created us for His own glory! What a rich portion indeed is theirs *who fear Him*! Are you, dear reader, among the latter? We do not mean "*fear*" in the sense of dread. But are you one of the children of God, sensible of His great love, walking in filial fear, and finding your pleasure in remembering His commandments to do them? If so He would have you enjoy all these precious things of which we have been speaking. Oh that it may be so increasingly with us all, that our hearts may ever return to Him overflowing with worship and grateful praise!

E. H. C.

A MAN OF PURPOSE.

DANIEL is first introduced to us as a captive in the hands of the great King Nebuchadnezzar, who, having successfully besieged Jerusalem, had carried away the flower of Judah's royal household to the land of Babylon. Goodly in person, and skilled in learning and science, Daniel and his three companions are singled out from their fellows as specially fitted for posts of honour in the royal presence. "And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king."

Many questions might have suggested themselves to the youthful captive when he heard of the king's appointment. "Ought he to put himself in conflict with the king's commands, and incur the risk of his displeasure? Should he not rather, as reason and expediency would suggest, take advantage of the king's favour, and exert his influence on behalf of his down-trodden people?" But no. Daniel was one of a little faithful band who could rise to the height of Jehovah's thoughts and purposes for Israel. "Can I be true to Jehovah, and eat the meat

of the Babylonish king which has been offered in sacrifice to idols? Shall I act thus in defiance of God's holy law, and by unholy means seek ease and affluence while the land which Jehovah has chosen is in the hands of the spoiler?" The captive exiles of Judah might hang their harps upon the willows, and weep as they remembered Zion, but was not God the Jehovah of Israel still? Had He not said, "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear them from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land"? (2 Chron. vii. 14.) Here was Daniel's resource in a dark and difficult day: and so, come what may, "he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat, or with the wine which he drank." He casts himself upon the strong arm and faithful word of the living God. Will He fail him? Reader, is He *your* refuge in the hour of extremity? When clouds of distress and perplexity darken your path, do you know what it is to lean with unshaken confidence upon God?

"Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs." Here we observe that no sooner does the man of faith take a definite stand for God than Jehovah's power is actively engaged on his behalf. And is He at all changed? Surely not. The one who sets

forth, in full purpose of heart and dependence upon God, to run the Christian race, will assuredly find that the One in whom he trusts will carry him on, no matter what the difficulties may be. And so Daniel was found "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in the king's realm." He alone, of all the wise men of Babylon, could interpret the king's dream. "Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon."

Kings, however, are only mortal, and the mighty Babylonish monarch, with all his riches and glory, passes off the scene; and Belshazzar succeeds him. He, too, after a brief, luxurious, and licentious reign, is suddenly called to his account. Darius, the Median, takes the kingdom, and still we find Daniel in favour with the ruling Gentile power. But in every period those who have trodden the path of faith have had to learn that there are adversaries and evil occurrent. The enemy of mankind ever diligently seeks to oppose the testimony of God, and to crush those who uphold it. Accordingly we are called to follow "the man of purpose" into the valley of trial.

"Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm." (Chap. vi. 3.) But the enemies

of God and Daniel, moved with envy and hatred, resolve to effect his ruin. The princes and presidents league themselves together, and a council is held to consider the best means to render their plans effectual. "We shall not find occasion," say they, "except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." So by craft and flattery they induce Darius to issue a decree that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days shall be cast into a den of lions. Then they kept a strict watch upon Daniel.

"Now when Daniel knew the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his window being open toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, AS HE DID AFORETIME." This magnificent sentence sets before us the whole moral bent and trend of Daniel's life. And it is men of the Daniel stamp that are wanted to-day; men of purpose, men of prayer, men of power. What is the "grand secret" of Daniel's faithful testimony for God? Simply this: *Jehovah of Israel had the first place in his heart.* It was so when, as a humble captive youth, he refused to defile himself with the royal diet. It was so whether interpreting the king's dreams or ruling over the vast provinces of Babylon. And it was so when, in the face of the king's decree and the lions' den, he could kneel down in prayer and

thanksgiving before his God. Christian reader, let us take it home to our hearts. Daniel, whether we view him at the start, in the course, or at the finish, is a man who was singularly "approved of God," and we earnestly commend the study of the Book of Daniel to young believers. The word for the servant to-day is: "Study to show thyself approved unto God." (2 Tim. ii. 15.) Surely it would be the desire of every true-hearted believer to answer in some measure to this. It was Daniel's portion in *his* day, and it may be yours, beloved, in a much higher sense.

The comparatively dim dispensation in which Daniel lived and played his part is past. God's dealings with Israel as a nation for the present have ceased. His ancient people are scattered among the nations. Meanwhile, God is taking out from among the children of men, regardless of tribe or nationality, a people for His name. The One whom man refused and crucified is on the throne of God. A new relationship has been established. The cross has cleared the scene for God of all that barred the way of His approach to man in grace. The Christian can say, "We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom. viii. 15.) Has *your* heart, dear reader, been led into the reality and joy of all this? It

is the privilege even of the "babe" in Christ to be consciously in the knowledge of "the Father." (1 John ii. 13.)

It is only as our souls are, in some measure, in the enjoyment of this grace that we are prepared to take a definite stand for Christ. Man is still unchanged, notwithstanding all the culture and enlightenment of this polished age: and the language of the mass to-day is as it was long ago, "We will not have this man to reign over us." (Luke xix. 14.)

Are *you* professedly a follower of Jesus? Let the words uttered by the Roman governor, 1900 years ago, be the text for you, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" (Matt. xxvii. 22.) Have you enthroned *Him* in your heart? Then you will necessarily have to learn that His kingdom is not of *this* world. There was no room for Jesus here. "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world," said the Master, "therefore the world hateth you." (John xv. 19.) In Daniel's day God marked His approval of His faithful witnesses by promoting them to honour and dignity upon the earth. Earthly blessing was the characteristic portion of the true Israel of God. The death of Christ has closed that order of things, and in resurrection He has become the Head of a new race. Our blessings, as Christians, are all vested in Him on high; we have

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

305

nothing here. We are called to heavenly glory with Christ. "When He appears in glory we shall be manifested with Him." Meanwhile, we have the privilege of sharing His rejection. If you and I are of the spirit of Daniel for this day, we shall be found in the company of those of whom the Lord speaks: "They have kept My word, and have not denied My name." (Rev. iii. 8.) The present knowledge of His love and approval is the sweet compensation for those who, in a day of general departure, are thus prepared to "cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart." (Acts xi. 23.)

G. F. E.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANXIOUS ONE.—It is indeed quite possible to object to flowers and feathers as articles of dress, and yet make use of ribbons quite as showy. Such inconsistency, if it exist, we shall not attempt to justify, nor shall we cry it down. We often marvel that Christian women should be slaves to fashion and disfigure themselves with gaudy millinery, but we never inveigh against the practice, however much we may deplore it. No good comes of doing so, and in nine cases out of ten it only provokes temper. Besides, feathers, flowers, and fantastic ribbons are mere externals—the secret of their use lies within. Scripture, indeed, is not silent on the subject. 1 Peter iii. 3, 4 is clear enough, and a spiritual mind will not long disregard so plain a word. We advocate

no extreme, and believe a Christian is suitably attired when there is nothing to attract attention or provoke remark either on the side of show or of obtrusive plainness. But it is a rare thing to err in the latter direction ; the danger lies the other way.

Replying to your question as to whether it is possible to live without sinning, the Christian is under no obligation to sin. Necessity is not laid upon him, and should he commit what people call a trivial sin—though no sin is really trivial—he must judge himself for it as having no excuse. Had he been watchful, prayerful, and dependent on the grace of Christ, he would not have fallen into it at all. But when we come to actual, practical, everyday life we are confronted by that word, “In many things we all offend.” From this apostolic confession no one is exempt. No doubt we are called to holiness. God would have His children like Himself, and therefore says, “Be ye holy ; for I am holy.” On no account would we weaken this ; but if a man says his life is perfectly holy, and that the eye of God can see no sinful blemish in it, we believe him to be self-deceived and flying in the face of Holy Scripture. As to the word of the Lord to Abram—“I am the Almighty God ; walk before Me, and be thou perfect”—we understand it to mean that Abram was called to walk before God in uprightness according to that name—*the Almighty God*—under which He had then been pleased to reveal Himself. There is no thought of his being perfectly holy ; his perfectness would consist in his walking before God as the Almighty One, able to protect and able to fulfil every promise. Your third query is answered in our reply to another.

S. B. C.—In Acts we read of *households* being baptised. No mention is made of children, though we may reasonably suppose there were children in some households. If so, we presume they were also baptised. We can understand that a parent, once a heathen or a Jew, passing by baptism into the outward circle of Christian profession would wish his family to be brought into it likewise, and thus share in the privileges found there and nowhere else; but he would not have the remotest idea that his children were thereby born again, much less that “the taint of original sin” was washed away. Such ideas are mere figments of the human mind receiving no support from Holy Scripture. It is needless to say there are allusions to baptism and deductions drawn from it in Scripture which can only apply to true believers, though baptism in its less restricted meaning embraces all who enter the circle of Christian profession, whether they eventually prove believers, or mere professors and nothing more.

We do not understand 1 Peter iii. 19 to teach that the Lord Jesus Christ between His dying and rising again went and personally preached to the imprisoned spirits. It means rather that the Spirit of Christ, in and through Noah, preached to the men of his day whose spirits, at the time the apostle was writing, were in prison because the testimony of Noah was not believed.

D. P.—Titus iii. 5.—There is but one other place in all Scripture where this word “*regeneration*” occurs, and that is Matthew xix. 28. A glance will show that it is not to be confounded with the new

birth of John iii. In Titus it refers to the new order of things which Christianity introduces, and into which we are brought through grace. But not this alone; there is the renewing of the Holy Ghost. This embraces the new birth, but goes beyond it; and there is something still, for the Holy Ghost has been shed on us abundantly. Here, then, are the three parts of the passage: (1) The regeneration, (2) the renewing of the Holy Ghost, (3) the abundant gift of the Spirit. For not only is there a new moral being formed in us when born again of the Spirit, but the Holy Spirit given to the believer "ever communicates to us more and more of the things of this new world into which He has brought us. So that it is not only that we are born of Him, but that He works in us, communicating to us all that is ours in Christ." All this is embraced, we think, in the "renewing of the Holy Ghost."

BELIEVER.—Strictly speaking, the priesthood of the Lord Jesus was not in exercise till after the cross, though the offering up of Himself as the Victim might well be regarded as a priestly act. From that standpoint He would be viewed both as Priest and Sacrifice. The work of the priest did not properly begin till the victim had been killed; then he dealt with the blood according to the law. But we would not build too much on a type. If any contended that at the cross the Lord Jesus was both Offerer and Offering, Priest and Sacrifice, we should not object or argue the point, though inclining to the thought that the statement might not be rigidly exact.

PERSONAL HOLINESS.

IN both the Old Testament and the New we have the command, "Be ye holy," and the reason is the same whether in regard to Israel or to Christians—"for I am holy." God's character is to determine ours. Under false systems of religion, people attribute their own passions to their gods, under Christianity the reverse is true. God will have His people like Himself. Consequently, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

What does "holiness" mean? "Holiness" is "wholeness." To be entirely separate from evil, set apart by God, to serve Him with the whole heart, this is "holiness." Is it not precisely in this entire yielding of ourselves to God—this thoroughness—that we are wanting?

We must not confound "holiness" with justification. Justification is ours through the work of another. It is ours when we "believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Romans iv. 24, 25.) Moreover, it is ours at once. At one moment we might be "in our sins," "guilty"; at the next "justified." Holiness, as we are regarding it, is a matter of time.

There are three forms of "holiness" or sanctification (for sanctification is an essential element of holiness) spoken of in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians vii. 14 we read, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they *holy*." This is a mere external holiness. It does not mean that the person is either justified or saved. Then in Hebrews x. 10, 14 we come to quite another character of sanctification. Christ is seen as having accomplished the will of God, and having accomplished it, we are set apart to God in all the virtue of His one offering. There is a third aspect, what may be called personal holiness—holiness in the life—and this is what is referred to in such passages of Scripture as 1 Peter i. 14–17; iii. 10–16; Romans vi. 22; 2 Corinthians vii. 1; and 2 Thessalonians v. 23. This is that of which we speak.

HOW IS THIS HOLINESS TO BE ATTAINED?

There are differences of opinion on this point among earnest Christians. They are all one in longing to be holy. But when we inquire how we are to become so there is not quite the same unanimity. Some think it is by one supreme effort of the will; others that by an act of faith, or by a more gradual process, sin within is entirely eradicated; while others again, though they desire

to be holy, are almost inclined to think it is unattainable, except by the few. Lastly, some set themselves to attain it in a legal way.

Two fundamental errors underlie these systems. Either redemption is not understood, and so the soul mixes up holiness with the question of its acceptance with God; or the truth as to the "flesh" is not apprehended, and so there is a vain attempt to better it. Let it be said at once that the knowledge of redemption must pave the way for true scriptural holiness, and that holiness does not consist either in the principle of sin being removed, or in the gradual bettering of our old nature.

The basis of holiness is found in redemption and new birth. These are mentioned by the apostle Peter immediately after he enjoins those to whom he is writing to be holy. (Chap. i. 18, 23.) Redemption brings us back to God. He has regained possession of us; we are His. Notice the language in Exodus xiii. 2, and after they have crossed the Red Sea. (Chap. xv. 2.) In the former God speaks: "Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn . . . *it is Mine*"; in the latter the people say of Jehovah, "He is *my* God." God has redeemed His people, they are His, and they are conscious of it. As in Israel's case, so in ours, it is the blood that has done it. In their case only in type, in ours in all the reality of "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and

without spot : who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." It is not a question of our worthiness, but the value of the blood of Him

"Who without usurpation could
Lay claim to heaven's eternal throne."

Reader, what worth must attach to that blood ! God sees everything in it, and by it brings sinners right home to Himself. Now having been brought there, we see at once the force of the injunction, "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

BUT SOMETHING ELSE IS NECESSARY.

Redemption brings us to God's habitation : how are we to enjoy such a place ? A new nature is necessary, and for this we must be born again. The truth works in two ways ; it not only sets forth what has been done for us, but it operates in us, we are born again by the Word of God. Something is produced in us the very opposite in character to the flesh. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And these two distinct natures, the one "flesh" and the other "spirit," are in every converted person. It is of the utmost importance to be clear as to this. Only as having a new nature could we desire to be holy.

But the desire to be holy, and our being so, are not one and the same thing. Yet if these two

truths are apprehended, viz., redemption and new birth, a basis for holiness is already secured. We may now advance a step further, and invite attention to another passage. In Romans vi. 22 we read, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, *ye have your fruit unto holiness.*"

Here we see at once that holiness is attainable; "ye have your fruit unto holiness." It is, however, only as we are "made free from sin, and become servants to God," this point is reached. We have said that sin is ever in us, and will be in the best Christian on earth, until he parts for ever with this mortal body. *But it is not to reign.*

HOW THEN ARE WE MADE FREE FROM SIN ?

The first eleven verses of Romans vi. deal with this very point. The question is asked, "Shall we continue in sin?" And the answer is, "How shall we, that have died to sin, live any longer therein?" We get free from sin by having *died to it. There is no other way.* And we do not die to it by our own effort, or by our own death. Then how? We have died to it in the death of Christ. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His *death*? Therefore we were buried *with Him* by baptism into death." Every baptised person, whether he knows it or not, has taken the

ground that he has died in the death of Christ. Christ having died to sin, it says, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." It is not a question of feeling, but of reckoning. Just as we inherit the principle of sin, in being of Adam's race, so we get free from it by being alive in Christ, the Head of another race, and reckoning His death as ours. We are entitled to reckon what is true of Him as true of us. This is the first step in the emancipation of the soul from the power of indwelling sin.

The next is this—instead of being servants to sin, we "become servants to God." "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." In other words, instead of yielding to the lusts within, and allowing our members to be the instruments of those lusts, we turn from them as being dead to them, and yield ourselves to God. We are privileged to see the death of Christ between us and all that we were, and look upon ourselves as alive from the dead. It is as having another life—Christ—we can reckon ourselves dead to sin because He who is our life has died to it.

The third step is the realisation that we "are not under the law, but under grace." (v. 14.) Were

we under law we should be left to struggle as best we could with the evil tendencies of our own hearts. This is where many are. They strive to alter themselves. They ask God to alter them. They agonise and pray, but get no better. God will not alter what you are. For if He did, it would only be to occupy you with your own improvement. Your eye is in the wrong direction. The only thing to do is to confess that the lust you find within, however horrible, is just yourself, as to the flesh; and without seeking to turn it out of your heart, own that it is just what your heart is by nature, reckon yourself dead to it, yield to God, and you will find grace will be given to overcome it. Under law we should be left to our own resources, under grace all the resources of God are at our command, if only we get down low enough.

WHAT IS THE CONSEQUENCE

of being dead to sin, alive unto God, and being under grace? We have our "fruit unto holiness." As we yield to God, our members are "servants to righteousness unto holiness." (v. 19.) Both righteousness and holiness are mentioned here, and there is a distinction. Righteousness is what is due, doing anything because it ought to be done. Holiness is more doing a thing because you love to do it. We begin by yielding to God because we see it is right and our duty, we end by doing

it because we love to do so. And how is this point reached? Only, we believe, as we know consciously what it is to be "alive unto God in Christ Jesus." We are in living contact with all that God is, and this alone can make us holy. As Christ lives to God in all that God is now to Him, made "full of joy with His countenance," so we live to God in the sense of all that He is to us in that beloved One. This is what it is to be under grace, and the more we know this the more glad we shall be to reckon ourselves dead to sin, to yield ourselves to God, and as a consequence have our "fruit unto holiness." The whole secret lies here in knowing what it is to be alive unto God.

LET US SEE IN WHAT HOLINESS CONSISTS.

It consists in being *sanctified*. In 2 Cor. vii. 1 we read, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." This statement is founded upon what has gone before. The apostle is exhorting the Corinthians to be separate. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Then, "having therefore these promises, let us cleanse

ourselves." Surely such promises may well encourage us to be separate. And as we learn what this One can be to us we shall be glad to let everything go that is unsuited to Him.

Let us then seek to realise what these promises mean, and if we only taste their preciousness, entering into what we are to God as His redeemed people, and what God has undertaken to be to us, we shall be more and more willing to cleanse ourselves, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

These last words suggest that the *fear of God* is a most important element in the matter. And one reason surely why there is not more personal holiness is because there is so little of this fear. There is a beautiful thought in one of the poets, that in some of the ancient edifices which still stand as the wonder and admiration of the world, the work that is hidden from ordinary view is found on closer inspection to be just as perfect, and to have had as much pains bestowed upon it, as that which meets the gaze of every passer-by. And the reason given is,

"THE GODS SEE EVERYWHERE."

Did we but realise how true this is of the One we own and serve, how much more particular we should be as to the *hidden* part of our lives! God sees it all. It is just this thoroughness, this

wholeness, which constitutes holiness. And this springs from the fear of God.

Another element of holiness is *obedience*. This specially marked the blessed Lord. He was the obedient One, and therefore what always characterised Him was the "spirit of holiness." (Rom. i. 4.) The apostle Peter connects this with holiness in regard to ourselves. "As *obedient* children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance"; and again, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in *obeying* the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren."

This leads us in closing to two other considerations. First, there must be the "*obeying* the truth" (not merely hearing it), or our souls will not be purified; and secondly, there can be no true holiness without love. Our Lord prayed to the Father, "Sanctify them by Thy truth: Thy word is truth." It is only as the revelation of God becomes effective in our souls that holiness is produced. It is the truth of God's love brought home to us in the power of the Spirit that makes us holy. This can have only one result, "unfeigned love of the brethren"; we shall "love one another with a pure heart fervently." This is holiness.

R. E.

THE HEART AND ITS OBJECTS.

HOW the soul is instructed by the different purpose of the Spirit of God in *Ecclesiastes* and the *Song of Solomon*! They read, not a *kindred* lesson exactly, but very consistent lessons which together richly instruct the soul. In *Ecclesiastes* we are taught that he that drinketh of these waters shall thirst again—in the *Song* we learn that he that drinketh of the water Christ giveth shall never thirst. In *Ecclesiastes* the soul is represented as having full capacity to try everything under the sun. Solomon was raised up as such a one. No one had or could have the command of more extended resources in the earth than he. He commanded wealth and honour and pleasant learning. All stores of these various delights were found in his dwelling. He could, in short, wield the instruments to traffic in the market of human, natural, earthly and carnal attainments and treasures without stint or difficulty. And he tried them in all their variety. But he found they would not do. They left his heart a parched ground and wilderness still, and instead of raising music there, it was all and only “vexation of spirit.” He that drank of these waters was still athirst.

In the *Song*, the soul is altogether differently affected. It is in a different attitude and different

experiences. It has but *one* Object, but it is *satisfied*, and never for a moment thinks of looking beyond it. It has "the Beloved" and cares for nothing else. It has its griefs, as the soul in Ecclesiastes has. But it is a grief of an entirely different character. It sighs for more *capacity to enjoy its Object*, as there it sighed over the *insufficiency of its object* with full capacity to enjoy it. "Draw me, we will run after Thee" is the language of the heart here. It seeks for nothing but Jesus, but laments that it is not nearer to Him, more intimate with Him, more fully and altogether with Him. "I sleep, but my heart waketh." Want of power in watchfulness is felt, but no want of an object—for even if this drowsy soul were questioned about its Object, it could recount its beauties from head to foot and think not for a moment of searching for another. Oh, it is this we want, beloved, it is just this. We want to find in our Jesus a corrective for the wanderings and gaddings of the heart. The building of palaces, the planting of vineyards, the multiplying of the delights of the children of men, all these efforts and travails of the heart should end at the discovery of Jesus. Then let the grief of the soul change. Let it become a sorrow after want of capacity in ourselves like that in the Song, in the blessed certainty of this, that there is adequacy in our Object. He that drinketh of that water shall never thirst.

J. G. B.

“WEEPING MAY ENDURE FOR THE NIGHT,
BUT JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.”

LUKE vii.

IN Simon's house the Saviour sat ; no heart distress'd
Was in that circle found. None sought the grace
Which He had come to give ; nor did they trace
In Him, the humble Nazarene, God ever bless'd.

The host in self-sufficient pride invited Him ;
Gave not the usual kiss, nor washed His feet,
Soiled by the walk of grace o'er Judah's street ;
But curious asked Him to his house and *slighted* Him.

But lo ! a woman enters in. She nothing reaps
From her past years of sin, save deep remorse.
Repenting of her sin, of all her course,
In presence of His matchless grace, she *falls and weeps*.

Yes, tears, that only grace can bring, came falling fast,
And fell upon His feet. He stills her fears,
Forgives the life of sin, those misspent years,
And saying to her, “*Go in peace,*” gives rest at last.

JOHN xi.

Deep sorrow was in Bethany, for Martha's heart
And Mary's swelled with grief. Their brother gone !
Their well-lov'd Lazarus ; and they left lone
To battle through life's way bereaved, and then depart.

Three days of bitter woe are passed ; and now draws near
The blessed Son of God. He sees the crowd
Which round the sisters grieve and wail aloud ;
He knows each heart by sorrow pressed, each rising tear.

But, oh, what grace, what love untold ! *The Saviour weeps*
In deepest sympathy. But deeper still
He feels what sin has wrought, and man's proud will—
Distress, disease, decay, and death. Yet *Lazarus sleeps* !

Such are the wondrous words He saith, and now He cries,
“Roll ye away the stone ! Come forth !” And, lo !
His voice of might prevails, dispels the woe,
Relieves the sorrowing sisters' hearts, and dries their eyes.

LUKE xxii.

Gethsemane's lone hour was past ; the rabble came,
 By treach'rous Judas led, and bound those hands
 Which ne'er had done aught else but God's commands,
 And dragged Him to their master's house to suffer shame.

And Peter e'en forsook his Lord, and fled away,
 Yet sought the palace court, and took his place
 With those who hated Christ. They scan his face ;
 "Of a truth thou also wast with Him," they taunting say.

His self-confiding courage spent, he then denies—
 Denies with oath and curse—denies his Lord.
 The cock's repeated cry recalls His word,
 And, gazing to the inner court, he meets His eyes.

Oh, look of deepest love unchanged ! For His poor sheep
 The Shepherd's heart is full. That look reveals
 The loving heart within, and Peter steals
 Outside the palace courtyard gate, *alone to weep.*

REVELATION xxi.

The bright eternity has come (oh, glorious day !),
 No sadness to be found, all grief is o'er,
 For God has triumphed now for evermore,
 And all the tears that dimmed the eyes has wiped away.

Nor could a sorrowing heart be there, nor teardrops start !
No sinner's tears could fall—all are at rest ;
 And in the Father's house, for ever blest,
 They swell the universal song with joyful heart.

No *Saviour's tears* could ever fall, for death and pain,
 Bereavement and distress, are passed away,
 And naught can ever mar th' eternal day
 Where all in new creation shines, and God doth reign.

No *wayward tears* could ever flow—for all His own,
 Made like their blessed Lord, for ever shine,
 With robes of spotless white, in light divine,
 Where God Himself the centre is, and God alone.

A. J. H. B.

BUILDING AND WATCHING WITH HIM.

“Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it : except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”—PSALM cxxvii.

THE wisdom of the writer shines out in a remarkable way in this verse, and its spiritual application to the present moment cannot fail to strike the attentive Christian reader.

How many earnest and devoted servants of the Lord have been the means of building persons through their ministry into God's house outwardly, only to find that the stones, to speak figuratively, have fallen out of the wall again! And why? Because they were attracted by ministry, gift, happy meetings, and so forth, and Christ was not formed in their souls. “Except the Lord build the house, *they labour in vain* that build it.” How important, then, that we should be found much with Him, so that our service may be in spiritual power, gracious, wise! What we need is steady, sober, solid work, and we cannot be too earnest, so long as our earnestness is of the right kind. There is no time to be lost, for sinners are perishing and saints starving on all hands. Blessed be God, the gospel is *for all*, and the ministry of Christ *for the whole Church*; but we need to communicate spiritual things by spiritual means. (1 Cor. ii. 13, N.T.)

824 BUILDING AND WATCHING WITH HIM.

And further, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." The Lord has many watchmen to-day, and we need to watch for souls, as they that must give account. (Heb. xiii. 17.) How easy it is to get distressed about the state of the saints, and of the Church in general. But, while it is right to take things to heart, if we get under them we shall fail as true watchmen. Let the Lord's servants be as watchful as they may in the Church, if the Lord does not keep it they watch but in vain. This is no ground for neglecting our responsibility, but it shows the importance of being much in His presence so as to get His mind about things.

A Christian may have little or no gift of ministry and yet be a most valuable *watchman*. Though comparatively out of sight, he may be an instrument in the Lord's hand for the preservation of His people in the presence of the enemy's power and the laxity of the flesh. May we know better what it is to be on the watch-tower. "Watchman, what of the night?" The watchman said, "The morning cometh, and also the night." (Isaiah xxi. 11, 12.) "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand," says another. (Rom. xiii. 12.) In happy communion with his Master, Paul builded and watched as none other in the house of God till the end of his course. May we too be found *building and watching* till He come.

E. H. C.

“TIME IS SHORT.”

SO said the apostle Paul many centuries ago. If time was short then, how much shorter now! We stand to-day nineteen centuries nearer the coming of the Lord, nearer the end of all things. This should make us think.

As we pass out of one year into another, let us remind ourselves of the rapid flight of time and the shortness of the longest life on earth.

Men are engrossed with the things of this life, and seem to forget that each has a soul which must live for ever. His life here is the veriest speck compared with the eternity which is to come.

Now God earnestly desires us to understand our true condition before Him. He seeks to show us that though man's life at the longest here is less than a century, yet He has opened a way whereby our *future life* of unending years may be one of supreme happiness.

The first thing to see is that by nature we are far away from God and in our sins. Yet He is able through Jesus to proclaim forgiveness to all who believe in Him. The blessed God has in His great love provided an all-sufficient remedy to meet our every need, and to bring us into

greater blessing, under the headship of Christ, than we lost when Adam fell.

By the shortness of time, and especially of your own life, we beseech you to receive God's salvation. Do not delay to have this momentous matter settled.

You may be planning and arranging what you will do during the coming year. But we entreat you to consider WHERE YOU WILL SPEND ETERNITY, for that is of far greater moment than the most important things of this life. "Now is the accepted time, NOW is the day of salvation." Besides, though we are now on the verge of another year, there are many alive and apparently in good health who will never see the dawn of its first day.

God says in His Word that "the wicked shall be turned into hell." Therefore let us once more beseech you, if not already saved, to consider your eternal destiny.

May the year 1900 find you a happy believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, waiting for Himself to call you up to meet Him in the air, and thus to be, not for a few years or even centuries, but

FOR EVER WITH THE LORD.

T. R. W.

“HARRY SAVED.”

TWO words—what do they mean? Some time since a vessel left our shores, bound for the coast of America. She had on board in all forty souls, including crew and passengers. A pleasant, prosperous voyage they had across the Atlantic; and now, almost in sight of the land to which they were bound, the voyagers were beginning to congratulate one another on the safe and short passage they had made.

As the evening, however, came on, threatening clouds appeared above the horizon, and the practised eye of the captain foresaw pretty certainly that a storm would overtake them before morning. Such proved to be the case. For some hours the vessel held her way amidst the storm, but at length, becoming totally unmanageable, she was driven on the rocks, and quickly broken to pieces by the violence of the waves. Help was speedily sent from the shore, and out of the forty on board twelve were taken safely to land; twenty-eight found a watery grave.

One of the passengers on board was a young man, the son of a widow lady; every day since his departure she had eagerly scanned the papers for any tidings of the vessel. At length this account met her eye: “Out of forty souls, twenty-

eight drowned, twelve saved; no particulars, no names given." In which list would her boy's name be found? The suspense was unbearable; and having a friend in New York, she telegraphed to him at once, begging that he would make inquiry about her boy. In a few hours the answer came. Only two words were sent: "*Harry saved.*" Only two words, but how full of meaning!

Pause a moment, reader; just write down your name, whatever it may be, and then think whether, looking forward to eternity, you can write "saved" after it. If you can, you may indeed thank God for it. "Saved" meant a great deal to that young man; but, in a higher sense, it means a thousand times more to you. "Saved" or "unsaved"; one of the two must be true of everyone who reads this. How tremendous the difference!

I thought I understood a little of the meaning of the two words as I stood, a short time since, by two deathbeds in the same hospital. I had been asked to visit a workman; and while sitting talking to him, my attention was attracted to a man who lay, or rather was sitting propped up with pillows, in the opposite bed. His breathing was heavy and laboured, and the near approach of death was unmistakably marked on his countenance. I asked the man I was visiting about him. He told me yes, he was very near death—

too near, he feared, for me to be able to speak to him; but as I passed close by his bedside, on leaving the ward, my heart yearned to know whether he was safe; so, stooping down, I whispered gently—

"My friend, do you know Jesus as your Saviour?"

He raised his dying eyes to mine, and with a face of sadness never to be forgotten, replied, as well as his shortened breath would permit—

"Oh, I wish I did! I wish I did!"

It was only a short time after that I stood in the same hospital, at the bedside of a poor woman, who had lain for some days expecting each one the summons to depart. Her face lighted up with joy as I spoke to her, and with deep gladness in her voice she said—

"I never expected to have seen the light of another day; but when the sunshine came into the ward this morning I thought, Well, this is glorious; but, oh, what will it be to wake up and see the sunshine of His glory?"

Let us consider for a few moments what it was that made this great difference between the two. Both had alike been found "guilty before God." But God has sent an offer of pardon for sin to whomsoever will accept it. The poor woman had not resisted the Holy Spirit. She had taken God at His word; she felt sure that "God for Christ's sake" had forgiven her; she had accepted His

offered mercy; she had seen how Christ, the Just One, had suffered for and instead of her, the unjust, the unrighteous one; how, because He had suffered, and had borne on the cross the punishment she had deserved, God could accept and receive her. She had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and she was saved.

My friend, how is it with you — saved or unsaved? *Selected.*

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. S. H.—We are not aware of any direct passage that enjoins Christian parents to have their children baptised. Some who follow the practice gather their authority from the general analogy of Scripture and ask for no other. They say that as of old there was a Jewish circle in which distinct privileges were found, so now there is a Christian circle with still greater privileges. And as a man might have belonged to the former without being in deed and in truth a true Israelite, so one might belong to the latter without being more than a Christian in name. In this we think they are right. “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” (Romans ii. 28, 29.) This shows that God must have reality, and that it is not enough to share in what is “outward.” Then, to guard one from a false conclusion in thinking there was

no good of any kind in being in the circle of the "outward," the apostle asks, "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?" and answers his question by saying, "Much every way." There was good then attaching to the Jewish circle, and there is good in being of the Christian circle. Thus they argue who support household baptism. They quote also Hebrews vi. 4, 5, as showing the privileges of the Christian circle in which one might share without possessing "things that accompany salvation." If then a man came by baptism into the circle of the "outward," he naturally would wish those belonging to him to be there also. We think this a fair statement of the ground taken by some who advocate "household baptism." On the other hand, those who advocate "believer's baptism" quote Mark xvi. 16 and similar passages. On such a subject we shall not dogmatise. Let us remember that after all Christianity is not a system of ordinances, and that, apart from living faith in Christ and His atoning sacrifice, the sharing in the privileges that Christianity confers on all who stand within her borders only lays us under heavy responsibilities for which we shall have to give account.

MAMMON (Luke xvi. 11).—Mammon simply means riches, wealth, money. It is styled "*unrighteous mammon*" in contrast to the true riches, and because it belongs to this fallen world and has no place in the heavenly scene with which the Christian is connected. We are to use it generously, employing it for the glory of God, to whom everything really belongs. The acquisition of it is not to be an object of pursuit. For "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a

snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." (1 Tim. vi. 9.) God and mammon cannot both be served.

T. P. G. (Galatians v. 17).—We must interpret this verse with due regard to the argument of the entire passage—a safe rule in dealing with Scripture everywhere. The apostle is showing that the power of Christian life lies not in attempted subjection to legal enactments, but wholly in walking in the Spirit. When one does so walk the desires of the "flesh" are held in check, the Spirit's power prevails, and the things which "flesh" suggests he will not do. In the New Translation of Mr. J. N. Darby the verse runs thus: "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these things are opposed one to the other, that ye should not do those things which ye desire." This rendering makes the meaning plain. Possibly we may have an article on the subject in our January issue.

The solemn statement in verse 21 we shall not weaken by attempting to reconcile it with other portions of the Word. It is vain to think that if a man practises these things he will nevertheless inherit the kingdom of God. Such a thought is a delusion and a snare. There is indeed forgiveness for any who have been guilty of them, as 1 Corinthians vi. 11 plainly shows. But light and darkness, Christ and Belial, can never go hand in hand.
