

GOOD TIDINGS

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EDITORIAL

Our attention is drawn to the seasons as they rapidly pass and we are fast approaching the end of another year. Autumn reminds us that vegetation has finished its course and that the time of decline and decay has come. How short the time since it sprang forth in luster and vigor, in glory and strength! It should be an instructive lesson, reminding us as we pass through this world that we apply our natural gifts with effort and energy in our endeavor to accomplish success, as the fond object of this life; then comes decline, and according to our allotted time, we too must pass away from these temporal scenes!

We are taught by God the Author of life that our souls are immortal and responsible, and during our life time here we are impressed that accountability is awaiting us. By obedience to the Word of Truth, the unerring guide which directs and teaches the way, and how to obtain the spiritual and heavenly life: May all be awakened to a sense of responsibility, and in our contemplations seek purely the wisdom of God and that Spirit which promises eternal life. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

In the columns of "Good Tidings" we endeavor to define scripture subjects in agreement with the spirit and principles of truth; may we cherish a longing desire in our efforts to advance the spirit of these truths; Christ said "To this end was I born, and for this cause, came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth!"

If any of our readers have scripture subjects that they would wish to have defined and inform us of such passages we will endeavor through these columns to present our knowledge of such scriptures.

May all be encouraged in furthering the mission of "Good Tidings"—Those who are blessed with talent to write and others in spreading the messages by soliciting subscriptions, or otherwise; all may be helpful in spreading more widely the knowledge of God's blessed will!

AUTUMN THOUGHTS

During the autumn season the last ingathering of the various fruits and products of the earth takes place. If we are diligent in this harvest we will have sufficient to supply our every want and comfort during the coming winter.

A feeling of sadness steals upon us when we view the gradual decline of the glorious summer, and see the evidences of decay in the gorgeous beauty of nature's face. The luxuriant foliage of the trees and shrubs have turned to the "sear and yellow leaf" and they fall to the earth to decay. The beautiful flowers which adorned the landscape are blighted by the frost and they fade and die. These pensive autumn days impress us, as we grow older, that we too are rapidly approaching the winter of human life and are nearing the great harvest at the end of the world! We should be diligent in "gathering fruit unto life eternal." Sad it would be if the words

of the Prophet would apply unto us: "The harvest is passed the summer is ended and we are not saved." Jer. 8: 20.

This is the day of grace—the day of opportunity, and as we grow older time becomes more precious unto us, because it is nearing the end—and then eternity!

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

AUTUMN'S IMPRESSIVE SEASON

We all appreciate the opportunity to enjoy the works of nature. The broad canopy of the heavens above us and the beauty and majesty of the mountains in the distance, ever remind us of the great Creator of the heavens and the earth, whose wisdom we adore. The beauty of earth and sky forms a picture gallery of God's own making. From nature we turn to nature's God, and the language of the Prophet is appropriate: "To whom will ye liken God? . . . It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."

Man who is so finite will he question God's wisdom? The Prophet, comprehending God's infinite power and wisdom, was moved to ask, "Who hath been God's counsellor and showed to Him the way of understanding? . . . Behold the nations are but as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. . . . All nations before Him are as nothing." The Psalmist was moved to say, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" Whatever has a tendency to teach us how little we are and to quell the spirit of pride within us brings us a step nearer to God.

The harmony and order of God's creation are beyond our comprehension. In the Garden of Eden there was perfect harmony and accord. The Lord blessed

the earth and there was no need to till the soil nor to sow the seed. In God's order nature produced and sowed the seed without man's labor. Man's disobedience broke the harmony, and the entrance of sin brought the curse which has caused thorns and thistles to cumber the ground. Hence man must earn his bread by the sweat of his face.

The ground was cursed for man's sake, necessitating him to be watchful and diligent that the good and useful plants be not choked and destroyed. In mercy the Lord promised that seedtime and harvest should continue, and His promises do not fail. The ground must be broken, the soil cultivated and the seed sown in the proper season. This is man's work. All growth however depends upon the blessings of dew, rain and sunshine. Man may plant and water but God alone giveth the increase.

In God's providence the time is now here to sow the seed for another year's fruiting, since the earth is not fruitful of itself to bring forth good fruit as God had designed from the beginning. The trees and vines so fruitful in their season now show the marvelous coloring of crimson and gold, the crowning glory of the passing year. The migration of the birds and the shortening of the days remind us of the changing season and we note the wisdom of God's providence. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom Thou hast made them all. The earth is full of Thy riches."

The same order is observed in the spiritual, as in the natural life. The good seed is sown in every heart and, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men." It is God's order that this seed should be fruitful. But since the enemy has succeeded in sowing tares, the tender growth of the spirit needs care that the good seed is not choked. If God's Spirit is rooted in a penitent heart the enemy cannot de-

stroy the life. Even in the year of drought the fruit will not fail, because faith lays hold of the promises.

The dews which fell upon the mountains of Jerusalem caused them to be fruitful in rich pasture. They were typical of the blessings of the Holy Spirit descending upon humble prayerful hearts. The Psalmist describes the benefits of the unity of the saints as, "The dew of Hermon and as the dews that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forever more."

Only those who plant in season can expect to reap a natural harvest or fruiting. So we are invited not to delay in accepting God's offer of salvation, lest the door of mercy be closed, and we be necessitated to say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

SYMPATHY

The most of us who have lived a number of years have realized at some time or other what a comfort it is to have a kind word of sympathy from a loved and interested friend. Sympathy has been defined as "A feeling corresponding to that which another feels."

We learn from our experiences and can more readily enter into the feelings of another, when we have suffered in a similar way. A certain writer says "The best consolers of human hearts, are those who have suffered most."

There are so many around us in need of human sympathy and love, so many aged and helpless ones whose faltering steps and weakened bodies and minds call out our best feelings of helpfulness: the many who are confined to sick rooms, the shut-ins, the blind, to say nothing of those who have gone astray and whose sufferings have been brought on by self indulgence.

Our hearts are warmed when we read of the many charities which relieve the suffering in large cities; and we thank God that there are so many kind, loving, and sympathetic people.

We are not all so blessed in having the means to provide the needy with necessities of life but there are many other ways of showing our love and sympathy. A kind word of encouragement to those who are laboring under heavy burdens: A sympathetic interest taken in those who are afflicted, even a smile or a hearty handclasp carry a message of cheer and exert an influence to help those who are depressed.

Oh, that the bounds of our love and sympathy might be enlarged! We are surely a common brotherhood, and the whole human family at times needs a share of that which each one of us can so easily give and spare.

Since the last issue of "Good Tidings," the thoughts and sympathies of the whole nation have gone out to our honored Magistrate and his family, in their hour of sorrow. "Sorrow makes us all akin."

Our Savior has given us an example of true sympathy in relieving the sick and suffering, and of His still greater love in giving His life to save a sin-stricken world.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

AN APPEAL

Why travel on in sin's dark way?
How soon may come the final day!
Lo, all thy days shall numbered be;
Where wilt thou spend eternity?

Have you not heard the Savior's voice?
Why will you not make Him your choice?
Then you shall dwell with Him on high,
In realms of glory, 'yond the sky.

He has prepared a home for all
Who will accept His gracious call;
"Narrow is the way, strait the gate,
Few there be who go in there-at."

Wilt thou thy soul for Heaven prepare,
And His blest Kingdom with Him share,
Or wilt thou still continue on
In evil ways, till hope is gone?

The Savior says, "Broad is the path,
And many are the ones that pass,
Unto destruction it does lead."
Do you upon this highway tread?

If then you'd enter Heaven's gate
Come choose your path ere 'tis too late;
The day and hour you do not know
When you from earth must surely go.

Fayetteville, Pa.

C. J. M.

WHERE ART THOU, ADAM?

Where art thou, Adam? Where art thou? This is one of the most important questions that occurs in the Bible. It is important because it is God who asks it. It is important since it is asked of man. The Creator inquiring of the creature. It is important because it involves so much; it anticipates a great change from a previous relation. But a very short time before this inquiry was made, man was in the image and likeness of God, in the image of his own eternity, and in communion and fellowship with Him. He was at the head of the creation. It was all provided for his well-being and happiness. He resided in the Garden of Eden, where herbs and trees (with fruit that was pleasant to the eyes) grew and fruited and yielded bountifully.

Adam's duty was to dress the garden and keep it. The Garden of Eden can by us only be thought of as a delightful place; it doubtless had all the perfection it could receive from the hands of Him who gave it for man's abode.

The earth was not then under the curse; it did not bring forth thorns and

thistles, and man did not need to earn his bread in the sweat of his face, and in sorrow eat of the fruit of his toil. No guilt of conscience, no depression of mind, and no weary aching limbs. There was peace in the garden, no destruction and no wasting, no fear, for all was harmonious until the spoiler entered, and man yielded to his fascinating, yet deceitful, pleading. The crowning part of man had been his innocence, his purity, his daily communion with his Maker. For the promotion of man's happiness he was endowed with a social nature, which qualified him for association. He was surrounded with animals, which he named, and with them he was in daily contact. He did not fear them, and they did not fear him. As an effect of his social nature he enjoyed sweet communion with God.

After the spoiler entered all is changed. man, instead of seeking communion with God, fled from His presence and hid himself. Hence the inquiry, "Adam, where art thou?" O, the change from love to fear, from innocence to guilt.

Adam is the federal head of the human family. The unrest in the minds of mankind, dates from the day of the loss of God's image or love. The malady is deep-seated. Nothing will eradicate it but a restoration of the lost love and image through faith in Christ. The Christ enthroned upon the heart in spirit, will beget love and indelibly inscribe upon it the Golden Rule, which in its application will end wars and labor strifes because justice and equity, tempered by love will control the actions of all. "Wherefore as by one man sin came into the world, and death by sin, therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." This appears an awful conclusion if accepted without qualification. Paradise lost. Man's primal innocence forfeited, the thoughts and imaginations of his

heart evil from his youth. Adam, where art thou? The import of which may be considered as follows: Wherefore dost thou hide thyself from my presence? Whither has thy childlike submission, trust and communion gone? Wherefore has fear come upon thee, and torment rent thy soul? Hast thou transgressed my command? Guilt-stricken Adam answers, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me and I did eat." Who of us can contemplate the moral desolation of the race without being impressed with the awful character of sin! If there were no provision made for man's redemption, then could truly be said, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved." But there is a provision made for a renewal to the divine image; the image restored is the same as the image lost. The provision for the restoration of the lost image dates from the foundation of the world. "Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment was unto all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." By virtue of Christ's death the sin of Adam is removed and we now are only accountable for our own sins. While children, and in our innocency, we are all free from condemnation. When, we know to do good and do it not, it is then we commit sin, and do what Adam did—bring guilt upon our consciences and fear upon our souls. It is then God calls us, saying, "Adam, where art thou," how are you spending your time, where is your heart, where are your thoughts and what are your meditations? O, young man, are you walking after the sight of your eyes and in the ways of your heart? Are you guilty of sins that you must make darkness and night a place of covering and hiding? Then thou shalt know that darkness hideth not from Me, for the night, the darkness and the light are all

alike to Me. I see in the dark as in the light. "Adam where art thou?" Sinner, where art thou? Art thou yet upon the broad way that leadeth to destruction? Dost thou refuse the pleadings of the crucified One? "The Spirit and the Bride say come, and he that heareth sayeth come, and whosoever will let him come," and do you yet refuse to come? Oh, sinner, where art thou? The Father above calls you, the Savior of sinners calls you, the Holy Spirit calls you, the angels call you, heaven and earth appeal to you to come, and will you still refuse? Sinner living in the fallen nature of Adam, where art thou? The gates of heaven are ajar, the door of mercy is open wide; then come, O come, without delay! To those who profess obedience let the question be asked, Child of Adam, where art thou? Are you renewed in the spirit of your mind? Are your affections set on things above and not on things below? Are you a light to the world in manifesting the spirit of the Master and walking as He walked? Are you walking in all the commandments of the Lord, and do you endeavor by grace to so live as to remember, "Thou God seest me?" Are you possessed of brotherly love, of humility, meekness, sobriety, truth, purity and love? If so, all is well. But if you have only an outward profession without humility, separation from the world and obedience, then all is not well. But if even you are sound in faith and doctrine and yet are cold in prayer, negligent in reading the New Testament, much occupied in talking about the doings and happenings in the neighborhood, and are ashamed when in company, to confess your Savior when duty would require you to confess His truth, and your conversation is more about the world than about the salvation of the soul. If so, then the inquiry of heaven is as of old. "Adam, where art thou?" Of such the

inquiry is not only made as to their realization of their perilous situation, but they are entreated to be watchful and to strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, by repentance and renewal of the spirit of their mind, and are counseled to buy of the Lord gold tried in the fire, that they may be (spiritually) rich; and white raiment that they may be clothed, and anoint their eyes with eye salve that they may see.

To all who unwarily have wandered from the narrow way, the opportunity to return is revealed in those blessed words, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with Me."

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

SEEKING THE LOST

"Then drew near Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."—Luke 15: 1, 2.

The Savior replied to this murmuring by citing the parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver and the prodigal or lost son, thus appealing to our natural sense of fairness and right.

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?"—etc. Luke 15:

"Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle and sweep the house and seek diligently until she find it," etc. Luke 15:

Then follows, the parable of the prodigal. We observe the great wisdom underlying these sayings by which the Savior makes clear the purpose of His mission—that He came to save those that are lost, those who are willing to acknowledge their helpless and lost state. "They

that be whole need no physician, but the sick." We perceive that His chief thought was to reveal to a sin stricken world that He could render no service to those who justify themselves by the deeds of the law; for "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."

The Savior surely knew that the Pharisees and scribes would find fault with Him, for the practice of the Jews was not to eat with the publicans and sinners. Aside of this, the strict manner in which they held their subjects to the letter of the law clearly demonstrates that their understanding concerning the real purpose of the law was dark. They did not understand that the law was an expression of God's holiness, given to expose and condemn sin, that all might repent and seek refuge in Christ, the Savior of the world. "The law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ."

The tendency with mankind ever was to place their hope on their own good deeds, on the observance of outward forms and ceremonies, rather than in Christ who satisfied the just demands of the law. By our good deeds we can never be reconciled to God. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20.

Our dependent and helpless state is typified by the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the lost or prodigal son. A certain authority says, "No creature strays more easily than a sheep, none more heedless, and none so incapable of finding its way back home. No creature is more defenseless, and more exposed to being devoured by dogs and wild beasts." The lost piece of silver could do nothing to recover itself.

In the case of the prodigal, the whole course of the sinner's life is more fully illustrated; while it is obvious that this parable teaches practically the same les-

son—that only those who come to a knowledge of their lost state, confessing their guilt before God and man, can enjoy the fullness of the Father's love. "Asking for the portion of goods falling to him" may have reference to the time when we become accountable for the destiny of the soul which has been committed to our trust, when we become free agents, capable of choosing whom we will serve—God or Mammon. "Journeying into a far country" may mean leaving our innocent state, turning away from the Father to serve the hard taskmaster, satan, under whose crafty and subtle influence we become so bewildered that it is hard to find our way back home to the Father. "Wasting his substance in riotous living"—spending a life that is not in harmony with Christ's teaching—mispending the time of grace. "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine and he began to be in want." It may mean when we discover our perilous situation, become conscience-stricken, and weary of the burden of sin. "And when he came to himself"—when we get a right understanding of the purpose of our being. "I perish with hunger"—apprehending the awful calamity awaiting the soul if we delay further our return to the Father. "And he arose and came to his Father." This may allude to the resurrection from the dead state of sin to newness of life. "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion on him and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." The Father, above, gladly receives all penitent sinners who return to Him, regardless of how undutiful they have been. His great love and tender mercy is also manifested by welcoming such to their rightful home where true rest is found. "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it;

and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found,"—partaking of God's holiness, the fullness of His love, communion with God and the holy angels.

The elder son who was angry and would not go in, may symbolize the ninety and nine self-justified persons, and the nine pieces of silver may have been intended by the Savior to represent the Scribes and Pharisees, also the moralist and self-satisfied of all times, who justify themselves in their good works and feel in their heart that they need no repentance.

Receiving publicans and sinners; also the parables which Christ spake, may have been intended as a gentle rebuke to the Jews;—but should not all Bible-readers take home to themselves the wise instruction that is given us by these sacred truths?

The Savior knew that according to their traditions, the Jews were justified in murmuring against Him, but inasmuch as He was the Son of God, the Light of the world, having come to establish a new covenant based on better promises than the old, He was justified in assuming the authority to deviate from their hard and fast rules.

The circumstance, therefore, we believe was wisely designed, for it opened a question which vitally concerns everyone. It offered an opportunity for the Savior to demonstrate by His act and to confirm by the parables which He spake that God is no respecter of persons, and that until we become sensible of our lost state, Christ will not find us. We also learn from these sayings that this knowledge of ourselves must precede repentance and conversion, consequently this is the first step toward salvation. "Bring forth therefore, fruits, meet for repentance." Matt: 3: 8; Luke 3: 8.

The titles in themselves, given these parables, namely "The Lost Sheep," "The Lost Piece of Silver," and "The Prodigal or Lost Son" convey to us this truth, that through Adam's transgression, we have fallen into a precarious situation. We are dead in trespasses and sin, lost and not found. Christ makes clear that we cannot appreciate the need of repentance, nor can we recognize Him as a complete Savior until we see ourselves in the same perilous situation as is represented here by the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the prodigal or lost son. The following scriptures verify these truths: "For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin." Rom. 3: 9. "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. 3: 12. "But the scriptures hath concluded all under sin. Gal. 3: 22.

Lancaster, Pa.

F. E. E.

EVIDENCES OF GRACE

The evidence of a work of grace in persons who profess the name of Christ is not in word but in the fruits which they bring forth. 1 John 3: 18. Works must follow that are different in kind from those which persons, in their carnal state, are capable of doing—peculiar and distinctive. They are to be easily seen, like a lighted candle on a candlestick, "known and read of all men," and of such a nature that all are convinced and judged by them. John 14: 12.

A life lived in the simple faith of the Gospel, and in obedience and submission to it, an act done in humility—to bear injury without resentment, to return good for evil—has in it the power to convict and convince greater than argument or anything we can say. And the example of a conscientious and devoted life, to us who may often stumble and fail,

is an encouragement to greater effort, and leaves an impression for good that lasts through life; and, it may be, long after the person who lived it has passed away.

In the experience of persons who have embraced the faith, especially young persons, who without persuasion or compulsion have forsaken pride and vanity and the gay social life of the world which is near to them, have changed their fashionable dress for plain and modest apparel, seek no longer to gratify the "desires of the flesh and the mind," but find their enjoyment in the things of the spirit, in associating with those of like faith and experience, whether young or old, we can see good evidences of a work of grace. And when such persons tell us that they are happier now than ever before, and what seemed to them a great sacrifice has become no sacrifice compared with the blessings that followed, it is an encouragement to others, under conviction, feeling their guilt and the burden of sin, to "seek the Lord while He may be found and to call upon Him while He is near."

As Christian evidences, the Scriptures speak particularly of the fruits of obedience, of love, and of unity. John 14:23; John 13:25; John 17. Obedience relates to our duty to God and is evidence of loyalty to Him. Above all things, Christ insisted on a service that is whole-hearted and not divided, on complete devotion to Him. He says: "No man can serve two masters;" "whosoever loveth anything more than Me, is not worthy of Me." Obedience is a consequence of this devotion. It is inseparable from love, as Christ said: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words." In contrast, "He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My commandments." There is, then, no more simple test of any one's religious profession than whether he obeys or disobeys the commandments of the Lord. Disobedience results from the love of some-

thing else more than God—the worship of an idol of our own; a willing and loving obedience fulfills the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy mind and soul and strength." And as duty to God means that we do all other duties, the first includes also the second commandment which is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Love for our neighbor" is not based on the human affections and sympathies, (lovely as these are when rightly placed,) and acts of benevolence, although christian fruits are not necessarily and distinctively christian acts; they proceed from those who do not believe as well as from those who do. Love to man has its source in love to God and moves us to act, not according to the treatment we receive from others, whether good or evil, but in response to God's love for us; it is therefore constant, ever the same to all, and extends even to our enemies. "If you love them which love you, what do ye more than others?" It is the love of man as man on the ground of the redemption that was wrought—the sacrifice made—for each and every one.

Love ministers to the natural and spiritual wants of others. It is proved by its works. In serving others Christ's life is our pattern; "He pleased not Himself." "I am among you." He says, "as He that serveth." True service is unselfish, it looks for no reward; it often requires self-denial and sacrifice; and it ought to be done "cheerfully, without grudging, for God loveth a cheerful giver." To be disposed to share all good gifts with all who are in need, to "bear one another's burdens," is the evidence of love which all can understand. If we should do otherwise, live in luxury and ease and in the satisfaction of worldly desires, and fail to look into and bring home to ourselves the situation and circumstances, the wants and feelings of

others—furnish our own needs lavishly and give only of our abundance when the needy and suffering are about us, we would not be following the example set for us.

Love seeks the welfare of the soul; it builds up and supports the faith of others, comforts and consoles. Esteeming every brother an equal, we can not despise or disrespect the feelings and convictions of any one. Knowing our own faults, we will not be fault-finding, nor look uncharitably on human weakness and imperfection. We shall not judge the standing or motives of others, ("love thinketh no evil"); we know them by their fruits only. We censure wrong acts but seek to reclaim the erring. 1 Cor. 5:5.

Fruits contrary to love are manifest in this world. Envy, hatred, emulation, strife, divisions, we know are the works of darkness, because love is wanting. We shall live apart from these evils and oppose them. The works of light are distinct from the works of darkness. "What communion hath light with darkness and what concord hath Christ with Belial."

Separation from evil is a distinctive mark, and a necessary fruit of love—both from the evil within us and from the evil of others, whether of vice or of unscriptural doctrine and worship. We can not love God and cherish evil, neither can we love our fellow-beings and encourage them in a wrong course of life, saying, "Peace, when there is no peace, nor bid God-speed to the erring, for he that biddeth him God-speed is a partaker of his evil deeds." To warn, to arouse and recover the erring in the spirit of love and kindness, with no feeling of superiority, or that, "I am holier than thou," to obey the commandment of Christ, plainly stated and defined in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, fifteenth to nineteenth verse, is the effect of love,

and separation from the disobedient and unfaithful becomes not an act of selfishness or of condemnation, but a most distinctive fruit of love for the soul. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another."

Love unites people. Perhaps nothing makes so marked an impression on us as when we see love and unity among believers, the evidence, so unusual, of "hearts being knit together in love." Unity is not natural, nor is it attained by natural methods of association. It is a divine principle founded in the experience of each individual through a work of grace in the soul. The Spirit was given to the disciples before the Church was organized, and unity is the fruit of the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4. The church visibly united alone fulfills the purpose of Christ's mission, and must ever be the witness on earth to its fulfillment. Divisions are "carnal;" they who practice them "walk as men"—as the world in general—uninfluenced by the power of redemption. 1 Cor. 3:3. But when a people realize and manifest in this world, the divine virtues of love and unity, the evidence is plain that God's grace influences and controls their lives, that the work of His Spirit is effectual in them, even as in the beginning, when it was said "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul," and when Jew and Gentile were united in one church. Eph. 2:14.

M. H. M.

Lancaster, Pa., R. F. D. No. 4.

GOD'S APPROVAL

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. 2 Timothy 2:15.

Seeking God's approval in the affairs and interests of this life is not as much sought after as it should be for we know that in many instances much more time

and energy is spent in seeking the approval of mankind in ways wholly unrelated to religion. We easily forget what our true relation to God should be. According to nature we are all selfish and out of accord with the original purpose of our being, so much so that we can live thus without shame before Him.

There are ways for us to know what our duty to God is. Conscience is given as a prompting influence, and Scripture is our guide. Good intentions are not enough, we must follow the rules so wisely given for our benefit. Our desires must be accompanied by a life that shows what our relation to God is.

In every age there were those whose lives bore testimony to what they believed, and many were the hardships endured by them, because they were more desirous of God's favor than the approval of mankind.

The Apostle Paul was an example of zeal and courage even if in early life these qualities were misdirected. He was brought up in the strictest sense a Pharisee without toleration for anything that was not in accord with the law or the tradition of the Jews. He knew nothing of the doctrine of love and peace that Christ brought. The law to him was everything and those who disobeyed or digressed were worthy of punishment. Without doubt he thought he was doing what merited God's approval.

This was changed when he was met on the Damascus-road by a shining light out of which he heard a voice say, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Immediately he answered, "who art thou Lord?" and "what wilt thou have me to do?" He started out to persecute and imprison any whom he could find either men or women who were disciples of Jesus; but he showed his sincerity in that as soon as the Lord answered his question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" he followed without reluctance or questioning.

It was not a half-hearted service either that he gave to the cause of Christ. His zeal and courage were now transferred to His cause and when he wrote to Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God," the one aim of his life was to further the spread of His doctrine whose followers he once persecuted. It was near the end of his career that he wrote to Timothy as a father writes to a son. The letter may have been intended for him alone but the advice is good for us all.

Many years have passed since those early churches were founded but the same doctrine of Christ remains, and if we want to be assured of God's approval we must come into harmony with it. The work of regeneration begins with repentance followed by true conversion. Now, as then, the mystery of the Spirit works and we must be born again by its power. Recognizing God as our Creator and that we are creatures created to worship Him is the first step. A consciousness of sin and sorrow for it, are needed, and then the sincere questioning by faith, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" Christ compared the new birth to the wind that blows. We hear the sound but cannot tell of its coming or going; but this we know that the spirit of grace and power awaits every one who in godly sorrow and true humility asks for it. The realization that this is a work we cannot do ourselves, brings us to Jesus who died for our sins and arose for our justification, and is now our constant Intercessor. He was made sin for us that we might go free. A vicarious offering was better understood in those days, for the Jews were constantly making such at their temple service.

Salvation is a free gift through Christ's atonement. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." When we truly accept Christ we are saved. Years of service will not further the sal-

vation that has been accomplished for us; but we should remember that "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

This is our study now to keep our lives in accord with the profession we make. The test of our faith is the spirit which we manifest in all things. Christ told His disciples to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. If we do this many of the entangling interests of this life that mar our service to God will be removed. We have our natural duties here and God approves of us doing them well, but above all we shall live as those who are conscious of their high calling as children of God, remembering that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

Eternity is before us, God is a God of love but if we believe His word we believe there is a judgment for all, a time when we must give an account of the time spent here. At that great day only those whom the Son speaks free can have a hope of God's favor. In view of all this, how wise are those who make use of their opportunities. We should look upon it as a privilege to worship God, to obey His commands in all things, and to be among those who are accounted worthy to witness to the truth in a world where evil has the ascendancy over good. Our desires should be in accord with the Apostle Paul's prayer for the saints at Philippi: "That your love may abound yet more and more, that ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God." Phil. 1: 9, 10, 11.

Chambersburg, Pa.

M. C. S.

INNOCENCE, GUILT AND CONVICTION

How innocent the infant's smile!

How free from self conceit!

No stain from guilt—no trace of guile

Found in its nature sweet.

But as the mind unfolds to see,

Soon inclinations grow;

When innocence and purity

Will waver to and fro.

How early snares, by satan laid,

The tender child to win;

And later onward to invade

The labyrinth of sin.

At this grave stage the child does need

A guardian's watchfulness—

A dear maternal friend indeed,

Good morals to impress.

To teach it—heed the voice of grace—

Christ's stirring loud appeal;

His precious counsels to embrace,

With unremitting zeal.

With holy Paul take up the cross,

Born by his Sov'reign Lord;

To count all worldly things but loss,

And gain the heavenly hoard.

The endless wealth bestowed to all

By God through mercy given—

To all that shall embrace the call—

The precious call from heaven.

LANCASTER, PA.

S. C.

PROPHECY FULFILLED

"Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." Joel 2: 32.

About eight hundred years before Christ the prophet Joel uttered the above on concluding a remarkable prophecy relating to the founding of the church on the day of Pentecost. The prophecy is as follows: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in

the earth blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

Of particular interest to us is that part of the prophecy which gives us the encouragement of hope, and the possibility of being saved by calling on the name of the Lord. The hardened state of the heart of man made it necessary for a helper to come, and this Helper, the central figure of the Bible, is held forth as our only hope of deliverance. While upon earth He revealed God's plan of salvation by declaring that He was sent for that purpose, saying "I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly."

When we are convicted of our sinful lives and fully convinced that we are without promise we become penitent and sorrowful and long for some way of escape. It is then that we are fitted to call on the name of the Lord for comfort to our souls.

On the day when the prophecy was fulfilled we read that the people confessed their guilt, this coupled with the impending judgment preached by the apostle Peter caused them to cry out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" They were directed to that Living Source which never fails, and evidently they called and were saved and became "lively stones" in the church. It must have been an impressive sight to see so many penitents at one place. Such exercise of heart is not limited to a certain people, for it is recorded that fifteen different nationalities were present and testified. God's plan can never fail, and therefore that

part has become history. The unity which resulted is expressed in the words, "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."

This new state is an all important consideration, more to be desired than all the wealth of earth, because it secures for us the favor of God and enrolls our names in the "book of life." The Savior said of Mary, "She hath chosen that good part which shall never be taken away from her." Surely it shall never be taken away, still we are in danger of losing it. So long as we are upright and sincere we shall never fall, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Faithfulness brings continued comfort. The same apostle who preached with power on the day of Pentecost later gave counsel what we shall do to remain in the saved state. First, he refers to promises given assuring all who accept the faith of becoming partakers of the divine nature, and, continuing says, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall."

In the course of a life-time many things happen which do not minister comfort, and by reason of our weakness we often come to the throne of grace pleading for forgiveness, for we too with the apostle feel, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal

life." We call on the Lord who is our intercessor, on Him who never sleeps nor slumbers, who has promised to be with us to the end.

When we realize our weakness and proneness to evil we will value very highly the benefits of belonging to the body of Christ where love rules the members. We need encouragement, and since the church is "the pillar and ground of the truth" we will be under the good influence which restrains our natural inclinations. May we cherish a humble mind and a pure heart as those who have been benefitted and made free by calling on the name of the Lord. He came as the true physician who can heal our troubled spirits, who can give comfort in distress. In the last chapter of the Old Testament we read these comforting words, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall grow up as calves of the stall." May we continue in the new relation to God, and to one another, which was made possible by calling on the name of the Lord.

Lima, Ohio.

U. S.

LOVE NOT THE WORLD

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2: 15.

If mankind had remained in their primitive state, this injunction, "Love not the world," would not have been necessary. The fall of mankind resulted in a two fold creature, bringing into effect two elements; called light and darkness, and, as these have no communion or fellowship with each other they become antagonistic through separation. There are therefore two kinds of love, one emanating from God, possessing the hearts of those who are born again. The other love, is that inherited

from our first parents, and is happy only when the flesh is gratified. During our life of innocence, we are not responsible for any evil acts, Christ's atoning sacrifice having reconciled all innocent children to God. We have on record, in Matt. 19: 14, the most convincing evidence of their favorable relation to Christ and His kingdom, without any outward ceremony. They cannot have any conception of the misguided love older persons have for the world. What an important and responsible trust the true believer holds! The term "world," mentioned in the text, does not have reference only to material things; they are God's beautiful handiwork, beautiful and eliciting our admiration, for they testify to the existence of the Supreme Being by whose goodness every one should be brought to "repentance." The term "world" has reference to sinful mankind whose life consists in the various amusements and gratifications of the flesh, which disqualifies them to be temples wherein God can dwell, fitting them to love God. Hence to be checked in our love for the "world" we must possess the Spirit of God, which is the only means that will enable us to distinguish between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of this world. If all those who profess to be Christians, were under the divine influence there could be only two classes of people (saint and sinner), the distinction would not be so critical, but when people have a form of godliness and in their actions deny the power thereof, they are classed with the world, which we are not to love, for we must bear the cross before we can wear the crown. In the antediluvian world the most disastrous calamity befell man when "The Sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took them wives of all which they chose." Gen. 6: 2. The effect of that transgression brought giants in the earth. This

illustrates the progress of wicked man and shows the displeasure of God that He destroyed the world (mankind). God did not destroy the material world, but mankind who constituted the world, which we are not to love. An important distinction is needed. We cannot hate or despise the world, and refuse to render kind and benevolent services to mankind, regardless of nationality, rank, or enemy. In this sense we must love our worst enemies, when our services will relieve suffering or want; but when our friendship is sought, or our associations are enlisted to cooperate in acts that are not in harmony with the doctrines of Christ, then our acts must testify that we do not love the world. This constitutes a straight and narrow way, in which the followers of Christ are in the minority. As our Savior says, "Few there be that find it." Love is the chief characteristic of a child of God, and its virtues are far reaching, as described in 1 Cor. 13: 4. They must adorn the true profession of a child of God.

May we all be prompted by a desire to search the scriptures, and to pray God for light, wisdom and understanding that we may "Choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," and may we be of the number who, while in the world are not of the world.

Lancaster, Pa.

B. F. M.

FALL AND RESTORATION

It is not said how many trees were in the Garden of Eden, but two were of special importance—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life. The location of the tree of life is not given, but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was in the midst of the garden. We believe the trees were all of easy approach, and it was Adam's privilege to partake of all the fruit except of the tree in the midst

of the garden. It might be that the fruit of this tree was more beautiful than the fruit of any other tree, and as it would impart knowledge, it was more desirable.

The penalty for eating of the forbidden fruit was death, and as the ground was cursed because of the transgression, it was said to Adam—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Adam was yet in the Garden of Eden, and as the tree of life had not lost its virtue, lest Adam eat fruit of this tree and live forever, God drove him out of the garden and protected the tree of life by Cherubims, and a flaming sword.

Death was infused into Adam's body as a penalty for his disobedience, and it has been transmitted to all his posterity, so the apostle could well say—"For as in Adam all die"—but the comforting promise is that, "In Christ shall all be made alive."

Adam's consolation was in the promise, that, the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head—or what was lost by the disobedience of one, would be restored by the obedience of one.

As it was not God's design that man should remain in death, Christ died for Adam's transgression, and as He arose from the dead, therefore will all mankind arise from bodily death:—"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every one according to their works." Rev. 20: 13.

When the apostle said, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," he referred to the bodily death; but when God said to Adam, "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," He did not refer to the bodily death alone. The

sweet communion and fellowship which existed between God and man was severed, and man became estranged to his God in consequence of the transgression. As Christ is the fruit of God's promise to Adam, the surety to restore what was lost by the transgression, this estranged relation is removed. By virtue of His death and resurrection, He brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. He is the Author and Source of spiritual life to all His people by the supply of the Holy Spirit. All are born in sin, bearing the image of Adam. All who realize their true condition and accept Christ as their salvation, will bear the image of the second Adam.

"Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5: 18.

Mankind can not escape judgment, but they all have the privilege of accepting the free gift, which will be a comfort in this world and an everlasting joy in the world to come.

Camp Hill, Pa.

J. I. M.

"HOPE FOR THE DEAD"

The occasion was truly a solemn one, a small group of friends with uncovered heads in a drizzling rain, gathered around the casket containing all that is mortal of a beloved child about to be lowered into the grave, and the silence only broken by the mother's sobs.

Col. Ingersoll being one of those gathered around the open grave, was asked to make an address, and it is stated, "in a voice full of exquisite cadence, delivered one of his characteristic eulogies for the dead."

In his address he expressed the hope, but could offer no assurance, that death here may be only a door to a future life. He also states that death here may be necessary for the preservation of love on the earth; and concludes with the

statement that "we, too, have our religion, and it is this: Help for the living and hope for the dead."

Thus men often declare "There is no God," yet when awed in the presence of death they express a hope that can only be based on God; and they see and admit that without love there would be little in this life worth living for.

The religion of Christ, which we profess, is based on this, that "God is love," and that "love is of God." The measure in which love influences the actions in men's lives largely determines their happiness and the happiness of those with whom they are associated; and the fullest expression and exercise of love, as in real—not merely professed—christian religion, is more than love as ordinarily in evidence in the social relations of life, in which we love our friends but have no power to love our enemies. In all the moral efforts and philosophies of life and living, there can be no excellency in attainments without the far-reaching results of a life lived under the promptings of divine love fully possessing the heart. It is an utter impossibility for us, of ourselves, to attain this condition. It is a power that comes from a source immeasurably higher than ourselves. It is this higher power that every one in full possession of that love, will worship as God, with the knowledge that "God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." All who can not so worship Him, and who do not recognize this higher power, must primarily yield to the appeal which divine love makes in every heart, to "live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." Heeding that call is the beginning of the work of God's grace and love in the heart, and will lead all who are really willing to a life that is controlled by the promptings of divine love.

Without the heart being in possession of that love, and our activities, conduct

and conversation being under its promptings, it matters very little whether we profess the religion of Christ, simply believe in it, or whether we say in our hearts, "There is no God."

Possession of divine love in the heart spiritually is life— eternal life, through Christ, who has "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The Apostle testifies that "He that hath the Son hath life;" and to be "spiritually minded *is* life and peace."

This condition, though humbly expressed, and with constant need of a Mediator and Redeemer, which provision has been made in the infinite love of the Father, affords the fullest measure of happiness that can be attained in this life. It brings the expression of loving and devoted service to God, and love toward all others. That, again, brings peace;—peace with God, peace with others and peace within ourselves. A happy condition indeed, in which "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."

Though there may be "great tribulations" in life, we will realize that they are designed for our good, and will enhance our appreciation of the heavenly Father's love and care for us. And though we unite in the expression of the Apostle, that we, "in this tabernacle, do groan, being burdened," desiring "that mortality might we swallowed up of life," yet we will enjoy spiritual comfort in the realization that we "are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."

This blessed association constitutes the kingdom of heaven on earth, into which all whose lives have come under the promptings of divine love, and possessing eternal life, have entered; and remaining faithful subjects in that kingdom during this brief preparatory stage, will attain its happy culmination in unalloyed felicity hereafter.

Under true christian living, then, when death removes such from our midst, though it leaves an aching void, there is no philosophy of life or death, nor cadence in the human voice, that can so soothe the sorrow and assuage the grief, as that knowledge and assurance that the transition is a blessed and happy one.

In the infinite love of the Father we may behold, through the mists, as it were, the dear departed who have passed through the "great tribulations" in life, stand among the "great multitude," "before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands,"—emblems of victory! In contemplation there is such inspiration and comfort imparted to the bereaved who get into the blessed condition to comprehend its real meaning, that it can never be told in the language of mortals.

When we realize that we are nearing the end of our allotted time, what a comfort, too, when we need not enter the "dark valley" without a strong arm to support us. When, having borne the cross, we "shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." "An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled."

Then, too, we have the comforting assurance that the Savior's atonement avails for the irresponsible and those dying in childhood; and for every penitent sinner, even as the malefactor on the cross, desiring to be remembered "when thou comest into thy kingdom," with the Savior's reply, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Doylestown, Ohio.

C. W.

ETERNAL LIFE

“And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” John 17: 3.

It is apparent to every mind that to serve God rightly, we must know Him. God is a spirit and He seeketh such to worship Him who worship Him in spirit and in truth. The natural mind receiveth not the things of the spirit, neither can it know them. The flesh is against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, then, they that are in the flesh, and serve the flesh, cannot please God. God is all-wise and powerful, and when we trifle with His laws it grieves Him. He is able to make us wise unto salvation, for, to those who believe, He becomes wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. To know God we must come into possession of His Spirit, and live in the spirit, then we become alive in the sense that God lives, and the blood of His dear Son will cleanse our hearts from all sin. God is love and we are only able to realize this when we find our sins forgiven and the soul redeemed.

Old things are passed away, all things become new, having passed through the strait gate on the narrow way—the path that Jesus trod while on earth. This leads to life, to a clear knowledge of God and His Son, for no one can walk on the narrow way unless clothed with wisdom and righteousness, which comes from God. Under these garments beats an honest and clean heart, for Christ dwells there through the Spirit. Then we can truly know Christ, His character, work and life, for it is He who worketh in and through us according to His good pleasure.

We are also able to know the Father because we have become a member of His family and household. We can, by adoption, call upon Him as “Abba, Father.” We become an heir, a joint-heir with

Christ to the eternal inheritance in heaven. We are brought home with God hence we know Him by the change necessary to possess this knowledge. How absurd for anyone to believe that the sinner and unregenerate can possess this knowledge of God while the heart is naked, bereft of the divine life in the soul and opposed to the spirit.

If the spiritual things can not be discerned by the carnal mind and the carnal mind is in league with the world, how useless would it be that such cherish a hope of eternal life. No matter what we would do, however moral our lives would be, nor how much we might preach and pray, it would avail nothing. Though I speak with the tongues of angels and had all knowledge and would give my goods to feed the poor and would give my body to be burned, and had not charity, it would profit me nothing.

The carnal mind seeks to please God by works, but, as Paul teaches works alone can never bring salvation. Works will never satisfy the justice of God. Salvation is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. The spiritual mind seeks to meet the favor of God by faith and an unconditional surrender to His word and will. We see a wide contrast between the two. One is brought by the knowledge of God while the other is not.

Medway, Ohio.

C. A. H.

OUR LIFE

How weak, how frail is mortal man
His life is measured by a span;
To-day in health, in wealth, in fame,
To-morrow lo! in death is lain.

Like as the flower of the day
That buds and blooms and fades away;
Or, as the vapor of the morn,
He passeth with the noonday sun.

Yes life and all things here below
Are transient, and no peace bestow:
Yes, all is but an empty name,
Possessions, honor, wealth and fame.

But Oh, beyond this vale of gloom
 There flowers of Spring perennial bloom;
 There peace and love and pleasure reign,
 And life is free from every pain.

There blessed saints and angels bright
 Abide in raptures of delight;
 And with angelic voices sing,
 Sweet praises to the Heavenly King.

O, grant us grace to gain that clime,
 Dear Lord, beyond those scenes of time!
 That we may be forever blest
 And dwell with Thee in endless rest.
 Lancaster, Pa. C. N. H.

INTENT OF BAPTISM

Baptism is an ordinance given by the Lord for His disciples to observe upon those who are established in the knowledge of redemption, and who have given evidence of the effect of the new birth. The Savior said, "The tree is known by his fruit." "Make the tree good and his fruit good," Matt. 12: 33, signifying the change of the mind, and life. Water baptism does not effect this change in walk or conduct, nor is it intended to make an inward change. It is not given as a means of salvation; yet it is to be lamented that many troubled souls are comforted by religious instructors with a hope of heaven when they only believe in Christ and are baptized. As proof they cite, Mark 16: 16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This scripture means, he that believeth and giveth evidence by his changed life that he is willing to follow and obey Christ should be comforted. It refers to the effect of faith pointing to Christ. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. Matt. 3: 11. The mind is directed away from man's service of water baptism, as a means of salvation. The spiritual baptism brings a marked change of mind and deportment by which the affections are diverted from earthly to heavenly things. The scriptures give abundant evidence that water

baptism has no saving merit. Those who have received this spiritual change are saved. Water baptism is a command, but for another purpose. Christ came to save sinners, and to establish His Kingdom on earth, which is His church. He came to restore the peace which was lost. The first marked evidence of this effect was on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand souls became affected by the spiritual baptism after Christ's ascension. The Spirit was poured out and they became of one heart and of one soul. They were saved, redeemed, justified by the merits of Christ. It was foretold by prophecy that God would in the latter days establish His peaceable kingdom on the earth. Baptism by water was commanded as a means of membership or admission into this kingdom, but not to be saved thereby. The church was instituted for a home and protection to believers. Such only who have shown loyalty to their profession shall be admitted. Candidates should first be proved, then admitted. Christ provided means whereby the church should be kept pure from sinners or leaven. He says, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Matt. 18:13. Do not as nature would do, expose his fault to others and wound his feelings, but speak to him alone, endeavoring in the spirit of love, to awaken him to the danger of being drawn away from the Spirit of Christ.

Every one that has come to true change of heart will be anxious and have a desire to become united with the visible church, to be numbered with those who give special encouragement to the new life, who walk in obedience to the requirements of the Lord, and who observe the ordinances of love to Christ in the emblems of the bread and the cup with a desire to renew the mind with a re-

membrance of the love of Christ in their behalf. In greeting with the kiss of peace and washing one another's feet they show a testimony of love and mutual interest in the work of grace, but in all these services do not claim saving merit. They are the fruit of the begotten love to the Master, and to each other, for refreshment and a constant solemn renewal of their vow. Baptism is a subject that has caused much perplexity with many. We wonder why? It no doubt is because "the natural mind can not comprehend the things of the Spirit." Hence the confusion. Mankind can comprehend the letter by nature, which prompts them to do something to please the Lord. Baptism is one thing that can be done, and communion; reasonably supposing that God will be pleased with such service.

All we possess is from Him and nothing can be done by us except by God's permission. We owe all to Him, He owes us nothing. All we can bring is impure, but when we come as needy sinners desiring favor we are accepted and will receive the mind of love to God, being baptized by His Spirit. Water baptism cannot secure the hope, but is a fruit of love. The church abounds in love and faithfulness to Christ's teaching. Such cannot feel worthy to bring an acceptable service, only the offering of thanksgiving, even they feel unworthy of the ordinance of water baptism, to be numbered with the true people of God. "We are saved by grace through faith, and not by works." Only Christ's blood and His merits can save us. What an unmerited gift is placed within the reach of every one, granted to penitents, and none should fail to accept the call.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. K.

I must work the work of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. John 9: 4.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

Religion is the outward acknowledgment or evidence of the inward recognition of the existence of a supreme being or God, of whom, through whom, and by whom are all things.

The inner consciousness of a creator is in all human beings, and a tendency to worship a divinity or omnipotent being is almost universal. The manifestations of this feeling of worship constitute the religions of the world.

There are many forms of religion: Buddhism, Brahminism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism, and other forms besides the Christian religion.

The Christian religion, which has more followers than any other form of religion in the world, acknowledges God as a spirit, everywhere present, all-powerful, and all-knowing, who created all things, and upon whom all things created depend.

The Christian religion acknowledges Jesus Christ as the Son of God by the immaculate conception, and that He was possessed of both human nature, and the supernatural power of God, His father, through which power He had absolute control of Himself and lived a perfectly pure life entirely without transgression or sin. Thus He came to earth—lived, preached His gospel, suffered, and finally offered His sinless body as a sacrifice in propitiation for the sins of the whole human family.

By virtue of this sacrifice all human beings have the opportunity of salvation if they accept it on the terms on which it is offered. A part of Christ's mission on earth was to declare these terms to mankind. They are found in the New Testament.

The Christian religion accepts the New Testament as the last will and Testament of God, by which all former wills or instructions to God's people were annulled. The sermon on the mount (St. Matthew

5, 6, 7), contains the essence of it all, and was preached by Christ Himself to the multitudes who came to hear Him. The spirit of Christ's teachings extends through the whole of the New Testament, and governs those who are trying to follow Him.

The Christian religion is a heart work. Its practice begins in each soul with the new birth. Christ said (St. John 3: 3), "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." And again in St. John 3: 8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth—so is every one that is born of the spirit." These newly born creatures are all of the spirit of Christ and are irresistibly drawn together. When Christ taught His followers how to pray, His first words were: "*Our* Father which art in heaven." If his religion were an entirely individual matter would He not have said, "*My* Father which art in heaven"? He meant that His children are His family. This family He later called His church—and He gave directions, both personally and through His apostles, how the church was to be conducted. It is governed by love. As God is love, His children, through love, try to obey Him. Through love they observe the ordinances He wishes them to observe, not attaching saving merit to any of them, for salvation is alone through the merits of Christ, by faith.

As we read the New Testament, we find that Christ's promises are made only to those who believe in Him, and who confess their belief openly before men—both in word and deed. He says in St. Mark 8: 38, "Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Christ reveals His precious truths only to those hearts whose doors are open to receive them. Those hearts whose doors are closed to Him, those minds which are resolutely set against Christ, and which say, "We will not have this Man to rule over us," He passes by—they are not His, because they do not want to be His—not because Christ does not want them.

What then is the religion of Jesus Christ? It is too beautiful, too deep, too simple, too wonderful to be put into words. Can one describe a lovely sunset? Can one put into words the grandeur of the firmament? The fragrance of a rose? The "peace that passeth understanding?"

Those who wish to know what the religion of Jesus Christ is, need only to make an unconditional surrender of self to Him, and He will teach them what it is. No soul need fear. He says (St. Matthew 11: 28, 30). "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

Lancaster, Pa.

L. L. F.

CHRIST'S RELIGION

Religion usually means a system of faith and worship. The custom of worship dates back to the beginning of Bible history, but in the intervening periods many worshippers lost sight of the true object of homage, even some of the leading Hebrews, who had signal evidence of the Divine care, were led into idol-worship, giving evidence of our proneness to stray from the path of rectitude. Human nature being ever the same we expect gross perversion now. The moral code taught by Confucius was introduced among the Chinese about the year 520 before Christ. Buddhism is ascribed to Guatama whose mother claimed spe-

cial inspiration for her son. He devised certain philosophies pertaining to life, and his doctrines became so popular that millions now follow them in China, Japan, India and Asia. The time of his life is supposed to have been about 500 years before Christ. Mohammedanism took its rise through Mohammed, born A. D. 570 at Mecca. He could not read but claimed to have his revelation through the angel Gabriel and started a crusade against Jews, Christians and idolators. After gathering some relatives to his standard he began by means of the sword to bring under him followers and soon became the ruler of Arabia, from whence his power spread to bring under him several hundred millions of followers. He claimed to be God's special prophet, with Christ next to him, and he incorporated some of the Christian doctrines in his text-book, the Koran, comprising secular teachings and picturing to his disciples a sensual heaven for their reward.

The religion revealed through Moses appeals to intelligent minds in teaching homage to one united Creator from whom every good influence must reasonably come, and therefore the drawing of the creature toward that center is as natural as the water coming from the ocean to find its way back to its source, or that the plant draws its strength from its root. His religion teaches justice to all regardless of their station or their gifts, and commends to us the one great truth of equality to all in the Divine dealings; and that the purest and holiest relations are intended by the precept: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Lev. 19: 18. While that religion teaches correct family and social life it also gives the basis for good worldly government, having in view the purpose of directing the civil affairs of the Hebrew nation. Monarchical government was not designed for the Hebrews, for

God wanted to be the ruler of His people, but the clamor of that restless people was for a King, as the ungodly nations around them had Kings; therefore God suffered them to have their way. 1 Sam. 8: 7-20. The prophecies foreshadowed the religion of Christ. Its approach was heralded by John the Baptist as the dawn of the morning precedes the coming of the day. The Baptist taught repentance in preparation for the higher and true life. He confessed, "I am not the Christ." Christ and the apostles all preached the same as the Baptist: "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was "at hand," but had not come in its fullness before Christ had ascended into heaven. Hence John the Baptist's mission and all the labors of Christ and that of the apostles were under the law of Moses before the Ascension. From the time of the Ascension till the Holy Ghost was given the apostles did no public preaching.

There is little account given of the life of Christ before He was thirty years old, which is the age when persons were eligible for the priesthood. He proved His power by healing the afflicted and raising the dead. He taught doctrines which, He said, He received of His Father. It is a new religion and we will look into its character. In the Sermon on the Mount He outlines some of its new features. He begins the Sermon by pronouncing a blessing upon the poor in spirit, by which He commends a state directly opposite to our nature and voices the doctrine of self-denial, which pervades His whole religion. He assures comfort to those who mourn, giving promise to them who in humility deplore their sins. The rest of the Beatitudes breathe the spirit of the New Lawgiver. He assigns to His disciples the office of preserving the earth, of being "the light of the world," of glorifying God by their "good works." He calls hatred

the principle of murder and that while we are engaged in strife our worship is vain; that indulging a wrong desire brings the same guilt as committing the act; that divorce is justifiable only for the extreme breach, that a simple promise is so sacred that an oath to confirm it is unwarranted; He enjoins the suffering of abuse, injustice and compulsion without resentment, as He gave us example; He demands aid to the needy.

In the earlier religion, before the temper of the Holy Spirit was inherent in believers, hatred against an enemy was allowed—now love and forgiveness are the virtues of the redeemed, in accordance with the love of Christ to them. Display of our good deeds, our worship and our gifts is reproved. Retirement in everything comports with humility. Our interest, attention and affections shall be directed chiefly to things eternal.

Hypocrites shall not judge others, but shall remove first the beam of sin, which darkens their vision, then shall they see clearly to pull out the mote that is in their brother's eye. No one is so perfect that he may not profit by the service of another. We should not press admonition on those who prefer the unholy life—it is like casting pearls before swine.

Those who feel the real need of grace have the promise of receiving when they call on the name of the Lord, and as we are graciously served we shall be gracious to those whom we can serve. By teaching entrance into the "narrow way" the Savior voices self-denial. When He warns against false prophets He argues that as little good can be received from them as we would profit by trying to "gather grapes of thorns" and He counsels: "By their fruit ye shall know them."

He closes His Sermon by comparing one who hears God's word and does not do it with the folly of building a house on an insecure foundation.

The new religion recognizes two classes, the one spiritual, the other carnal, and that they are direct opposites, the one composing the Kingdom of Heaven, the other the Kingdom of the world. The Savior said to His disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world." We will try to discover how the separation is to be practiced. It cannot mean that His disciples are not to provide for bodily wants, for it is said: "He that provideth not for his own hath denied the faith." After the Savior's ascension the Holy Ghost came upon about one hundred and twenty disciples, by which "the love of God is shed abroad in the heart." This love makes persons too defenseless to be agents for the enforcement of the violence needed to support worldly government. Among those composing the world we find much folly, while the disciples are to "avoid foolish talking and jesting;" they are to "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." We are told, "lie not one to another." Any intentional deception is a lie. It is said, "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon thy wrath." We may lose our temper, but we shall speedily check it and make amends. We are to do deeds of love to our enemies, as God "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good; . . . if thine enemy hunger feed him; . . . grudge not one against another, brethren." The few examples noticed show that those who do such works are chosen out of the world—they deny the worldly life.

The preaching of John the Baptist, of the Savior and the Apostles, was "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand," not that it had come. It came when the Holy Ghost was given. After the little band of one hundred and twenty had been sanctified by the Holy Ghost the Apostles preached no longer, "the Kingdom

of heaven is at hand," but preached conversion, and that the Holy Ghost shall be given to believers. It meant, "the Kingdom of heaven within you," as our Savior had promised it should be, and it was the beginning of the visible church. All previous worship was only preparatory, including the baptism of John, the forerunner of Christ, of whom the Savior said: "He that is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he." That excludes him from the kingdom, but, mark! he was yet under the old covenant, not lost, but shared the promise with Moses and others; on which lengthy subject it is not now our purpose to write.

The church "is the body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." The prophecy is, that Jesus should die that "he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." John 11: 52. Christ's prayer is: "That they may be made perfect in one; and that *the world may know* that thou hast sent me." John 17: 23. This evidence condemns the popular claim for a divided church. Division is called heresy, which makes those who depart from sound doctrine heretics. Those churches which in earlier centuries waged persecution gave evidence that they were of the worldly kingdom, as Christ said: "If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you."

The church is vested with authority: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Every member of the church, called the "body," is responsible to aid in obeying all commands. Disorderly members must be withdrawn from, for fellowship with them is forbidden by many scriptures, because it would comfort them in their way to destruction, and make us "partakers of their evil deeds." The duty of separation from

unsound doctrine is as forcibly taught as the exclusion of disorderly members from the church, and is in principle the same. Christ's religion is of holy character, and is to be guarded by its disciples against corruption and dishonor. Every sacrifice for its sake shall be rewarded with manifold gain in this life, and with eternal glory in the world to come!

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

"WHAT IS TRUTH"

"Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a King then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice." John 18: 37.

"Pilate said unto Him, What is truth?" This was rather a superfluous question, no doubt to excuse a guilty conscience, for we believe that Pilate was convinced that Jesus represented the truth by word and example for he said to the persecutors of Jesus, "I find no fault in Him at all." John 18: 38. Truth is the most comprehensive of all the divine attributes; it embraces all that is righteous, pure and holy. It is eternal in its character, for it is of God and will never fail. A certain writer says:

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again
The eternal years of God are hers,
But error wounded writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers."

It is equivalent to the word of God, for Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." Truth then is the foundation of salvation and is the treasure we can lay up in heaven. We must first accept truth before we can hear the voice of Jesus, for He said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Before the coming of Jesus, truth was upon the earth for it is co-existent with God, but it was partially hidden from mankind in the

spiritual darkness by which they were enshrouded. Light dawned when Jesus came, for it is testified, "He was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1: 9. This blessed light reveals to us our lost and sinful condition. If we heed the grace of God, we fear the judgment which is pronounced against all "unrighteousness and ungodliness of men," and we "flee from wrath to come." We realize that we are living in error and we now seek truth. We humble ourselves, repent of sin and hear the voice of Jesus: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your soul." Matt. 11: 28, 29. They now receive from Christ the Spirit of truth "whom the world cannot receive because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14: 17. The voice of Jesus now calls them out of a sinful world; it calls them to a life of self-denial, non-resistance of evil to a life of love, fellowship and peace. They will have no "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," and hence will separate from all worship, however beautiful it may appear, which is not in harmony with truth or the word of God. They cherish unity as a fundamental principle of worship, thus exemplifying the truth of Jesus who prayed, "That all be one; as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they all may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou has sent me." John 17: 21.

It seems a marvelous contradiction of human judgment, that in regard to religion the mind of persons can be so deceived that they firmly believe that they are obeying the truth and thus worshipping God, like the Samaritans of

old, "They worship they know not what." John 4: 22. This lamentable condition is all brought about through unbelief and unwillingness to obey the grace of God. Many have heard the voice of Jesus but have refused to obey; His sayings seemed too hard, the cross too heavy, the way too narrow, the sacrifice too great; they became offended, their conscience became seared, their hearts hardened and "they turned their ears from the truth and were turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4: 4. They are now in a condition to be deceived, and the words of the Apostle sadly apply: "Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie; That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thes. 2: 10, 11, 12.

Let us then not only ask the question: "What is truth?" but let us answer it by living a life in harmony with its teachings, so that when our days are ended, and when our names are "blotted out of time" we may have our names enrolled in the "Lamb's book of life," and then in that great day hear the welcome plaudit: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Mat. 25: 34.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

ORDER MAINTAINED BY CHURCH DISCIPLINE

All true believers receiving the Spirit of Christ flow together, thus forming the Church of Christ. This was exemplified when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost. Christ, through love gave His life for the Church. When He was still with His disciples He told them that they would later receive the Holy Spirit, which "will guide you into all truth." He told them that they

would meet with much opposition inasmuch as they would be called out of the world. He impressed upon them the fact that as He was rejected of men they could expect the same, and that if they really loved Him they would keep His commandments. "If ye love me keep my commandments." John 14:15.

It is clear that every true disciple of Christ willingly keeps His commandments. The true Church of Christ is composed of those who love Him and consent to undergo the reproach of the world and suffer persecution. Such are willing to be classed as "the offscouring" of the world rather than to forsake their love for Christ their Head, thus keeping His commandments. Such persons, however, may fail to be guarded and through neglect be led astray. In the Church of Christ all do not hold the same office—see 1 Cor. 12. The apostles established churches at many places and appointed elders and ministers to preside over them. Paul to Timothy, 2 Timothy 4, instructs him to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" so that all may be watchful.

The Apostolic Church was one united body. All the churches that were established were controlled by one Spirit and all laborers were taught to admonish all members of the body to faithfulness. If any failed to hear the admonition, given in love as directed in Matthew 18, they were, after faithful labor, to be brought before the Church. Those faithful inspired leaders, called to guard and guide the Church, would not hold as brethren those who failed to live a life consistent with love, and who did not obey all the sayings of Christ their Head.

Centuries have passed since then, but all faithful ministers in the true Church will reprove every member of the flock who fails to walk in christian order, or who does not adhere to all the doctrines taught in the New Testament. Love,

however, must be the controlling power by which they reprove. Should a member fail to be a light to the world by taking a liberty, inquiry will follow and if it is found that the member failed through lack of judgment or thoughtfulness he may be asked to explain the matter to those affected, or perhaps before the Church, thus endeavoring to relieve the minds of those troubled by the indiscretion. Should a gospel principle be violated, and the matter become public, such members will be required to confess before the Church their failing and to ask forgiveness of those grieved, and the forbearance of the Church. Should they justify their position, and fail to accept the admonition of love given by the Church, they may be suspended from the communion of the Church. This is done in the hope that such may see their error and repent; if they repent they will then be willing to confess before all that they have failed and have been justly reproved by the Church. This course will always establish confidence and vindicate those who have committed the offense, also the Church.

Should such members become obstinate or continue to live a worldly life, and show no regard for the labors of the Church, there is but one remedy left, which is to separate them from the Church. The Church will not only separate such, but hold in the ban all who do not repent, as is abundantly taught in the New Testament. Persons who turn away from the faith are to be dealt with in a different manner than open sinners who never were in the Church. In 2 Thess. 3:14, we read, "and if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him that he may be ashamed." This command has reference to those who once believed and were faithful and now refuse to continue in the faith.

Christian discipline has always been

practiced in the true Church by a faithful ministry and will continue to be. It is in vain for us to claim to be the Church of Christ if we fail to keep the Church pure by gospel discipline, which will never retain known sinners in the Church.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. L. K.

BRIEF NOTES

Well may we be impressed as the Apostle was, with "What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." A fitting theme it is, indeed, for contemplation, to every humble follower of the Savior. It is accompanied by the humbling yet inspiring thought that, "when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

* * * *

"When I fall I shall arise: when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me." This declaration of the Prophet expresses the feeling of the true believer. It is the desire that lies deep in the heart more than the ability to accomplish; and from out of every benighted condition to look to the Lord for light, that constitutes acceptable service in the sight of God.

* * * *

There are many organizations, associations and leagues designed to better man's condition in the various activities of life; but enduring results are attained only when men's hearts—their desires are changed; when the love of God, the true religion of Jesus Christ possesses the heart; when the exalted mind is abased, the heart humbled and selfish desires subordinated. Then, doing the will of the heavenly Father becomes the foremost consideration. If these conditions would truly obtain with us, then these associations could all disband; and the many social, industrial and international problems would automatically solve themselves.

The reply to the question why Job, a perfect and upright man, was not molested by satan, was, "Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all he hath on every side?" True believers, under the gospel dispensation, in the near relation they bear to their heavenly Father, realize the need of being similarly hedged about. Knowing the destructiveness of the evil influence exerted by satan, through a weak humanity, they realize how helpless they would be if the "hedge" were removed. The anxious concern for its maintenance finds expression in constant prayer, "the spirit itself making intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."

* * * *

This from a letter written many years ago, is a fitting expression on the occasion of the marriage of believers: "May the Lord bless you both that your lives may be prolonged, your happiness increased, and your daily walk and conversation be pleasing to the Father in heaven. It is my experience that it is God's way to complete our happiness in this life. May your lives then express gratitude, with thankful hearts rendering praise and honor to Him for His wise provision in congenial companionship." With hearts united in such a desire, as all should be, and that purpose foremost in whatever trying situations in life arise, there will be no occasion for family quarrels which so often end in separation and divorce.

* * * *

However impressed we may have been with a sense of duty in the use of time and opportunity, yet in retrospect we discover idle moments and misspent time. Contemplation may bring deep and painful regrets when we realize that "the sands of life" are running low, and that the opportunity may be short in which to make amends for the past.

Also that we have accomplished little or nothing. We may have reached the eleventh hour, having rejected the appeal to "enter the vineyard:" but there is still the same reward if we enter, and there is still work for all that are willing. Deeply humbled by our past failings, may we yet with gratitude for the prolonged opportunity, bow in submission to the divine will, yield to the entreaty, and render willing service to the Master while we may.

* * * *

Very active efforts are made to constrain men to forsake intemperate and other bad habits, and to substitute regular church attendance for present-day intense pleasure-seeking. Many of the efforts involving self-sacrifice and so-called missionary work, are spoken of as advancing the christian cause. We admire the higher standards of living; but higher moral living is not necessarily christian living. When the efforts and the results are said to be christian, without the true christian principle in the heart, which living inconsistently with Christ's teaching does imply, then there is a pitiful delusion involved, as Christ foretold in His Sermon on the Mount. In speaking of His final coming and judgment, in the latter part of the 25th chapter of Matthew, He also contrasts these mis-directed efforts, ending in everlasting sorrow, with that of the righteous, who, in humility, unconsciously rendered an acceptable service and could hear the welcome plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. Luke 10: 27.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Can one keep Christ's Commandments or only make an honest effort to do so?

A. Our Savior has promised to intercede for all who earnestly strive to keep His commandments; hence the effect of this effort will be manifest in their lives, and observers will be convinced that such persons have the power of obedience and are willing to do whatsoever He commands them.

Q. Who are the pure in heart?

A. All true believers cherish a pure heart, and because of this earnest desire are accepted of God as pure in heart.

Q. What is meant by separation from the world?

A. Naturally mankind are worldly-minded. Believers are instructed to take captive every thought to the obedience of Christ. This causes one to become spiritually minded and will separate from the world and all its carnal practices. Pride will be subdued, frivolity and excesses be abhorred, a form of godliness without the power, protested against. "They are not of the world as I am not of the world." John 17:16.

Q. How are Christians to be known from unbelievers?

A. Christians bring forth spiritual fruits—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc. Gal. 5:22, they return good for evil, and are willing to suffer all things for Christ's sake. Unbelievers bring forth carnal fruits—hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, sedition, etc., and are unwilling to be led by the Spirit of Christ.

Q. Does christian simplicity apply alike to old and young in the faith?

A. Yes. God is no respecter of persons, but requires full obedience from all His children. Both old and young observe christian simplicity and are thereby guarded from temptation.

Q. Do all young people become accountable to God at the same age?

A. No. Spiritual, like natural understanding, develops much earlier in some young people than in others. God reveals to all a knowledge of guilt when they have passed into a state of accountability.

Q. What sacrifices must one make to be a Christian?

A. A willingness to deny self, our own sufficiency, also every earthly possession, husband, wife, parents, children and our own life if required rather than to forsake the Word of the Lord.

Q. Are more sacrifices required from one than another?

A. No, because every true believer is required to give up all for Christ's sake, and if unwilling to do so we have no promise.

Q. What is meant by, "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees?" Matt. 3:10.

A. This was preached by John the Baptist. He said the people should not be comforted by their descent from Abraham. In his day he received only worldly blessings. John meant he is the forerunner of the judgment which deals with the spiritual life, and that if the repentance which he preached and the conversion which shall be preached after him are not obeyed, destruction to the soul will follow. The axe at the root is a threat to the life of the tree.

A GREATER THAN MAN

We read the lives of men revered
For deeds that in their day
Proved them as giants strong and true,
O'er hearts of men held sway.
They've handed down a torch whose flame
Burns yet with brightning ray.
Their deeds and words help mould our lives—
These ne'er shall pass away.

Thank God for good and honest men
His noblest work and best,
They are the safeguards of our land
And make a nation blest.
May they with wisdom be endowed
From graft and greed divest;
'Tis righteous rule exalts a land
And gives a nation rest.

But there is One who far exceeds
All men however great,
Who gave His life a ransom free
Man's sins to expiate.
To Jesus may our hearts be drawn
With reverential love;
To know and follow in His steps
Fits us for heaven above.

True wisdom is not born of earth
Not learned from great or wise
It is God's gift of greatest worth
His love the precious prize.
Oh may we choose the better part
Which ne'er shall fade away.
More lasting joys it will impart
In heaven's eternal day.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

In the early history of many nations slavery was a common practice. Many wars were wars of conquest and the victorious nation took its captives for slaves. God's chosen people Israel were reduced to slavery through successive changes in the monarchs of Egypt. However personal freedom was highly prized in all ages. It was often earned or bought at a great price. As civilization advanced nations as well as individuals realized the value of personal liberty and more and more granted its right until at the present time only those who are a menace to society are held in bondage.

Much as personal freedom has always been prized it is not to be compared in value with spiritual freedom. The benefits of the one are limited by time whereas the blessings of the other extend through this life into eternity. Paul in

his first letter to Timothy wrote that, "Godliness is profitable unto all things having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." Our Savior taught, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Life at best is for a period of four score and occasionally some years more, but withal it is fraught with much labor and sorrow. The body is subject to many ills whereby the enjoyment of its freedom is to a great degree limited.

The benefits and comforts derived from spiritual freedom are not limited by time or its attendant circumstances. Deprivation of health or the comforts of this life often tend to draw the soul closer to its source of spiritual life. The apostles and martyrs were willing to sacrifice their personal liberty even to the extent of giving their lives to hold fast their liberty in Christ.

What then is the cost of a possession so valuable? How may we attain to this freedom? In our time we need not forfeit our lives to be followers of Christ, but nevertheless a sacrifice is necessary. To attain to and to hold fast to spiritual freedom obedience to gospel precepts is required. Christ said, "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Christ himself died to purchase our freedom from sin and death. His blameless life was given a ransom for our liberty. "If the son therefore shall make you free ye shall be free indeed."

As personal freedom was often dearly bought so spiritual life and freedom are not acquired without a struggle. We may not have to suffer persecution as the martyrs of old did but it requires a constant effort to deny the selfish life within us and it often brings us disapproval and censure to reprove the worldly life and practices around us.

Important as was the freedom of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt God's great purpose was to show them that He was God and to show them the necessity of depending upon Him. Without His help our struggle against the bondage of sin would be in vain. In yielding our will to His, He teaches us self-control. In our failures He would have us learn humility. In His love we can accept the varied events of this life as happening for our good.

What greater freedom can we attain than to be free to do not what we want but what we ought? Obedience to God's word and not to our own will is the test of our love to Him. His love has purchased our freedom. Christ has paid the debt incurred by transgression. He lives at the right hand of God to intercede for us, when realizing our sins and failings we come to Him for help. By His gift of grace and through faith in His perfect life we may be free now and forever in the life to come.

Waynesboro, Pa.

M. A. S.

THE STORY OF RUTH

In the days when the Judges ruled over Israel, there was a great famine in the land. The crops were poor and food was scarce in Judah. This condition may have been caused by the Philistines and other tribes carrying away, or destroying the corn.

A man named Elimelech who lived in Bethlehem, took Naomi, his wife and their two sons, Mahlon and Chillion, and went into the land of Moab. Elimelech died there and Naomi was left with her two sons. They married wives of the women of Moab; one was named Orpah and the other Ruth.

Later the two sons died and Naomi was left alone with her two daughters-in-law. They dwelt in Moab ten years. When Naomi heard how the Lord had again

blessed her people and given them bread, she decided to return home.

Her daughters-in-law loved her and prepared to go with her, but she told them to return to the homes of their mothers. She said to them, "May the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me." They wept, and she kissed them and again told them to return home.

Orpah then went back to her parents, but Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

It is supposed that both Ruth and Orpah were idolators, but Ruth surrendered her idolatry and cheerfully abandoned her country and her friends and accepted the God of Israel as her God. There was certainly a beautiful and wonderful attachment between Ruth and Naomi.

They journeyed together to Bethlehem where many friends remembered Naomi and spake kindly, saying, "Is this Naomi?" She replied, "Call me not Naomi which means pleasant, but call me Mara, which means bitter, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me. I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home again, empty."

It was the beginning of barley harvest when they returned, and it was customary for the poor to go into the fields and gather the grain that the harvesters dropped. Ruth desired to go into the fields with the gleaners and Naomi consented to her going.

It was no doubt providential that she happened to get into the fields of Boaz,

who was a kinsman of Naomi's husband. When Boaz came to the field he said to his reapers, "The Lord be with you." They replied, "The Lord bless thee." This was a common salutation at that time, and a beautiful one. When Boaz saw Ruth he inquired of his steward who she was. When he was told, he spake kindly to her and told her to go nowhere else, but to glean in his fields until the end of harvest. She asked why he showed her such kindness, as she was a stranger. Boaz replied, "It hath been shown me all that thou hast done for thy mother-in-law, and how thou hast left the land of thy nativity and art come unto a people that thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." It was a beautiful tribute.

She was told to eat with his reapers, and they were bidden to purposely let fall handsfull of grain for her. When she told Naomi of being in the fields of Boaz and of his kindness to her, Naomi told her he was near of kin to them and she should do as he told her. She gleaned in his fields until the end of harvest, when Boaz held a feast on his threshing floor. Naomi told Ruth to ask Boaz to be kind to them for Elimelech's sake.

Boaz loved Ruth and married her, and took both her and Naomi to his own home. Boaz and Ruth had a son whom they named Obed. Naomi nursed the child and the latter end of her life was pleasant. Obed was the father of Jesse,

All the circumstances of the history of Ruth were providential. The truth of the words is verified, "Acknowledge Him in all thy ways, and He will direct thy paths."

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E. V. L.

A CHILD'S STORY

THE STORY OF ST. MARK

My dear little children:

It is thought that St. Mark lived in Jerusalem for his mother lived there. He became a believer in Jesus by hearing Peter's preaching, and we notice in Peter's writings that he sometimes calls Mark his son. He was also a companion of St. Paul, who speaks very kindly of him. At one place he says Mark was very useful to him and calls him a fellow-laborer. He died a martyr's death.

Mark's account of the life and doings of Jesus, was written after that of St. Matthew and he may have thought it was unnecessary to repeat what had been written, as he omits the birth and childhood of Jesus, and begins his history with the preaching of St. John. He tells that Christ has come, and prepares the people to hear what Jesus will tell them. We see much to admire in Mark's gospel, and much to confirm our faith in Jesus.

Mark gives us a very good account of many things that happened in the life of Jesus. He alone tells us of the wonderful cure of a man's blindness, "He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands upon him, He asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that He put His hands upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly."

This story tells us how kind Jesus was that He Himself led the blind man. Perhaps the reason why He led him away from the town was this, that He knew of the want of faith in that city, and He only showed His love and power where there were believing people.

Another event that shows the sympathy and pity that Jesus had for people is this, that of three dead persons whom He recalled to life, one was the only son

of a widow, another the only daughter of Jairus and the third the beloved brother of Martha and Mary.

One of the most interesting stories St. Mark tells us is about a little girl, the daughter of Jairus, a man in charge of the temple. When she was twelve years old she became very sick, so sick that her father thought she would die. When Jairus heard of the many sick people Jesus was curing, he thought perhaps He could make his little daughter well. He came to the place where Jesus was and falling at His feet, said "My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray Thee, come and lay Thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." Jesus went with Jairus and many people followed them to see what He would do. Before they reached Jairus' house one of his servants came hurrying to him and said, "Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?" But Jesus said, "Be not afraid only believe," and they went right on but He took with Him only Peter, James, and John who trusted Him. When they got there many people were there weeping, Jesus said to them, "Why make ye this ado, the damsel is not dead but sleepeth." But the people only laughed at Him.

He let only the parents of the little girl and the disciples who were with Him come into the room where the little girl was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Damsel I say unto thee arise." And she did arise and was well as ever. In all the stories of Jesus' healing we find that the people who were cured, were those who believed that He could help them.

I cannot now tell you more of the wonderful stories St. Mark tells us of the many miracles Jesus performed, but I am sure you will all want to read the whole account.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.