

# GOOD TIDINGS

A RELIGIOUS MESSAGE, PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY  
THE REFORMED MENNONITE CHURCH, FOR THE  
PURPOSE OF DISSEMINATING SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

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## EDITORIAL

We stand on the threshold of a new year and we wonder what it may bring to us of joy or sorrow. It is concealed from our view. In the obscurity of it all, we endeavor to concentrate our energies in the performance of our duties as they come before us day by day.

Let our situations in this life be as they may, while we have anxious thoughts for the future pertaining to ourselves, we are also deeply concerned for the welfare of those with whom we are closely allied in this world. Some of us may have friends in perilous positions in distant lands, others not so far away; some may have made business ventures with a question of success; there are those who may strive for higher or less higher positions of rank and honor in the world, or there may be those seriously afflicted, caused by accident or malady, and many other are the varied circumstances to which this life is exposed. To the culmination of all these varied conditions we always welcome relief and success, which removes suspense and brings cheer and gladness to hearts that may be clouded with sad forebodings. All of these circumstances concern a certain number of individuals, be they few or many and these particular interests are confined to this life only.

How insignificant, when compared to the message of "good tidings of great joy" heralded from heaven to earth by the angels, when our blessed Savior made His appearance into the world. This was a message that was not only of interest to a certain number of individuals, but deeply concerned the whole human family and the joy which it brought was not limited to the natural lifetime of mankind, but was to endure throughout eternity. These good tidings came not as an achievement of man, but are the means given by God to liberate the soul from the imprisonment or bondage of sin. Neither was the proclamation by the messenger from heaven restricted to the particular time when the glorious tidings were heard, but were intended for all people for endless time.

The prophet Isaiah foretold this event, when he said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion; Thy God reigneth."

The object of this periodical "Good Tidings" is to publish and spread these wonderful truths, and are intended for all people that may be reached, with the hope that some may be interested and be led to search more deeply how to attain to the real object of life, by obeying Him, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."

We think the various subjects presented in this issue are made clear and plain by the writers and the manner in which they are presented should be encouraging and instructive to the readers. We thank contributors for their efforts and extend encouragement to all who have gifts to continue writing for future numbers.

In order that the circulation of this

publication be increased, each patron may be helpful by inviting attention of friends, who might be interested in reading and searching more deeply these precious "truths" and receive the copies regularly by soliciting their subscriptions.

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### CHRISTMAS DAY

'Tis the glad day of Christmas of which I will write

For the hearts of God's people are filled with delight.

'Tis the birth of our Savior whose coming today

Is a blessing so great, no words can convey.

The Shepherds, who watched o'er their flocks in the night,

On the plains of Judea were filled with affright. So wondrous the glory their hearts thrilled with fear,

But soon they heard words of comfort and cheer.

The angel said, "Fear not, good tidings I bring;

Today there is born a Savior and King.

In the city of David a babe you will find,

'Tis the Christ, who has come to rescue mankind."

Soon the angel was joined by a heavenly throng, And sweet were the words of that beautiful song.

May our hearts swell in rapture with heavenly love

For our Blessed Redeemer who came from above.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

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### "GOOD TIDINGS"

"And there was in the same country shepherds abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Luke 2: 8-14.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace; of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." Isaiah 9: 6, 7.

The promise of the Messiah was first specially made to Abraham and to David who were shepherds; and the fulfilment of the promise was first made known to shepherds. The scenes and events of that night were transcendently grand, sublime, and unearthly. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh."

The message of the new-born Babe was conveyed by an angel to the humble shepherds who watched their flocks by night. They were at first stricken with fear, but their fears were soon allayed, when the heavenly messenger addressed them with such comforting words, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy." Suddenly a great company of angels attended the occasion, singing the grandest song that mortal ear has ever heard: "Glory to God in the highest, on earth, peace, good will toward men."

Before the appearance of the Messiah the way of peace was not known. He reconciled the world to God. He lived a life and taught a doctrine that had been lost to the world during four thousand years, which are so beautifully expressed in the angelic message, that of, "On the earth peace, good will toward men." An end of war, an end of strife to all God's people.

"Good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour." The tidings of salvation were proclaimed to all, because the infant Jesus had come to lay down His life for all, both Jew and Gentile. Through His death the

wall of separation between Jew and Gentile was removed, "For it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Truly these are good tidings.

Upon Pentecost when the apostle Peter witnessed the fulfilment of the promised salvation among a great number of his brethren, Jews and Proselytes, he was inspired to utter those great truths; "For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Later the Apostle attained a clearer knowledge of the angelic witness to the shepherds: "A Saviour born for all people."

When Cornelius and his friends attained salvation, Peter uttered those memorable words: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him."

The prophecy, "*For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given*" was uttered seven hundred years before its fulfilment. It is remarkable because it is in the present tense, and gives evidence of their unwavering faith in the promise of the woman's seed made to the fathers. It is also an evidence of the inspiration of their faith to obedience and suffering, as it enabled them to enjoy a foretaste of the comfort and benefits consequent to the appearing of the long-looked-for Messiah. Many prophets and holy men of old desired to see the Gospel Age. Spiritually, "Darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the nations." Among the faithful there was felt a crying need of the Messiah. The Jews as a nation were cold formalists. The heathen were enveloped in midnight darkness. There was a remnant anxiously waiting for the fulfilment of the promise, among whom were Anna and

Simeon, and Simeon took the infant Jesus into his arms and said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people."

An humble birth in a stable, a lowly bed in a manger, was that of the Lord of Glory—the Prince of the kings of the earth. What a contrast between this lowly state and that of the palace of earthly kings; yet He challenged the adoration of angels. Three philosophers, wise men from the East, came and bowed down at the infant's crib, and gave Him gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gifts precious and valuable, fitting types of faith, hope and charity.

But from the manger to the crown was yet an untrodden path; it was a long step. The agony of Gethsemane, the cruel mocking, the ignominy of the cross, lie between them. This lowly state is a severe comment and reflection upon the pride and vanity of man.

The prophecy, "*And the government shall be upon His shoulder*" cannot be applied to any earthly ruler. Earthly governments are supposed to be founded upon justice and equity, and their power is vested in the sword. The kingdom of Christ is founded upon love. In order to establish His kingdom He took the sins of the world upon Himself; he bore the cross and died upon it, saying, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge, for they know not what they do." "The government was upon His shoulder," He bore ignominy and reproach. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not." The government is yet upon His shoulder. We go to Him for strength and comfort. He is an unfailing governor. He protects His subjects. He will be with them in sickness, in sorrow, in temptation, and

in death. "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

"*And His name shall be called Wonderful*" as "God manifest in the flesh." He was wonderful in His birth. The shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us." To the Virgin Mother it was wonderful. She pondered it in her heart. He was wonderful, when at twelve years of age He sat in the midst of the doctors of the law both hearing them, and asking them questions.

Those who heard Him were astonished at His understanding. After His maturity and His entrance upon His public ministry the people, both learned and unlearned were astonished at His doctrine and at His wisdom. They knew His parents and His kindred, that they belonged to the people in the common walks of life, but whence this man had His knowledge was a mystery to them.

He was wonderful in His recognition of the Holy law, and His adherence thereto in all its depths of spiritual meaning. And yet He exercised grace, mercy, and forgiveness towards the vilest sinners. The most faithful worshiper of His day could not reconcile His doctrine to the high standard of the law with His mercy shown to sinners.

He was wonderful in His perfect righteousness, His pure and spotless life, and yet willing to suffer ignominy and death, when He could have summoned legions of angels to His assistance. He was wonderful in His reconciling justice and mercy, peace and righteousness through His death upon the tree of the cross.

He is a true and faithful "*counselor*." He invited all who labor and are heavy laden to come to Him and learn



of Him. He is a safe counsellor, because He is the wisdom of God, and therefore cannot err. He is also the truth. His counsel is unfailing and unchangeable. It is the same yesterday and today, and it will be the same tomorrow and forever more. He is not now our counsellor in person as He was to the apostles, but He is our counsellor through His Spirit and Word. We can draw near to Him by faith, and commune with Him through the spirit; but we must have His spirit. It will create humility and contrition of heart, and qualify us to meet Him in the valley of humiliation. It is a blessed privilege to meet Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and to receive counsel from Him.

He is counsellor in making known that which was shrouded in mystery from the foundation of the world. Having come forth from the bosom of the Father He revealed the Father's will, and made known the Father's truths and perfections; and being made wisdom unto us He became our infallible counsellor in all our trials and perplexities.

In His blessed Gospel He counsels us to be humble in mind, pure in heart, and to live so as to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man. He counsels us to love one another and to serve each other in love, to reclaim erring members, to be no respecter of persons, not esteeming the rich above the poor.

As counsellor He teaches us to love our enemies, and to show our love by doing them good; that our works should be to the honor and praise of the Father above; that we "Lay up our treasure in heaven where thieves do not break through and steal, and moth and rust do not corrupt." We are counselled to "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" with the promise that all else that we need will be added unto us.

He could lay down His life and take

it up again because He was *Mighty God*. As to His divinity, He is wonderful because incomprehensible; "For no man knoweth the Son but the Father." In the form of man yet *Mighty God*, he restored the dead to life and healed the sick; gave vitality and action to paralyzed limbs; opened the eyes of one born blind; restored sight to the blind; caused the lame to walk and the deaf to hear; cleansed the lepers; calmed the raging waters and stilled the rolling billows. He also cast out devils and forgave sin. He was *Mighty God*. He knew the thoughts of all hearts. He commanded life, and death yielded. He commanded health, and sickness fled. He demanded of the "strong man armed" that he "come out of him," and he obeyed. He is to us "the Arm of the Lord" strong and mighty. "He could not be holden of death." We have the assurance that He is to us a *Mighty God*; and that we can do all things through Him who strengtheneth us. "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed for I am thy God."

*The everlasting Father.* Christ is the unfailing Father of the Church. The true members of the Church are members of His body. They are bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh. They are begotten by the spirit and are His spiritual children, and heirs with Him of the everlasting inheritance. He is the Father of all His children. He came in the form of man in order to save man. They are born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word: and He is the Word, we can therefore readily understand that He is the *Everlasting Father*, since, "In the beginning was the Word." He has neither beginning of days nor end of life. To those who receive Him He will be with them every day unto the end of the world; and not

only in this world, but He will be with them in heaven forever.

He is the *Everlasting Father* because He existed "Before the mountains were brought forth, or even the earth and the world was formed."

He is *The Prince of Peace*, the author of peace and of reconciliation to God. "On earth peace, good will toward men." The birth and life and doctrine of Christ are the only means for the attainment of real peace upon earth. In His word and spirit is the power to reconcile estranged feelings between brethren and friends. Christ's doctrine reconciles parents to children, and children to parents; husbands to wives, and wives to husbands, and friend to friend, because it humbles the heart, it bows the will, it makes contrite the spirit. "My peace I give unto you." Envy and strife must be banished from the heart and mind of all His people. His place is upon the throne of the heart to rule by His spirit and word. He will not abide where love does not dwell.

*"Of the increase of His government and His peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom to order it, and to establish it, with justice and judgment henceforth and forever."*

His testimony is that the everlasting kingdom of peace is to be sought in one's heart, saying, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, lo here, or lo there; for behold the kingdom of God is within you." His kingdom is set up in the heart, and the efficacy and virtue of it will endure forever. There shall be no end to the increase, nor to the government, neither to the peace of the kingdom. Love should increase as we grow older. Neither the love, the government, or the peace shall wane. This is manifestly to be understood as being a spiritual kingdom. The throne of David was

a figure of the heart of a believer. Christ in the spirit reigns in the heart of all His people. He is king and ruler, and they are His subjects.

It is the same kingdom that Daniel foretold; "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people." "They shall beat their swords into plough shares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."

Love is the foundation of the everlasting kingdom of peace. Where there is no peace there is no rest for the soul. If we do not live in peace we have no rest of soul now, and we have no promise of the eternal rest prepared for the people of God.

Peace has its beginning in our hearts. It is attained by faith in Christ through whose death we are reconciled to the Father. Peace among ourselves is the effect of our love to Jesus. If we know ourselves rightly we have a deep seated sympathy with all who have experienced what we have. We do not think evil of them, for love thinketh no evil. We walk in love and forbear each other in love. When anyone fails to walk in love we should apprise him of his fault but not lose our confidence in him until we have scriptural ground for doing so.

Before the Prince of Peace came upon the earth the way of peace was not known. There was war and violence. The garments rolled in blood were evidence of the absence of peace, and the confused noise of the warriors was evidence that strife existed and that wasting and destruction were in the land.

The Patriarch Abraham had three

hundred and eighteen trained servants, armed and equipped for battle. Under the law it was "eye for eye." Gideon who had his band of three hundred could consistently cry, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon."

The birth of Christ was the beginning of a new era. But dark was the night, deep were the waters, and rough the pathway that the Babe trod on His way to victory and to glory.

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

### THE NEW YEAR

New Year again is drawing nigh;

Could we but just behold

Whate'er for us it has in store,

Its treasures to unfold;

Would we be just as happy if

The future we could see,

And know what things may come to pass,

If good or ill they be?

'Tis better that we do not know

What cometh on the morrow,

For if it should disaster be

'Twould cause us deepest sorrow;

We know all things are wrought for good

In some or other way.

'Tis not for us to know God's plan,

Sufficient is to-day.

Our duty is to watchful be,

And not be led astray;

How insecure our hope, if we

Step from the Narrow Way.

To God belongs the years to come,

To us the years gone by;

To what the New Year may bring forth,

Ourselves we must apply.

C. J. M.

Fayetteville, Pa.

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. 1 Cor. 2: 9.

### THE OLD YEAR—THE NEW YEAR

The old year has gone. What a record it has left on the annals of time! What varied experiences of sorrow, grief and affliction, joy and happiness it has recorded in the affairs of the children of men! Many, who entered the past year full of hope and promise of success in life, and prospective joy in the attainment of the same, have been cut down by the great Destroyer Death. O, the painful separations, the loneliness, the sundering of tender ties of affection, the desolation it has brought to many homes! Those who are gone no doubt entered the then New Year with well meaning resolves, not only to make a success of the temporal life, but also to make provision for the salvation of their souls by obeying the grace of God. We hope they fulfilled their resolves and that they died the "death of the righteous." The silent march of the years impresses us who remain on the stage of life, that we are growing old—one year nearer eternity! When we review our life in the years gone by, we have many regrets—we may recall many sins of commission and omission, and though we believe they have been repented of and no more imputed unto us by God, the memory of them cannot be effaced. We may recall instances of remissness in openly confessing our Lord and Savior, and freely defending the eternal truth before the world and our friends. We may have failed to show unselfish kindness, love and forbearance to our enemies, and in extending helpfulness and charity to the poor and needy. What has been done however is done and cannot be recalled or changed forever. Then as we turn the page of the New Year let us endeavor by the grace of God to make a clean unblotted record—not only commendable to ourselves and

our fellowmen, but to God. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." Let us take advantage of every opportunity not only to do good unto all men, but take heed unto ourselves that we waste not the precious time of this New Year but endeavor "To live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2: 12, 13.

We know not whether we shall live to see the end of this New Year. There are 365 days to come, but only to-day is ours. We should be anxious to live aright *to-day*—to "watch and pray that we enter not into temptation" *to-day*; to-morrow may never come to us; so we should not anticipate troubles, or fears, or worries for to-morrow. Solomon says, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a *day* may bring forth." Our Savior said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matt. 6: 34. We should feel thankful for the dawn of the New Year. God in His mercy, love and long-suffering is yet extending time and opportunity to all men, and inviting them by His grace to accept salvation. It is dangerous to frustrate His grace, for the saving of the immortal soul is involved. It is testified "To-day if ye hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 4: 7. We know not how many days of the New Year will be ours, but this we know that when death comes opportunity ceases. There will be "time no longer" unto us and beyond the grave the soul will meet judgment and eternity, either an eternity of joy and happiness or of sorrow, misery and woe.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

## BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR, AND KNOCK

From the exhortation given by the Angel to the Church at Laodicea, it seems that many of their number had grown listless and indifferent and were not aware of their condition and of their great need of help. They were admonished to be more zealous and were reminded of God's love and His willingness to pardon by these words, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent. . . . Behold, I stand at the door, and knock, if any man hear My voice and open the door I will come in to him and sup with him and he with Me."

What an evidence of God's loving kindness and tender care! God pleads with the backsliding and erring sinner, using every means to bring him to repentance. He reminds him of His willingness to save and that He wills not the death of the sinner. He reminds him by His ministry, His word and by sickness and affliction of his duties and obligations to his Creator. God's patience and longsuffering is very great.

The Lord stands at the door and knocks. He makes no forcible entrance for man is a free agent. It is the sinner's part to open the door so that the good spirit may enter. The Lord has graciously promised strength and power. He is able and willing to heal all backslidings and pardon all iniquities. He then offers to come in to the penitent sinner, to sup with him, to feed him with the bread of life and bring peace to his soul.

How often have we heard God's gentle knock and His pleading voice, "Come, oh! come, why will you die." Can any one refuse to admit Him, refuse to accept His offer of mercy and pardon?

In our Savior's parable of the man that made a feast and invited many to

come to his supper, a servant was sent to call those who were bidden, for all things were ready. The call was met by general refusals. One had his estate to manage and was obliged to go and see a new addition to it. Another was deep in buying and selling; and the third was so content in his domesticity he could not come.

The King was angry and said those who were bidden were not worthy. He sent his servants out into the highways to bid as many as they could find to come to the feast. There was yet room and he told his servants to gather in the wanderers by the hedges and lanes, for he said none of those bidden should taste of his supper.

Our Savior had reference here to His rejection by His own people, the Jewish nation and the calling of the Gentiles. The Gentiles were looked upon as outcasts by the Jews, but the number of Gentiles to partake of the supper, would far exceed the number of learned Scribes and Pharisees who rejected Him and did not accept His teaching.

This parable applies to all who make light of God's call of mercy and of His invitation to come and accept free salvation. They hear His call, but refuse to come, preferring the enjoyment of earthly pleasure to heavenly blessings. Men to-day are just as ready to make excuses as were those who refused to come to the feast. The honor and friendship of the world, the love of its pleasures and the unwillingness to bear the cross, hinder many from heeding the Savior's call.

The feast is now ready, the call is given. Those who heed the call will not only receive manifold more in this present time, but in the world to come life everlasting.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

## ARE YOU WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE?

Everything that has value in this life has its price and whatever it is that we wish to possess we must be willing to pay its price at which it is valued. Earthly goods, bodily comfort, health, peace of mind or happiness, all have value and each requires some sacrifice or effort to be obtained. There is one thing that is of greater value than all earthly things, and that is the salvation of the soul. The word of God teaches:—"For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

That we possess a soul which will live in eternity and which will be eternally happy or miserable are facts impressed upon every mind at sometime in life. This knowledge comes to us by the grace of God, which the apostle Paul says, "Hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world." We firmly believe, that this grace comes to us all at some period of our lives and appeals to every one. Have you not heard this voice accusing you, when your actions have not been in accord with love to your fellow-beings? Have you not felt that you were unprepared to meet death? Why is it that we fear death? Is it not because we are impressed that we have not lived as we ought?

The question confronts us, "What must we do to be saved?" Christ came to reveal God's will to us. He offered His body as a sacrifice, once for us all, and invites all, who labor and are heavy laden, to come to Him and find rest. What are the conditions or what is the price? He said "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." Here we have an offering of eternal value that cannot be bought for gold or silver. It is offered without money or works and yet has a price. It is a price that the rich must pay, the poor can pay, a price for all to pay. Christ says: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." This selfish life, which we must sacrifice, is the price we must pay. Its value is fixed and never will be changed.

God's plan is revealed in His Word, and we cannot change the conditions and be justified in a hope of salvation. "I judge no man," "the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," is a fixed and final declaration.

We may reason, that it is not necessary to be so strict and to deny ourselves of the things which are so dear to the natural life and which give us much pleasure in that life. We are not required to deny ourselves of those things which give true happiness, but only those things which draw our affections from God. We are to set our affections on things above and not on things below, for that which is above is eternal, but the things of earth shall pass away; and we are not to love anything more than God. If we are not willing to forsake all things for Christ and the Gospel's sake, we cannot be His disciples, and if we are not His disciples then we have no promise. By faith in Him we will be enabled to do all that He teaches.

To the unconverted the commands of our Savior, seem hard to follow. Some will say that no one can do them. We answer, that if we accept the Savior's word and are born again, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind. If we have died to the world and have become new creatures, if we have set our affec-

tions upon things in heaven, we will have pleasure in living to His praise, and will love Him because He first loved us, and will be willing to suffer with Him, that we may also rejoice with Him.

True, no one who comes to Christ will be so dead to the world that he will not be tempted by that influence that seeks to draw His followers away from Him; for we read, the devil seeks to devour them and will tempt them with unbelief and an offer of the worldly kingdom, just as he did our Savior and Christ foreseeing all things, told His disciples to watch and pray, for with every temptation, there will be a way of escape, but with this warning we may not at all times be duly impressed and fail. Even then a remedy is offered, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." We are invited to come to Him in contrition of spirit, and He will care for us.

According to God's word, our individual experience and that of others, we find that everyone must realize that he is without God and hope in this world. With this realization any one may come to Christ, and when he is willing to surrender to Him unconditionally, and seeks to know the price of Salvation, it will be revealed to him. If he is willing to pay the price he will receive the Spirit of God, which will lead and guide him into all truth.

Lancaster, Pa.

B. G. L.

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### THE SPIRITUAL ARK

In the days of Noah, God saw that the wickedness of man was great and that the thoughts of his heart was evil continually, and it repented Him that He had made man, and the Lord said, "I will destroy man by a flood of waters."

Noah was a just man and walked with God and found favor with Him. God

commanded Him to build an ark for the saving of his house and a remnant of all creatures. History informs us that Noah strictly followed God's commands, although the work was done under the most trying circumstances; in the face of much ridicule and scoffing by the unbelieving and ungodly. Naval architects say that a vessel so constructed would not be sea-worthy. Noah could have reasoned in the same way, but he had implicit faith in God's promises; he knew that if God designed it and directed him in its construction, it would serve the purpose for which it was intended. Nothing could impede the work, and when completed Noah and his family by faith entered the ark, and with them two or more creatures of every sort, fowls after their kind, cattle after their kind, every creeping thing of the earth after his kind; the door was then closed, cutting off all who through unbelief, failed to enter. The windows of heaven were opened and the waters became great, continuing until everything having the breath of life was destroyed. In saving Noah and his house God made a special display of His power as also the infallibility of His word, which should teach us to fear Him and accept in faith His wise counsels and commands as taught by Christ and the Holy apostles in the New Testament.

Christ is the spiritual ark of safety to whom every God-fearing soul flees, to escape the wrath of God which will be poured out upon the ungodly on the great day.

Noah's ark, built exclusively for the saving of his house, brought him safely over from one era into another, as God had promised. Christ the spiritual ark was sent into the world to save sinners, and all who by faith enter the Ark will be borne safely through the wilderness of sin, even through the dark valley of

the shadow of death, over into the unspeakable joys in the great beyond, world without end.

Noah's ark was the only means that God provided for the preservation of the natural being and all who failed to enter perished in the watery deluge. Christ, the spiritual ark, is the only means provided for the preservation of the soul and all who fail to accept and obey His holy commands by faith, will surely suffer everlasting punishment as God's holy word has decreed.

Until Noah there was little faith in the world. "The earth was corrupt . . . and filled with violence." Gen. 6: 11. The visitation of the flood came because of this. The fiery deluge will be visited upon the world for the same cause. By the deluge of water God manifested His wrath, also His power, that man might fear His judgments in ages to come and exercise faith in His word and in His wise counsels. Man's spiritual condition did not improve, however. God said to Noah, the preacher of righteousness, "Neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth . . . I do set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." But there is a deluge of fire promised those who fail to enter the spiritual ark, Christ, that will be more terrible than the flood of waters, because its torment will never cease.

When the day of judgment suddenly appears, all no doubt would gladly take refuge in Christ, the ark of safety, but the door will then be closed. When the door is closed God will no more respond to the pleadings of the contrite and penitent. To-day is the day of grace, the time of opportunity. By the goodness and mercy of God all is made ready, all are invited to come while the door is open. It is declared upon sea and land that all who will come, let them come

and enter the Ark of the Lord. The drawing of the Father is experienced by every one, which, if heeded, would lead them to the Ark of safety, Jesus Christ. As in the days of Noah, the natural tendency of mankind is to dishonor God by rejecting the means which He, in love and mercy, designed for the saving of souls.

With God there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. He will deal with us on the basis of New Testament teaching, according to His promise. The excuses offered by those who refuse to enter the spiritual ark Christ, will not avail on the great day. The door is now open. It is our privilege to accept or reject the invitation to enter.

To those who enter the ark there is sweet communion with the Father, a joy and comfort unknown to those who remain outside; the heart is filled with love, love to God and love to man. Nothing of a selfish nature can survive there. The wonderful redemption; the assurance of escaping the deluge of impending fire brings gladness and rejoicing to the soul. Sweet songs of praise and adoration to God ebb forth from the hearts made pure by the blood of the Lamb.

Pondering over the wonders of God—how man is led to repentance by the drawing of the Father—how the fallen are raised up—the polluted made clean—the dead made alive, we are moved to say with the apostle Paul, “Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” How comforting to know Him as our Father and Jesus as our refuge! The storms of life may rage, the billows of life may roll, but as Noah’s ark of old withstood the elements, Jesus Christ the spiritual ark of safety has triumphed over everything that opposes the work of grace.

When the ship of the disciples in Galilee was tossed by the wind and waves, they feared greatly, while Christ slept undisturbed. The disciples woke Him, saying, “Lord, save us, we perish.” He was their only hope of safety. He spoke to the elements. “Peace, be still” and a great calm followed. Their hearts were glad. Our hearts will be made glad if we flee to Him for safety and confess in the language of the disciples, “Lord save or we perish.”

Medway, Ohio.

C. A. H.

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### NINETIETH PSALM

Our dwelling place, in ages past and gone,  
Thou wast, O Lord, yea Thou art God alone;  
Before the earth and world was formed Thou  
wast

An everlasting God—alwise and just.

A thousand years will be, within Thy sight,  
Like yesterday—a watch throughout the night;  
As with a flood Thou carriest them away—  
They are like sleep, when darkness turns to day.

Man groweth up, and like the with’ring grass,  
We fade away, and soon our days shall pass;  
Tho we may reach the number Thou hast set,  
Our years of strength we spend in sorrow yet.

So teach us, Lord, to number well our days,  
Apply our hearts to walk in wisdom’s ways;  
Tho evil and affliction we have seen,  
Do Thou in mercy make us glad within.

Fayetteville, Pa.

C. J. M.

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### THE DUTY OF A CHRISTIAN

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” Amos 3: 3.

When we become the children of the Father which is in heaven, there is a duty devolving upon us as christians, which the author of salvation commands in John 13: 34, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.” This is a happy relation and implies that His children must walk to-

gether and agree as the prophet declares, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" This embodies an idea that is very little recognized in the present age, notwithstanding it permeates the whole Bible. The moral law enjoined the duty of loving our neighbor as ourselves, which embraced the duty of doing to our neighbor as we would have him do unto us. Since the moral law enjoined the duty of loving one's neighbor, which was promulgated nearly 1500 years before Christ gave the new commandment, why does he call this a new command? The reason is obvious. The believer's position under the gospel, is in advance of that which was under the law. He is now a partaker of the divine nature and renewed to the divine image. He is the purchase of Christ's blood and the fruit of his love. "For ye are bought with a price." This love toward one another which the Lord commands is the effect of the new birth which impresses the mind with an unspeakable debt of gratitude to Him "who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God."

The duty of gospel believers under the new covenant—to love one another, is from a new motive illustrated by a new example. His people could not expect to continue in love, peace, and fellowship with Him, enjoy His protection and reap the fruit of obedience promised them, while dishonoring Him through disobedience. They and their God could not walk together because they did not count Him worthy of all love, honor and obedience.

Christ and His professed people can only walk together in agreement when complying with the terms outlined in the New Testament. The inspiration is love and the fruit is obedience. "If ye

love me, keep my commandments." "Why call ye me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?" Confessions, creeds and dogmas will not avail where love and obedience are not in evidence. "Not every one that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Christ testified that many will call him Lord, Lord, with whom he is not in agreement. The only possible cause of disagreement between Christ and His professed people is the absence of love and obedience, as witnessed in the case of the church at Ephesus which was threatened with His withdrawal from them unless they repented. Paul's testimony is: "Christ liveth in me." Every act at variance with love to God and love to our neighbor grieves the spirit of Christ that is enthroned upon the hearts of His followers. If we violate the law of love, the spirit of Christ will reprove us and lead us to repentance. If we fail to heed this reproof, our hearts will condemn us, and guilt of conscience will ensue and separation from Christ will follow. But the sincere Christian welcomes the reproof of the Spirit and word of the Gospel, and will repent of his failing and amend his ways. This is loving one's own soul, and this is the spiritual love with which a Christian loves his neighbor. If we ourselves have no comfort when we transgress, we reasonably cannot comfort our neighbor when he transgresses. "By their fruits ye shall know them." If Christ, the true vine, sustains the branches and they receive their sustenance from Him, christian fruit will be manifest.

"If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother and wife and children and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14: 26. Christ never

taught hatred of any person. God is love, yet he hates evil. It is the mind of Christ that we shall hate sin, there can be no compromise with evil. If evil arises in our hearts, we must hate it. We should not hate our being, but the evil in us that would hinder us in doing our christian duty must be abhorred.

Hence we must endeavor to emphasize the duty of love, peace and agreement. Should we fail in this we fail in attaining to the object of our being, we will not only fail to fulfill the object of our being, but we shall be shut out of heaven and eternal happiness. It matters not what our station in life is or what we profess, we must walk as He walked, and bear gospel fruit or we are none of His. God in mercy grant that none of us will hear the irrevocable sentence of the Judge in the last day: "Depart from me ye that work iniquity." This awful denunciation that is predicted, will be uttered against a class of persons who will claim they had prophesied in His name, and in His name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works.

We then conclude that the duty of a Christian is to love and obey him, which will bring about agreement and fellowship, and we can walk together.

Rohrerstown, Pa.

H. S. M.

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### CAUSE OF PERSECUTION

"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil." John 7: 7.

The foregoing reply the Savior made to his brothers in the family who urged Him to go to one of the three great Jewish feasts in Jerusalem. He told them He was not ready to go from His home in Gallilee. He knew they wanted to kill

Him in Jerusalem, and He gave the cause of their hatred to be His testimony against their evil works. It is impressive that those who hated Him were worshipers, and that He called their works evil: evidently because they did not live up to their profession. It is hypocrisy to profess what we are not willing to do, and hypocrisy is an evil which our Savior reproved unsparingly. If the leaders of the professed disciples of Moses had been true to their best convictions they would never have crucified the Benefactor of the race. The convincing miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead did not pierce the dark veil of prejudice that enveloped the conscience of the rulers, for in the light of that convincing power of Divinity, they agreed in council to slay the Author of the marvellous feat. They admitted that His miracles might persuade all the people to believe on Him, that in consequence they might lose their country; and that it were better that He should die than that they should suffer such a calamity. Many evil surmisings now keep persons from accepting Christ. Persons are so strongly wedded to their earthly loves that they will rather have slain what is divine in them than to forsake their fleshly idols. The religious people which our Savior arraigned as hypocrites, serpents and vipers were such as had forsaken the law of God and had put themselves under the censure: "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." "The law of the Lord is perfect"—we shall not add to it. The Savior did not arraign the open sinners as He did those who worshiped falsely, for they made no pretense, nor did they conspire against Him as did the worshipers. He could fitly say, "The whole need not the physician," meaning the



self-righteous. Those who have their hope in the righteousness of Christ always need the physician, for they are conscious of infirmity that needs the healing of the physician.

To those who said, "Abraham is our father," the Savior answered, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." This reproof was wounding, but no doubt was needed for their good or the Messenger of Love would not have administered it. Such arraignment should bring everyone to reflect whether we deserve it. They made a strong claim for righteousness, were strict in keeping the Sabbath, in paying their tithes, clinging to self-made doctrines, but "omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith." They were strict legalists, but not strict in principle which is the spirit of true religion. A profession of religion not regulated by the principle of consistency is mockery. The merited reproof to those formalists made them cry, "crucify him, crucify him."

Every spiritually minded person takes reproof kindly and patiently, with the feeling that there is room for betterment. "Every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

The testimony against evil, which the Savior declared, is declared in separating from the practice of all indulgences not in agreement with the spirit of what is written, and from all unsound worship. The Savior says, "Beware of false prophets."

When Stephen testified against those who had the law of Moses and did not keep it, they stoned him to death. He was the first martyr after Christ. The apostles who were slain suffered at the hands of worshipers, either Jewish or pagan. The martyrs since then were the

victims of the churches whose lives they reproved. They would not help them fight their wars, nor adopt their unscriptural infant baptism, and would not worship with them because of their carnal lives, which caused the ruling churches to slay them by thousands, inflicting on them the most inhuman tortures, as every reader of history knows. After the two great religious factions in Germany had fought with each other for thirty years, almost depopulating the country, without either one gaining the ascendancy, necessity drove them to make a treaty of peace, in which they allowed religious liberty to either side, yet both denied liberty of conscience to those who would not worship with them. The same issue still exists between those who try to maintain sound worship and those who admit worldly members to their communion. His testimony against evil caused the Savior to be hated and persecuted, and such testimony will be an offense forever to those who "love darkness rather than light." John 3: 19.

Examples show the prevalence of the spirit of persecution in our Savior's time, and how weak the people were to meet it:—"No man spake openly of Him for fear of the Jews (John 7: 13), . . . these words spake his parents because they feared the Jews (John 9: 22), . . . among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue (John 12: 42), . . . Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus." John 19: 38.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

### GOD'S PERFECT WAY

"But Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Psalm. 102: 27.

David complains in a most pathetic manner of his trouble, and pleads that the Lord may not fail to hear him. He sets forth the great truth that man continueth not, and that God is unchangeable and will ever continue the same, even when the heavens and the earth will have passed away.

Generations have passed into oblivion since David wrote these words, and at that time he informs us, he wrote it for the generations to come. Every invention of man is subject to improvement, "But Thou art the same." There can be no improvement made on that which is perfect. God's work is perfect. Deut. 32: 4. His way is perfect. Psalm 18: 30 and 2 Samuel 22: 31. His Law is perfect. Psalm 19: 7. Man was created in the likeness and image of God, a free agent, capable of doing God's will or rejecting it. He disobeyed, and, as a consequence, suffering and death followed. The fact that man fell and became the servant of sin, although he was created a perfect being, does not signify that God's work is not perfect. His way, which is also perfect, was to create man a free agent and God told him that death would follow transgression. His law was very simple and could not be misunderstood. The only way man could violate it was to disobey the plain command of God.

The fact that our first parents were enticed to partake of forbidden fruit did not excuse them. To-day we hold a similar relation to our God. The New Testament teaches us the way of salvation. We are permitted to choose whom we will serve. It is only when we pass from our innocent state that we become accountable to God. Early in life we are convinced that God is unchangeable

and that His work, way, and law are perfect. We all should conclude that it is most reasonable to acquaint ourselves with Him. It is clear to us that we are not ever the same, and that our years will end. Yet God has promised all believers everlasting life.

To become acquainted with God, who is from everlasting to everlasting, we only need to respond to the calls of grace that come to us, inviting us to behold the wonder-works of God. The sun, moon and stars, the earth and the fullness thereof, the sea and all that is therein, all speak volumes to us, and should lead every sinner to repentance. Just as God reveals himself to us through things we behold, so he also gives us understanding to see that God's creature man is corrupt and does not honor his God who created him and gave him power to do so. With this picture before us, a conscience within us, God's word to guide us, should we not be able to discern what this God, who is ever the same and whose years never end, requires of us?

Christ, while on earth, taught the will of His Father who sent Him. By His death, resurrection, and outpouring of the Holy Spirit, he gave power to all mankind to attain Eternal Life, and thus to receive the mind of Christ. Such souls bring forth spiritual fruits, which are as unchangeable as God himself. A truly spiritually minded person can as little bring forth carnal fruits, as a carnally minded person can bring forth spiritual fruits. A carnal life is in harmony with our fallen nature, and at best can only enjoy the fruits of sin for a season and then comes to an end, for man is as a shadow and continueth not. A spiritual life is in harmony with the Spirit of God, and although it may be greatly annoyed by our natural tendencies it will continue forever.

Let us not be deceived—we may be in possession of spiritual life, and earnestly desire to be faithful, yet the deceiver may present our many mistakes and endeavor to rob us of our treasure. On the other hand, we may feel very sure that we possess spiritual life and live very correct lives and cry aloud against the corruption and sin in the world and still not possess it.

God is a Spirit and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The true worshiper then will not be tossed about by every wind of doctrine, but will say with David, "But Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Jesus Christ yesterday, to-day and forever. One Spirit, one doctrine, one object in view. A divided worship was never found among spiritually minded people, and will not be until the end of time.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. L. K.

### COMPARISON IN WORSHIP

The inconsistencies of professing christians are a cause of sorrow to many who are in the churches, and a hindrance to those outside of them. For, as a christian example is the strongest means of influencing men to a belief in the truth, nothing bewilders and leads so surely to doubt and unbelief as to see those whom one believes to be christians, live in disagreement with the teachings of the Gospel.

Truth has not been without witnesses in the world. The testimonies of the Apostles remain in the scripture records. True witnesses have followed them, who, though often persecuted, scattered, and at times few in number, have preserved for us the evidence of their christian works and doctrines in numerous writings, especially in that invaluable work, "The Martyr's Mirror."

Christendom has admitted its failure to even approach the standard set by the Gospel. Men are ever looking for a revival, some great change, even for a Millennium. They overlook the power of the regeneration, that power which came upon the disciples at Pentecost, and the fact that christian love and peace were realized by those early believers, and by all the faithful who have since followed in their steps.

Many churches acknowledge that the world's censure of the pride, worldiness, and discord in them is just. No one is blind to faults so apparent. Pride and vanity are common sins, so common, indeed, that we are apt to grow insensible and indifferent to them; very often they are excused on the ground of human frailty. Their sinfulness is not lessened by human standards of conduct. Humility is the foundation of the christian life; pride renders that life impossible or destroys it. None were so severely condemned as those who were rich in their own good works, self-justified, proud in heart. They who sought pre-eminence had not yet learned the nature of the spirit, and needed the lesson that they "should become servants of all," "all ye are brethren."

To be vain of anything we possess, the gifts which we have only received—wealth, family, talents or of one's person is unseemly and unchristian. In things necessary for us in this life, given for use, to be used in moderation and with thankfulness, we see most of display, especially in the ornamentation of homes, splendid and costly furnishings, contrasting with simplicity and contrary to the teaching, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate"—in the adorning of the mortal body with things pleasing to the eye, not necessary or useful, often lacking in modesty and discretion.

Pride, passion, worldly desires lie very close to us; they are inherent in our sinful nature. Only by the christian experience of being quickened to a sense of the sinfulness of sin and of renewal by grace can we lay them aside. Evil must needs be cast out at its source: "Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." Fundamental in christian doctrine and experience is this change of heart—new desires and affections and a new object of worship and devotion.

If, then, professing an inward change there is no corresponding change in the manner of life—the same eager pursuit of pleasure in social gaiety and frivolity, sometimes with revelry and excess, the same ostentation, extravagance and luxury, covetousness and avarice as is manifested by the unregenerate, "men of the world whose portion is in this life," it can be said justly, as it has been said, that there is no evidence that the beliefs and hopes of such persons have any influence on their lives.

Again, if there is strife, litigation and war; and if divorcement is practiced contrary to Christ's teachings there is no advance over the old law of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Out of the kingdom of force, dependent on the sword, yet necessary for order and government, ordained by God for the use of the world—Christ called His disciples. He called them to something higher than dissension, war and blood-shed. So plain are His teachings that all who think on them must see that for a christian to engage in such practices violates every principle of His doctrine; it violates, indeed, the purpose of His coming, for "He was manifested to take away our sins" and to give power over the lusts from which these evils spring. Fruitless is the sacrifice of Christ if it has not

averted, among His people, the suffering and wretchedness of family quarrels, the misery and horrors of war, brought peace, and ended divisions among them.

The organic unity of christians is necessary for the keeping of the commandments and observing the ordinances given to them. The church, spoken of in scripture as being one body, one fold with one Shepherd, united in faith and doctrine, is now sadly divided by the ever changing and conflicting opinions of men. Love binds together, even families and friends. Pride and self-will—"the lusts that dwell in our members"—divide churches and the members of the same church. These evils are openly revealed when members of churches slight and disregard one another, and commit offenses and trespasses without confessing their faults; when they quarrel, and harbor feelings of bitterness, resentment, and spite; when there are jealousies and suspicions among them, and they cast reflections and speak evil one of the other. Wherever these conditions prevail, confidence is lost, and communion destroyed. Love, peace and unity, the most precious fruits of the Redemption, are the strongest proofs of it; strife and divisions are the greatest stumbling-blocks.

It may be said, truly, that there are many worshipers who live in simplicity, separate from the world, who abhor war and contention, and who are patterns of kindness. But if the more consistent join with all others in worship and extend fellowship to them saying, "God-speed," "peace be with you," and give no warning, the scriptures teach that they consent to wrong-doing and become partakers of other's sins. Ez. 33., 2 John 2: 5., Eph. 5: 11.

For the correction of faults within the church plain commandments are given. It is not enough that ministers protest

and cry out against many evils. If we love others as ourselves every effort will be made, by all possible means, to recover the erring and to bring to repentance the sinner. There are no commands in the New Testament more plainly defined, and given with greater detail, than those of brotherly reproof, excommunication, and avoidance. They are the appointed means for the recovery of the fallen, and for preserving the church from the leaven of sin. Matt. 18, 1 Cor. 5: 5. If these commandments are not kept, or if they cannot be kept—(as plainly they cannot be by a church dis-united, not “joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment”)—it is evident that the church has lost the authority which Christ gave it, and that it has been moved from the foundation on which He built it. Matt. 16: 18. Clearly, an individual or a church that chooses a position in which it is impossible to obey the commandments of Christ cannot claim to be in fellowship with Him.

In the midst of this confusion, and these inconsistencies the evidence of true religion with its marks of identity is lost. A sincere, seeking soul, perplexed and uncertain as to what is right and wrong, has one source of light and guidance. Between truth and error there is a fixed line drawn by the unchangeable Word of the Lord. The Apostle in writing to the Corinthians, telling them to be not unequally yoked with unbelievers, since between righteousness and unrighteousness there can be no fellowship, says: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Cor. 6: 17.

Lancaster, Pa. R. 4

M. H. M.

## SPIRITUAL CAUTION

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” 1 John 5: 21.

Such counsel to us, given over 1800 years ago, is hardly applicable now, when knowledge and intelligence have taken the place of ignorance and superstition. The idols of old were images or figures of beasts or other objects to which the people brought their offerings and sacrifices in worship. The idol which Aaron made in response to the request of the people was a golden calf, which had no life in itself, nor could it render any service. The idolatry of the present day is a sad reality, and painful to contemplate! People ignore the visible and material idols and make for themselves others equally without life and power. An idol is anything on which the affections are extremely set or to which we offer worship, or on which we may base the hope of eternal life that is foreign to God’s will. Jesus said, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” Matt. 10: 37. “And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14: 27. Paul says, “Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.” Eph. 6: 1. We might love our parents who are not in the Lord and obey their commands not in agreement with the teachings of Christ, which would be a test to the affections, and our worthiness of Christ. We might love our children extremely and encourage them in the ways of the world, fearing to lose their affections, when at the time the grace of God might be laboring with them, and by a little help they might become willing to confess Him. We might love our worldly friends too much and allow ourselves to be hindered from



freely confessing Christ, lest we lose their friendship. We might love ease in life, and be unwilling to give up the pleasures of this world, or we might love wealth and luxury, and a display of our possessions, for the purpose of enlisting respect and admiration, and thereby fail in discipleship.

We might base our hope of eternal life on our good works and fail. Jesus said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7: 22, 23. Awful failing!

Or we might base our hope on the observance of the ordinances which Christ has commanded His church: we might be baptized, might partake of communion; we might wash one another's feet: these are commands to the church, but unless the new birth has taken place it will profit nothing, and is idolatry, just as surely as if we would worship an image of wood or stone, or even gold, which is among the most precious substances we can obtain. The Apostle could wisely say, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," while many dangers beset us.

Landisville, Pa.

C. S. N.

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### MORALITY ALONE WILL NOT SAVE US

We hear the expression: "There are good and bad in all churches." We admit, there are many good and moral people in all the popular churches, and many are good and moral who do not profess Christianity. They are given to hospitality, they feed the hungry, clothe the naked, assist the needy, visit the sick, build homes for the dependent which is

commendable. But persons may be moral and not be Christians; yet we cannot be Christians without being moral. Moses was a chosen vessel to lead the children of Israel into the promised land. While traveling through the wilderness many began to murmur against Moses. Korah, Dathan and Abiram exalted themselves against Moses and two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, "famous in the congregation, men of renown," who gathered themselves together against Moses and Aaron and said unto them, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, everyone of them; wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" The consequence was they all had to perish. Numbers 16: 32, 33. Had these men believed Moses, their leader, they would not have perished; and had the man of God not obeyed the disobedient prophet, he would not have been slain by the lion. 1 Kings 13: 24.

We have Bible accounts of persons perishing for their transgressions, disobedience and unbelief. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." Heb. 2: 2, 3. The Savior came into this sinful world by the will of His heavenly Father, and opened the way for all sinners, teaching us the whole counsel and will of His heavenly Father. We are warned not to add to or take away from His word, and are taught to take up the cross and His yoke. The Savior says, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock." Matt. 7: 24.

Let us be as wise men and hear this spiritual Moses, who will lead us out of this world of sin, which lieth in dark-

ness, and not disobey His commandments, and believe and observe all things whatsoever He has commanded us. The Savior and His inspired Apostles saw great danger that many may be deceived. Therefore they warn us emphatically to beware of false prophets and deceivers, whereby they lie in wait to deceive us. Eph. 4:14. The Savior says, "My sheep hear my voice, . . . but a stranger they will not follow," though they may be strictly moral. Such may deceive many, as they are deluded. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7. Paul writes, for this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie. On the day of judgment all shall be brought before the Judge to hear their sentence. We read, Matt. 7:22, and also Matt. 25:44, of those who shall hear their doom, they will say to the Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works. Then shall they answer him, Lord, when saw we thee an naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or minister unto thee. It is not probable that these are condemned for their moral works, but for their transgressions and disobedience in rejecting the Savior and His commandments. It will avail nothing to have done many good works. To keep sinners in the church is in direct variance with the Savior's and the Apostles' teachings. Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:13. If we love the Lord we will endeavor to keep His commandments and will put our talents to usury. He will lighten our burdens and will help us to bear His cross, which will be of short duration compared to endless eternity!

God preserved Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who were cast in the fiery furnace for refusing to worship idols.

Daniel was cast into the lion's den for praying to God. Our prayer is that the many troubled souls who are called by the tender appeals to take courage, and come boldly to the throne of grace, and confess Him before this evil generation before it is forever too late! To-day if you hear the voice of the Lord harden not your hearts. Let us trust in Him, and hear and obey His voice, that our names may be written in the Book of Life.

Columbus Grove, Ohio J. W. B.

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### SPIRITUAL LEARNING

The question has been asked, "Do we believe in education?" The inquiry was made by one who was led to believe that members of the Reformed Mennonite Church were inclined to look with disfavor upon education. Education means training. The question should be about the kind and degree of education. The Scriptures and observation impress us with the brevity of time here. This impression should teach us that we have no time to waste upon anything that is not a glory to God and for the uplift of our souls. A christian need not concern himself greatly about spiritual growth because he believes that it is purely a gift of God. He should, however, feel a great need of it, and pray for it.

A few more points may serve better to state our position. The benefits of education are everywhere apparent. We ask, who is it that does not appreciate it? The gift of language by which we may communicate intelligently with one another is a blessing for which we should desire to thank God all our days. The mind and its capacity for development is beyond our comprehension. We stand amazed! Who *can* fathom the depth of the mind?

We are living in a period wherein there is a strong desire for knowledge and progress. There is a systematized study of mind and matter resulting in comforts and privileges such as history has never recorded. Closely associated with these blessings, unfortunately, there appears a spirit of unthankfulness, self-sufficiency, with "lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God," "a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof." Probably we learn more about worldly things than we do about eternal life. Do we care more about what people think of us, than what we *really* are, or what God thinks of us? Here there is much food for thought.

Mental education only, is entirely separate from religion. An uneducated person endowed with the spiritual life is far more blessed than others who are devoid of the Spirit, though they may be educated. "Knowledge shall vanish," "Charity never faileth." Let us not confuse these two conditions.

Some education has purely the elements and character of destruction, and tends so emphatically to the satisfaction of human vanity and social standing, that it is no wonder that a thoughtful and godly person desires to escape its influence. For one example, reference may be made to popular theology, which distinguishes little between morality and spirituality. God works from the interior, the moralist on the surface.

Any education that robs us of our faith in God blinds us to our great dependence upon His mercy and power; in fact, any line of mental exercise, no matter how noble, even though it may equip us better for temporal life, *if* it helps to make us self-satisfied, and forgetful of God, is destructive. But is this education? We repeat, let us not confuse worldly wisdom with Divine wisdom. The one is natural, and the other

is spiritual. James says, 1:5 "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him."

We conclude that our best time, which is our youth, should be given to preparing for a state of unending glory. Do we expect this glory to be realized in our physical body? Not fully. Let us not be deceived by the kind of education which makes us only socially prominent, or which gives us that surface-touch that is so very pleasing to the natural mind, which may encourage us to ask; Who is he? Who were his parents? Instead of, *what is he?*

We should develop and grow and increase, but we must not forget it must be according to God's plan. Our prayer should always be that we *may* be obedient and passive; that our stubborn, proud human nature *may* be made subject to His Will. It is a christian's duty to have an open mind, receptive, willing, happy to learn and to try to practice useful culture of body and soul, that he may be a worthy and useful instrument in God's service. It should not be said of us: "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Lancaster, Pa.

M. H. B.

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### MAN'S FINAL DOOM

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." Rev. 20: 12.

To the writer, the above words have always been the most impressive in the Bible. All through the years of sin they were remembered as being the unavoidable destiny of all mankind, and they cannot be read to-day without profound reverence.

The Book of Revelations is a deep and mysterious book. Much of it can be spiritually discerned, but there are some figures and passages that cannot be interpreted by man's limited intelligence

because being unfulfilled. Many of the events illustrated have taken place, some of them are going into effect at the present time, and others still remain to be fulfilled.

There are those who try to understand Revelations in a natural sense, and those who use human reason to substantiate their preconceived views; but the words of our text cannot be misunderstood. In clear and simple language they portray the final and closing scene between time and eternity. When the mighty angel shall stand, with one foot upon the land and one upon the sea, and swear by Him that liveth forever and ever that there shall be time no longer; when the sea and the graves shall give up their dead—then must we all appear before Him that sitteth upon the great white throne, before whose face the heavens and the earth shall flee away, and there shall be no place found for them. What a solemn thought! Great and small, prince and beggar, rich and poor, righteous and sinner must all be summoned, and there be judged according to the deeds done in the body. God is no respecter of persons;—what will it avail in that hour if we have achieved much honor and wealth in this world, yet have scorned His proffered mercy! What excuse can we offer? Can we say that we did not have time, that we did not know, or that we were prevented by someone?

Many in the world are comforting themselves with the hope that God is merciful, that He will not destroy His creatures; but we read in the 16th verse of the 6th chapter that “many will call upon the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” No, no, we read that, “as the

tree falls, so shall it lie,” and “it is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment.”

How precious then, these fleeting moments! To-day is our opportunity, to-morrow it may be too late. Our intentions may be good, but what if we are suddenly snatched from time into eternity? The Savior said, “Behold, I come quickly”—suppose He should come to-night! When He was here He told His listeners that the words which he had spoken, the same should judge man in the last day. How then, can we escape! There are only two ways open, and there will be only two conditions after this life—unspeakable happiness, or unutterable misery. The heavenly Jerusalem and the glory of the saints is so beautifully described by the Revelator, that we long to attain to those blissful realms. May we be wise unto salvation! “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

Stevensville, Ont.

W. I. T.

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### AMONG THE TOMBS

Wandering among the tombs and reading the memorial inscriptions of the dead, we are soberly impressed with the short duration of human life—how short the sojourn from the cradle to the grave. True, some lived above the allotted age of man, even above four score years and ten, but even this apparent long time came to an end and now is as a “tale that has been told.” Life is a mystery and we only realize how wonderful it is when death closes its activities. God is the arbiter of life and death, and to Him alone is known the end of mortal man. In our finite understanding, we may question His dispensations, but it does not become us, for all His plans are con-

ceived and executed in wisdom, love and mercy. The Psalmist says, "His tender mercies are over all His works." Therefore when we stand at the grave of the infant which was snatched from its mother's breast by death, or at the grave of the young maiden whose life was unfolding into beauty and loveliness, or at the grave of the young man, who was qualifying himself for the duties of life, laid low by the great Destroyer; his fond hopes and aspirations for a successful and happy life, blasted and buried with him in the silent tomb. In contemplating these early deaths with sorrow, we will not question the workings of an overruling Providence, who gives life and takes it at His own will. Here lie fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, and children of all ages! Oh, what a harvest has death gathered in! What desolation, what loneliness has been wrought in homes! What anguish of spirit, what anxiety of mind, what sorrow of heart, when those tender cords of affection were severed. What bitter tears were shed at the separation of loved ones! But here the mourner and the mourned lie together in the silent chambers of the dust! Truly among the tombs is a place for meditation. Who can walk in this silent city and not be impressed; for we all know that we too must soon join the innumerable dead. The impressive consideration is that death does not end all with man. Though it ends mortality it does not destroy the immortal soul. There is a great day coming, a resurrection day! "For the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5: 28, 29. Why this awful contrast in the destiny of man? It is be-

cause the latter in their lifetime frustrated the grace of God, and would not accept Jesus the Author of eternal life. Jesus who uttered these words of doom to the ungodly, came into this world and opened the way to life and salvation to all the ends of the earth. If we repent of our sins and believe in Him "He will give us eternal life and we shall never perish." John 10: 28. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John 11: 26. If we are faithful to Him, He will "never leave nor forsake us." He will go with us through life, be with us in our dying hour and He will be with us in eternity. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Psalm 23. By accepting Jesus we obtained the hope of eternal life, which modifies the sorrow and desolation occasioned by death; for it is a consolation in the dying hour and a soothing balm to the grieving friends, all because it unfolds to the spiritual vision a glorious resurrection and a blissful eternity. Therefore, as we wander among the tombs let us remember the words of Solomon "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work nor device, no knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest." Let us remember, that our life is "even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." James 4: 14. Let us remember that Jesus said, "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." They who are not in fellowship with Him who said "I am the resurrection and the life," cannot hope to be victors in their dying hour; their life would go out while in darkness and eternal death would be their doom. Jesus said "And these shall go away into everlasting pun-



ishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Mat. 25: 46. The righteous through the power of Jesus will be victors over death and hell, and can exultingly say in that great day, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory." 1 Cor. 15: 55.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

### DAY OF SORROW

There comes a time when human hearts stand still  
When grief and pain cloud all life's weary way.  
Our trust in God may question if His will  
Has deemed it best to dim the suns bright ray.

Our tear-dimmed eyes may fail to see His hand  
Is holding us, and soothing death's alarms  
So near is He if we could understand—  
Beneath us are His everlasting arms.

At such a time our way obscured may be  
We cannot halt however drear the path;  
The going on seems hard, we cannot see  
That God leads us in pity not in wrath.

Then blest are we if we can look above  
With faith to trust a loving Father's care;  
In His own time He whispers words of love  
And helps us to endure what we must bear.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

### BRIEF NOTES

We are impressed by the scenery in mountains, hills, dales and valleys, as they reflect the glory, the majesty and the dominion of the great Creator. The feeling is expressed in the language of the Psalmist: "The cattle on a thousand hills are His," and "the earth and the fullness thereof."

\* \* \* \*

"God giveth grace to the humble, but He resists the proud." This implies a law of cause and effect, spiritually, as effective as, and more far-reaching than the laws of cause and effect in the material world; for it was effective when angels kept not their first estate in

heaven, and it will be effective still, after the dissolution of these material things, through endless ages of eternity!

\* \* \* \*

If there is one New Year resolution we may properly make above another, it is to exercise a fuller measure of love and forbearance toward all, in the business and social relations of life, as well as among ourselves as fellow-believers. There may arise trying situations in life during the year; and the measure of love and forbearance we can extend under them, depends largely on our humility. That, again, is based on a fuller knowledge of ourselves, which God's grace reveals to us to the extent to which we yield and obey its appeals.

\* \* \* \*

We are inclined to believe that, if only our conditions in life were more favorable, we would be happy. But a palatial residence, where every comfort is provided which money can procure, may be the seat of abject misery; and real happiness may be found in an humble home, and even beside a flickering lantern in a gusty tent; for happiness centers in the condition of the heart, and in the measure in which man yields to the appeals of God's grace, which, when fully yielded to, results in a life adorned by christian virtues in any condition of life, and then peace and happiness will ensue.

\* \* \* \*

In prosperity our disposition is to be unmindful of and not sufficiently grateful for our blessings. Our appreciation is by contrast. When adversity comes, and bereavement, we may better see our lack of appreciation and gratitude as it is expressed by our actions. In christian living it is a humiliating exercise, to have enjoyed such blessings yet not to have given proper expression in liv-

ing, of gratitude and appreciation. In the enjoyment of comfortable homes and happy firesides, may we then remember our indebtedness to a kind heavenly Father, and may our gratitude find an effective expression in our daily life.

\* \* \* \*

The editor of one of the leading dailies fittingly remarks that, "If all other literature were destroyed, yet would we have in the Bible the elements out of which it could be reconstructed; and such reconstruction would add little to the sum of human wisdom now contained in the Bible." We all have access to the volume; and many of us have leisure hours at this season of the year, in which to acquaint ourselves more fully with its teachings. As the experiences of life increase with our years, and our minds are occupied with graver thoughts, we find an ever greater depth of meaning in its simple language, conveying to us an intended message for good in every situation of life. Well may we "search the Scripture."

\* \* \* \*

"Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Thus wrote the Apostle to his Roman brethren. Our real life and strength, spiritually, ever lies in our condescension, humility and abasement. These qualifications of fitness for the kingdom of heaven are based on the measure of our self-knowledge—a knowledge and scrutiny ever deeper and more constant, of our motives, desires and promptings, which may well cause us to exclaim, with David: "Search me, O God, and know my heart."

It is only by this constant scrutiny, under the enlightening influence of God's grace, that we can attain this condition of condescension and self-abasement; because it reveals to us the fact, and constantly impresses it on our mind, that all our ability for good, and even

our desire for holiness comes to us as an unmerited gift. Thus real self-knowledge causes us to condescend to men of low estate; for however diligently and devotedly, then, we may apply our energies to the service of the Lord, in word, in thought and in deed, it will ever be in accord with the expression of king David, in the acknowledgment of, and thanksgiving for all that was so willingly given for the building of the temple: "For all things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given Thee."

\* \* \* \*

The declaration of Revelation is, that "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." The Church of Christ is beautifully and fittingly described as the Bride; and this is the appeal, in love, to all: "Come." "And whosoever will, let him come, and partake of the waters of life freely." With this loving interest in the welfare of souls, the question then is asked, why we do not interest ourselves in the great "revivals" in progress, and in the so-called evangelists who conduct them.

The appeal made by these "evangelists" may have the effect that the preaching of John the Baptist had, for multitudes came to him; and yet he was led to exclaim, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance." Repentance is necessary; but it is only preliminary to conversion. Living "soberly, righteously and godly in this present world," as the grace of God appearing to all men teaches, are the fruits worthy of repentance.

Under the popular so-called evangelization little evidence of conversion appears, though many are comforted as converts; and if only they abstain from the grosser sins and give an uplifting influence to the moral and social welfare of the community, theirs is called a

christian life. Reformation is substituted for conversion; which is attended by only a natural and temporal reward. The life of a truly converted person will be in harmony with gospel teaching, as a result of being actuated and moved by the spirit of Christ, possessed in the heart. To comfort an unconverted person with a hope of salvation, is not in accord with the promptings of love. We cannot co-operate in an inconsistent and unscriptural course. Love constrains us to withdraw and reprove in word and in deed. Love is that which love does.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Are Christians permitted to wage war, because God through Moses sanctioned it under certain conditions?

A. No. In Deut. 18: 15 we read, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;" That prophet was Christ. See Acts 3: 22, 7: 37. He commands His followers to love their enemies, and to return good for evil, and if smitten on one cheek to turn the other also. Matt. 5th Chap.

Q. Who was Peter Waldo?

A. Peter Waldo was a very wealthy man who lived in France about 800 years ago. One day while conversing with several of the principal citizens of Lyons on various matters, as is customary in the summer season in France, one of their number suddenly expired before his eyes. This happened in the year 1160. He was greatly impressed—repented of his sins—began to distribute his great wealth among the poor—called upon the Lord for help—became a leader among the persecuted followers of Christ. He was a man of great ability, and had many relatives who befriended him. It was four or five years before they were

utterly driven from the city of Lyons by their enemies, (the dominant church). He was very active in the faith and as a consequence the true Church was given in the name of Waldenses. We are told there are people in some parts of Europe who still bear the name of Waldenses, but in doctrine and life have departed far from what Peter Waldo advocated.

Q. What effect did martyrdom have on the true Church?

A. Many souls who witnessed the steadfastness of the saints, under cruel persecution, were convinced that God was with them—as a consequence the Church grew rapidly. When persecution ceased, and satan no more came as a roaring lion, openly destroying the God-fearing by cruel torture and death, conditions changed and satan came in the form of an angel of light. 2 Cor. 11: 14. If true Christians, by God's help, pass through life during times of religious liberty without becoming defiled by the spotted garment of the flesh, they have perhaps overcome as well as the beloved martyrs of old. We pray not for persecution, but for grace to remain humble and keep separate from the world.

Q. What are the fundamental and unmistakable marks by which Christ's Church can and must be known?

A. Every member of the Church will confess implicit faith in Christ and a willingness to observe all His teachings. This faith in Christ is neither an uncertain opinion nor a bare confession of the mouth, but a firm, sure confidence of the heart, which doubts not the things promised by God in Christ. This faith begets in the heart of the believer, an inward taste of the kindness of God and of the power of the world to come.

This faith of the heart is known the very best to God, who is a discernor of the intents and thoughts of the heart.

But to man who has no way to judge this faith, but by the fruits of the same, which he hears and sees, there are certain signs given to distinguish it. Obedience to His Holy Word both in spirit and in letter, love, humility, peace, gentleness, a willingness to part with all earthly possessions, if necessity requires it, rather than to contend for them, will be marks to identify all God's children. Unity, harmony, fellowship and reproof are marks whereby the Church, which is composed of God's children, may be identified.

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### HELPS

It is such a help when a little trial comes—one of the petty vexations of daily life, which we all experience, and which at the time seems so great:—it is such a help in enduring it, to think, it will not be long—the end will come, and it may be soon. Shall we allow such trifles to cause us to lose our temper, and wound people's feelings, and thus deny the power of Christ?

It is a help in all trials to think that the matter itself—be it a broken plate, or great financial loss, or worse than these, the pain that comes from unkindness received from those we love—all these things, and their like, are temporal and will pass away, while the spirit in which we meet such trials goes to make the record for or against us, in God's Book of Judgment. The things above on which we should desire to set our affections, and for which we should suffer, are *eternal*. Soon we shall pass into eternity. Will these things of time *then* be important?

We ourselves determine what our future state shall be. God has made us free agents. He has plainly stated His terms on which we can have eternal life and happiness with Him; and He has of-

fered to help us to comply with these terms. Let us then not allow temporal matters to dim our spiritual view and to cause us to lose sight of the main object of this life, which is to love God with all thy heart and soul, and mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself, as we read in St. Mark 12. If this frame of mind control us, we will strive not to be turned away from this worthy object.

It is surprising how a very little circumstance may cause us, (or at least some of us), to become uncharitable, or in other ways to depart from christian living. Ah yes, we all are human, and daily are humiliated by not being able to live up to our ideal of the Christ-life.

In our "first illumination" we may have thought with horror of Peter's weakness when a maid caused him to deny his beloved Master. But after years of experience with our own human nature we are ready to think of Peter with sympathy. Being so very human we have great need of Divine help. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psalm 46: 1.

Lancaster, Pa.

L. L. F.

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### PAUL AND THE EPHESIAN CHURCH

As we learn to know intimately those who have the rule in the Church of Christ, so, in the early days of the church, there were those to whom the Apostle Paul was very near. He had a special interest in the church at Ephesus, for we read of several accounts relative to it in the Acts of the Apostles.

Ephesus was the third starting-point of Christianity, the first being Jerusalem, the second Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians. It was the seat of one of those great councils in the then known world which defined the faith of the Christian Church. Here its

principles were fully developed and promulgated, and it was the first of the seven churches of Asia.

Paul first came to Ephesus from Corinth. He taught for a short time in the synagogue, reasoning with the Jews, and "when they desired him to tarry longer with them he consented not," as he was very desirous to keep the feast that was soon to be celebrated in Jerusalem.

On his second visit he found about twelve disciples of whom he inquired whether they had received the Holy Ghost. They knew nothing of the Holy Spirit, having received nothing but John's baptism. After being fully instructed, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and "when Paul had laid his hands upon them the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied."

"He went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months;" but when some opposed him and endeavored to dissuade others he departed from them and separated the disciples, confirming the inquiry: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed." He disputed daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years, "so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." The knowledge of God grew so much in power that many who used curious arts brought their books together and burned them, the value of which was 50,000 pieces of silver, possibly worth \$10,000.

But this change in the religion of the people aroused wrath in those who made silver shrines for the goddess Diana. A meeting was called by Demetrius, a silver smith, to discuss this matter and he said: "Ye see and hear that not alone at Ephesus but almost throughout all Asia this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no

gods which are made with hands; so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipeth." The whole city was in confusion, and they caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, who were Paul's companions in travel, and rushed to the theater. But when Paul endeavored to reach the people, the disciples would not allow him to do so. Their excitement was so great that for the space of two hours they cried, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" It was with difficulty that the town clerk was able to gain their attention to tell them that they should decide this question in an orderly and lawful manner, for the tumult rendered them liable to a charge of sedition, since they would be entirely unable to give any reasonable account of this uproar.

Because of this uproar it was inadvisable for Paul to remain at Ephesus as he had planned. So he departed to go to Macedonia. As he wanted to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost he determined to *sail* past Ephesus, on account of lack of time. He proceeded to Miletus where the vessel had to stop. While there he could not refrain from asking the elders of the church of Ephesus to come to him, a distance of thirty to forty miles, for their last affectionate interview.

He testified that he taught them publicly and from house to house, of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he anticipated the sufferings he was to encounter for the sake of the faith, yet the thought uppermost in his mind was the future life of the church. What an intimate picture is presented when he tells them: "And now behold I know that ye



all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." Like us, they too were human, for the account is that they "sorrowed most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." This is an example for us to look up to those who are able to lead us in the way of life, as we are taught "to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."

Before Paul left them, he prayed that they might not faint because of his tribulations for them, and in the fourth chapter of his epistle to them, which contains the confession of the faith, he beseeches them that they should "endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." He cautions them that greivous wolves shall enter in among them, and that from among themselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. He said, "therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears."

The epistle to the Ephesians was written while Paul was in prison, about the year A. D. 62 and is known as one of the "prison epistles." He tells them, "now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ;" and, "For this cause I Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, \* \* \* bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, \* \* \* that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."

Later in writing to Timothy, whom he desired to remain at Ephesus, he says he wished him to do so that he "might charge some that they teach no other doctrine," for even at that time there were some who had made shipwreck of

their faith. "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; \* \* \* for the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

The epistle to the church of Ephesus closes with this impressive benediction, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

Waynesboro, Pa.

B. F. M.

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### ELI, THE FOURTEENTH JUDGE OF ISRAEL

After Samson, Eli became Judge. He was also High Priest of the Lord in the Tabernacle at Shiloh. His history is told in connection with the history of Samuel.

While Eli was Priest and Judge, a man named Elkanah came to worship at Shiloh. Elkanah had two wives, as many men at that time had. The one wife had children while the other whose name was Hannah, was childless. Hannah was sad and prayed to the Lord saying, if she was given a son she would consecrate him to the service of the Lord as long as he lived. Her prayer was answered; she was given a son whom she named Samuel, meaning "asked of the Lord." As soon as he was old enough she took him to Eli and the child at once entered into his ministrations under the direction of Eli.

Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phineas were also priests and assisted their father in the work of the Priesthood. They were not honest, good men. Their father knew they did wickedly, but did not reprove them severely as he should have done. A man of God appeared unto Eli

telling him because he had allowed these evils to continue, the strength and influence of his family would be destroyed. Eli was distressed and asked his sons why they did these evil things, but he did not punish them as he should have done, nor shut them out of the tabernacle, for they were not fit to be priests.

One night when Eli had lain down to rest and Samuel too was in bed, a voice was heard, saying, "Samuel, Samuel." He immediately ran to Eli and asked what he wanted. Eli told him he had not called, he should again lie down. He did so and again heard the voice call, "Samuel." He did this the third time and then said to Eli, "Here am I for thou didst call me." It had been a long time since the Lord had spoken to man as he earlier had done to Moses and Joshua and Eli believing Samuel's call was a message from the Lord, told him if he was again called to say, "Speak Lord for Thy servant heareth." The Lord then told Samuel of the destruction that should come upon Eli and his family. He said it would send a thrill of terror through Israel. He would punish Eli and his two sons because Eli had not taught them to be obedient and serve the Lord.

Samuel lay until morning fearing to tell Eli what the Lord had spoken. We do not read that Samuel was told to deliver the message to Eli, but Eli asked him to tell the whole truth and conceal nothing. Samuel told him all the Lord had said. It was a sad message, but Eli said: "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth good."

Israel engaged the Philistines in battle, but she was defeated and many of her army were slain. The people of Israel thought the Lord was not with them and decided to bring the ark of the covenant from Shiloh. They hoped its presence might be a charm and help

them defend themselves from their enemies. They may have remembered how the ark was carried around Jericho when that city was taken, but they forgot that the Lord had commanded Joshua what to do and he had been obedient. The Lord had now forsaken them on account of disobedience.

When the ark was brought into the camp it was received with great shouts of joy so that the earth rang with the sound. When the Philistines heard it and knew what it meant they were afraid and said, "God is come unto the camp of the Hebrews; who shall deliver us out of the hand of this mighty God?" It caused them to fight with all their strength and the Israelites were defeated. Many were killed and Hophni and Phineas, the two sons of Eli, who had gone with the ark to take care of it, were also slain. The ark was taken and carried away by the Philistines into their own land.

Eli, who had grown old and was nearly blind, sat trembling near the door of the Tabernacle and when a messenger came and told him the result of the battle and of the death of his two sons, he was greatly distressed. But when he was told the ark of God was taken, he fell backward off his seat and his neck was broken. All Israel wept for the loss of the ark. They were more distressed over its loss than for their defeat by the Philistines.

The wife of Phineas, who died soon after hearing of her husband's death named her newly born son, Ichabod, saying, "the glory has departed from Israel." The state of Israel was indeed sad. Their army was defeated, the priests slain, the supreme Magistrate dead and the Ark of God was taken by their enemies.

## A CHILD'S STORY

### THE STORY OF ST. LUKE

My dear little children :

St. Luke was the companion of St. Paul, we read that he accompanied him on many of his travels and that he attended St. Paul when he was twice imprisoned in Rome. St. Luke is supposed to have written "The Acts of the Apostles."

We do not know from what country he came, or when he became a Christian, as he never once mentions himself, but we think he was one of the seventy disciples.

In his gospel he tells many parables, miracles, talks and events that the others do not tell, and more of what happened after Jesus arose from the grave, than either Matthew or Mark.

Luke is supposed to have been a man of great learning. His style of writing is so simple and so beautiful, and his way of telling things that happened, is so vivid and clear that we see them as in a picture, for this reason he is considered one of the greatest historians.

St. Luke was a Physician, and he is spoken of as "The Beloved Physician." I always think of him as being a gentle, kind man.

We all love a good kind doctor. He is

the one to help us draw our first breath, and watches over our childhood days, so that we learn good habits, and grow up with healthy, strong bodies. When we are sick how kindly he tries to help us to get well, and when death is near he is last to try to make us comfortable.

I have always had a great regard for a good doctor and I do not doubt that some of you too have been sick and have felt just as I feel.

Once when I was a little girl, I was awakened in the night, and told that my mother was very ill, and that I should dress quickly and very quietly come into her room. I was so afraid she would die. They told me the doctor would soon come.

At that time there were no telephones to call the doctor, nor automobiles to bring him quickly. I waited at the gate to hear the welcome sound of his horse's hoofs on the hard road, and oh! how glad I was when I saw his buggy draw up to our house.

I shall never forget how happy I was when told my mother was better, and would soon be well again.

No doubt Doctor Luke saw how much wiser and greater Jesus was than he, Jesus had only to speak the word and the people were cured of their ailments.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.