

GOOD TIDINGS

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

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BUSINESS NOTICE

We wish to draw our patrons' attention, that nearly all subscriptions to GOOD TIDINGS expire with this number.

As a reminder an "Expiration Notice" is placed in each copy of all subscriptions ending with July number. We ask all to carefully read and comply with "Notice." We hope this periodical is appreciated by our many readers and that all of the subscribers will renew their subscriptions *promptly*.

In consideration of the expenses attending the publishing of GOOD TIDINGS it has been thought necessary to raise the subscription price; we prefer not to do this, but instead wish to increase the circulation and for the present keep the price at fifty cents per year; with this object in view we ask the support of our patrons in securing as many new subscribers as possible. We believe this can be done and hope our anticipations may be realized.

We kindly invite all who have the gift for writing, to do so as a duty, without special solicitation. Contributions for the October issue should be received not later than August 1.

We have recently secured a number of "Menno Simon's Complete Works" and can offer them as long as they last at the very low price of \$2.50 per copy. They are new books and formerly sold at \$4.50 per copy.

Address all orders to GOOD TIDINGS, 840 East Orange Street, Lancaster, Pa.

EDITORIAL

Of all the endowments conferred upon us by our Creator, none has more significance than intelligent vocal sound or voice. It not only conveys our thoughts but often betrays our emotions and feelings. Its peculiar tone and quality help to identify persons. One need not be seen to be recognized. Once known, our voices will tell who we are. Just as memory holds a face or form, so does it cherish the sound of a voice. A certain writer has said, "There is no sound that so vibrates in the heart as does the human voice. Long after those whom we have known and loved have passed to the silent land or have been separated from us there still remains the memory of their voices."

We love to recall the voice which appealed to our highest longings or desires and which also was a soothing balm to our troubled hearts. The kindly voice silenced by death still echoes in the hearts of loved ones left behind.

As the human voice is so significant and does so indelibly stamp itself upon memory it may well typify the conscience and the grace of God which visits all mankind teaching them to deny ungodliness and worldly lust and to live soberly and righteously in this present world. We are familiar with the still small voice that reminds us of duty.

In the ages past God has spoken with priests and prophets and with the fathers of our faith. He has communicated with man directly and also through His angels. He has appealed and ever does appeal through nature. The Psalmist referring to the heavens and the firmament said, "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." But in this present age God speaks to us through His Son. We have on record from the Inspired Page that there came a voice out of the cloud, "This is my

beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." How wise it is to heed the admonition, "To-day, if ye hear His voice harden not your hearts."

To obey God's word is to be brought into a relation best described in the words of our Savior—"My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me." "A stranger will they not follow . . . for they know not the voice of a stranger." Throughout His word the Savior has voiced the Father's love and care for mankind. The theme is always worthy of repetition.

This number of GOOD TIDINGS presents the thoughts and views of the twenty-four writers, but they are as one voice proclaiming the unity, peace and purity of the church. Would that this voice in harmony with God's word, uplifting in sentiment, encouraging to and qualifying for heavenly association, might reach and appeal to the hearts of many heretofore unwilling to obey divine teaching.

JULY

Each season has a pleasure rare,
Each brings a joy that all may share.
And now July with warmth is here
And blessings lasting all the year.

The plants that grow from tiny seeds
Warm days and nights do surely need;
The ear of corn would ne'er mature
Did not July its warmth insure.

Then come July thou'rt welcome too,
We love thy flowers and skies so blue.
We love the fruits that thou dost give,
By thy maturing grains we live.

The months and years this pledge renew
That seasons will their course pursue;
Seed time and harvest, heat and cold,
God's wondrous power to us unfold.

DUTY

In this world duty is manifold, and often perplexing; we seek to understand its principles and the basis on which it rests. The moral law embodied in the ten commandments is the foundation of all morality. It is a moral standard which is unchanging, because it is a revelation of true righteousness, and the distinction it makes between right and wrong is eternal.

This law which is the basis of moral duty, and which is expressed by the ten commandments, is written on our hearts. Moses said to his people, "This commandment which I commanded thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. But it is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." By the light of conscience we perceive an essential difference between right and wrong, between good and evil; and we know that we ought to choose the good, and refuse the evil: "For thine ear shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way walk ye in it when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Even the heathen who are without a written law, Paul says, "are a law unto themselves, and show the work of the law written in their hearts." It is one law for all men and binding on all. It defines certain duties, and enjoins them upon us; it makes them imperative, and pronounces judgment on evil.

This innate law reveals itself more fully as it is respected and obeyed. It reveals God as the Author of law, holy, just, and righteous, One Supreme God, and that our duty is to fear, reverence, and serve Him and only Him. It teaches our duty toward our parents, and to our fellow-men. It reveals to us a much deeper meaning in the commandments than the need for mere outward obedience to the commands and

that their importance lies not so much in the letter as in the underlying spirit.

If we study the eighth and ninth commandments we will see that they mean more than stealing and lying: if we fail to speak the truth honestly, unmoved by fear or favor or policy; if we make any false, damaging or slanderous statements about any person, or bear false tales that would sow discord, trouble and sorrow, our conscience tells us that we violate the spirit of the commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." Again if we are unfair in our dealings and misrepresent an article we sell, or take advantage of another in buying; if we take what does not properly belong to us, or benefit by a mistake in an account or a will; if we do not pay our debts, and spend money which belongs to others; if we withhold more than is meet from our servants, or do not render a just day's work for a just day's pay, we are not free. No set of rules could be given that would cover all the details of human life and conduct, and no man can teach another. Our duty, as it arises, must be revealed to us from within.

We have a criterion, however, in the Golden Rule in which we are directed always to put ourselves in another's place, to do as we would be done by. No rule of duty could be more simple or make a more direct appeal to the understanding and the conscience. In persons who, "by reason of use, have their sense exercised to discern both good and evil" these fundamental principles of justice and integrity become established and are plainly written in their minds like the letters on the two tables of stone hewn from Mt. Sinai.

The revelation of this law, then, makes clear our moral duties and guides us to right conduct. But it does more. As its spirituality is more clearly seen, it enters deeper into our experience and

becomes a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; it judges our motives. It condemns selfishness, and it requires love in our actions, for love is the essence of the law. It demands more than it can supply, since it is not "a quickening Spirit" and has no power to impart life and renew the heart.

Love is the fruit of faith, and the mission of the law is not completed until it has prepared us for faith, as clearly shown in the Epistles to the Galatians and the Romans. It was always a perversion of the intent and purpose of the law for men to seek righteousness by works, for the promise of the Messiah preceded the giving of the law; and the law itself, by the sense of sin and guilt which it creates in the soul, proves that we need a righteousness better than our own.

With the coming of faith, however, moral duty has not ended. Because justification is by faith there is no excuse for the error into which men have fallen, that of looking on conduct as of little importance and of regarding it lightly. The mission of the Baptist was to call men to repentance, and he told them to bring forth fruits worthy thereof. In repentance we die not only to self-righteousness, but also to unrighteousness and sin. To be prepared for the Gospel we first must become righteous. Duty is not lessened, "every moral precept of the law is incorporated in the Gospel," and while there is in its blessed promises, forgiveness of sin, there is no tolerance of wrong-doing.

But morality without love is cold, and may end in the pride of self-righteousness, and good works may be done to be seen of men. Love is the principle in duty which makes it acceptable to God. Law has failed to make men dutiful; knowledge and wisdom fail. Love, alone, is the power which impels us to do our duty. Therefore we must attain to love, and love must possess the heart.

The Spirit of love came into the world in the person of our Savior, and "He manifested it unto us" by His obedience and complete submission to the will of His Father, and by the sacrifice of Himself for us. He was yet much more to us than a pattern. "I am come," He said, "that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly." He brought redemption and grace; and all who have felt the eternal judgment of God's law upon their sins, and have accepted the promise of pardon and peace by faith, become renewed in the spirit of their minds; selfishness is replaced in their hearts by love, and they enter into the new covenant which is a covenant of grace. And now grace imposes on them a higher obligation than law and it creates a new motive for obedience, as the apostle John says: "We love Him because He first loved us."

Duty now is not done by the constraint of law, but of love, and its limits are not fixed by the considerations of right and justice. It pays what it owes, but it does much more, it fulfills the precepts given in the New Testament, viz.: if any man compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain; resist not him that is evil; if any man go to law with thee and take away thy coat, let him have the cloak also; love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you; condescend to men of low estate; he that is greatest among you shall be your servant; bear ye one another's burdens; be of one mind in the Lord. Here duty is presented as the fruit of the divine Spirit and divine love. It is a love patterned after the love of the Savior, which leads to the denial of self for the good of others, for it is in this spirit only that His commandments can be kept as He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

The sum of duty is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned. The summary of the commandments is to love God supremely and thy neighbor as thyself.

Since, under the new covenant, it is said, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them," and "they shall be all taught of God," the knowledge of our duties and also their fulfilment, depends on faithfulness to God—to our convictions enlightened by His Spirit and word. If we do our duty to God we will do our duty also to our fellow-men.

M. H. M.

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

THE MERCIES OF GOD

The term GOD implies the eternal, infinite and incomprehensible Being, the Creator of all things, who preserves and governs all things by His almighty power and wisdom. Mankind are included in the creation, and as they are endowed with intelligence, they recognize an object of worship in their Creator. The holy men of old, while they were void of the spirit, were so endowed that they could appreciate the goodness and mercy of God. They gave expression to their faith, not only by obedience to what was commanded them, but by thanksgiving and praise.

Mercy is a wonderful attribute of God, and is as inseparable from Him as heat and light are from the meridian sun. Suffering and mercy are opposites, but in God there is that essential perfection which relieves the suffering of His creatures. Since there is no power but of God, all that occurs is permitted by Him. God's mercy, love and kindness are questioned by the unbelieving now as they ever were. The Psalmist said, "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him."

God is from everlasting, and mankind from yesterday, yet His mercy is often questioned. The span of life from the days of accountability to death is very brief compared to eternity; yet it is time sufficient to recognize the Supreme God with all His attributes of mercy.

Job was an example of all that man can meet with in this life. From the highest prosperity, he was suddenly cast down to utter poverty and misery, deprived of all his property and children, stricken with a loathsome disease, forsaken and insulted by his wife and friends; but after the severest trial of faith and patience he was restored to more than his former prosperity and happiness. The experience of Job has ever been and will continue to be a rich source of comfort to the children of affliction.

Job's early life of prosperity might be compared to man's carnal life which can be defended by the strong arm of the law; his life of poverty and desertion by his wife and friends to the Christian life; and his later prosperity to the life when man inherits all things. During the carnal life, or the life of self, it is the privilege of mankind to love their neighbors and hate their enemies; advantages may attend them as it is their privilege to sue at the law, take up arms in defense of their person, their property and their country. In the Christian life these liberties are denied by Him who has authority. He clearly states that to be a citizen in His kingdom the privileges permitted under Moses must be denied.

God's design is that all should be saved, and in Christ all can be saved; but before we are in a saved state we must possess the Christ life which is one of suffering and self-denial.

There will be a disposition to give up all for His sake (if necessary) as Job did, rather than sue or defend by force. The scribe expressing a willingness to

follow the Savior was told "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head," proving His poverty in this world. The follower of Christ is commanded to buy as though he possessed not, and to use this world as not abusing it. He may be called upon to suffer extreme affliction in this life, but what a mercy, that, "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Living the life that Christ taught necessitates separation from the idle pastimes of the world, and from all doctrines which are not sound—the observing of which is a rebuke to all who are not in His kingdom. Thus the light diffused by the subjects of His kingdom reproves and convicts the world. Light and darkness have no communion, neither will those who are in possession of the spiritual life worship with those who prove by their life that they are in spiritual darkness. The standing command is, "Come out from among them and be ye separate." When not understood, such separation may cause contempt, but God commanded it, and as God is love, this command is a fruit of love and mercy.

Lemoyne, Pa.

J. I. M.

TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

"God is a spirit; and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4: 24.

This worship is the most solemn act of which man is capable. It is a duty all men owe to God, owing to their relation to Him as Creator, Preserver and Benefactor. In His presence all meet on an equality, for He is the maker of them all. The ceremonial worship of the law has come to an end; and Christ, in restoring the true spiritual worship under the new covenant, prescribed no

set form of worship for His children. In the memorable interview with the Samaritan woman (from which the above text is taken), He declared that the hour cometh when the true spiritual children shall neither worship upon Mount Gerizim nor at Jerusalem, as these places should not much longer be appropriated to the worship of God. Under the gospel dispensation, true worship is not prescribed with grand and costly temples, multiplied sacrifices and outward ceremonies. These had their appointment under the law, and had the shadow of good things to come. It is now a spiritual service adapted to the nature of the object of worship. It is the sincere desire of every Christian that his will is brought into subjection to the divine will. This is an indispensable qualification for spiritual worship.

Apostolic language is very impressive: "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His." The vitality and glory of Christianity lies in a clear knowledge of the spirituality of the Gospel. No earthly attainment can confer the qualifications for the acceptable worship of God. It is alone His Spirit which begets faith and love in the heart, and these alone can confer the virtues and graces which are essential to true worship. Literary attainments can but confer worldly wisdom, but cannot confer true love and humility, which are indispensable to true worship. Having the spirit of Christ implies the presence of the graces and virtues, and the disposition and life that characterized Him during His sojourn upon earth. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself to walk even as He walked."

A clear and full knowledge of our dependence upon the presence of the Spirit of Christ is essential to true worship. It is also necessary to have a willing mind, and that we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice so as to be able to

say, "Not my will, but Thy will, be done." It is necessary that we separate from all evil, even the evil thoughts of the heart, and from the uncleanness of our depraved nature. "The unclean shall not pass over it." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Hear what the law says: "And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil?" Apostolic teaching is confirmatory of the above: "Wherefore, lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." Herein is set forth the danger of half-hearted worship; of coming before the Lord with one's heart overcharged with cares of this life. Naturally, bearing a heavy burden weakens the knees, and lack of courage and zeal causes the hands to hang down. When one looks too much upon the things that are seen, and the affections become set upon the things below, the spiritual energies of the soul are weakened, while faith and love decline, and thus we are disqualified to fight the good fight of faith; and then it is that in prayer we draw nigh unto the Lord with our mouths, while our hearts are far from Him. There is probably no Christian duty so little understood by professed Christians generally, as prayer; or that is so much abused. True prayer has its origin in the Divine; and there must be a concurrence with the same in the will of the worshipper in asking for those things with which the word and Spirit impress His children, as being needful for them and honorable to their God.

It is evident that the possession of the Spirit of God is a necessary qualification to prayer, for by it His will and our spiritual wants are revealed. Many persons think they do God a service by repeating the Lord's Prayer. They fail

to recognize the qualification indicated by the first sentence. No one who cherishes sin, or is not in full accord with the life and doctrine of Christ, can consistently call God his Father. It is only those who are led by the Spirit of God who are sons of God; and this Spirit teaches them to hear and obey Christ. Such may say, "Our Father, which art in heaven." All who repeat the Lord's Prayer, and do not hear and obey Christ, are saying that which is not true in relation to themselves. They have not believed in nor received the spirit of adoption which authorizes them to say, Abba, Father. Neither can such say, "Thy kingdom come," since they are not willing to be ruled by the Spirit of Christ, nor are they willing that His kingdom be established in their hearts. Neither can they pray, "Thy will be done," so long as they do their own will and disregard the will of God. Neither are such willing to love their enemies and to forgive their trespassers. Therefore, they should not utter that prayer, for by so doing they invoke the heavy judgment of God upon themselves.

A qualification for prayer is a willing mind and an obedient disposition, being subject to the Holy Spirit, which brings fellowship with God, and imparts a knowledge of His perfection, and begets hope in His mercy, regard for His word, gratitude for His goodness, pleasure in His service and a desire for the promotion of His glory. God does not regard a fine collection of well arranged words when they are not the expression of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. So it is with all human effort, and with all forms of worship; their acceptance before God depends upon the will and sincerity of Him who prays and acts.

When the number and extent of Christian duties are considered on one hand, and the depravity and weakness of human nature on the other, we may ex-

pect, even from devout worshippers of God, failings in the way of neglect of duty. They may, through want of watchfulness, and through the infirmity of their nature, neglect or violate some of those manifold duties. But they would not do so purposely; and when they fail they are reminded of the same by the Spirit of truth, which Christ promises to every believer, and which leads them to repentance and to seek forgiveness through the intercession of Christ.

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

THE DOCTRINE OF LOVE

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3: 16.

The text gives the motive of love for God to sacrifice His Son to save those who believe. Isaiah says, “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” John the Baptist says, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Paul says, “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” The Savior said of little children, “Of such is the kingdom of God.” These testimonies mean that the sin in Eden is atoned for in those who are too young to believe, as well as for those who are forgiven, because they believe.

Redemption is the service of love for us all. Then all should be grateful. The Creator controls all things that He has made, and He controls us, if we heed the law that is inherent in us, for there is a sense of right in us, an influence wanting to control us, which Christ calls “the drawing of the Father,” that will make us temples of God, for Him to dwell in if we give Him place. Some yield to this influence of Divinity very young, others when older, some never,

and crush it causing angels to mourn! The latter are “without God in the world.”

Of the Gentiles Paul says, “They are a law unto themselves.” Physical things are controlled by law, so are the things spiritual, and violation of either law may bring suffering. As pardon and life is offered to the transgressor who wills to obey the Son, the decree is, if we do not forgive others their trespasses neither will the Father forgive us. The Father asks penitence of the transgressor to be forgiven, so may we demand it, nevertheless, the Father shows His beneficence to His enemies as well as to His friends, so shall we show love to all, as love is shown to us.

There are two kinds of love. Social love befriends those who befriend us, in doing which the Savior says, “What do ye more than others?” Spiritual love does what God does to us—it loves those that hate us, and does them deeds of kindness. The Christian does not slight them who slight him, no more than God slights the sinner, who too is God’s enemy. He seeks by love to gain him. The dying words of the Prince of Love were, “Father, forgive them.”

Spiritual love binds together those who possess it—“be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” It labors for the welfare of the priceless soul. It will not offend a fellow-believer by indulging any doubtful liberty, nor will the scrupulous judge harshly the liberty of those who are inclined to indulge. Love reconciles opposites. When a departure from sound doctrine occurs love will labor to restore those who are “overtaken in a fault.” If repentance does not follow, it will “withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly.” By this rule those who are retained in the church are necessarily orderly.

By the law of love no one will sue an-

other one at the law, for among believers, it is said, matters of difference shall be adjusted "before the saints," and not "before the unbelievers." The Savior says, if by suit at law our coat shall be taken we shall let the aggressor have the "cloak also." If we are to be so passive under aggression, the spirit of passiveness will not allow us to aggress, for love never starts contention.

The Savior and Apostles, in teaching to beware of false doctrines and to turn away, do it from love to reprove the erring. To aid those in need is a service of love 'v those who are prospered. To do what we can for the welfare and happiness of others is an office of love. Love to God works obedience to His glorious will, revealed to us by His beloved Son, as said: "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

We owe love to our civil rulers, who have great responsibilities, from whom in doing good we "Shall have praise of the same." We should cheerfully pay tribute and custom, and be subject "for conscience sake;" but when they ask us to do acts contrary to love we have the example of the apostles in Jerusalem to excuse us, who when forbidden to preach replied: "We ought to obey God rather than men," and they continued preaching, bearing the consequences. God is higher than earthly rulers and when they oppose God's commands the true disciple will obey God at the peril of estate and life, by the help of God. The Savior and apostles were slain for obeying God. John was spared and was exiled. The doctrine of love requires a purified church, to be married "to Him who is raised from the dead." Love sheds sunlight into the family, into the community, into the church, it is the abiding attribute, "charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they

shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

The Scriptures mention two distinct kingdoms or states. It was said to the disciples one "is within you." The other is the world, which the Savior said, to His disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Because the disciples are chosen out of the world they hold a marked distinction, and to be true to their calling they must possess qualities that are as different from worldly people as light is from darkness, since they are called "the light of the world," and the world is said to be in darkness. The difference cannot be because they worship, for many worship who, aside of church-going, belong fully to the world in their manner of life. The difference must be in their distinct course of life, in which the fruits of self-denial appear. The Savior puts strong emphasis on self-denial—restraining our inborn nature. The true life is a sacrifice of what we incline to by nature. This expression is used: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." Under the old dispensation God accepted only such beasts for sacrifices as were physically unblemished; in the new service He asks a blameless life.

God was manifest in the flesh, thereby showing a high type of humanity, and to us the invitation is: "If any man serve me, let him follow me." Our faithful effort is accepted while in our attainment we lack, which sense brings humiliation, "that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

What nobler monument can be built than that which God erects in the lives of those who obey His will, of those who render service to others, who master their own temper, who are temperate in all things, who are just to every one, who keep purity of character, who show courtesy and kindness to all!

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND DIVINE LOVE

We easily perceive that much of the misery and unhappiness in the world is caused by mankind seeking to satisfy their selfish desires by promoting their worldly interests, without regarding the interests of their fellowmen or neighbors. This selfish disposition is manifest in private, corporate, national and international affairs, separately and often in powerful combinations of interests arrayed against others, and employing stratagem and untruthful propaganda, resulting in hatred, litigation and war, with a long train of evils following in their wake, attended with misery, sorrow and suffering that can never be told. If it were not for the influence of God's grace in varying degrees, restraining mankind, we question the possibility of happiness in this world.

Heaven, as a place or condition of perfect happiness, is what mankind generally look forward to, with a hope of its final attainment. To meet the requirement of happiness, in accord with that hope, it must be a place or condition where these disturbing influences are removed.

Christ declared that he chose His disciples out of the world, and spoke of them as being in the world but not of the world. His purpose was to bring them into a happy condition, where these evil influences would no longer control—into His kingdom, where His spirit of divine love—love to God and love to their fellowman would actuate them in their conduct through life, instead of self-love; and meekness and humility instead of exaltation and pride.

Man by nature does not love God supremely, and his neighbor as himself. He is exalted within himself and proud, rather than humble, meek and lowly. While he may love those who love him, he cannot love his enemies, in accord

with Christ's teaching and example. He may modify his disposition and improve his moral deportment, but he cannot change his selfish desires and promptings, and his exalted mind, so that the love of God in the heart may become the actuating influence in his life. Prior to the experience of this necessary change in the heart of man, there is only one command in New Testament teaching that really applies: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." This is not in accord with our natural desires, for, as the Prophet foresaw and foretold of Christ, "He hath no form nor comeliness, no beauty that we should desire Him: . . . and we hid as it were our faces from Him."

It is only when we become willing to surrender our will to the Lord and obey the teaching and leadings of "the grace of God which hath appeared unto all men and which bringeth salvation," that we can realize how hopeless our situation is when we rely on the arm of the flesh. Our sins separate between us and our God, therefore it should be clear to everyone that we need a Redeemer, Savior and Mediator. Self-knowledge alone brings self-abasement and humility, and through repentance and renunciation of our sinful desires the way opens to newness of life, in which the love of God in the heart prompts us to do that which accords with Christ's teachings. This constitutes the new birth, which, as Christ taught, is necessary before we can see the kingdom of heaven.

Though Christ told His disciples that "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and "behold the kingdom of God is within you," and that humility as exemplified by a little child was required of them before they could enter the kingdom, they were yet looking for it to come "with observation," in a visible

form, wondering who among them should be greatest therein. They had not yet received His spirit in their hearts, consequently they could not see or comprehend the nature of His kingdom. They tarried at Jerusalem as they were told, until they were endowed with the spirit. It is said, "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." They could then see the kingdom; it was not only in their hearts but it was realized in their midst as it will be amongst all who become willing to follow Christ in humility and meekness. When willing to deny ourselves, bear the cross and follow Him and come under the influence of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, we can then truthfully and consistently utter the prayer, "Thy kingdom come," because our desire is that Christ by His spirit should reign and rule in our hearts, giving us power to subordinate every selfish desire to the will of the heavenly Father.

The basis of our love and service to God now is, that "We love because God first loved us." (1 John 4: 19. Revised version.) For "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That love can never find full expression in our lives without self-knowledge revealing to us our helples and unsaved condition without a hope, promise of, or claim to salvation. It is only when we fully realize this, that we can appreciate the depth of love involved in the plan of salvation—love infinite and boundless. The humble service we may then render in turn, however full it may be, we will ever regard as an insufficient expression of our love, "because He first loved us."

Such service voluntarily rendered in love, is ever distinct from that rendered in a legal or arbitrary way. The de-

sire may be to merit God's approval by rendering obedience to gospel commands, engaging in and contributing to works of charity and deeds which are morally uplifting, and in modifying an evil disposition and habits, thereby improving our moral deportment. The Apostle contrasts such service, declaring: "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." Here is seeming charity and zeal unto death, yet of no avail without divine love as the motive.

Love is the ruling principle in Christ's kingdom and when shed abroad in our hearts, it will find expression in our every day life. In the life of Paul we see the change wrought by the love of God in the heart: for when we first hear of him he was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," and now we have the 13th chapter 1st Corinthians, in which he extols love as being above all things; he tells us that, Love suffereth long, is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, doth not behave unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity.

When divine love actuates us instead of self-love it begets in us the christian virtues, and fits all who come under its influence, for christian fellowship, as in the case of Paul, and of them that believed on the day of Pentecost, who were made of one heart and one soul. In heaven every cause of unhappiness is removed, so in Christ's kingdom on earth the association of Christ's followers must be one of unity, accord and harmony; and to preserve that happy condition the exercise of love is continually required, and will be manifest as Paul writes, in patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness and sincerity.

The Apostle's reminder is, "Be kindly

affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another," and "be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Thus active love among Christ's followers is expressed in an humble, meek and lowly service, resulting in peace, unity and fellowship, in contrast with that rendered according to man's selfish inclinations, with all the sad consequences as noted.

The result of coming under the actuating influence of divine love, will also be manifest by loving our enemies, whom we, while under the promptings of self-love were unable to love, returning good for evil to those on whom before we sought to be avenged; bearing injustice and wrong, as in the teaching and example of the Savior.

Such love and service to God is expressed in a non-worldly life, in accord with the teaching of the apostle John, to "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." In their everyday life, then, non-worldliness will be a distinguishing characteristic of Christ's humble followers; and while it enjoins continual self-denial, and necessitates bearing the cross, there is the sure promise of inheriting "A crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Doylestown, Ohio.

C. W.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

"The kingdom of God cometh not by observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17: 20, 21.

From this answer to the Pharisees, we infer that the Jews were looking for Christ to establish a visible or political kingdom. They no doubt reasoned that Jesus, possessing such miraculous power, could soon liberate them from Roman rule and restore to them the kingdom.

On the occasion of Christ's feeding the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, the people wanted to make Him king. "He perceiving that they would come and take Him by force and make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone." His disciples, after His resurrection, asked Him saying, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts 1: 6.

This proves that even His disciples, before they had received the Holy Ghost, had no conception of the spiritual character of the kingdom of God which Christ came to establish. There is a deep significance in Christ's expression, "For behold the kingdom of God is within you." This necessitates a heart work—regeneration; for the heart of man according to nature is not adapted to the kingdom of God. The prophet says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17: 9. Until we become truly converted we cannot know our sinful heart; its varied and numerous impulses of evil, its deceitful devices, are so subtle and enticing that we cannot know it and we cannot change its character. The Lord only can search and know the heart. "Ye must be born again" said Jesus to Nicodemus. "Born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." 1 Peter 1: 23.

When by repentance we believe and accept Jesus, His spirit, by mysterious power, fits our hearts for His kingdom. We give Him our heart and He cleanses and sanctifies it. The heart now bears the fruits of the spirit; the divine virtues manifest themselves, and lead to a sober, righteous and Godly life. Love becomes the ruling principle—love to God and love to man—to all men, even our enemies.

If we would look for a visible, outward kingdom of God established by works consisting of an upright, moral, kindly, charitable life, the observance of baptism and all the ordinances, without the experience of true repentance and conversion, we would be saying, Lo here, or lo there! This would be the Kingdom by observation and not "within you." It is possible to make a very zealous profession of religion, claiming to worship God and yet not be in the kingdom of God. If we would continue to love the worldly life, take part in its many political and social functions, its many pleasures and diversions, striving for riches, fame and preferment—we would not possess one characteristic of the kingdom of God. We would be living the carnal life and would be "sowing to the flesh."

The citizens of the kingdom of God are spiritually minded. They no more enjoy carnal pleasures, "hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." They live humble, self-sacrificing lives, and their delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law do they meditate day and night. They love the society of the saints, and live in fellowship, unity and peace. Here is the impressive consideration. We must enter the kingdom of God *here* and *now*, if we would enjoy its beatitudes in the world to come. We must receive eternal life in this world. Jesus came to give eternal life. If we believe in Him He will "resurrect us from dead works to serve the living God." He said, "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." We must believe that the kingdom of God here is a counterpart of the kingdom in Heaven—they are both spiritual in character. Therefore it is self evident that if we do not enter the kingdom of God here and remain faithful subjects, we cannot expect to inherit the kingdom

hereafter, neither would we be capable of enjoying the felicity and the happy association of those spiritual and glorified beings which are in heaven.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

ALMOST PERSUADED

"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Acts 26: 28.

These words were spoken by King Agrippa following the powerful and persuasive reasoning of the apostle Paul concerning his hope in Christ and the resurrection of the dead, for which cause he had been bound by the Jews.

It was some time after he had made his defense before Felix, the governor, that Paul was brought before the highest tribunal at Rome to plead his own case. When he was brought before the king's council it is written that he stretched forth his hand and said, "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I should answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews." "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, . . . and many of the saints did I shut up in prison . . . and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them . . . and being exceedingly mad against them I persecuted them even into strange cities."

It was under the hearing of these words that King Agrippa was moved to exclaim in the language of the text, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Paul made this impressive reply, "I would that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Characteristic of the great apostle, the zeal which had made him a persecutor of the true Christians, had now changed its direction, but not its force, for he had now become a zeal-

ous leader of the Christians.

The scene must have been a most remarkable and pathetic one. Here in chains stood a learned man, one who had been instructed in the law of Moses and reported by the Jews to have had a good understanding of the scriptures. He who had breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the true followers of Christ was now bound for defending their cause, suffering with them the same cruel treatment that he had only a short time before inflicted upon them. Paul's experience affords a most striking example of the wonderful power of God and is probably recorded in the holy scriptures as a standard for comparison to all who profess to have been converted to the Christian faith.

Paul revealed to his hearers that his religious views had been completely reversed. His change of attitude toward the true Christians, his courage and boldness in defense of their principles, and his willingness to now suffer with them for Christ's sake, may have made a deeper impression on the minds of those present at this notable hearing than the words he spoke. The people evidently were amazed that one who so recently had been madly arrayed against the Christians, could now so earnestly defend the doctrines of Christ.

It does not require any very extended analysis of the acts of the apostles to prove to ourselves that their deportment coincided with their preaching. It is clearly shown that Paul's life conformed strictly to the views which he so ably set forth in the epistles bearing his name. His example gives license to our friends to look for a correspondingly marked change in the life of everyone who today professes Christianity. The greatest and most lasting power of persuasion lies in Paul's example.

Paul's trial before the king involved more than those present, or even more

than Paul himself perceived, and was of greater moment perhaps than any case ever brought before such a high council, excepting Christ's trial before Pilate. Paul's conversion and experience, the opportunity given him to speak for himself, and the recording of his experience, was no doubt a part of God's great plan to enlighten and teach us the importance of self-examination, and to persuade us to be true Christians.

The following questions should appear to every sober thinking person who reads of Paul's earlier career when he persecuted the Christians and later of his exemplary Christian life:—Am I, contrary to the teachings of Christ, ignorantly and in unbelief, following my own opinions and seemingly good intentions, as Paul had done? Should I discover, when reading the scriptures, that I am following a course in life that is not in harmony with divine love and wisdom, am I willing to acknowledge my error and change my course of life as did the great apostle Paul? Am I true and honest to myself and to God if I do things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth and give my voice against His plain and comprehensive doctrines of love and peace, when at the same time I profess before all men that I am a Christian? If I cannot answer in the affirmative, then I am not a Christian and I should be alarmed, and pray God that I may be persuaded to true Christianity, "Not only almost, but altogether."

Since all men know something of their obligation to their Creator, God, we, who have found Christ, should sacredly regard our great responsibility and accountability, that we may not only professedly bear the name "Christian," but our deeds at all times and at all places should reflect God's love and goodness, that we may be instrumental with Paul in persuading our dear fellow beings in the way of truth.

When Paul reasoned before Felix of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, which proves to us that men in every situation and station in life are sometimes moved to serious and sober reflection concerning the salvation of their souls. The great day of final reckoning is approaching and this fact is somehow, consciously or unconsciously felt in the soul of every man. When Adam disobeyed God he was afraid. Cain feared when he killed Abel. There was no law then written on tables of stone to condemn or enlighten them relative to their guilt; nevertheless they knew that God was not pleased with them and they were conscious of their guilt to the extent that they feared God. We are a fallen and sin stricken race, and all who transgressed the holy law of God prior to the written law, evidently had a keen sense of their guilt when they transgressed.

Felix trembled—King Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Why? Because God, who is Almighty, by Paul's conversion demonstrated His wondrous power, thus bringing such pressure to bear upon them that Felix could not hide his feelings, and Agrippa could not refrain from saying, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." An acknowledgment of two prominent and notable characters of that time, that God is, and that there is a judgment.

There is much written in connection with this circumstance, and since it is shown here that the acts of the apostles conform with the doctrines which they taught, it should be a powerful incentive to the unconverted to believe and turn as did Paul, from darkness to God's marvelous light—not only almost but altogether persuaded to be a Christian.

How important that we search the scriptures so that we do not build on a sandy foundation as Paul did. He at-

tributed his radical views and his eagerness to follow a course contrary to the holy scriptures, to ignorance and unbelief—a reminder to everyone, that we owe it to ourselves to prove our views by the scriptures. If it were possible for one with Paul's intelligence and understanding to be misguided through ignorance and unbelief, we are, without question, in great danger of deceiving ourselves. While he apparently sought to do God service, he now acknowledged before Agrippa that he was then the chief of sinners. If we discover that we have a prejudiced feeling against the views of those who give evidence of sincerity, by conforming in word and deed to Christ's teachings and to the acts of the apostles, we should be alarmed and confess with Paul that we have been following an erroneous course.

There is great responsibility resting upon those who find the great treasure. If we are ashamed to confess Christ openly before men, we give evidence that we are not altogether persuaded. Paul had the courage of his convictions. He testified that he was happy to stand before kings and boldly defend Christ's holy truths. Why should we be timid and half-hearted in our efforts to persuade men in a cause that concerns our eternal well being. When we know of a plan or scheme that is advantageous for our natural good, we venture to make it known and we invariably endeavor to persuade our friends to accept it, that they may enjoy with us its benefits. Some may be almost, and others altogether persuaded, but only those who are altogether persuaded reap the benefit; likewise spiritually, as Paul said to King Agrippa, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether."

Paul knew that unless we, by faith, are altogether persuaded to true Chris-

tianity, we cannot enjoy its benefits. "Almost persuaded" will not avail in the sight of God.

Lancaster, Pa.

F. E. E.

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14: 15.

God's kindness to mankind is evident on every hand, and we receive bountifully of His blessings. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19: 1, 2, 3. "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. 5: 45.

We have scriptural testimony that all are visited by God's grace. He is no "respector of persons." None can offer excuse that they did not hear or know! "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Titus 2: 11.

All are invited to accept His loving offer of salvation. The invitation is "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 11: 28, 29, 30. The invitation is given to high and low, rich and poor, and can be accepted by all who are willing to come with a humble heart and a contrite spirit. Salvation is the "gift of God," it is offered "without money and without price," but our acceptance must be unconditional. Our highest duty is to keep His commandments; we do not have the privilege to select and observe some and reject others that are not agreeable to our humanity. We enter a conflict "For the flesh is

against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh;" also Satan, our wily foe, has power to deceive and lead us astray if we yield to him. We must "resist the Devil and he will flee from us." James 4: 7.

It is deplorable that many persons are apparently deceived in considering God's merciful offer of free salvation, as if it would be a natural agreement or contract—a business transaction, a bargaining for terms and conditions, as if man would say "I will only accept on these conditions—I want to reserve some liberties—some privileges." The surrender, however, must be unconditional.

God's word is simple and plain. We are told that "wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein." Therefore, if the Scriptures say "be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds," is it reasonable to suppose that we can engage in worldly pastimes and practices with no change in our lives from our former ways, expecting to be in favor with God? If this could be so, how would we explain the trials and persecutions of the earlier christians?

We are taught to have love one for another that there may be unity and peace—an undivided church, a true people of God. This love must be exercised to the world, even to the painful duty of separating from unfaithful worship, thus testifying against it, that we may give no encouragement to error. If we say, "Peace, peace when there is no peace," we deserve the accusation of the Savior, when he says "why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6: 46.

God is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. His word is our guide in this life and our judge in eternity. He has never been and never will be without His witnesses. We are taught that whosoever is willing to make the wise choice of

following Him will in no wise be cast out. Those who follow Christ will be as "gold tried in the fire." Yet we are told that "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man," and that He "will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. 10: 13.

May we be on our guard that we continue to obey from the heart unconditionally. Let us not attempt to dictate or compromise, but with an eye single to the glory of God, sincerely try to continue faithfully unto a happy end. "If ye love me keep my commandments."

Lancaster, Pa.

J. H. F.

HAPPINESS

Happiness is a state of mind—a feeling of comfort or satisfaction or joy—in varying degrees. It seems to be what all human beings are striving for. The well-disposed wish their fellow-creatures happiness and try to help them to attain it.

What causes happiness? What gives happiness to those who are happy? Is it lands or houses or large bank accounts with high income taxes? Is it natural comforts brought by the modern conveniences in the home? Is it the holding of any worldly goods, opportunities or possessions? Those who have little of this world's goods may think or imagine that if they had plenty, or all that their heart could desire in the way of natural things they would be very happy.

In regard to this, Solomon the wisest of men says, in Eccles. 2: 10, 11—"Whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour. . . . Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had laboured to do; and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there

was no profit under the sun." Then he goes on to consider life, and the things of this life and at the end of his line of thought says, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Eccles. 12: 13.

Centuries of experience since that time have proven that if man does this whole duty, he will be happy. True happiness—the highest and best happiness comes alone from God, who is the perfection of all that is good and happy. The more nearly we are in harmony with God, the happier we will be. Those who, in the depth of their soul say, "Thy will be done," receive the blessing of divine approval, and of being in harmony with the Infinite. In God there is peace and joy for His human creatures if they reverence and love Him. The natural mind cannot grasp this. Even those who have made an unconditional surrender to their Creator, and who are earnestly striving to walk in His ways—being human and imperfect, do not at all times experience "the peace of God that passeth understanding." But when these seasons of peace do come they are so fully soul-satisfying that the happiness of them far outweighs all the trials and sufferings that may have preceded them. They are a foretaste of the eternal happiness that awaits those who endure to the end.

When we are troubled by our sinful flesh we are not happy—often greatly humiliated—yet, if we are faithful and try to follow the teachings of the Word—making amends when we have transgressed, He will forgive us and we can still be in harmony with His will. "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." Psalm 103: 14.

God's children cannot escape the ordinary trials of this life—aggravations of all kinds, the pain caused by the ingratitude of those dear to us, accident, calamity, losses, bereavement. Can one

be happy when in such circumstances? What general principle or guide in life can help us in passing through these and similar experiences? In the word of God we find the answer, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3: 2, 3.

If our first and best love is to our Maker, if the greatest joy of our life is to be in harmony with Him, then our *life* is hid with Christ in God, and the trials of this life serve only to show us our great need of Him, and strengthen our desire to keep close to Him. All the things and affairs of this life have a second or lower place in our hearts and if even what we prize most of natural things, including our dearest loved ones, is taken from us—we through faith and by God's grace, accept the dispensation, as for our good, believing that God does all things well. This brings the happiness that comes of self-surrender which is far higher and more satisfying than that of self-gratification.

"Our Father knows best"—this is the keynote of our life. Through the power of this thought, by God's grace, we rise above the irritations, the trials, the pains of this life.

If we wish to be happy we must avoid pitying ourselves, for self-pity is most dangerous to our spiritual health and happiness—it is a form of egotism—a cloud that rises in our hearts and shuts out the light of the "Sun of Righteousness," so that we fall into darkness and become a prey to many forms of evil which bring unhappiness.

Again, if we wish to be happy let us look about us for those who need help or sympathy, and give them what we have to give. It may be a cheerful smile as we meet them, a listening ear to their troubles, or a few words of sympathy, or encouragement. Perhaps we have

only a few flowers to give, or food or clothing or money. Let us always remember this scripture, "Freely ye have received, freely give." It is wonderful how happiness comes as a reaction to those who forget their own troubles and try to lighten those of others. Perhaps years after we have cast bread upon the waters, and we have forgotten all about it, it may come back to us and even with accrued interest. We do not expect it, nor labor for it—but it is such a happiness when it does come back unexpectedly. Christ says, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, . . . For with the same measure that ye mete with all it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6: 38. We need not go to foreign countries to find those who need sympathy—they may be in our own household or in our near neighborhood, and the eyes of our understanding may have been "holden" so that we did not perceive their need. Let us pray earnestly that if our spiritual eyes have become dull with sleep, we may be awakened, so that Christ may give us light, and we may again become truly happy.

Lancaster, Pa.

L. L. F.

PERFECTION

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5: 48.

The human mind is not capable of realizing this perfect state through natural reason, for it is not an intellectual or a moral attainment. It is a condition wrought within the soul through divine grace by which man is fitted for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

It is evident that man, in his primitive state was perfect since he was created in the image of God. But having fallen by transgression, he lost his first estate and became subject to sin and death. Man can never return to God except through obedience to the convicting

grace of God which will halt him in his downward course, awaken him to a realization of his lost state, and lead him to forsake his former course of life. In humility and contrition he will then seek forgiveness and mercy from God and make restitution for wrong done to his fellow-men. By this experience he becomes fitted as a vessel wherein God can dwell.

God has made this spiritually perfect state possible to the soul that yields unconditionally to His will, and His purpose to restore mankind to communion with Himself can be accomplished "that we might receive the adoption of sons." In such souls, sin in no form can be retained in the heart, not even to the setting of the sun: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Eph. 4: 26.

This renewed condition of heart and mind every child of God will realize, for by it we are made acceptable to our Father in Heaven, and become fit material for His church—the bride of Christ.

The effect of this change will surely bring men into harmony, and the prayer of Christ to his heavenly Father will be fulfilled, "that they all may be one as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." John 17: 20. But wherever there is envy, hatred, retaliation, and a divided sentiment, the spirit which brings perfect peace will not dwell and the spiritual life cannot exist.

The economy of heaven is perfect. God's work in the soul is a perfect work. Throughout the Bible we find that nothing was acceptable to God but that which was perfect. The creatures selected as offerings and sacrifices were to be perfect and without blemish and those who offered them were to be free from any legal defilement. In all times services rendered to God were to be done with

"clean hands and a pure heart."

This is typical of the perfect sacrifice which Christ made for us, and of our separation from sin. As we separate from the evil within, we will also separate from evil in our lives. And if the Spirit of Christ is permitted to possess the heart it will guide every step of the christian warrior that he, through the perfect influence of God's love, will bear christian fruits which will reflect a light to the world.

This perfect state is the gift and work of God; His love shed abroad in the heart is one of the divine attributes in us. Yet our weak and frail humanity remains the same—in our "flesh dwelleth no good thing," and we err in many things. The willingness to confess our faults and make amends for them, the striving after holiness and the warfare against evil that sin may not reign in our mortal bodies, is the evidence to us that God is working in us both to will and to do according to His good pleasure.

The child of God may not confer with flesh and blood. He asks no favors save of grace to be able to make a perfect surrender of body and soul and say with Christ: "Thy will be done."

When two of the disciples asked our Savior to permit one of them to sit on His right hand and the other on His left hand in His glory, He told them it was a privilege beyond His power to give; but in turn He asked: "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said, "we can." This is the sequel of a perfect state. He told them, "Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with."

What a beautiful and perfect state is that of the true christian when the heart is inhabited by a perfect God. To such, the message announcing that their lease on life has expired will be a happy one.

Lancaster, Pa.

B. F. M.

DEATH AND LIFE

Naturally almost every one enjoys life—the life which now is; man takes pleasure in doing the things which he likes to do; he finds enjoyment in pursuing the vanities, pastimes, and amusements of this world; his vanity and pride are stimulated by the prospect of achieving honor, wealth, and power. These things will vanish when death approaches; therefore the question we should consider is, *will they bring life to the soul?* The sure way to determine this question is, by hearing the word of the Lord and Savior, who said, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and who spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

We meet persons everywhere who live at variance to the word of God, and the teaching of His Son Jesus Christ. They love the praise of men, seek worldly riches and honor, seek advancement according to their own personal desires and take credit to themselves for all they have attained to in this life. Some lead questionable lives, others are upright and of good character, but they do not take to heart the saying of the Savior, “But one thing is needful.”

We meet others who are very zealous in good works, saying that all men everywhere should do their duty as good citizens, assisting in establishing good laws and in placing good people into office to enforce them, that all forms of crime and disorder be suppressed. They fail to see that Christ called His disciples out of the kingdom of this world.

The Savior said to his disciples and in the audience of the people, “Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; which devour widows’ houses and for a shew make long prayers: the same

shall receive the greater damnation.” Luke 20: 46, 47.

He also said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat.” Matt. 7: 13. From this we learn that the sinful way is broad and many walk thereon. James says, “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” We would understand from this testimony, that the broad way leads to destruction and death. The apostle Paul wrote to the Romans, 6: 23, “For the wages of sin is death”; the death here referred to is not the death of the body, but the death of the soul: the separation between the soul and God throughout eternity.

To the Hebrews, Paul wrote, God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son; and when the Son was transfigured upon the mount, there came a voice out of the cloud saying “This is my beloved Son: hear Him”; and the Son said, “I am the bread of life.” We understand the mission of the Son of God upon earth was to restore life, for all are dead in trespasses and sins; to do this He had to offer the sacrifice of His body upon the cross; this sacrifice was perfect and will save to the uttermost every soul which comes unto Him.

All men are declared to be under death by the word of God: “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Rom. 5: 12. “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3: 4. These passages of Scripture declare all men guilty before the law, and under condemnation of death—the second

death, which separates from God now and in eternity. Behold the love of God toward fallen man in that He has provided a way of escape from this death through Christ: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3: 16, 17.

John said, when he saw Jesus coming unto him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "Who bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." 1 Peter 2: 24, 25. God's love to all men is thus extended through the Savior, who also said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11: 28, 29.

The life giving, healing virtue of Jesus here displayed is unfathomable, and His love is beyond comprehension. Oh! most wonderful gift, lavished upon those souls who are willing to deny themselves and take up the cross and follow Him, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many

be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 5: 17, 24. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord". Rom. 6: 23.

We must realize and acknowledge, that but one source of life exists, both material and spiritual, For in Him we live, and move and have our being.

Long, long ago Job asked the question, If a man die, shall he live again? which question has concerned the minds of men ever since. The blessed Savior answered it, when he said unto Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." "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." Rev. 22: 14.

Glen Elder, Kansas.

E. F. S.

"THE FOUR CALLS"

"The Spirit came in childhood,
And pleaded, 'Let me in;'
But ah! the door was bolted
By thoughtlessness in sin.
'I am too young,' the child replied,
'I will not yield to-day,
There's time enough tomorrow.'
The Spirit went His way.

"Again He came and pleaded
In youth's bright, happy hour;
He called, but heard no answer,
For, lured by Satan's power,
The youth lay dreaming idly then,
And saying, 'Not to-day,
Not till I've tried earth's pleasures.'
The Spirit turned away.

“Again He came in mercy,
 In manhood’s vigorous prime,
 But still He heard no welcome—
 The merchant had no time;
 No time for true repentance,
 No time to think and pray,
 And so, repulsed and saddened,
 The Spirit turned away.

“Once more He called and waited—
 The man was old and ill,
 He scarcely heard the whisper,
 His heart was cold and chill.
 ‘Go leave me, when I need thee
 I’ll call for thee,’ he cried,
 Then, sinking on his pillow
 Without one hope he died.”

—Author Unknown.

BRIEF NOTES

Our motive in doing anything justifies or condemns us before God rather than the manner in which we do it.

* * * *

A departure from the spirit of love as the principle by which our conduct in life is governed, often manifests itself in a contentious disposition, of which the Apostle says, “We have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”

* * * *

A certain writer aptly says: Kindness works best with others, sternness with ourselves. It is dangerous to make allowance for our own faults, but wise to do so for the faults of others. “If thy hand offend thee, cut it off,” should apply to ourselves. “Father forgive them” to others.

* * * *

The Savior taught that cherishing the wrong desire in the heart is equivalent to guilt in the act. He did not teach that it is wrong to take part in war, but He taught the necessity of having the forgiving spirit, and making our life subject to its influence, which then makes war impossible with us. To cherish a feeling of resentment when we are sub-

jected to contumely and injustice, is war in its incipient stage, and is wrong before God just as much as to engage in open warfare.

* * * *

It is just as impossible for man in his unconverted state to love his enemies as it is for a leopard to change his spots. Our natural impulse and prompting is that we resent injustice and find satisfaction in planning to avenge the wrong. In christian living such impulse and promptings are not cherished, but denied, because self-knowledge, underlying the christian life, has revealed to us the wrong at its source, and its harmful effects on our spiritual life. Divine love thus replacing self-love in our hearts, we seek the welfare of those who have wronged us. We are then constrained as Paul says, to “Recompense to no man evil for evil.”

* * * *

Bearing Christ’s yoke and learning of Him to be “meek and lowly of heart,” brings our life into conformity with His life, living as He lived, subduing our selfish desires, and love replacing desires for revenge—Christ’s spirit as the ruling power in the heart.

The effect will ever be as on the day of Pentecost: “One heart and one soul,” as against the result in those who, under popular evangelization, are said to have “come to Christ,” but are divided into many shades of doctrine, comforting themselves with a hope of obtaining the crown, though unwilling to bear the cross that leads to it. Who, though they say, Lord, Lord, yet “do not the things which I say.”

* * * *

Real christian living knows no discipline to a written creed; for the prompting to our course and conduct in life then is from the christian spirit ruling in our hearts, and bringing all who come under its influence into unity and fel-

lowship. One need not teach the other, "Know the Lord, for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest."

The creeds and discipline in many popular churches, as we often learn, are formulated and made compulsory after bitter controversy and contentions, often involving strategy, whereby one faction gains advantage over another faction in the same church, and the minority finally yielding only because they must. Such service being in violation of the Christian spirit, by what manner of reasoning can we say that it is anything but ineffective, unavailing and delusive?

* * * *

The Apostle, commissioned through Revelation, sends warnings to the seven churches; and these are just as applicable now. To the first there is this significant one: "I know thy works, thy labor and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil, and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars, and hast borne and hast patience and hast labored and hast not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou hast fallen, and repent and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

This indicates to us clearly that all good and commendable works are of no avail when love has grown cold and is no longer operative and finds expression through a humble, forgiving and forbearing spirit, through which alone christian fellowship, unity and peace can be maintained among Christ's followers, and spiritual life and light will continue to prevail in the church.

* * * *

One can hardly conceive of a more sublime, dignified and impressive decla-

ration than this: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

Vain controversies have arisen from the claim made by some and denied by others, that scientific proven facts discredit the Bible account of the creation, for scientists say, "In the beginning nebulous matter gathered itself into stars, which threw off hot, shapeless planets; and that the earth, as one of these, grew round by revolving, then separated into land and water. Then gradually vegetation appeared; then life in low forms, then higher, and finally man."

The Bible account also starts with matter "without form and void," but it includes the Spirit of God as Creator. Scientists say, "First Cause," regarding which they make no claim of knowing anything.

The Bible account of the creation is very comprehensive. It is adapted to all ages and to varied degrees of intelligence and learning, and in all that is essential and to the purpose for which it is given it does not conflict with what science has proven.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What is necessary to qualify one to partake of the bread and the cup in the Communion service?

A. A true living faith that worketh by love, manifested by obedience which is the fruit of faith and love. Having the mind of Christ, we will speak the same thing; we will labor for unity and peace. When brethren are not in agreement they will by mutual consent accept

the plain words of Christ to adjust their difference; and when differing on matters of opinion which are not clearly defined by the word, they humbly submit one to the other in confidence, thus endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. By so doing they are still brethren—"one in Christ" and are qualified to take part in the holy Communion.

Q. Can we consistently commune if we differ in doctrine?

A. The Savior said "my doctrine is not mine but His that sent me." John 7: 16. These words prove that the Savior brought but one doctrine, and His true followers will adhere to it, consequently they will not commune with persons who differ in doctrine. "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Rom. 16: 17. We cannot consistently avoid them and at the same time commune with them.

Q. Is it not the duty of the church of Christ to take an active part in suppressing evil in the world?

A. The church is the bride of Christ, and every faithful member of the church will cherish a desire to love and obey the Bridegroom, who has given plain and comprehensive instructions as to the duties of the church. We find no command directing the church to suppress evil in the world, but many commands to refrain from evil and to separate evil doers from its communion.

The sword is given to the magistracy to suppress evil, but Jesus said unto Peter, "Put up thy sword into the sheath"; and to His disciples, "Resist not evil." The church is neither commanded nor privileged to join with the worldly powers in the suppression of evil.

Q. What is the first step toward salvation?

A. The first step toward salvation is to realize and acknowledge that through our fallen nature we are dead in trespasses and sins; lost and not found; out of harmony with the laws of heaven. Having a right sense of our lost state, we are condemned and fear God who is pure and Holy. When convinced that we are sinners, if we repent and seek refuge in Christ, He will save us. Salvation is the gift of God bestowed only upon those who truly repent and allow Jesus Christ to rule and reign in the heart.

Q. Can we be saved by keeping the commandments?

A. We are saved by grace through faith. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Without faith it is impossible to please God. Then we are saved by accepting through faith, the salvation wrought by Christ who fulfilled every demand of God's holy law, which condemned us, and who atoned for our sins by His sacrifice on the cross. Obedience to Christ's commands is a fruit of our faith in Him.

THE TWO WAYS

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7: 13, 14.

These words of Jesus are part of the sermon on the Mount. He was speaking to the multitude. In the preceding verses He mentions the golden rule and how the Father which is in heaven giveth good things to them that ask Him.

In our text He speaks of entering into a gate or a way that leadeth somewhere. We, who have been translated from darkness into light—resurrected from dead works into newness of life, having

renounced the kingdom of this world and having entered the kingdom of God's dear Son, realize what Jesus had reference to, when He said, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 4: 17. All who will can enter this kingdom, but only by one way and that is Jesus, who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14: 6. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." John 10: 1.

In our text He says, strait is the gate and narrow is the way. The prophet Isaiah foretold the way, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there." Isaiah 35: 8, 9.

When we enter the way or into this kingdom it is very noticeable; a great change of heart takes place which cannot be explained; it is a mystery. It is as Jesus said to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3: 8. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. 5: 17.

This kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost. We do not enter it by church membership, water baptism or by keeping the ordinances, but alone through Jesus who is the perfect and only way.

He says, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." To enter it requires self-denial, a sacrifice, a conflict. But the end of this way is most beautiful and peaceful. We receive what Jesus prom-

ised—peace and rest for the soul in this life and also the bright prospect, "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." 1 Peter 1: 4.

The closing words of our text indicate a very sad ending, "few there be that find it." In Luke 13: 24, we read these words from Jesus—"Strive to enter in at the strait gate for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." Sad the thought that so many people are on the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Let us prove and examine ourselves by the word of God as to which way we are on.

The Savior uses strong language to impress us with the awful end awaiting those who walk on the broad way, by saying, "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Lancaster, Pa.

J. C. L.

BLESSED HOPE

Hope has been compared to the ministrations of angels which is a beautiful thought. What strength and inspiration we all find when we can be hopeful. It is so in a natural sense. In this life anything in which we engage has its elements of uncertainty and we need to be hopeful if we desire results from our labors. When sickness or trouble comes, how the burden is lightened where there is hope.

The future is always hidden and sometimes appears dark before us and there are times that we have the feeling of going blindfolded from day to day knowing nothing of what we may meet. We may plan and anticipate but we do both in hope that is often mingled with fears and prayers. It is this uncertainty that impresses us with the need of true religion and of having a well grounded faith and hope under every situation; Faith to assure us that the wise and loving Heavenly Father will direct us in all our ways, and hope to ease the

“travel pain” of our daily experiences with the thought of better things to come.

We need spiritual vision, and faith and hope are essential to that. It is not necessary for us to stumble along in the dark. Christ came a light into the world to guide us safely home. He is the ground of our hope and it is His love that “constraineth us” to turn from a life of sin to one that is higher, and in accord with Gospel teachings and ideals.

The struggle between right and wrong is going on in every heart and ever what we ought to be stands out in bold contrast with what we are. This is conviction and great should be our gratitude for it. It is conviction of duty that brings us humbly to Jesus and makes us rejoice in the perfect salvation that is given us through faith in Him. Christ and the blessed promises constitute the hope set before us: “which hope we have as an anchor for the soul both sure and steadfast.”

The apostle Paul in writing to His Roman brethren of the justification by faith and of the grace wherein they stood told of their rejoicing in hope, so much so, that they even gloried in tribulation for they knew “Tribulation worketh patience, patience experience and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” There are times when we are inclined to think that the experiences of life should yield us more than hope. We desire more visible results but God knows best how to fit us for the duties He requires of us and apparent lack of accomplishment may be a wise protection from self esteem. God provides the way to keep us humble and at the feet of Jesus where we may obtain grace and strength for every coming need. We are unable to see the results of genuine Christian hopefulness

and are apt to forget that we are saved by hope.

The Psalmist sang “Happy is he whose hope is in the Lord his God.” The Prophet Jeremiah worded it beautifully, “Blessed is he who trusteth in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters * * * and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” Jer. 17: 7, 8.

It is the unalterable law of nature that we reap the fruit of our own sowing. It is demonstrated by the farmers about us. The seed they use and the care they give indicate their returns. If we sow to the flesh we are told we shall reap corruption, but if we sow to the Spirit we shall reap life everlasting. Here too, no doubt “If we sow sparingly we shall reap sparingly.” If we cherish the Good Spirit and cultivate faith and hope and love we are rewarded in peace and comfort and in a happiness such as comes alone to the faithful child of God. But if we allow doubts and fears and our own selfish desires to have the ascendancy, the result is discouragement for ourselves and dishonor to God. Self-knowledge is necessary but selfishness is sin and who of us but knows the bitter fight against it.

Let us then strive to sow good seed by God’s help and look to Him for the “early and latter rains” of convicting and sustaining grace, hoping for a bountiful reaping to His honor and our salvation. What greater blessing could we ask, and is this not the consummation of christian hope, to have a God to whom we can trustfully say “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore?” Psalm 16: 11.

Chambersburg, Pa.

M. C. S.

THE BELIEVER'S HOPE

“For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.” 1 John 3: 20, 21.

It is written that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Like the apostle Paul all believers experience a thorn in the flesh, the emotion of sin, which would oppose the work of grace in the heart. Through bodily afflictions, the approach of old age, disappointments and sorrows, we are subject to seasons of despondency and discouragement. At such times when reviewing our lives and comparing our actions with the word of God, we see our many imperfections and sometimes fear lest our heart may condemn us.

Moses was commanded of God, that when the Israelites would enter into Canaan they should drive out or destroy the inhabitants. He warned them that those which they let remain of them, would be pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides and would vex them in the land. Num. 33. Joshua who led them into the promised land desired to fulfill the commandment, and with the instruction and help of the Lord, he destroyed the cities of Jericho and Ai. The Gibeonites fearing the Israelites “took old sacks upon their asses and wine bottles, old, rent and bound up; and bread, dry and mouldy, and old shoes clouted upon their feet, and old garments, appearing to have travelled a long distance from a far country.” They approached Joshua as servants and ambassadors, desiring that he would make a league with them. He, before taking counsel from the Lord, made peace with them. After three days they heard that the Gibeonites were their neighbors and that they had beguiled them. They were a vexation to the Israelites, but as Joshua had sworn unto them by the Lord, that he would not destroy them, he let them live but

brought them into servitude, making them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and altar of the Lord. Josh. 9.

The entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan after many trials and temptations in the wilderness very properly typifies the experience of every true believer who finds entrance through the spiritual Joshua, Jesus Christ, into the spiritual Canaan, the kingdom of God.

The destruction of the cities of Jericho and Ai, may be comparable to the believer's conflict against the odious and gross sins which must be overpowered and the emotions, which must be kept in restraint.

The circumstance of the Gibeonites may be symbolical of our besetting sins and temperamental weaknesses, which can never be entirely eradicated. These besetments may however serve us by keeping us humble and teaching us to appreciate the following words written by the apostle Paul, “For we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.” 2 Cor. 4: 7.

The believer's effort may be to serve the Lord with all the mind, heart and soul, but through the vexation of the flesh may fail to be a shining light. “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Rom. 8: 33, 34.

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession, for we have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Heb. 4: 14, 15. Believers, therefore, have reason to be encouraged, for God knoweth the longing and desires of our hearts.

The believer's hope is a hope that maketh not ashamed, which hope Paul says we have as an anchor of the soul and as a certain writer says "a true christian hope is a firm expectation of all promised good things, so far as they may be for God's glory and our spiritual good. This hope is distinguished from worldly hope, by the excellency of the object which is an eternal state of glory and joy, whereas worldly hopes are terminated on empty vanishing things gilded over with the thin appearance of good."

May we read and meditate upon the word of God, and endeavor to build on a good foundation, that we may have a justified hope for the safety of our souls now and in eternity. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river."

Baden, Ont.

H. G.

THE KISS OF PEACE

"Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss."
1 Thessalonians 5: 26.

We believe that some mode of greeting was in vogue in all ages of the world, as greeting with the kiss is a manifestation of friendship and good will. However, the kiss the apostle here speaks of is far more important. It is an outward sign of spiritual love and, if observed in the right spirit it suffices for that for which it was intended—a sign of fellowship. From the words of the apostle to the Thessalonians, and also other scriptures, we are impressed that it is our duty to comply with the apostle's admonition, as he was a chosen vessel to dispense the good tidings of the Gospel to all. When

sincerely greeting with the kiss we show a love for our fellow believer, whom we love if we love the Lord, "for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" 1 John 4: 20.

It is plain that we should not hide our light under a bushel but place it where it may be seen of all men. In greeting our brother we openly confess that we love him and will try by our walk and conduct toward him to prove to him that we really do love him and have a desire to serve and be served. All commandments are for our spiritual benefit, and if observed in a christian spirit will tend to build us up and strengthen us in the faith. We know that we have no continuing city here, but sooner or later must leave this world that is seen and go to the one that is not seen.

How important that we observe all things that are commanded us, that we may reap a glorious reward in the world to come! In Luke 15: 20; we notice the great love of a father for his wayward son inasmuch as he fell on his neck and kissed him. This was a manifestation of a father's love for his natural son. This, and all other parables were spoken for our instruction. The kiss of peace if practiced in a legal way would help us nothing, but if practiced in love helps to strengthen the bond of unity.

In Acts 20: 37; we notice the strong love the disciples had for the apostle Paul, as they all wept sore and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him. They manifested great interest in him and for one another. They were trying times for them, as it was evident they would not see the apostle again in this life; but what a consolation it is that we with them can "meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Fresno, California.

I. H.

SERVICE AND FRIENDSHIP

The Savior conferred a new meaning, a new dignity, upon the word service when He told His disciples, "Whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant." The ten were indignant at John and James for asking to sit the one on Jesus' right hand the other on his left when He would come into His kingdom. It is an intimate and loving picture of Jesus calling His disciples to Him and telling them of the greatness of service and of His own great service to mankind.

Since the days of the disciples human nature has not changed. Without Christ's spirit to teach us and lead us it would be hard to understand why ambition should be guarded, the desire for honor curbed, the esteem and favor of men not coveted. If we would be servants in the higher sense we must follow Christ's example, we must deny self. "The disciple is not above his Master nor the servant above his Lord."

While in person here on earth Christ gave His time and energy to serve men. He taught the simple life of loving service by precept and example. Crowds came to hear Him and many went away cleansed and healed of disease. His great purpose though, was to free men from the bondage of sin. Through His death on the cross He accomplished His mission for all who accept Him as a complete Savior and strive to be obedient to His teaching.

But the Savior told His disciples He would no longer call them servants but friends. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." So our great Master forever linked service and friendship. To be a true friend is to be rich in service and self-sacrifice. As all sin may be traced to selfish gratification so all true service has its foundation in love and self-denial.

Who would not be a friend of Christ's? To be His friend is to have the highest ideal of friendship. It has been well said that, "Our human relationships are sanctified and glorified by the spiritual union," and that "We part from men to meet with God that we may be able to meet men again on a higher platform."

His spirit leads and guides into an everlasting fellowship. Through Him we may have part in the communion of saints on earth and the fellowship of believers. In His church Christ has provided a refuge for His followers. All are bound together by the ties of that higher friendship. Each has his place to fill and his service to perform. All are guardians of the peace and purity of His church.

Would we be friends of God and sons and heirs according to His promise? Servants, friends, heirs Christ has named them who by grace through faith are saved from a selfish life for a fuller life of service to God and man.

Waynesboro, Penna. M. A. S.

BIBLE STORY

KING SAUL CONTINUES TO PURSUE DAVID

David was told that the Philistines had descended upon the people of Keilah and were robbing their threshing floors. He inquired of the Lord whether he should go and smite them. He was told to go, but his men were fearful so he again inquired of the Lord and he was encouraged to go. He then went with his three hundred men and smote the Philistines, gaining a great victory.

He feared to remain in Keilah and inquired of the Lord who told him the people of Keilah would deliver him up to Saul. So David and his men departed and hid in a wood in the wilderness of Ziph.

When Saul learned that David was in Keilah he thought that now the young warrior was at his mercy for Keilah was a city with gates and bars. Saul therefore went with his army to besiege the city.

While David was in the wilderness of Ziph, Jonathan came to see him and said, "Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee: and thou shalt be king over Israel and I shall be next unto thee and that my father knoweth." He and David renewed their covenant and parted never again to meet in life.

After Saul was told where David was hiding in the strongholds, he with his army seemed to have almost surrounded David's men, when the Lord's providence intervened. A messenger came telling Saul that the Philistines had invaded the land, and he was forced to return and meet them.

When Saul returned from following the Philistines David was hidden in a cave in the wilderness of Engedi. Saul came with three thousand chosen men and he being weary entered the cave to rest, not knowing that David was near.

David's men said to their leader that now the Lord had delivered Saul into his hands, but David would not harm him. He quietly went to where Saul lay sleeping and cut off the skirt of his long robe. After Saul went out David called to him and showed him the piece he had cut from his garment. He reminded Saul that he did not wish to harm him, although he might have done so while he slept. He asked Saul, "After whom hath the King come out? after a dead dog or a flea?" This was a term of great contempt in use among the Hebrews.

David in speaking to Saul called him "my Lord the King." When Saul heard David's voice his old love for him returned. He wept and said "Is this your voice my son David? Thou art more

righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil . . . I well know that thou shalt surely be king and that the kingdom shall be established in thy name. Swear now that those wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house." David promised and Saul returned home.

We now read of the death of Samuel and that the people of Israel gathered together and buried him at Ramah, lamenting his loss. This they might well do for there are few characters in the Bible who were so devoted to the Lord and to the service of His people. The fear of the Lord was at a low ebb in Israel at this time. There were very few prophets and no open vision, scarcely any revelation from God. Samuel was a bright example of firm integrity and faithfulness. He reproved both the King and the people for their transgressions and showed the deepest concern for their backsliding and infidelity. Yet so little mention is made of his death. The Bible gives little space to eulogies, it gives a mere statement of facts.

While David and his men were in the wilderness of Paran, David learned that a man in Carmel named Nabal, who had great possessions and thousands of sheep, was having his sheep sheared and was preparing a great feast for his shearers. David sent ten of his men with friendly greetings to Nabal to ask for a portion of his abundance of food. It is evident that David and his men had a claim upon Nabal, for they had rendered him a service in protecting his herdsmen from wandering bands of robbers.

Nabal was rude and uncivil and asked, "Who is this David? who is this son of Jesse? There be many servants who break away from their masters. Shall I take food prepared for my shearers and give it unto men I know not?"

When the men returned and repeated Nabal's answer David was angry and sought to avenge himself upon Nabal for this insult. He went with part of his army to destroy Nabal.

One of Nabal's men told Abigail, the wife of Nabal, what had occurred and that evil would befall Nabal on account of his conduct. Abigail, seeing his danger made haste to take a present of food to David. She sent her servants ahead with asses laden with food and she followed after. She met David and his men and she knelt before him, asking him not to regard what her husband had done. She said, "Nabal is his name, and folly is with him." She had not seen his men when they came asking for food, and she desired David's forgiveness. She reminded him that when he would be ruler over Israel, it would be no source of grief to him that he had not shed blood needlessly.

David accepted her gifts, he blessed her for her good counsel and told her to return in peace.

Abigail did not tell Nabal what she had done when she returned, for she found him feasting and drinking. But in the morning when he became sober she told him what had occurred. He seemed terrified and fear overcame him to such an extent that in ten days he died.

When David learned of the death of Nabal he thanked the Lord who had preserved him from taking vengeance upon Nabal. He sent for Abigail and she became his wife.

The Ziphites again came to Saul at Gibeah and told him of David's hiding place. Saul at once went in search of him. David had in his army three brothers, Joab, Abishai and Asahel. They were sons of David's sister, Zeruiah. Joab was captain of David's army. Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle, was captain over Saul's army.

David asked his men who would go with him to the camp of King Saul. Abishai at once offered to go. When they came to Saul's tent they found him asleep, with his spear stuck into the ground at his side, and his bottle of water with it. A deep sleep had fallen upon both Saul and Abner. Abishai asked permission to kill Saul but David said, "The Lord forbid that we should stretch out our hand against the Lord's anointed, but take his spear and his cruse of water and we will depart."

They went a great distance away on top of a hill, and David called to Abner asking why he had not taken better care of the King, since one of the people had come in to destroy his life.

Saul knew David's voice and again wept, saying, "Is this thy voice, my son David?"

David said, "Thou art come out to seek a flea as one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains."

Saul then said, "I have sinned, return my son David, for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day. I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly." Saul blessed David and went on his way. But David felt he could not trust the King and he said, "I shall one day perish at the hands of Saul."

David then left the country of Israel and departed with his six hundred men unto Achish, the king of Gath, who gave him the city of Ziklag as a dwelling place. When Saul heard that David had gone to Achish he sought him no more.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

A CHILD'S STORY

THE STORY OF GAMALIEL

My dear little children:

You will remember that in my last letter I told you about a great and learned teacher in Jerusalem named

Gamaliel, who was loved and respected by all who knew him. I think you would like to know more about him, and of his wisdom in speaking to and calming a great crowd of excited and angry people.

After Jesus had been crucified and arose from the dead, He sent His apostles out to tell the wonderful news to all the world. They told the people how the birth and coming of Jesus had been foretold by the prophets, years before, and that now Jesus had come to save them from their sins, but as they did not believe He was the Christ, they had cruelly put Him to death. The apostles called upon all the people to repent of their sins and Jesus would forgive them. And many thousands believed and confessed that Jesus was the Christ.

When the rulers saw that the people were beginning to believe what the apostles taught, they began to fear that they would lose their authority, and no doubt were troubled at what a dreadful thing they had done in crucifying the Savior. The Bible says they were "cut to the heart" by Peter's boldness in telling them of their sins. This made them angry and they told the apostles not to teach in the name of Jesus, but Peter said, "We ought to obey God rather than man."

The apostles would not stop preaching Jesus, and for this reason they were cast into prison, but in a wonderful manner an angel came and opened the prison doors, bringing them out and telling

them to speak in the temple all the words of Jesus: Here we can imagine a crowd of excited, angry people, planning how they could put the whole company of apostles to death.

We read, "Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; saying, "Ye men of Israel take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do touching these men." Gamaliel then told them of two men who had arisen and spoken very boastfully, and that many had believed and followed them, but they were all scattered.

Then Gamaliel gave this advice, "Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of man, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight against God." And to this advice they agreed.

After calling the apostles and beating them, they commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and they let them go.

We admire the wisdom and courage of Gamaliel in preventing injury or loss of life to the apostles. Perhaps he secretly believed in Jesus, or the Lord may have influenced His heart to further the work of Jesus. We like to think of Gamaliel as loving Jesus, and of his becoming a disciple before his death.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.