

GOOD TIDINGS

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

Entered as second-class matter September 26, 1922, at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Subscription, 50 cents per year, in advance. Sample copies sent free on application.

Send all contributions to Frank E. Eshleman, Business Manager, R. D. No. 7, Lancaster, Pa. Subscriptions should be sent to "Good Tidings," No. 236 N. Mary St., Lancaster, Pa.

Remit by check, P. O. money order, or U. S. postage stamps.

VOL. VII

OCTOBER, 1928

NO. 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Editorial	33
Thanksgiving	34
Bible Notes	35
Christian Unity	37
Communion, or the Lord's Supper	39
Caesar and God	40
The Bread of Life	42
Brief Notes	43
Questions and Answers	45
Autumn	46
Thanksgiving Day (Poem)	48
What Do We Read?	49
Lost and Found	50
The Christian's Relation to Government.....	52
The Gospel of Christ	53
Christ's Kingdom	54
Fear	55
Some Spiritual uses of a Garden	55
The Son shall make you Free	58
"Be Ye Therefore Perfect" (Poem)	59
The Covenant of Promise	60
Ask and Ye shall Receive	60
The Brevity of Life and its Responsibilities	61
Rehoboam, King of Judah	62
A Child's Story	64

EDITORIAL

We have again enjoyed a bountiful harvest; the fruits of the earth are gathered in; the grain is garnered and our storehouses filled. God has blessed our fields and gardens; centuries pass with every generation witnessing the order promised from the beginning. "Seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night have not ceased." As a manifestation of the longsuffering and patience of God, "He watereth the hills out of His chambers. . . . He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth fruit out of the earth." Ps. 104: 13, 14.

In this land of full and plenty, with its almost unlimited resources, we have opportunity to become worldly-wise and heap to ourselves riches which tend to exalt and cause many to forget God, the giver of every good gift, who through the mouth of the prophet said, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which

exercises loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth." Jer. 9: 23, 24.

Contrasting the Creator's mighty power with the creature's dependence for life and being, David very fittingly said of his people, "That Thou givest them they gather, Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled; Thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust."

God's Fatherly care; His gracious providence in dispensing to us the earthly blessings should lead us to sober reflection and meditation concerning the true purpose of life and our obligation to Him as rational and accountable beings. The order and harmonious operation of the great solar systems of the universe, many of which are visible to the eye unaided, bespeak God's grand provision for man's comfort, enjoyment and inspiration. "Lift up your eyes on high and behold who hath created these things that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." Isa. 40: 26. Should they not awaken us from that sleep of indifference to a living faith in God and warm our hearts to love Him and obey His word of counsel that we may sow to the Spirit and on the great harvest day reap a good reward.

We observe how the farmer and gardener plow and cultivate in hope of reaping a harvest. Those who labor diligently and consistently, availing themselves of opportunity by planting and sowing in season, are rewarded, but the slothful who delay and neglect to sow and plant at the opportune time cannot hope to reap a harvest. That we may not fail to reap bountifully on the great harvest day, let us not be like

the slothful but as the wise husbandman; let us strive lawfully and consistently for the great reward that is promised the faithful. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Jas. 5: 7, 8.

THANKSGIVING

We are taught to acknowledge and confess with gladness the benefits and mercies which God bestows upon us. This applies both to spiritual and natural blessings.

The Chief Magistrate of this great nation annually sets apart a day, asking the people to give thanks to the Lord for peace, prosperity, and bountiful harvests such as this country enjoys. The origin of this practice can be traced to the early settlers in Massachusetts. We quote from "Historians History of the World," Vol. 22, page 631, "In the Fall of 1621 the first harvest of the Colonists was gathered. The 'Corn' yielded well, and the 'Barley' was 'indifferently good,' but the 'Peas' were a failure, owing to drought and late sowing. Satisfied, however, with the abundance of their fruits, four huntsmen were sent for fowl; and at their return 'after a special manner' the Pilgrims rejoiced together, feasting King Massasoit and ninety men for three days, and partaking of venison, wild turkeys, water fowl, and other delicacies for which New England was then famous. Thus the time-honored festival of Thanksgiving was instituted—a festival which, originally confined in its observance to the sons of the Pilgrims and the State of Massachusetts, has now become almost a national festival."

How thankful we should all be that God has so directed the ruler of the

nation that the attention of all the people is called to the importance of giving God the praise for all natural blessings. This appeal should be especially appreciated by those who, by the grace of God have become willing to enlist under the banner of Christ, and who desire to follow doctrines of peace as taught by Him. They enjoy so many natural blessings and thank God for them, but above all they thank Him for His great mercy in revealing to them their lost state and condition, and in moving their hearts to call upon Him for deliverance. All who are thus delivered and remain faithful to Him who delivered them, become citizens of the kingdom of God's dear Son, and are taught and controlled by one head even Christ, no matter what nation or flag they live under. Such are in duty bound to submit themselves to the "powers that be," cheerfully pay tribute, honor the rulers, and they should not fail to thank God that they are privileged to live quiet and peaceable lives.

It is not the privilege of the redeemed to dictate to the rulers or reflect upon the government under which they live, but they should at all times acknowledge themselves as strangers and foreigners upon this earth, and willingly submit to every ordinance of man. "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Rom. 13:7. When we call to mind the great suffering during the dark middle ages through religious persecution, our hearts should overflow with thanksgiving and gratitude that our lot is cast in this blessed land where religious liberty is granted and every one can worship God as his conscience directs. It becomes every child of God to be thankful not only for food, and comfortable homes, but for the govern-

ment under which so many blessings and liberties are enjoyed.

Let us then endeavor to comply with the request of the Chief Magistrate and be thankful for harvests, homes, our families, the government, but above all for the gift of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who alone can give life and light to a dark and benighted world. Wherever His voice is heard and His counsel heeded, war will cease, contention and strife will come to an end, and love will abound. If we allow love to have its perfect work we will all be drawn to God who is love, and to such the words of Paul will apply: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Col. 3:15.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. L. K.

BIBLE NOTES

After the children of Israel had left Egypt all the males were numbered from twenty years old and upward, except the tribe of Levi who were to attend to the worship at the tabernacle. The whole number was over six hundred thousand. Of the tribe of Levi the males were numbered from a month old and upward, amounting to twenty-two thousand. The different tribes were arranged by divine direction. Those who served at the tabernacle were between the ages of thirty and fifty years. Our Savior was thirty years old, when He assumed His office.

From the time when all the first-born in the houses of the Egyptians were slain to effect the freedom of the Israelites, God chose the first-born among His people of all unblemished males, both of man and beast, as His own. Later when the tabernacle worship was established He chose the tribe of Levi in place of the first-born. They served under the

high priest, which may forshadow the service of John the Baptist, the minister of repentance, who served as a fore-runner under Christ the True High Priest. When anyone was disqualified by defilement to keep the Passover, or was away on a journey that he could not keep the feast at the appointed time, he was to keep it the next month on the day set; and if any could keep it, and did not, such were to be cut off from the people. The Lord's Supper, as a memorial, now takes the place of the Passover, and the same duty as a command reasonably applies to it, for God has a purpose in all that He teaches.

The Israelites loathed the manna and clamored for flesh, which the Lord sent them by a wind which "brought quails from the sea" so abundantly that they ate to excess and many died. We too may loathe the "Bread that came from heaven" and bring God's judgment upon us by lusting after fleshly things. "Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth," but he lived before the Gospel age, wherein Christ teaches "meekness and lowliness of heart." Can His disciples "mind high things?" Moses sent a man from each tribe to view the Promised Land. Their report was favorable, save that some were faint-hearted because of the giants that dwelt in the land; others were confident in saying, "We are well able to overcome it." Caleb was one of the confident ones who, with Joshua, was chosen to conquer the land. They succeeded by their faith. Canaan seems to be emblematic of our state in Christ, whom we obtain, as a heritage, by overcoming the strong worldly desires in our flesh.

A sin of ignorance was to be forgiven by sacrificing a living creature for it, but when by a sin of presumption the word of the Lord was despised by any

one, that soul was to be utterly cut off. Since all labor at that time was forbidden on the Sabbath, a man who presumptuously despised the command of the Lord by gathering sticks on the Sabbath was stoned to death. Will not people now who presumptuously "despise the word of the Lord" be cut off from the promise of eternal life?

They were to have a sign on their garments by which to "remember all the commandments of the Lord." Do we need reminding? If our engagements are too worldly we wilfully sin, and according to the example quoted we will be cut off.

For the spirit of rebellion against Moses and Aaron, Korah, Dathan and Abiram and the company that adhered to them, two hundred and fifty, that were of the chiefs of the people, were swallowed up, and because the congregation murmured against the penalty inflicted a plague was sent which destroyed nearly fifteen thousand more. The heads of the twelve tribes were to be represented by a rod for each tribe laid up in the tabernacle, and the rod of Aaron was the only one that budded to show that he was chosen to be the high priest. The Levites were not to have their share of land with the other tribes, for they were to serve at the place of worship, but it was said, "I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance."

When the people lacked water God instructed Moses and Aaron to bring it out of the rock, and Moses took the rod and smote the rock, saying: "Ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock?" This manner of speaking the Psalmist calls "unadvisedly," as assuming too much, and this slip prevented Moses from entering the land of Canaan. The rock may be typical of Christ from whom comes the Living

Water. It is said: "That spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." For their murmuring God sent fiery serpents among the people that bit them and many died. The people confessed their sin of rebellion, and Moses prayed for them and was directed to raise a brazen serpent on a pole when all who looked on it were healed. The evangelist John uses the brazen serpent to be a symbol of Christ.

The Israelites desired to pass peaceably through the country of some Kings but were withstood, and they were allowed to subdue those idolaters. Balak, King of the Moabites, sent messengers to the prophet Balaam to come and curse the Israelites that he might overcome them. The prophet inquired of the Lord who forbade him to go, but the king sent other messengers more honorable, when the prophet asked the Lord again and he was allowed to go to his sorrow. The ass he rode was used to reprove him. So our flesh which carries the soul sometimes becomes afflicted for our disobedience. When we have a clear conviction we trifle with God to ask for further knowledge.

The people of God were drawn into idolatry by the heathen nations which they met, causing a plague among them of which twenty-four thousand died. When we read, "The anger of the Lord was kindled," we should remember that the expression is in human words, to give us the thought of God's displeasure. We do not understand that God is affected by anger as we are, or He would be fleshly, but we have instances of His forbearance ceasing.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Rom. II: 33.

CHRISTIAN UNITY

"For He is our peace, who hath made both one; and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." Eph. 2: 14.

In this chapter the Apostle beautifully defines the mission of Christ; that He came to quicken both Jew and Gentile, who were dead in sin, and by His grace to raise them up to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Thus He becomes our peace, for He restored the peace and happiness which was lost by the transgression. Men universally seek happiness and peace, but in their carnal state they are not in harmony with the economy, will, and Spirit of God and are under condemnation. The grace, which appears unto all men, reveals their accountability, and pronounces judgment against them. This leads to unrest and consequent unhappiness. Sin becomes a grievous burden and man seeks relief; and the only source of relief is in accepting Jesus the sinner's friend. He remits their sins; He redeems; He restores the lost peace and love, and by His mysterious power He united the Jews and Gentiles, who had been separated as by a wall, into one—into fellowship, peace and love.

The Jews were God's chosen people and to them was committed the law and all the oracles. They were given the promise that, if faithful and obedient, they should reap many blessings. They were commanded to observe many sacrifices, offerings and ceremonies, but these were only types and shadows of the spiritual dispensation which Jesus eventually came to establish. He not only came to fulfil every jot and tittle of the law by His death and resurrection, but He came to proclaim salvation, equality, liberty, and peace, to all nations—to all who would truly *believe in Him*.

The Gentiles had now an equal opportunity with the Jews to accept salvation; and Jew and Gentile, quickened by His Spirit, could be made one, for He broke down the partition wall between them by "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances." We cannot wonder, however, that the Jews were jealous and envious of this newly acquired privilege of the Gentiles. But when they were willing to renounce their selfishness and prejudice, and believe in Jesus, they all became united in one spirit of love and peace.

Though our text applies directly to the Jews and Gentiles, yet it is applicable to every one's condition according to nature. We have all reared up a wall of partition which separates us from our God. The transgression of our first parents has alienated all of us from His holy attributes of love, peace and unity. And even when we become disturbed by the grace of God, and guilt condemns us, if we should seek justification by moral works of the law, we would only add to our burden and raise the wall higher. We must first repent and follow the spiritual Moses, Christ Jesus, who not only breaks down the partition wall, but leads us as a faithful Shepherd upon the way to eternal life. Then pride, hatred, envy, self-love and everything that does not harmonize with peace and love, is purged from the heart. We then accept the Gospel as our rule, guide, and judge.

Christ brought but one counsel and that everywhere emphasizes love and unity. We are assured, too, that His word shall stand, for He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but My word shall not pass away." Two religious theories or doctrines may be advanced and taught, they cannot both be right but both may be wrong. The word of God is the criterion. When there are divisions and dissensions in worship it is

conclusive evidence that the partition wall has not been broken down, for peace and love is lacking.

God gave the Mosaic Law to curb man's selfish, evil passions; also to protect the righteous and punish the evil-doer. Some minds are perplexed at the apparent contradiction of the Scriptures—that God in one age of the world permitted strife, resistance of evil, swearing of oaths, and warfare, and in another age forbids them. These persons are yet under the law and are governed by carnal reason. The veil of Moses yet obscures their spiritual vision; they have not come to Christ, for the Apostle says "which veil is done away in Christ." When we believe and accept Christ He instils love into the heart and fulfils the law for us. By the new birth He imparts power to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. "We follow peace with all men and holiness," and instead of swearing an oath our "Yea is yea, and our nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Instead of engaging in strife and warfare we love our enemies and do good to them. "We have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Where fellowship and unity do not exist Christ does not rule. In order to preserve this condition among believers, they must be willing to make sacrifices. If our brother or sister does wrong we must not follow the dictates of carnal reason and conclude they must bear their own sins and say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" but we must in love labor with them to impress, and if possible regain them. If they yield they are restored, if not they are separated from the church; otherwise purity, unity, and fellowship could not be maintained. Trespasses, offenses and failures will occur, but if they are

treated according to the rule of Christ prescribed in the 18th chapter of Matthew, the church can be kept pure, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Then unity and fellowship which Christ so earnestly prayed for in the 17th chapter of John will be preserved to the praise and glory of God.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. K.

COMMUNION, OR THE LORD'S SUPPER

Professors of the religion of Christ, with few exceptions observe the communion or sacrament of the Lord's Supper. All who do observe it recognize it as being one of our Savior's commands and many no doubt think that there is saving virtue in the observance. Man-kind are deceived by such a conclusion, since all saving virtue is vested alone in Christ's merits. Obedience to God's commands is a part of worship since worship is the performance of our vow to God.

When the Jews sought to kill the Savior, He told them to "search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." We conclude from this scripture that the Jews believed that salvation was assured by the works of the law, but they failed to understand that all their ceremonies were a type of the true and spiritual service in Christ.

Whenever God required a service of His people, it was intended for their good, and at the same time He was honored by their obedience. The passover was called a feast, but the food partaken of was not all palatable. The lamb was to be roast and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. While it was not a feast in the usual sense of that word, it was the seal of their deliverance from natural bondage, and a type of man's future deliverance from spiri-

tual bondage through the suffering, death and resurrection of the true lamb of God, Jesus Christ. The Paschal feast was to be observed yearly and at the same time of each year. Naturally their posterity would wonder what the service signified. Put the Lord had told them to tell their children the reason for it. It no doubt meant much to them that were actually delivered from bondage and, lest they should forget, it was to be observed annually. This feast would not have been required had it not served a purpose, and could it not be fittingly said that what the passover was to God's literal Israel, the Communion of the Lord's Supper is to His spiritual Israel?

The male children of Abraham's posterity were commanded to be circumcised when eight days old, which was one of the requirements to be a partaker of the feast. Freedom from defilement was also demanded. If any one became unclean he was forbidden to partake of the feast till he would offer such sacrifices and perform such duties as God had appointed for his cleansing. As these conditions were a necessity to the proper observance of the passover, so circumcision of the heart (spiritually) and freedom from defilement are the essentials to the proper observance of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

God demanded strict obedience to the law from His literal Israel and they were filled with gratitude for their wonderful deliverance. They could well understand the meaning of this memorial service. God's will ever was that His people should be happy, and that condition can only be attained by faithful obedience to His commands and a knowledge of their underlying principles.

All commands and ordinances may lose their true meaning when they are

not conscientiously observed according to divine authority. Especially true is this of the Lord's Supper. There is so much involved in Christ's death and resurrection. The service that He rendered atones for sin from the time of Adam's transgression to the end of time. All who repent and exercise faith in Him are freed from sin and can no longer live therein. Christ died for sinners and all who have accepted Him stand in the power of His death; it therefore follows that all who stand in that power, stand in the same relation to Him, thereby establishing a brotherhood which is authorized to commemorate His death by partaking of the emblems of the bread and cup.

Communion signifies fellowship, concord, agreement, oneness. "By one Spirit (the Spirit of Christ) are we all baptized into one body." Is it not clear that where this unity or oneness does not exist the partaking of the emblems would be meaningless. Known sinners must be excluded, not only from the communion, but also from the church, since His church is to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Man brings condemnation upon himself by the misuse of the communion, so will the church bring condemnation upon herself by retaining unrepentant sinners, since the command is,—“Put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” “Know ye not that a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump?”

Where true fellowship exists, there is love and confidence. These constitute the relation between brethren which is effected by Christ's death, and which is the requirement to witness to His death by partaking of the emblems. If for any reason the confidence between members should be disturbed or weakened, the affected ones could not witness to His death till true fellowship is restored.

Our Savior knowing the weakness of human nature provided for the restoration of the erring in Matthew 18. Labor to restore the erring is not pleasing to the flesh, but when it is performed in humility and love it is Scriptural and may it not be compared to the bitter herbs the Israelites were asked to eat along with the paschal lamb. True communion implies self-denial and labor for the cause of Christ and His kingdom on earth. Saint and sinner can not commune together. The relation between them is as distinct as between light and darkness.

Lemoyne, Pa.

J. I. M.

CAESAR AND GOD

The line of distinction between our duty to Caesar and to God, drawn by Christ—Matt. 22:15-23:

“Then went the Pharisees and took counsel how they might entangle Him in his talk. And they sent out unto Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth. Neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Show Me the tribute money, and they brought unto him a penny. And He saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto Him Caesar's. Then saith He unto them, Render, therefore, unto Caesar, the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left Him, and went away.” The Pharisees were leaders of the main body of the Jews. They ob-

tained the highest offices, both civil and ecclesiastical, and, therefore, wielded a great influence both in religion and in politics. They were a power in Judea. They apparently were very religious. Their sanctity was, however, more in appearance than in reality; policy influenced them more than principle. The Herodians were a class of persons who stood in with King Herod and defended whatever that unscrupulous ruler devised. They laid no claim to piety. It is probable they were chiefly of the sect of the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection and the ministration of Angels, Acts xxiii, 8.

When the Pharisees and the Herodians approached Christ and addressed Him so respectfully—they spoke the truth, but it was spoken deceitfully. They had no love for Him, and no sympathy with His teaching. Therefore, their fine address was nothing but hypocrisy. They had conspired to entangle Him by asking Him what they evidently considered a difficult question to answer: Whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not? The Pharisees believed it unlawful to pay tribute to a foreign and idolatrous power. The Herodians considered it a duty to pay tribute to the reigning dynasty. Thus they thought they had Christ between two fires. If He attempted to escape the one He would be caught by the other. They failed to reckon with the fact that they were dealing with one who was unlimited in resources, and infinite in wisdom, and that by Him were created thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, subject to His control.

The Jews at that time were subjected by Caesar's armies. They were Caesar's subjects, and according to the law of nations were under obligation to pay tribute to him or to those whom he would appoint. If Christ had replied,

"No, do not pay tribute to a foreign and idolatrous power," then the Herodians would have reported Him to Caesar's officers, and He would have been arraigned and condemned for sedition and treason. If on the other hand He had advised them to pay tribute to Caesar, the Pharisees would have charged Him with being an enemy to the liberties of his country, and in opposition to the law of Moses. It is not difficult to understand how secure they felt; they were His enemies and were seeking His ruin. But His wonderful answer confounded them, as it was justice and truth and exposed their duplicity.

The coin or money bore Caesar's image and superscription and clearly indicated their duty of paying tribute to him as their lawful sovereign, under whose jurisdiction they occupied their homes and were protected in their rights. The duty of paying taxes to maintain Caesar's government was thus made plain. The deeper meaning of the coin with its image and superscription is, if we bear the image of the earthly, if our treasure is upon earth and our affections are set upon things below and we seek offices for honor and profit, and are governed by the law of retaliation, such as eye for eye, then it is consistent for us to serve the world and give our last efforts for the moral betterment and uplift of the race by laboring for governmental justice, for equality, for liberty and civic righteousness.

But Christ enjoined a higher duty than that they owed to Caesar by saying, "Render unto God the things that are God's." All the Jews who were true to their law recognized the duty and the consistency of the above injunction. To fear God and to keep His commandments, was the summary of

their law. So they could not find fault with His answer. Christ left it with them to determine by their law and by their conscience, what was implicit in the latter injunction, as well as in the former. The deeper meaning of the latter is, if we bear the image of Christ we are not our own, since we are redeemed from all our sins by Him whose image we bear, and are under the most solemn obligations to consecrate our lives to His service, which we will manifest by yielding our members as instruments of truth and righteousness. This constitutes us citizens of Christ's kingdom, which is founded on love, of which kingdom Christ is the Lawgiver and the Ruler. Of this kingdom and of the peace thereof, there will be no end, since it is founded on love and is distinct from the earthly kingdoms which are professedly founded on equity and justice as was that of Caesar's, which all are maintained by the sword.

Christ is Supreme Ruler in His kingdom and is worthy of unstinted praise. The kingdom is spiritual and exists in the hearts of all true followers of Christ; it consists in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. It is essentially a kingdom of peace, for its Ruler was foretold as the Prince of Peace. He gives peace of mind to His subjects, and authorizes them to seek peace with all men. Our homes and our natural estates are Caesar's. We possess them by his permission. We owe the payment of taxes and tribute to him, which we should pay willingly and conscientiously. Our bodies are our God's, as also our consciences; we should endeavor to live so as to have a conscience void of offence; this we can only do by mortifying our earthly members and subordinating our natural desires to the Divine Will. In rendering unto God the things that belong to God,

Faith, Hope and Charity are indispensable, these are gifts of God which He freely gives to all who sincerely desire them, the effect of which is separation from the spirit that controls all persons outside of the kingdom of God.

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

THE BREAD OF LIFE

"Jesus said unto them, 'I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.'" John 6: 35.

Wheaten bread is the staff of life; when we partake thereof it sustains and nourishes the body that we may be able to discharge the duties of life. But this was not the bread to which Jesus had reference, for it only serves our temporal needs. The children of Israel, when they journeyed through the wilderness, received manna which God had provided for them so that they could continue their journey towards the promised land. This was literal, but natural things are often used to make spiritual things more readily understood.

Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, came into the world and testified that He was the true and living bread which came down from heaven. This bread is spiritual, and nourishes the inner or divine life. "He that eateth of this bread," Jesus said, "shall live for ever." He has here given an eternal promise.

To eat of this living bread is to do the will of God, to keep His commandments, to love Him supremely as He loved the Father. He said, "I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." In doing the will of the Father we follow the simple doctrine which Jesus taught, all speaking the same thing, and walking by the same rule which is love. Love to God and love to

man becomes an inborn principle, so that we will do good to all men, especially to them of the household of faith, and we will love even our enemies. This is not the natural inclination of men: they love those who love them. But by virtue of regeneration or being born again there is a changed condition: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

The Jews murmured because He said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They asked, "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph?" They could not accept Him as the Messiah for they looked upon Him as a man; as it is written, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:11-13.

The Jews also boasted and said, "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert." Jesus told them Moses did not give them the true bread from heaven but My Father giveth you the bread that if a man eat thereof he shall never die. The testimony is "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. Therefore to eat of the Heavenly Bread will bring us into fellowship with God by reason of the new birth, a change of heart, and the passing from death unto life.

When Jesus met the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, He said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst." This is in agreement with the text: "He that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

Again He has given the promise that they who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. Such souls are led to separate from the unrighteousness of the world, as Jesus told His disciples, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." In this world we discover much of unrighteousness, much of envy and strife, and where these are "there is confusion and every evil work." To every professor of Christ apply the words of Isaiah: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" Since all that does not harmonize with Gospel teaching is not of God how careful should we be that we accept only that which is in agreement with the revealed Word and Spirit; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Although man has fallen from his first estate and wanders in darkness, there is still a spark left within him that moves him to worship. It is important that the Word of the Lord should sink deep in our hearts and that we seek to worship Him in Spirit and in truth; that we come to the Fountain of Life, seek Him while He may be found, seek Him early while His arm is not shortened but powerful to save, and not one that comes to Him will He reject.

Humberstone, Ont.

J. A.

BRIEF NOTES

It is only when we get into a near relation to God that we can reflect the divine attributes, because they then become a part of our lives, just as all men become more and more like those with whom they most associate.

* * * *

Our greatest happiness lies in rendering unto God devoted service. A full measure of such service cannot be ren-

dered without also unselfishly giving service to others, according to the requirements of the occasion, and our ability, under the direction and approval of a conscience enlightened by the grace of God.

* * * *

Our course in this world is likened unto a voyage; and our experience may oft-times be as that of the disciples, when a great tempest arises upon the sea of life. It is then we discover how frail our craft, and ourselves in jeopardy because of the wind and the waves. These experiences lead us to inquire with the Savior, Where is our faith? It is then we are led to exclaim, "Lord save us, we perish!" When we realize His "Peace, be still," then truly there comes "a great calm!"

* * * *

God is sometimes spoken of as destroying; yet in reality God saves; and in all His visible creation there is no waste. Material things pass into dissolution and assume other forms, but it has never been discovered that anything is really destroyed or wasted. Only the devil destroys. Destruction and waste are his purpose, and subversion of all the inconceivably high and lofty objects and designs of Him whose authority he rejected, thereby causing the fall of himself and his followers from their exalted station among the angelic host. Truly it was declared "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time."

* * * *

There is a disposition in man to acquire honor, fame, power, empire, and much effort is expended to that selfish end. In following the promptings of this disposition, even when men reach pinnacles of fame and honor, and are in the zenith of their glory there is no real greatness.

True humility, self-denial and self-sacrifice are the first requirements of real and enduring greatness, with the reward of a peace that passeth all understanding.

However much we may have humbled ourselves, may we not humble ourselves still more?—humble ourselves in service to others, in bearing injustice and contumely, in uncomplaining submission to adversities permitted in the providence of God, and in meekness, lowliness and simplicity in our daily life?

* * * *

A noted writer in a brief newspaper article, writing of the Ten Commandments, seems to question whether Moses, when he received them, really was in communication with God or whether it was merely some hypnotic fit amidst the thunder and lightning.

As these Commandments so expressly reflect the righteousness and holiness of God, as no human document ever has, it must be self-evident that Moses could have received them only from God.

The occasion of Moses being required to go up into the mountain alone may have been figurative of the faithful in all ages, as now; for we need to go up into the mountain alone and unencumbered in a consecrated service to God. It is only then that we can get a clear view of the comparatively insignificant worth of earthly wealth and attainments below. In this near relation to God there come to us also mighty demonstrations of His power and presence, as unto Moses on the Mount amidst the thunder and the lightning.

* * * *

The writer, commenting on the Ten Commandments, writes of them as being "generally accepted as the foundation of all law and morals, and the basis of society in the civilized world," and that these "lay their restraining hand on

every human being." That "they function in the home, the market, the street and the office; reaching out to the wild places of the earth and in the farthest seas," and are heeded or defied wherever there is a human being.

These Commandments, as they were graven on tablets of stone, truly represent the indelible manner in which is written in the human heart a sense of the need of just and righteous living, which they require. It is true that they still function with everyone, as they have for ages; but in the lives of Christians their purpose and design have been accomplished. True followers of Christ are no more under the law, but under grace. Their service, rendered to their God, is then a voluntary service in accord with Gospel teaching. Such are no longer subject to the requirements of the ceremonial law, under which faithfulness could only be attested by outward forms, sacrifices and offerings, all looking forward in faith to the great sacrifice and offering on Calvary, once for all.

* * * *

"Think on these things." This was the fitting advice of the Apostle Paul, after referring to the virtue and praise there may be in things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely and of good report. Even from a modern psychological point of view this is still good counsel and advice, in this age of amazing human activity, self-satisfying indulgences and amusements, in which the inclination is to drift along with the current without serious thinking.

"*Think on these things.*" Following this advice we may derive untold benefit from thought given to the unfolding things which are true, in the world about us and in the unutterable glory of the stellar universe. These all direct our thought to the eternal and unchang-

ing truths affecting us for weal or woe, when we have passed from these transient scenes.

There is a wonderful range of thought with similar effect, in thinking on the things that are honorable, just, pure, lovely and of good report. The whole theme is one which becomes deeper and more absorbing as we enter into it, until it affects our whole life, as it affected the life of the Apostle Paul, who meditated on these things and talked about them continually, becoming like his Lord, and acknowledging indebtedness and rendering praise to Him as the author and dispenser of all that is good.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Can we repeat the Lord's prayer with comfort, if we do not comply with its requests?

A. We cannot receive any spiritual comfort from offering the Lord's prayer, unless we are born of the Spirit of God, are in unity with its requirements and obey its teachings. Otherwise God will not hear and answer it to the comfort of the soul. We would only deceive ourselves and mock God. We must be faithful subjects of His kingdom to say in sincerity, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

Q. Explain the Parable of the Tares. Matt. 13:24-31.

A. Jesus very clearly explains the Parable, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world: the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy that sowed them is the devil." It is said, "When men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." This would imply that when men are asleep in sin, they are not responsive to the grace of God, and the devil has favor-

able opportunity to sow seeds of evil and sin into their hearts, of which tares are evidently a type.

Q. Why is true religion unpopular?

A. True religion constitutes the doctrine of Christ, which commands loving our enemies, non-resistance of evil, and a humble, self-denying, defenseless, non-worldly life. This manner of life is in direct opposition to the natural character of man, and is therefore unpopular. When religion becomes popular there is a justifiable cause for suspicion that it is not genuine. Christ Jesus being the author of true religion, was despised and rejected by the masses of mankind. His doctrine was never popular and never will be. He well said: "And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." He also said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Q. Why is nominal Christendom not united?

A. Because unity can only be effected through an individual heart work wrought by the Spirit of God, and cannot be attained by man-made rules or doctrines. It is a fundamental principle underlying true worship and is born in the heart by the word of God. Therefore worshipers, not having this seal, do not possess the elements of unity, and will continue to differ in opinion, and entertain conflicting views relative to religious duties. They are yet carnal and are swayed by carnal reason. That unity is highly essential in worship is proven by many Scriptures. John 17. Gal. 4:4, 5, 6. 1 Cor. 1:10. Phil. 2:2, 3, 4.

Q. Explain 2 Cor. 6:14-18. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers * * * wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate," etc.

A. Unbelievers in this Scripture are those worshipers who do not obey all of

Christ's teachings. Paul saw that a faithful Christian cannot be unequally yoked together with unbelievers in the church because Christ came to establish a church where peace, unity and fellowship is maintained. To remain in a corrupt church and commune with those who wilfully disobey Christ's commands would be confessing unity and fellowship when it does not exist; realizing the danger of a little leaven leavening the whole lump, he makes clear in this chapter the importance of separating from unfaithful worship.

Q. What is the first step toward salvation?

A. To realize that we are lost sinners. The grace of God acquaints us with our lost condition and until we become impressed with the blighting effect of sin upon the soul and the necessity of repentance, we have not taken the first step to salvation; we are in spiritual darkness. It is written: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and they that sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." Matt. 4:16. This light appears to all the sons and daughters of Adam. It is further written that Jesus was the "true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. If we heed this light it will reveal unto us our lost sinful condition; that the wrath and judgment of God is impending, and this will lead us to repentance and finally to salvation through Jesus our Savior.

AUTUMN

Again are we reminded of the beauty of the seasons. We note on tree and vine the changing color which comes as nature's crowning glory to the closing year. We again marvel at the rich coloring of crimson and scarlet blending into autumn's blanket of gold.

It is the close of the season of ingathering of the fruits of the soil. The last crops are being garnered and the storehouses of those who tilled the soil are filled. An All Wise Creator has not only provided food in store for man, but also for the smaller creatures that neither toil nor reap "yet God feedeth them." At this season they too are busily filling their small store houses since the frosty nights warn that winter is near. Surely goodness and mercy have followed us and we are unworthy of the rich blessings we have enjoyed in the year that is past.

In its season the seed was sown and an abundance of rain and sunshine gave bountiful crops. However, there were areas which suffered severe loss from floods. Again, there were hail-swept sections where ripening harvests were destroyed and little remained to reward the laborer for his toil.

There were also destructive enemies to the growing crops. In a small way we experienced this condition in our gardens. Each season it would seem a new insect is discovered which preys upon plant life. To avoid its ravages it requires constant and special care so as to destroy larva or blight. We need be vigilant if we would destroy the destructive agencies.

In the parable of the sower, our Savior illustrates the spiritual life in the similitude of the sower who went forth to sow. Christ is the Sower who sows the good seed, and the ground sown is the hearts of all men. A loving Savior scattered the good seed. Some fell on the wayside and some on stony ground, neither was good ground. Some fell among thorns but the thorns were not removed and the growth was choked. But some fell into good ground and brought forth fruit bountifully. The seed sown is the Word of God. The good ground is the honest and good

heart which is thoroughly prepared for the seed and "understandeth it" as being the pearl of great price.

As the Heavenly Father plants the seed and nourishes it, so it is He that will bring forth the fruitage, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty-fold.

Our Savior did not intend that the parable should convey the idea that there were no destructive agencies to hinder the growth of the seed on the good ground. The more fertile or mellow the soil, the easier the tares will root. He that receiveth the good seed, the child of God, "understandeth it" and cherishes the new life and guards it from danger. The thorns or weeds are to be recognized and uprooted when first appearing. A child of God is asked to be obedient and faithful to his trust. Since a loving Savior abides in the good heart, He warns the child of God that there are dangerous foes, enemies to the soul, who are watching to sow tares that the good seed may be destroyed. "Watch ye therefore . . . and what I say unto you, I say unto all, watch." No enemy can destroy the good seed, if the child of God knows the danger and calls for help. "Take ye heed, watch and pray." A loving Savior is very near, His ear is open to our cry to give us the needed strength for the conflict.

In the garden of the soul there is added vigilance and care needed hourly, to combat new enemies which endanger the life of the soul. In this age of reasoning and doubt there is a tendency to ignore the central truths outlined in Christ's teaching. The delusive reasoning of the carnal mind as set forth so commonly in papers and books of the present time instills doubt, since it is boldly asserted Christ's teaching is not applicable to the present time. This is subtle reasoning and many persons are deluded into rejecting Christ's plain

teaching and accepting "for doctrine the commandments of men."

May we be awake to the danger of the allurements of the world—a world which through man's greater knowledge and use of things is becoming more and more attractive. Greater opportunity is afforded for leisure and the enjoyment of the things of sight and sense. "The cares and riches and pleasures of this life" may be the tares which choke the good seed and cause love to grow cold.

These are some of the foes that are so subtle. These are the destructive agencies, the blight and canker, that are deadly to the spiritual life. Our Savior warns, "Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and cares of this life. . . . Watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things."

We believe serious reflections will come to every sincere soul who reads and reflects upon Christ's teaching as outlined in His word. It is only when we recognize the two kingdoms, the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of this world as separate kingdoms that Christ's teaching can be clearly understood. To His followers Christ's words are "I have chosen you out of the world" and again are His faithful disciples admonished that they "are not of the world as I am not of the world."

The entrance of the good seed, the word of God, into the heart causes a transformation. The taste or desire for social attainments and the idle pleasures and pastimes are lost. The cares and duties of life are secondary to the Christ-life and every true child of God will deny self of whatever may be a hindrance to the growth of the divine life in the soul. There is a sense of responsibility and a devotion to the great cause. The graces implanted and cultivated are strengthened. Add to faith

virtue, and to virtue knowledge . . . temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, charity. "If these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful." Love to God and a love for the welfare of all men bring the peaceable fruits of righteousness. These fruits shall not fail. They are fruits of the seed which brought forth bountifully, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

There is similarity not only in the growth but also in the limitation of plant life and the length of the span of life of man. Both appear for a little season and if there is not growth and fruitage the design of an All Wise Creator has failed.

The season of winter is fast approaching. It is an impressive thought that spiritually where the good seed was not received, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Hagerstown, Md.

E. S. L.

THANKSGIVING DAY

Thanksgiving Day is drawing near,
That blessed time of all the year;
When we recall God's mercies given,

Our grateful thanks ascend to heaven.
Did God withhold the sun and showers,
But all our efforts would be vain,
We till the soil and sow the grain,
No bounteous harvest would be ours.

We render thanks to God above,
For life and health and friends to love,
For peaceful home and kindly cheer,
For all these gifts we Him revere.

Not only on Thanksgiving Day
Would we our thanks and praises say,
But every day our prayers should be
More gratitude, O Lord, to Thee.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

"The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it." Prov. II: 22.

WHAT DO WE READ?

The faculty of speech is one of the gifts of the Creator, who has given man dominion over the beasts of the field. Man, having great intelligence, has devised means of recording and transmitting speech, so that persons in different parts of the earth may communicate by writing; and the thoughts and expressions of men, which constitute the accumulated knowledge of the world, may be preserved for future generations.

In earlier times the majority of the people were illiterate. They had not learned to read and write, and were inclined to look with scorn upon those who gave their time to the study of these accomplishments. What knowledge they had of the Scriptures was obtained by hearing the law read on the Sabbath day, or by conferring with those who possessed the requisite information.

As time passed the desire for knowledge increased, and facilities were provided to educate the young. For centuries, however, only a favored few had ready access to the books and parchments, all of which were written by hand. Then came the art of printing, which soon brought books within the reach of the masses. At first only the churches possessed ponderous Bibles, which were kept chained, where those with the ability could come and read. It is to be expected that the "common people" appreciated these new privileges, and applied themselves diligently in the pursuit of learning, through reading.

In our day, there is scarcely a home in the land without at least one copy of the Bible, and countless other publications are obtainable at low cost. Our language has been enriched by the lofty expressions of many writers; and the high standards of learning which now prevail

make it easy for the poorest in the land to become familiar with the works of the greatest authors.

Do we always appreciate this great privilege, and use it to the best advantage? It is to be regretted that many writers, greedy of filthy lucre, have found it profitable to use their talents in producing works of fiction,—sensational, salacious, pandering to the lowest instincts of man. God alone knows how much harm is done to the minds of the young by permitting them to absorb such narrations. And not only the young, but many of mature years are guilty of reading only that which amuses, entertains, or excites.

We would especially caution the believer against the danger in reading too much popular literature. By giving too much of our time to the perusal of newspapers, and to writings of a trifling nature, we not only weaken our desire for reading the Bible, but we expose ourselves to the influence of the sentiments expressed in these publications. It is generally recognized that the "power of the press" is one of the greatest factors for good or evil. This is because we are all swayed, more or less, by what we read.

We naturally take interest in our surroundings, and wish to know what is taking place in the busy world around us. The daily papers keep us informed, but let us be careful. How little we find there upon which the soul can feed! Most of the items arouse a spirit of levity, of selfishness, or of exaltation. Even the advertisements of those with merchandise to sell, almost invariably contain a subtle appeal to the pride, vanity or greed of the reader. There is also a noticeable tendency to confuse morality with Christianity, to substitute works for faith, and to give to man the honor that belongs to God.

Paul writes, Col. 2:8, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit; after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." So many plausible theories are advanced that we may become confused, and unbelief creeps in. We should serve God in singleness of heart, not being "tossed about by every wind of doctrine," knowing that a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, and will not receive anything of the Lord. Our time here is so precious that we cannot afford to be other than strangers and pilgrims here, and we are admonished to "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

What can we read? Let us first consider what the effect would be. We are told that whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Phil. 4:8). Will the reading matter under consideration promote such thoughts? If not, what benefit can we hope to receive? If our treasure is in heaven, we will endeavor to have our conversation there, and will seek to read principally of those spiritual truths, which make us wise unto salvation.

When we are hungering and thirsting after righteousness the Book of Books contains unfailing counsel, and sweet solace to the soul. O, blessed Bible! How its bright pages shine infinitely beyond all the wisdom of man! It stands above the mountains of worldly literature as the lighthouse stands above the treacherous shoals; its glowing light beckoning and directing the seafaring man into the harbor of safety. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

W. I. T.

Stevensville, Ont., Can.

LOST AND FOUND

We are all likely familiar with the distressing sensation of being lost in this natural life—a sense of fear and anxiety of mind seizes us, and we earnestly long to find our way and be delivered. And when we lose something valuable, how we deplore the loss, and how diligently we search for it. Also, in either case, how we rejoice in thankfulness when we have found our way or have found the lost treasure.

There, however, are instances of the lost ones not finding their way, as being lost on the ocean or in the wilderness. What awful anguish of mind, what fearful forebodings, must such persons experience when hope gives way to despair, and a lingering death confronts them! This is one of the most terrible experiences that mortal man can suffer. All this, however, applies only to this mortal life, and temporal death ends it and thus releases the sufferer.

There is another lost condition that is far more serious and attended with far graver consequences—it is relative to the fallen, lost condition of man, inherited through the transgression of our first parents. This condition not only concerns this mortal life but the eternal life of the soul. This lost state is universal; all have strayed from the true way,—the way of life; and to add to its seriousness, all are in spiritual darkness. The prophet portrays the situation: "We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men." Isaiah 59:10.

We know naturally that if we are lost in the darkness or in the night it is much harder to find our way than in the light of day. Spiritually we cannot find the true way while we are in darkness and asleep in sin. How then shall we extri-

cate ourselves? Of ourselves we are irretrievably lost. The Apostle prescribes the way to find help. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. 5:14. When we awake, when a ray of heavenly light enters our darkened heart we realize our sinful and lost condition—we repent and come to Jesus, and take God's word for our guide.

Christ is the "true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." He restores unto us the lost treasure. He said "I give unto My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish." Now we can rejoice, "For it is written eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. 2:9. Like the Prodigal we were lost and are now found. The Father in heaven received us through redeeming love. We can now praise His Holy Name and with the Psalmist acknowledge Him as our Creator and the God of our salvation: "Know ye that the Lord He is God; it is He that hath made us and not ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture, Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him and bless His name." The restoration from a lost to a saved state is the only source of true happiness upon earth.

Though the people of God may sometimes suffer tribulation, and dark clouds of doubt and unbelief, through their infirmities and failures, may obscure the light on their pathway, there is always hope and consolation in exercising faith in Jesus. He is the merciful High Priest which can be touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He said, "Fear not little flock it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Luke 12:32. This saved condition not only affords peace and happiness in this life, but as Paul said, "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only but unto all them also that love His appearing." Tim. 4:8.

In our anxiety to find the true way when we realize we are lost, if we are not entirely willing to obey God's word we may be deceived. We may receive some light but not the true light. We may repent by coming to John the Baptist, and like the Jews "muse in our hearts whether he is not the Christ." John was a "burning and a shining light," but he was not the *true light*; he was not the way—he only prepared the way. He said there cometh after me one who is mightier than I, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Mat. 3:11.

By not coming to Christ we would only be following the light reflected by the Law and might comfort ourselves with a moral, upright life. We might engage in worship, observe the ordinances, and be encouraged in our delusion by having multitudes for companions, and able and gifted leaders to console and encourage us. There are would-be evangelists who may reflect some light, they may have power to perform miracles, they may make many proselytes, but we fear it is only the blind leading the blind, and, "if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch." Mat. 15:14. All these lights which we would vainly follow are only lights in the night. They may be brilliant but nevertheless they are cold and lacking the warming, animating rays of love and truth. In the physical world there are also bright lights in the night—the moon and stars emit a mellow light in the darkness, yet compared

with the glorious light of the sun they are only cold, feeble lights in the night. So in the spiritual world the only true light to lead us out of darkness and to save our lost souls is Jesus Christ. He is the "Sun of Righteousness" that surpasses all other lights, dispels all darkness, and thus enlightens and sanctifies the dark, sinful heart. Unless we by repentance accept Jesus, are regenerated, and faithfully obey all His commands, we will abide in darkness, remain children of the night and will be lost and not found, and woeful shall be our destiny in eternity.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO GOVERNMENT

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." John 17: 14 and 16.

These words are among the most important and impressive in the whole Scripture; especially so at this time when our nation is occupied in the selection of a Chief Magistrate. The people are divided into a number of parties, each claiming superiority, yet differing widely in what they hold forth as best for the nation. It is claimed that Christians, who are unprejudiced, should be especially active in so important a matter, that one might be chosen who favors such laws as will be best for all the people, and in agreement with the high standards of good government.

Since the masses are so divided, and the parties so arrayed against each other, strife and contention will arise between them and between their individual adherents; and as the laws cannot be enforced except by power and sometimes by violence, the followers of Christ cannot take any part in such matters.

If it should be contended that Christians would be just the ones needed to

enact the best laws, the text applies most forcefully. "They are not of the world." If the Gospel believer should endeavor to put into practice the peaceable commands of Christ in the administration of justice between man and man, the purpose and effect of the law would be defeated; if he should use the laws of the land to maintain peace and order, even if it were to obtain justice or inflict penalty for wrong-doing in a clear case, he would be untrue to his Savior's call, Matt. 5: 39, 41; if he should use his vote and influence to elect officers in the world he would be bound by honor and consistency to support them, even though they were not elected by the party in which he cast his vote; for he must accept that they were elected by the majority, and therefore their administration should be for the greatest benefit to the greatest number.

Jesus prayed not that the Father should take them out of the world, but deliver them from the evil. Their example here may be productive of much good, even when not crying aloud against sin, for actions often speak louder than words;—the meek and quiet life; contentment, without enjoying or indulging all that a restless spirit would crave; the manifestation of patience in the time of trial; the submissiveness and charity in times when injustice is imposed, inadvertently or otherwise; all these cannot fail to make impressions on soberminded persons who may be witnesses, and perhaps lead to serious and profitable reflections.

While the Gospel believers are not of the world they are still in the world, and are enjoined (Rom. 13:) to be subject to the higher powers, For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. * * * Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." They pay their tribute and render to all

their dues: obedient to the laws, yet not making nor enforcing them; enjoying the benefits and protection of the government without taking part in it; not doing violence to any man, but as charity dictates, 1 Cor. 13:7, Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. They are a peculiar people, not forward in their life or profession, not intruding upon others either doctrines or demands, but quietly endeavoring to live a worthy example as Jesus ever taught, thus manifesting the distinction between the world and those who are chosen out of it.

Landisville, Pa.

C. S. N.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

The Apostle Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Paul was a man of intelligence and learning and was about to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Romans, who were a proud nation, yet he said he was not ashamed of Christ and His doctrine. Neither were any of the other apostles timid about preaching this new doctrine.

It seems that there has always been something about the doctrine of Christ of which the people have been ashamed. Christ's birth was very humble. He was not born in a palace at Jerusalem, where the natural kings were found, and where the wise men went first to seek Him; but in Bethlehem of Judea, in a stable and laid in a manger. Again His birth was not proclaimed to rulers and people of prominence in that day, but to the lowly shepherds, who were watching their flocks. His first disciples were fishermen. The employment of both the shepherds and the fishermen was an humble one leading them away from the strife and contention of the world, and

also away from honor and fame. The shepherds gave their life to caring for their flock. The fishermen spent their days by the quiet waters and were not concerned about the affairs and the government of the world at that time.

Christ is the true Shepherd and His followers are compared to sheep. He is meek and lowly of heart. His example teaches us to be humble, to avoid extremes, to love friend and enemy: in short, it is the embodiment of all the virtues;—so why be ashamed of His Gospel even though it leads to the narrow way of the cross and self-denial and separates from much that the world calls enjoyment? Christ said, "I receive not honor from men." He also said, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His father with the holy angels."

Nicodemus, prominent, and a member of the Sanhedrin, came to Jesus by night. We might infer that he did not want his friends to see him there, so, evidently, he was ashamed of Christ. The young ruler, who came to Jesus to know what to do to inherit eternal life, could not give up his possessions in the world. We read that Jesus looked upon him and loved him. Evidently he was a lovely, moral character, who kept the commandments from his youth, but he loved his possessions more than he loved Jesus. Samuel told Saul, "to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." The faithful ones of old were not ashamed to turn aside from the world and obey the Lord. They did not obey the commands only in so far as they were easy, and pleasant to their nature, but suffered all manner of denials and hardships.

The Jews said to Paul at Rome, "For as concerning this sect, we know that

everywhere it is spoken against." So it seems that the true doctrine of Christ never was popular with the world. Paul told Timothy not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord nor of him—Paul. There is so much written about being ashamed of the doctrine of Christ, that there must be great danger of it. When we think that Christ suffered all things so that He might be able to intercede for us, and seriously reflect on His agony on the cross when He was forsaken of God and man, we must wonder why any one should be ashamed to confess Him before the world.

We read that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. So it is with us. If all would go well, we would walk by sight, but suffering and sorrow bring us to call upon Him, and we become more deeply rooted in faith, love and hope, and can "rest under the shadow of the Almighty." Because in obeying the true doctrine of Christ we are led away from the pleasures and idle pastimes of the world, many persons think there is no enjoyment in the Christian life. Faith must be tried; if we trust in God He will give us the peace and joy which He has promised to those who take up His cross.

This is an age in which there are many dangers to the life of the Christian. Perhaps more than at any other time. Should we not search our hearts well to see if with Paul, we can say, "We are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

Chambersburg, Pa.

E. K. L.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM

Christ's Kingdom, established on the day of Pentecost, is everlasting and unchangeable and will exist for evermore, "For of His government and peace there shall be no end."

It should be apparent to every thinking mind that the kingdom established

by our Lord is peaceable, ruled alone by love, where there can be no malice, vengeance, strife, war nor bloodshed. Christ's mission was to give divine life unto us. We have been blessed with a receptive mind and if we obey the grace of God, repent and believe in Jesus, He will impart His Spirit; which will qualify us to obey His word, and enable us to forgive and even love our enemies.

Christ repeatedly warns us against false teachers, and invites us to "search the Scriptures." There is a responsibility resting upon us which we cannot afford to ignore. Kings and rulers of nations discipline their armies of soldiers in military training for preparedness in warfare; this is characteristic of the kingdom of this world, for the sword is the ruling power; but in Christ's kingdom war is learned no more. He said, "My kingdom is not of this world else My servants would fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews." We cannot harmonize these two conditions, for they are directly opposite in character. Therefore we cannot serve in both simultaneously. God is the King of Kings and the ruler of the great universe. Christ's word is peace. His mission is to help. He came to pardon our sins and to bear our burdens.

Kings, rulers of nations, men of authority, and all mankind are passing before God in review; their deeds are all naked and open to His all seeing eye. His word pronounces all men sinners and "strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

We can choose either spiritual life or spiritual death—there is no coercion. Christ has made provision to save all the ends of the earth, and invites all to enter His everlasting kingdom, be happy in this world, and inherit glory and happiness in the world to come.

Sterling, Ill.

C. F. M.

FEAR

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear." I John 4:18.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom." When we reach years of accountability the grace of God visits all of us, revealing our true relation to God and the necessity of yielding obedience to His will if we would hope to stand acquitted in the Day of Judgment. Realizing, then, that following our own natural inclinations would lead us in a course that is at variance with the Divine will, and would, therefore, bring us under condemnation, we should fear the just wrath of God, and should seek a way of escape. We have the assurance that if we seek, we shall also find.

When we sincerely yield to the grace of God, we no longer fear Him, but, through love and appreciation for what He has done for us, we endeavor to live in accordance with His will. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." I John 5:3. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love." II Timothy 1:7.

When the law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai, it was communicated with such terrible majesty that all Israel feared God: even Moses did "exceedingly fear and quake." Christ established His kingdom in a very different manner. There is nothing terrible or forbidding in His teachings, but they are truly the spirit of power and of love. Through His power, we are enabled to endure all trials and to withstand all temptations. His love is the incentive to all obedience and through obedience we can enjoy a hope of Eternal Life and a peace of mind that cannot be comprehended by the natural understanding.

The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Philippian brethren, admonished them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. The fear referred to by Paul was not the fear of God, but an anxious fear lest we become negligent in performing our duties, and through lack of continual watchfulness and prayer, lose the Light and Spirit of God, and, thereby, forfeit our hope of eternal happiness.

Let not the fears and perplexities of life discourage us, but let us always remember the perfect love of God. He has said, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Is. 41:10.

Mountville, Pa.

M. F.

SOME SPIRITUAL USES OF A GARDEN

God speaks to us in many ways, and from all parts of His natural dominion, the universe. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." On all sides we are reminded of the wisdom, the love, the providence of God. His care for all His creatures is clearly shown to those whose minds are ready to receive His teachings.

From the firmament above to the earth beneath with its great waters; from the sun, the great center of warmth for the preservation of all life, to the tiniest flower and blade of grass, we are reminded of the unfathomable wisdom and love of God, the Creator. Realizing that we, too, are His handiwork, we are led to say, with David of old, "Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of His dominion."

There are so very many departments or avenues for observation and study in

nature—all leading us to worshipful wonder, admiration and reverence for the infinite mind which conceived the plan for it all, and has made the laws which control all the operations of all His works.

We will not try to penetrate into the great things of creation; let us consider only a garden—let it be a vegetable garden, contributing to the sustenance of the body, a flower garden, or any kind of a garden. Who has not felt the spiritual influences of a garden? Especially when one is alone. The stirring of the leaves with a gentle evening breeze; or in the morning the drops of dew, each plant and leaf having its proportionate share; the rapid growth of vegetation when conditions are favorable. Simple as a garden may seem, we yet find in it the great mysteries of creation. Many lessons are here to be learned by those who will.

How do the plants, each after its own kind, draw up from the soil, to us dull and expressionless, the particular nourishment they need for the perfecting of their own flowers and fruit? Consider the unnumbered varieties of plants, herbs, bushes, trees, all receiving from the earth their life-giving food, and making no mistake in each one drawing from the soil its own kind. Why is this? Ah, here we come to our finite limit. We cannot explain it. God has been and is there, giving to each plant its sense of selection, and supplying in the soil just what each one needs.

Man may study deeply, and experiment, and change varieties, and add to the fertility of the soil, but he cannot produce the seeds nor give them their power of selection and growth. That is the God-given life principle which we cannot understand. We only know that so it is. The sprouting of seeds, their growth and development, and the matur-

ing of the seeds of the new plant, are a miracle. They are an evidence of the work of a Creator who is beyond our power to comprehend—who is infinite, and worthy of our reverence and worship.

What else can we learn from a garden? Many lessons. While the earth brings forth food for man, it also brings forth thorns and thistles to harass him, and weeds of many kinds to check the growth of the food plants. These weeds spring up in our gardens. There were no weeds or thorns in the garden of Eden. It was only after the disobedience of Adam and Eve and their consequent banishment from the garden, that these vegetable enemies appeared on the earth. God said to Adam, "cursed is the ground for thy sake . . . thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken"—Gen. 4:17, 18, 19. Let each reader interpret this lesson for himself and herself.

Another lesson learned from the garden is the value, indeed, the necessity, of pruning. Plants and bushes often grow too luxuriantly or too far in one direction. The wise gardener cuts them back so that more and better branches may be put forth, and the plants become stronger and more symmetrical, and bear more and better fruit.

Here is another spiritual lesson: we, being human, may, in our zeal to serve our Lord and Master, have only a one-sided spiritual development. God knows we are sincere, but we lack knowledge and wisdom, and perhaps charity. He prunes us by sending bitter and often heart-rending experiences to check the exuberant growth; to teach us more fully our dependence upon Him; to give us more charity and long-suffering towards the short-comings of our fellow-

creatures; in short to purge us that we "may bring forth more fruit." Christ said, "Every branch that beareth fruit, He (my Father, the husbandman) purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. John 15:2.

Again, we learn in a garden that we must cultivate it in order to get good results. We must work there and be interested in our work. Here we learn the necessity of vigilance and industry.

Our heart may be called our spiritual garden in which we are trying to produce the fruit of the Spirit. What is this fruit? We read in the Word,— "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. 5:22. But our hearts, left to themselves, do not produce this fruit. They, like Mother Earth, bring forth and abound in that which is the direct opposite of what our better nature desires—qualities and states of mind, which, like the weeds and thistles in natural gardens, would, if not checked, crush out the life of the best fruit.

Within ourselves, then, we must, like good natural gardeners, be diligent and ever on the watch for our enemies. We must daily, through prayer, call for Divine help. By the grace of God alone we are able to keep in subjection our evil tendencies, prominent among which are worldliness and selfishness. So by vigilance in keeping our hearts constantly open to the entrance of the Holy Spirit, we will, through grace, be able to cultivate our spiritual gardens. Thus we may hope to bring forth at least some of the lovely fruits of the Spirit, which we so much desire and long for.

A well kept garden is a joy to look upon. So a consistent Christian life is a help and comfort to all who come in contact with it, for the fruits of the Spirit are a joy to the heart, and are

ever convincing of the reality of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

There are many enemies in a material garden—many besides thorns and weeds: insect enemies of all kinds that must be met and exterminated to preserve the crop. Some of these are difficult to find, and often almost hidden. So in our hearts there are deep-seated tendencies to evil ever at work. The battle with these is part of the cultivation that our spiritual gardens demand. Constant watchfulness is needed, constant prayer and effort to prevent the tender plants of the Spirit from being destroyed.

A garden teaches us, too, that the sweetest and most beautiful flowers soon fade and pass away. Even the strongest and healthiest plants have their terms of life, and then die and pass back to the earth from which they come. So we, too, our bodies, have their limit of working power and existence, and finally cease to live and also return to "Mother Earth." But we believe the physical death does not end all for us, as it does for the plants in our gardens. We believe that the death of the body is the setting free of the soul which has animated it. As we have chosen to live, so we die. Let us try to live in harmony with God, our Creator, so that, when free from the body, "we may, through the merits of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, pass with hope and faith, trustingly into the unknown."

On the subject of the garden we look eagerly for the words of our dear Lord and Master. We find them in His Sermon on the Mount: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much

more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Matt. 6:28-30. There is no passage of Scripture more comforting than this.

We thank God that He has so clothed "the grass of the field." And we thank Him that He has given us seeing eyes to appreciate all the beauty He has given us to enjoy. The beauties of nature are often to us like an oasis in a desert. They seem to lessen the cares and anxieties of this life and to help us over the hard places; for they ever speak to us of the great Creator who loves us, and who has promised that He will provide for those who trust in Him.

Seeing God in His works fills the hungry soul with good thoughts which cheer and nourish the spiritual life as the food and the good things He gives us for the needs of the body sustain us for the work we have to do. For all these blessings past and present, we ever thank Him, and trust Him for the future.

Jesus Christ, our dear Savior, was permitted to have His last struggle with the flesh in a garden—the garden of Gethsemane—no doubt a beautiful place—where He was alone with His Father, for His three disciples, a little distance away, had fallen asleep. He said, "O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt"—the triumph of the Spirit over the flesh.

His words when He came back to His disciples and found them sleeping, are for us as well as for them: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Lancaster, Pa.

L. L. F.

THE SON SHALL MAKE YOU FREE

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

If we believe in God, we also believe in Christ the Son of God. If we obey His word we are disciples indeed, and the blood of God's dear Son will cleanse us from all our sin and iniquity. But as long as we consent to sin we are the servants of sin.

If we claim, or profess that we have Christ in our hearts, and yet have delight in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, we deceive ourselves. For the Savior said these things are not of the Father, but are of the world, and if we find pleasure in these worldly things, we are yet servants of sin. Christ prayed for His followers, for those who believed, that they might be sanctified through the truth, that they might also be one as He and the Father are one. But as we are still at home in a sinful body we need the washing of water by the Word so that we may be found pure.

This Word which was with God in the beginning is spirit and life and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. His Word is mighty and powerful, and if we believe and obey, it will lead and guide us, and if we are born of the Spirit of God we are free indeed. We will be led to forsake the things of this world, and condescend to those of low estate, to those who are lowly of heart, who have been made free by the blood of God's dear Son, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.

His Word is a light for the feet of those who walk upon the mountain of the Lord, and enables them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. It is a guide to lead safely in our going out and coming in.

Our Savior has been called "Wonderful, Counselor, and Prince of Peace." Those who obey His counsel are endued with power to beat their swords into

plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks and to learn war no more. The Savior appears at the door of every heart with convicting grace, and to those who hear and receive Him, He will enter, and cleanse the heart defiled by sin, and fit it that it may become a temple in which the living God may dwell.

Those who are thus set free from the service of sin are promised help and strength. Worldly wisdom, carnal reason, and self-righteousness can receive no encouragement in the hearts of God's children. If those who have once tasted of the goodness and mercy of God, and turn away from the counsel of the Good Spirit, they forfeit the promise, and again become servants of sin.

We are not promised a life free from trials, but we are promised that we will not be tried beyond what we are able to bear, but a way of escape will be given; for the Lord will give comfort to those who are poor in spirit, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and come with prayerful hearts to the throne of mercy. To such His blessings will be more precious than gold, and they have promise of life forevermore.

Those are free who have become children through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and only such have promise of everlasting life.

Pettisville, Ohio.

H. G. S.

"BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT"

Matt. 5: 18

Longing a child of God to be,
Cast down by sin and care,
Discouraged, sad, I come to Thee—
Hear Thou my earnest prayer—
Dear Savior, let me truly be
Fitted Thy love to share.

My heart is full of sorrow, too,
I scarce can see the Way;
I long Thy holy will to do,
Yet, fail, day after day;
Lord, lead me to Thy pastures, new,
And there, O, let me stay!

I fall.—For help I cry to Thee,
Lead Thou my steps aright
That through the darkness I may see
Thy bright and glorious Light.
Lord, tell me what to do, to be
Accepted in Thy sight.

"The Scriptures search." (O, blessed thought!)
Through them the Light, I'll see;
God's word (in vain 'tis never sought)
Will be revealed to me.
With what a price have I been bought—
Christ's death on Calvary!

But what is this my eyes behold?
How can I perfect be
As is the Father? Yet, I'm told
That I must be as He:
That this foul flesh must hide a soul
That's perfect—like to Thee.

Vain, vain for one as vile as I
His will to try to do;
My evil nature will not die,
My thoughts are evil too:
Perfect as God, I cannot be
Until all things are new.

Once more I read. His will be done!
He sendest down the rain
On all alike; He makes the sun
To shine on all, again—
The good and bad are blessed, anon,
That all with Him may reign.

In doing good to all, I may
Be like Him: even I
Can pray for those who go astray,
May still the orphan's cry,
And through the world shed forth a ray
Of light to passers by.

No one so poor, no one so lost
But he may come to Him;
Tho' by a sea of errors tossed,
With lamp untrimmed and dim,
The blessed Savior bids him come
And perfect be with Him.

Perfect in SPIRIT, FAITH and LOVE,
Our earthly blessings share
With others, too, for God above
Doth for His children care:—
So will we, sharing Jesus' love,
Each others' burdens bear.

Shippensburg, Pa.

M. E.

THE COVENANT OF PROMISE

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will shew them His Covenant. Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the net." Psalm 25: 14, 15.

The Apostle to the Hebrews gives numerous examples of those who died in faith, being under the first Covenant and not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. The Psalmist said, "The Lord will shew His Covenant to them that fear Him."—Evidently looking forward to the time when the New Covenant should become effective and be established on better promises. On the day of Pentecost the Apostle Peter spoke to them who were convicted of their sins, saying, "Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The Epistle to the Hebrews shows the better things obtainable under the everlasting Covenant. The Lord had said that He will not depart from them in doing them good,—“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord’: for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” We are now in the day of grace, we are under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Our Savior came to establish the everlasting Covenant. He told the Jews which believed in Him,

"If ye continue in My word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." John 8: 31, 32. Here we have the promise, if we are steadfast the Lord will make us free. Let us ever look toward the Lord and he shall pluck our feet out of the net. What a blessing to escape the pollutions of the world. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him and hope for His mercy.

Bloomington, Indiana.

J. G.

ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE

Christ is the source of all spiritual life. It is alone through Christ we may hope to attain peace in this life, and secure happiness in the world to come. As our natural body requires daily food to nourish it, so the spiritual life requires the heavenly manna, the bread of life to sustain the soul. We have need of grace and strength to meet the appointed tasks we encounter daily. We feel the need of daily communion with our Savior at the throne of grace, for strength, that our faith and love may grow stronger; for upright hearts and more fervent desires. We may then find joy in the service of the Master.

We are unworthy of heavenly recognition, to be accounted as heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. But our Savior has paid the debt and made intercession for us, and when we heed His call, "Come unto Me," and open our heart to His divine influence, we, in that awakened life, become a child of God. As a child we desire to follow in His footsteps.

We do not mean to be disobedient nor unmindful, but we are of the earth, earthy, and may often forget. But when we come humbly confessing our transgressions and asking forgiveness,

we may again find joy in bearing the cross, which is not heavy to those who love the Lord. There is grace sufficient for the needy soul. The promise is "ask and ye shall receive."

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that are bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon Thee and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him in truth." Psalm 145: 14, 16, 18.

God's forbearance and patience towards poor fallen man shows us the depth of His love. As He forgives us, so may we bear with the infirmities of others, making allowance for constitutional frailties. Since we ourselves are weak and often fail, how charitable we should be with each other, forbearing one another in love, not recalling former delinquencies.

It was said of an able man that he rebuked faults so mildly, that those rebuked, never repeated them, not because the reprov'd were afraid, but because they were ashamed to do so.

Lancaster, Pa.

A. A. G.

THE BREVITY OF LIFE AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES

"For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." James 4: 14.

Our life cannot be compared to eternity for that is endless duration, and therefore is not reckoned by days, months, years, and centuries. In the realm of eternity millions of years may come and go and yet would still remain eternity! The impressive consideration is that we are hastening toward eternity and our manner of life here will determine our eternal destiny—whether we shall share the joys of heaven, or be cast into outer darkness.

How important that we do not delay repentance and that we receive Jesus as our Redeemer! For if we by faith accept the terms of salvation and live soberly, righteously, and godly, then in that great day we shall welcome His appearing. It is written, "Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Rev. 1: 7. And Jesus said of others that, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the kingdom of God and yourselves thrust out." Luke 13: 28. In order to escape this lamentable condition, we must worship God in spirit and in truth. This necessitates obedience to His will or word. Jesus said: "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father in heaven." Matt. 7: 21.

Multitudes stumble at the yoke and cross of Christ, and become offended at His self-denying doctrine, because they love the world, and are not willing to submit to God's will. If we accept Christ He sanctifies the heart and imparts spiritual wisdom to comprehend His word, and power to obey His commands. This divine wisdom is only bestowed upon the penitent and contrite, who put their trust in God, and enter His kingdom as a little child. Christ said: "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Mark 10: 15. Christ also thanked His Father that He had hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Babes represent the humble and dependent ones who trust in the Lord and obey His holy commands. Of such it is said: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the

tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city." Rev. 22: 14. They live in love and one accord, and bear testimony by this fellowship and unity that they are one with Jesus and the Father. Jesus prayed that they all may be one; as Thou Father art in Me, and, I in Thee, that they may also be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." John 17: 21.

Waldron, Mich.

S. E.

REHOBAM, KING OF JUDAH

Rehoboam succeeded his father, Solomon, as ruler over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin which was called the tribe of Judah, while Jeroboam, with the ten tribes, was king of Israel. The kingdom of Judah, although inferior in size and number, later became equal to that of Israel. Many of the people were not in accord with the innovations of Jeroboam, and as the Levites were banished from their sacerdotal duties, many of those came over to the tribe of Judah.

Rehoboam, during the first years of his reign, was employed in building and fortifying many cities with strong garrisons. He remained faithful to God's word for some years, and received the full measure of reward and prosperity promised to those who were obedient. But when he had established himself and felt secure, his rectitude which had never been based on strong principles gave way and he forsook the law of the Lord. He seemed to have been influenced by his mother who was an Ammonitess. Idolatry was tolerated and openly practiced. He built high places, and images, and groves on every high hill and under every green tree. The Lord was especially displeased as the abominations of Judah excelled even those of Israel.

The threatened chastening was not long delayed for in the fifth year of his

reign the Egyptian army under Shishak invaded the land. He took possession of the fenced cities with ease, and robbed the temple, which Solomon had built, of its costly ornaments and great wealth. Shemaiah, the prophet, went to Rehoboam and said, "Thus saith the Lord, ye have forsaken Me and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak." Rehoboam with his people humbled themselves and appealed to the Lord for deliverance. The Lord had mercy and preserved them from destruction, but they were allowed to feel the difference between service to God and service to man, as the Lord had said they should be in servitude to the Egyptians.

Probably such treasures as the Egyptians secured in the temple were never before nor since found in any invasion. This attack seemed to have a salutary effect upon Rehoboam, as we do not read of his idolatrous practices during the rest of his reign. His latter years were more prosperous, but there was ever trouble between the armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

Rehoboam had many wives and numerous children. He reigned seventeen years, and Abijah his son reigned in his stead. Jeroboam seemed desirous to weaken and harass the kingdom of Judah, and went to battle against them with a much larger army of men than Abijah could command. Abijah stood upon an eminence and spoke to the people. He charged Jeroboam with being an usurper and said, "We keep the charge of the Lord, our God; but ye have forsaken Him, and, behold, God Himself is with us for our Captain, and His priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper."

While Abijah was speaking Jeroboam divided his men, forming an ambush

which must have proved fatal to Abijah, had not the Lord intervened. When the men of Judah saw their danger they cried unto the Lord. The priests blew their trumpets and the people gave a shout. Judah prevailed because they relied upon the Lord. A great number of Jeroboam's army were slain and many fenced cities were captured.

Jeroboam's army never recovered its former strength, while Abijah grew mighty, although he reigned only three years. It is recorded that he walked in the sins of his fathers, or did not remove the idolatrous abominations which his father had allowed.

He was succeeded by his son Asa, who ascended the throne when young and his mother ruled partly as queen. We read that Asa's heart was perfect and he did that which was right and good in the eyes of the Lord as his father David had done. The idols were overthrown and broken in pieces, the groves were cut down and the Mosaic system of laws shone with renewed luster in that corrupt age.

Asa was enabled to replace with silver and gold some of the precious things in the temple which Rehoboam had replaced with brass, after it had been robbed by Shishak, the Egyptian. Ten years of peace and prosperity were accorded to Asa in which time he strengthened and improved his kingdom. The temple was in part repaired and the ritual service was again restored.

The Ethiopian army under Zerah came to war against him and Asa called upon the Lord for help, saying, "Lord it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many or with them that hath no power; help us O Lord our God, we rest on Thee and in Thy name we go against this multitude."

His appeal to the Lord was heard and he obtained a great victory. A prophet

Azariah appeared unto Asa reminding him that the victory he had gained was due to God's interference. He reminded Asa of the duties resting upon them as being recipients of God's favor and protection, and he showed also the privileges they enjoyed above those of Israel. His words seemed to excite the gratitude and piety of Asa who renewed his work of reform with greater zeal. Finding that his mother had an idol in a grove, he cut down the grove, destroyed the idol and removed his mother from her position as being queen. It was a time of rejoicing and the people entered into a covenant with the Lord to serve and obey Him.

When the children of Israel saw the prosperity of Judah under the rule of Asa, many of Baasha's subjects were led to enter into Asa's kingdom hoping to again enjoy the worship of the true God. Baasha then built the city of Ramah, fortifying it as a barrier to prevent his people from turning to Asa.

Asa then sent messengers with rich presents to Ben-Hadad, King of Syria, asking him to break his league with Baasha and help him recover Ramah. This Ben-Hadad did and Asa recovered the spoil which Baasha had gathered. But for this act he incurred God's displeasure as he showed a want of dependence upon God's power. A prophet, Hanani, came to reprove Asa, telling him he would thereafter have continuous wars and troubles. Asa became angered and caused the prophet to be imprisoned.

Asa was diseased in his feet and resorted to physicians for healing, instead of appealing unto the Lord. Whether these physicians were idolaters who employed superstitious rites we do not know.

The reign of Asa was a long and prosperous one. He leaves a good record on

account of his rectitude of conduct and he was sincerely lamented as is testified by the account given of his funeral.

Jehosaphat, his son, reigned in his stead.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

A CHILD'S STORY

THE STORY OF ANDREW, ONE OF THE DISCIPLES

My dear little children:

We first read of Andrew being with John the Baptist when Jesus came near, and of John saying, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Andrew followed Jesus and abode with Him that day; no doubt he here was firmly convinced that Jesus was the Savior long promised to the world, for he went to find his brother, Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Christ," and brought him to Jesus. Here we have an example of decision, for he felt sure that this was the Savior of the world, he wanted to bring his brother and others also to know Him.

My dear little children, as you grow older, you, too, will find that there may be times in your lives that you will long for the decision that is so marked a trait in Andrew.

His first thought seemed to be that of bringing his own brother to Jesus. Perhaps he felt Peter was a more able speaker to tell of Jesus or perhaps he felt, as we sometimes find to be the case with us, that it requires a greater effort to tell our belief and acceptance of Christ to our nearest friends. We are not always sure that it will be agreeable to them, and yet we want them to know what a comfort and blessing it is to find Jesus.

Later we read of Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee and seeing the two brothers, Peter and Andrew, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Follow Me and I

will make you fishers of men," and they left their nets and followed Him. Andrew seems to have been one of the first disciples of Jesus.

Again we read of Jesus calling the twelve disciples to Him and Andrew is second on the list. Here, in a very impressive way, Jesus sent them out to preach the Gospel and gave them power to heal all manner of diseases. We think of this as the beginning of their divine work. As you grow older you will want to read the special instructions that were given to them upon this occasion, as recorded in Matthew 10th.

Once a great company were gathered to listen to Jesus, and it was in a desert place; the people began to get hungry and the disciples said to Jesus He should send the people to the villages to buy food. Jesus said, "Give ye them to eat." Andrew found a lad who had five loaves and two small fishes and he brought him to Jesus. This simple act of Andrew's shows us the faith he had in His Master's ability to make that small amount of food equal to the needs of the multitude. This incident might give us a little encouragement to think that even our least act in helping any one to find Jesus might be wondrous in effect if attended by a divine blessing.

While we do not gather so much from the Scriptures about Andrew's career, unlike his brother, Peter, we do not read that he spoke those wonderful sermons where great numbers were converted, nor of his attempt to walk upon the sea, nor of his using the sword to defend His Master; but we know he was a man chosen by Jesus, and was useful in spreading the Gospel. He is supposed to be the Apostle who first preached the Gospel in Russia, and was held in great veneration in that country. History tells us that after preaching the Gospel in Scythia, Greece and Epirus he suffered martyrdom on the cross.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.