

The Promise Of Father

What It Means to Us

BY
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“The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name. He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26.

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Foreword

MANY and various are the books that have been written concerning the Holy Spirit. They discourse on His personality, His place in the Godhead, and His gracious ministration on earth. These make edifying and instructive reading for the theologian, the Bible student, and the teacher of doctrine. Their theme is so many-sided and exhaustless that it affords a field of unending study and delight to the writer and the reader alike. We may not and must not depreciate the value of such books.

But it remains for the writer of this little volume to lead us into an interpretation of the Scriptures concerning the work of the Holy Spirit that is at once unique in kind and intensely practical in value. He is inspired by the one motive that governs all his preaching and personal labor, to open the Scriptures to the understanding of the simple as well as the wise, and to apply them definitely and helpfully to the daily Christian walk. His interest in doctrine is that it may teach us how to live. His conception of dogma is that of a framework for principles that should govern the daily conduct. His view of theology is that it should make us better men and women, better Christians.

Every word that is said here the reader will find confirmed in the chapters that follow. The writer, my beloved friend and brother, C. H. Watson, is here at his best as a Christian teacher. Pressed by the administrative cares of a world movement, and hampered by impairment of health from conscientious devotion to labor beyond his strength, he has enjoyed a closeness of walk with God into which he earnestly desires to lead others. This volume is the fruit of that desire.

It is fortunate that he bases his theme on "the promise of the Father" given us as an expression of His gracious love toward the children of men. The fulfillment of that promise in the sending of the Paraclete, "which is the Holy Ghost," is unfolded in its marvelous meaning to us in personal Christian living from day to day. Though in the chapter themes doctrinal terms are often used, interpretations will readily be seen to be eloquent with truth, uplifting in power, and sustaining in encouragement to earnest and faithful Christian living.

The lesson of the book is that in battling with the flesh, in the keeping of the law, in the overcoming of the world, in short, in the triumph over sin, our loving Father has made available to us the power of the Holy Spirit in all its fullness for our preparation, at the present auspicious hour, to meet the Lord Jesus in joy at His imminent coming.

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W. E. HOWELL

Contents

FOREWORD
THE DOING OF GOD'S WILL
IN OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT TIMES
ENLIGHTENS THE UNDERSTANDING
THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT
THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH
THE SPIRIT AND THE NEW LIFE
REGARDING THE LAW
REGARDING RIGHTEOUSNESS
REGARDING JUSTIFICATION
CONCERNING SONSHIP
CONCERNING HOLINESS
CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE
CONCERNING THE VICTORY

THE PROMISE

“Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you!”
Luke 24:49.

WAIT FOR THE PROMISE

“Wait for the promise of the Father.” Acts 1: 4.

THE PROMISE RECEIVED

“Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear.” Acts 2:33.

THE SEAL OF BELIEVERS

“After that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 1: 13.

The Doing of God's Will

IN HIS dealings with man, God does all things according to His own will. It is according to the good pleasure of His will that we become His children through Jesus Christ, God having chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world. According to the good pleasure of His will, too, He has chosen that we should be holy and without blame before Him. Ephesians 1: 4, 5. These acts of His will cannot be changed, for God's will is immutable. As it was before the world began, so it still is. It never has been altered. Though opposed by every force of evil, and often frustrated by the weak and wandering wills of His people, the will of God has remained the same.

Seven hundred years before Christ, the prophet Isaiah was heard voicing the soul-moving lament concerning the people of Israel in their waywardness: “O that thou had hearkened to My commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” Isaiah 48:18. An echo of this lament is again heard from the lips of the Lord of glory Himself, when, in the flesh, He walked with men and beheld Jerusalem wholly gone aside from the ways of God. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that kills the prophets, and stoned them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and you would not!” Matthew 23:37. But the apostle Paul who has so wonderfully taught us regarding the will and purpose of God, and who had such “great heaviness and continual sorrow” of heart for his unbelieving “kinsman according to the flesh,”

has given us assurance that” though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall he saved.” Romans 9:1-3, 27.

The means by which God seeks to bring about the performance of His will may be, and often have been, changed, but in Him and in His will there is not, and never has been, any “variableness, neither shadow of turning.” James 1: 17. Though many purposes are necessary, God’s will and purpose are not subject to even a shadow of variableness.

God’s purpose for us is life unending. The supreme objective of life that answers to that purpose is to know and to do the will of God. Before the foundation of the world He chose us to be holy and blameless before Him; and in harmony with that eternal purpose He created us in His own image, and gave us life with His own likeness upon us. He made us upright, and put within us the power of ruler ship to keep us upright. He gave us understanding of His will, and knowledge of the fearful consequences that would attend our failure to do that will. But notwithstanding all this, we departed from His ways and from Him, and gave our allegiance to His enemy. Thus from being His children, doers of His will, we became His enemies, and because of our disobedience lost the life that He had given us. But this did not affect God’s will toward us. The change in us was appalling, but His purpose that we should be holy and blameless before Him was unchanged.

A Blood Atonement Required

After the fall of man new means to bring him to holiness and blamelessness before God began to be employed. That which had been purposed through creation, but which man through sin had failed to receive, now became assured through re-creation. Man’s need of redemption from sin had been anticipated in the eternal purpose. “The revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal” was begun (Romans 16:25, R. V.), and by “the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:24) God began to bring man back from disobedience to the doing of God’s will.

Until “the fullness of the time was come” when God would be “manifest in the flesh,” it was necessary to keep God’s people in constant remembrance of the great basic fact of redemption, namely, that their sins could be remitted only by the shedding of blood. It was necessary, too, that they should understand that the blood by which sin would be remitted must itself be free from taint of sin, and that unless such blood were shed they must remain forever under the dominion of death. Since it was by one man’s sin that death had come upon all, for in that one man all had sinned, then by the righteousness of One who, untainted by sin, died for all, all might “be made alive!” “For if by the trespass of the one death reigned through the one, much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, even Jesus Christ!” “That as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord!” “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive!” Romans 5:17, 21; 1 Corinthians 15: 22, RV.

Prefigured by Typical Sacrifices

Great is the mystery of godliness. The divine Son, in whom the Father had purposed life and holiness for us before the world was, is the One “in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” Ephesians 1:7. The eternal will itself has not changed, but through Christ, crucified and risen from the dead, man is set free from the bondage of sin and is again empowered to do the will of God.

All this was continually set forth by the sacrifices for sin offered typically by men. But the creatures which were used to offer such sacrifices were themselves imperfect, and could not be made acceptable to God. Being part of the fallen creation, they did not do the will of God, and therefore, at best, could merely “prefigure what they themselves were not.” They were unable to do the will of God, but they pointed forward to One who in the flesh could and would do God’s will perfectly. Thus it is written, “For the law [the ceremonial law which required the offering of those typical sacrifices] having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the corners thereunto perfect. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when He comes into the world, He said, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Hebrews 10:1-10. Thus only could sinful man be restored, and God’s purpose for Him be fulfilled without change of that eternal purpose. Through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, “he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven” “shall

enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 7:21.

The Holy Spirit Given

When Jesus was about to give “His life a ransom for many,” He declared to His disciples that, in order to make effective in men what He was about to make possible for them, a great work of ministry by the Holy Spirit was essential. This work was to be wrought in the hearts of men as their lives were lived on this earth. It therefore became necessary for the Holy Spirit to come to our earth to begin this special service in our behalf. His coming was promised us by the Savior, who Himself had received the promise of the Father that the Holy Spirit would be given. The Holy Spirit is thus the gift of the Father to those who through the Savior have become His children. The Spirit is given to those who have set their hearts upon doing the will of God.

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him. But you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:15-17. This Comforter was to be sent by the Father. He was to abide with us, not casually, not as a visitor, but forever. He was to dwell not merely with us, but in us. This He can do for us because we receive Him and know Him. But this He cannot do for the world, because the world cannot receive Him. It sees Him not; and since it cannot see Him, it neither believes nor knows nor receives Him.

The Spirit’s Coming Important to The Church

In the mind of Jesus the coming of the Holy Spirit to His church on earth was a matter of first importance. As He marked the effect on His disciples of the thought that He was leaving them, He said, “Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow bath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.” John 16:6, 7.

All the words of Jesus are important, but these especially challenge our thoughtful study. “It is expedient for you that I go away.” His life in the flesh and His death on the cross were both essential to the eternal redemption of His disciples, but having lived in the flesh, and having died on the cross, it yet was “expedient” for them that He go away. Had He done no more than lived faultlessly and died sacrificially, they would yet be in their sins, and their faith would have been vain; for of Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” 1 Corinthians 15: 17, 18. If Christ be not raised, we have no High Priest in heaven, and if we have no High Priest in heaven, we are yet in our sins. It therefore was expedient for us that He go away. To make effectual both for us and in us all that by living our life and dying our death He had accomplished in our behalf, it was necessary that He go back to the Father. His great work of priestly ministry by which we are to come boldly to the throne of grace was yet to be begun. It was necessary that He come forth from the Father to suffer death for us. But having died, it was then necessary that He return to the Father to appear in His presence as mediator for us. Thus it is written, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.” John 16:28.

For His great High Priesthood He went back to the Father, and “being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear.” What was it that they saw and heard? “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.” “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:33, 16,17, 4. This plain teaching of the Scriptures is confirmed by the following statements:

Work of the Priesthood

“By virtue of His death and resurrection He became the minister of ‘the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.’ ” - “The Desire of Ages,” pages 165, 166 (Bold face mine).

“After His ascension, our Savior began His work as our High Priest.” – “The Great Controversy,” page 420 (Bold face mine).

“Christ entered into the heavenly sanctuary by the offering of His own blood.” – “Early Writings page 253 (Bold face mine).

“The blood of Jesus was then shed, which was to be offered by Himself in the heavenly sanctuary.” - Ibid. (Bold face mine).

“After His ascension, our Savior was to begin His work as our High Priest.” – “Patriarchs and

Prophets” page 357 (Bold face mine).

It is clear from this brief study that God’s purpose for His children is the same now as it was before sin came into the world. That the doing of His will in the personal life of the sinner required the shedding of blood untainted by sin to make possible the forgiveness of sin. That after this provision was made the coming and indwelling of the Spirit was necessary to make effective the means of grace in the doing of God’s will. That the promise to send the Spirit was fulfilled after the ascension of Christ as an act of His priestly ministry then begun in the heavenly sanctuary.

Promise of the Father Comprehensive

It is clear, then, that God’s great eternal purpose for His children is unchanged by man’s having sinned. It is equally clear that since sin had brought about man’s separation from the life of God and compassed him with ruin and death, blood untainted by sin was required to be shed in his behalf. Sinful man was to be brought back from ruin and death to God and life; and forgiveness of his sins, restoration to the favor of God, and power to live in harmony with God’s holy will, could come to the sinner through only that shed blood. It is also clear that when in behalf of man the ministry of that blood was begun in heaven, the means of grace must be brought to us here on earth, and our hearts moved toward their acceptance. This was all comprehended in the promise, “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26. “Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come.” John 16:13. The means of grace for our redemption was perfected, the ministry of the risen Christ was begun, and one of the early and important acts of Christ’s ministry as High Priest was the sending forth of the Holy Spirit in harmony with His promise. Through that ministry in heaven and by the leadership of the Spirit on earth, we become sons of God, heirs to the glory of eternity and joint heirs with Christ, the Lord of glory. Romans 8:14-17.

2. In Old and New Testament Times

OF ALL the things that the Holy Spirit was to do after His coming, there is not one that He had not already been doing in the earth. He was to teach. He was to guide. He was to testify. He was to show us things to come. All this He has ever been doing since human need made it necessary for Him thus to minister. It was the Holy Spirit that inspired the prophets of old to write the Scriptures of the Old Testament. “The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:21.

Work of the Spirit Before the Cross

After the first two chapters of Genesis, the entire Bible has to do with the sinner and his redemption from sin. Throughout, it is the teaching of the Holy Spirit concerning man’s need of redemption from sin through our Savior Jesus Christ according to the eternal and unchangeable purpose of God. Through the Holy Spirit every revelation of God in the Scriptures has been given. By Him the Old Testament Scriptures were made to testify of Christ. That they indeed do this is declared by the Savior: “Search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.” John 5:39. Observe here the confidence with which Jesus has referred us to the teaching of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament concerning Himself. He reminded His Jewish hearers that in those Scriptures they thought they had eternal life; but, without even a pause, He also called their attention to the truth of the Spirit’s teaching, that the eternal life which the Old Testament promised is, inseparable from Him of whom those Scriptures testified.

Since from the very moment of man’s need because of sin the Holy Spirit has so fully and clearly taught and testified and guided, and since the things which He was to do after His coming according to the promise were precisely the same as those He had been doing through all the centuries, in what new relationship to the church and to the sinner was He to be sent according to the promise? Why was it expedient that the Savior go away? Why would the Spirit not come if Christ did not go away?

Work of the Spirit After the Cross

It should first be remembered that the promise of the Spirit was not to have an immediate

fulfillment. Forty days after His resurrection Jesus indicated to His disciples that the Spirit had not yet come in the sense of the promise, when He “commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, said He, you have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. . . . But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:4-8. They were to wait, to tarry, in Jerusalem. They were to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. They were to receive power, but not until the Holy Ghost had come; and at that time He had not yet come. His coming according to the promise of Christ, therefore, was for a service intimately connected with Christ’s going away, and closely associated with the work Christ was to do in man’s behalf after His going away to the Father.

Because of this, the Spirit’s work was to acquire new power and importance. Hitherto He had taught in prophecy. He had testified of a Savior yet to come. Henceforth He was to teach and to testify of a Savior already come. He was to speak concerning that which had already been done on earth. He was to testify of a priestly service in progress in heavenly. A service that had been made possible by what the Savior had accomplished on earth. Hitherto the Spirit had spoken of a Son to be born, of a Sacrifice to be made, of a ministry to be begun. But when He was come according to the promise, these important matters were no longer to be declared prophetically.

The Holy Spirit’s Teaching

He was now to tell of that Son’s already having lived in the flesh, that Sacrifice already made for all, that ministry already begun in heaven. Now He was to tell of that Son who, already, having lived triumphantly in the flesh, having died on the cross of Calvary, and having risen from the dead, was now in heaven, securing by the merits of that sinless life and by virtue of that sacrificial death, our personal release from sin and our personal acceptance by the Father.

The Holy Spirit was to teach us that the fullness of the time had come, that God had indeed “sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Galatians 4:4,5. He was to teach us that God was indeed manifest in the flesh. That Christ, though tempted in all points, and tried to every limit, was perfected by the things that He suffered. That slain and risen and ascended, He had been accepted by the Father for us, and, made a High Priest forever by the oath of God, He is at the right hand of the Father in heaven. That as our High Priest, He has entered by His own blood into the heavenly sanctuary, a Mediator of the new covenant. The Spirit was to pierce the centuries of the Christian era, foretelling that Christ, when the fullness of the time had once more come, would plead for His people in the judgment. Would, after the judgment had closed, come again to receive His own to Himself, and to execute judgment upon the wicked. Would then in the glory of the hereafter be forever with His people, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lamb in the midst of the throne forever and ever.

In addition to telling of things past and future, the Holy Spirit was to bring to the remembrance of God’s people all things concerning Christ. While He had always spoken of Christ, now, more than ever before, the Savior was to be the central theme of the Spirit’s teaching. In the Old Testament He had testified of Christ in prophecy. But in the New Testament He has testified of Christ in history, of Christ in experience, of Christ in priestly service, and of Christ in glory. Of Christ in prophecy and of Christ in history the Spirit could testify without the Savior’s going away. But of Christ in experience, of Christ in priestly ministry, and of Christ in the glory of a Savior, He could not testify till Jesus had risen again from the dead, had been exalted to the right hand of His Father, had begun His priestly service in heaven, and had entered into His glory. Consequently it is written, “The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” John 7:39.

Work of the Spirit in the World

In the purpose of God, the Holy Spirit was not only to work for the children of the kingdom, but also had a specific work to accomplish for the sinner in the world. “When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” John 16:8. “Of sin, because they believe not on Me.” Verse 9.

This reproof of sin by the Holy Spirit has for its purpose the repentance of the sinner. It is a fearful thing for the unbelieving sinner to remain in unbelief. Man’s only hope for anything beyond this life is in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Somehow he must be made conscious of his sin, and of his need of Christ. He must be brought under conviction of sin, and be led to desire righteousness. He must be led to

confess and forsake his sins, and to enter into life through the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. All this the Holy Spirit has in mind in His reproof of sin in this world; and without this phase of the Holy Spirit's work, no sinner would ever be led to Christ.

Before Christ came, sin was not clearly understood. Its true meaning has been brought to us by the cross. The way of man's escape from it, from its power, and from its awful results is revealed by the death, the resurrection, and the priestly ministry of our risen Lord in the heavenly sanctuary. Christ's coming in the flesh took the cloak from sin. "If I had not come and spoken unto them," He said, "they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." John 15:22. The purpose that God the Father had in giving His only-begotten Son to die for the world was that man might believe on Him, and believing, might not perish, but have life everlasting. If we believe on the Son of God, and believing, confess our sins, we are forgiven for His sake. When forgiven, we are accepted of the Father in Him; and forgiven and accepted, we enter into life. The Holy Spirit then "bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Romans 8:16. But if we believe not on Jesus, we are yet in our sins, and the Holy Spirit reproves us of sin because we "believe not" on Him. John 16:8, 9.

To Convince of Righteousness

The Holy Spirit was also to convince the world of righteousness. Sin and righteousness are exact opposites. Yet Jesus assured His disciples that the Holy Spirit, when He was come, would "convince" (margin), the world of both of these qualities. Of sin, because they believe not on Jesus. Of righteousness, not because Jesus lived a righteous life and died without sin, but because "I GO TO MY FATHER." This is a remarkable statement. It clearly sets forth the Savior's being in heaven with the Father as the means and reason for the Spirit's convincing men of righteousness here on earth. It is important that we know this.

Jesus came forth from the Father into this world to take our flesh, to be tempted in all points as we are, to die our death, and yet in both life and death to obtain victory for us. Having lived victoriously in our flesh, having paid the penalty for our guilt by His death, having conquered death itself by His resurrection from the grave, and having thereby acquired the right to "destroy him that had the power of death," and to deliver us, it was yet necessary, to give effect to this right and purpose, that He go back to His Father. Had He not gone again to His Father, but remained in the grave, all that He had accomplished in the flesh would have failed to bring about our deliverance. In Adam we all failed, for Adam was our father, the representative of us all. Christ is the second Adam. From the moment that He took our flesh He became our representative. His failure would be our failure, His victory, our victory. Since we were under sentence of death because of sin, He must not only conquer sin by living righteously in our flesh, but He must also for us yield Himself to the power of death, and because of His sinlessness, He must burst the bands of death and come forth from its shadow a conqueror, bringing with Him our freedom from death's dominion forever.

To Witness of Righteousness

Had the grave been permitted to hold our Lord, He would not have "led captivity captive," and death by holding dominion over Him would have triumphed over us forever and forever. His righteousness, then, would have brought us no lasting blessing, for death would be our end. Well, indeed, did Paul declare the truth of all this when he wrote: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." "But," Paul continues, "now IS CHRIST RISEN from the dead," and, what is more, He is "become the first fruits of them that slept." The grave is opened, the Lord is risen, the power of death is shattered, its reign is ended, and we are free. Long has sin "reigned unto death," but, thanks be to God, grace now reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." "Since by man [Adam] came death, by man [Christ] came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive!" 1 Corinthians 15: 17-20; Romans 5:21; 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22.

In His righteousness Christ came forth from the Father into this world. In His righteousness, after being tried to every limit, He went back again to God. In His righteousness He offered Himself to the Father, and was accepted for us. In His righteousness He was made a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. In His righteousness, having begun His priestly ministry in the sanctuary in heaven, He sent forth the Holy Spirit to minister to human beings in the world for whom He died, convincing them of sin because they believe not, and of righteousness because Christ is not in the grave but in heaven in the presence of God for us. Thank God for the Spirit's witness of righteousness imparted to us through the ministry of our Lord in the heavenly sanctuary! By means of that ministry we can come to God with

confidence, because His Son, as our High Priest, ever lives to make intercession for us.

To Convince of Judgment

The Holy Spirit is also to convince the world of judgment. Observe the reason given by the Savior for this part of the Spirit's work. "Because the prince of this world is judged."

There is indeed a judgment that all men must meet. Sin has made that judgment necessary. Righteousness has made that judgment certain. Grace, by yielding all, providing all, suffering all, seeks to take away sin, to impart righteousness, and thus to prepare men for that judgment. To the certainty, the justice, the finality, and the irrevocability of that judgment the Holy Spirit witnesses, and brings by His witness strong conviction to the hearts of men.

In his attitude toward the Savior from Bethlehem to Calvary, Satan, "the prince of this world," revealed the wickedness of his own character and purpose with such unmistakable clearness that there can no longer be confusion of mind as to the principles upon which he seeks to rule this world. From the slaughter of the innocents of Judea, in Satan's diabolical effort to kill the Christ, to his last attempt on Calvary to cause the Savior to sin, the purpose of our enemy to make eternal our ruin through sin was made clearer and yet clearer, till on that night of betrayal before the cross, Jesus was able to say, "The prince of this world is judged." His true character and purpose are clearly revealed, and because this is so, the Holy Spirit, when He comes, "will convince the world of judgment."

The Judgment Inevitable

The principles of the kingdom of darkness are abhorrent to God and ruinous to man. Since it has now been forever determined that these principles shall not prevail, judgment of all men at the throne of God is inevitable. By the inability of the prince of this world to overcome our Lord with sin, by his utter failure to find at the close of our Redeemer's life in the flesh anything by which He could be brought under the dominion of sin, and by his ineffectual attempt to keep the Lord of life forever in the tomb, Satan is judged. By the victories of the Christ, the right of God to appoint a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness has been established. Observe the Holy Spirit's witness to this important truth. "The times of this ignorance God winked at. But now commands all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Acts 17:30,31.

The Hour of Judgment Is Here

Before rulers, too, was this witness of judgment borne by the Spirit. Through the imprisoned Paul He "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," till Felix trembled. Acts 24:25. At that time the judgment was neither past nor present. It was yet "to come." But the hour would arrive when the Spirit's witness of judgment would be, "The hour of His judgment is come." Revelation 14:7. That hour we believe is now, and, further, we most sincerely believe that in understanding that "the hour of His judgment is come," we have been called to proclaim this solemn and tremendously important truth to all the world. We believe with all our hearts that we have been graciously taught this truth by the Holy Ghost.

Living in the hour of God's judgment, men everywhere are now commanded to repent and prepare to meet their God. Only in the righteousness which comes to us in Christ Jesus have we hope in the judgment. It was by the offense of one that judgment came upon us all to condemnation; but thanks be to God and Christ our Savior, it is by the righteousness of One that the free gift has come upon us unto justification of life. Romans 5:18. May the good Spirit not witness to us in vain, either of sin or of righteousness or of judgment. Believing, let us be done with sin. Forgiven and cleansed, let us give place in our lives only to the things of His righteousness. Loving Him above all, let us serve Him fruitfully in this the judgment hour, and look for His glorious appearing when the judgment has sealed His acceptance of us forever through Jesus our Savior.

Jesus as Our High Priest

As the Righteous One, Jesus has been made both our High Priest in heaven and the head of the church on earth. "We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Hebrews 8:1. Observe the kind of high priest spoken of here: "For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Hebrews 7:26. A righteous High Priest, certainly. It is He also who is head of the church on earth. "And hath put all things under His feet,

and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.” Ephesians 1: 22, 23. He who is the head of the church on earth is the one Mediator between God and man, made a priest after the power of an endless life by the oath of God. Through the merits of His own life in the flesh, by virtue of the death which He died for us, and by the victory which He has obtained, He ministers in heaven for the church of which He is the head. By that ministry, through the blood of the sacrifice which He offered, He will at last present the church to Himself “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” Ephesians 5:27.

Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant. But it was through His DEATH that He became the Mediator of the new covenant. That covenant was of no force until after Christ’s death. His acceptance by the Father to be the Mediator of the new covenant was necessary to the beginning of His intercessory work in the heavenly sanctuary. That work begun in and through the accepted righteousness of Jesus, judgment was made sure, and is inevitable. The Spirit, in being sent according to the promise, and while convincing of righteousness, must warn of judgment also.

He Works Through the Spirit on Earth

It was through “the eternal Spirit” that Christ offered Himself “without spot to God.” The acceptance of that perfect offering made a priestly mediation possible. While that ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is proceeding, the Holy Spirit is here on earth, convincing of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. By the Spirit sinners are led to repentance, and to desire righteousness. By the Spirit the repentant are born again, and thus are brought to a life in which the righteousness of Christ rules.

But all this is because of Christ’s mediation for us in heaven. Therefore, everything for which the Spirit should come after the death of Christ, was consequent to, and dependent on, Christ’s being accepted in heaven as our offering, and His being inducted into His priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary where His work of priestly mediation is all wrought. It is because of this priestly ministry in heaven that there is now on earth reproof of sin, witness of righteousness, and warning of judgment by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, having come in relation to the priestly mediation of Christ for us, is “the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” Ephesians 1:14. It is by the ministry of the Spirit in our hearts, and the ministry of Christ in our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary, that we are made free from sin through the blood that was shed for us on Calvary, that we are able to obtain righteousness which was not our own, and that thus we are able to stand in the judgment, and abide the day of Christ’s coming.

3. Enlightens the Understanding

THE understanding of the disciples concerning Christ’s work and life was very imperfect before the Holy Spirit came. One of the important things that He was to do upon His coming was to “teach” them “all things, and bring all things to” their “remembrance “ whatsoever Jesus had said unto them. John 14:26. He was to testify of Christ. John 15:26. He was to guide the disciples into all truth. He was to show them things to come. He was to glorify Christ by receiving from Him the things of Christ, and by showing them all to the disciples. John 16:13,14.

The Spirit Works a Change in the Heart

By the work of the Holy Spirit a great change was to be brought about in the hearts of the disciples. When victory for the church had been obtained by our Lord, and He had come forth conqueror of death and the grave, He was to send forth these men as leaders of His church in its struggle with sin. The principles of His kingdom were to rule in their lives. His righteousness was not to be merely commended by them, but to be set forth in power by their living conformity to the will of the Father. Of all this at the time the promise was given they were almost completely ignorant. John and James were intolerant, merciless, unloving. They loved pre-eminence. They were “sons of thunder.” In them the foolishness and violence of intolerance were manifested. Observe them as they appear in Luke 9:54, at that village of Samaria which refused to receive their Lord. “When His disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?” Until the coming of the Holy Spirit, power in their hands would have been so misused as to deny the principles of the kingdom that Christ came to establish in the hearts of men.

Observe them again in Mark 10:35-39: “James and John the sons of Zebedee, came unto Him, saying, Master, we would that Thou should do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And He said unto them,

What would you that I should do for you? They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand in Thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, You know not what you ask: can you drink of the cup that I drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto Him, We can.”

How very little these men understood their Lord, and how little were they prepared to do His work! To them it had never yet occurred that before anyone could sit at either His right or His left hand in His glory, He Himself must acquire new power through His own death, His resurrection from the dead, and His acceptance for us by the Father, as “He that lives, and was dead.” It was indeed expedient for them that the Holy Spirit should be sent.

The Change Wrought in John

But how greatly changed were they after the Holy Spirit came and taught them and guided them into all truth! It was the same John, once so intolerant, who in writing his three wonderful epistles of love said, “Every one that loves is born of God, and knows God. He that loves not knows not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another,” 1 John 4: 7-11. How great indeed is the change from the John at the Samaritan village, and on the way to Jerusalem, to the John almost at the close of the first century of the Christian era! The difference is due to the Holy Ghost’s having been sent. John of the epistle had indeed been baptized with the baptism of his Lord, and had learned that he would be brought to his place in the kingdom only when his Lord should come back again. To him it was given to close the book of God with the yearning appeal, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

The Spirit Changed Peter Too

Peter, too, needed the help promised with the Holy Spirit’s coming. Observe him on the occasion of the last supper as he appears in Luke 22:31-34: “The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto Him, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death. And He said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shall thrice deny that thou knows Me.” How little Peter knew both of himself and of his Lord!

Observe him again in the high priest’s house. He was late in arriving there, for “Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.” He actually wanted to pass as one of them. “But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with Him. And he denied Him, saying, Woman, I know Him not. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with Him: for he is a Gallilean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou says.” Luke 22:54-60.

All this Peter did in the hearing of his Lord to whom he on that very night had pledged undying loyalty. Peter greatly needed the help of the Holy Spirit to fit him for leadership in the church of Christ.

Observe him again after our Lord’s resurrection, as he is revealed to us in John 21:15-17: “So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, loves thou Me more than these? He said unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knows that I love Thee. He said unto him, Feed My lambs. He said to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, loves thou Me? He said unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knows that I love Thee. He said unto him, Feed My sheep. He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, loves thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Loves thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knows all things; Thou knows that I love Thee. Jesus said unto him, Feed My sheep.”

Greatness of the Change

On this occasion at the Sea of Tiberias we see Peter in his humiliation. His foolish self-confidence is gone. The boastfulness of that former occasion has left him. This will be more apparent if we examine briefly two of the terms here used in the original Greek. Two entirely different words are both translated here “loves.” In reality, they do not mean exactly the same. One is the Greek word *agapai*, meaning love. This is the word used to express God’s love for us. It is found in the New Testament one hundred thirty-eight times, and is uniformly translated “love.” The other is the Greek word *philei*, meaning to have an

affection for; to be fond of. In the first two cases Christ asked Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, agapai thou Me?" That is, "Do you love Me?" Peter answered each time, "Yea, Lord; Thou knows that I philei Thee." That is, "Yea, Lord; Thou knows that I have an affection for Thee." The Slovakian Bible has translated this, "Yea, Lord, Thou knows that I like Thee." Peter no longer would trust himself to say that he loved his Lord so that he would follow Him to prison and to death. So on the third time of asking, Christ did not say, "Simon, son of Jonas, agapai thou Me?" but He said, "Simon, son of Jonas, philei thou Me?" "Has thou an affection for Me?" Twice had Peter assured his Lord that he did indeed have an affection for Him, and now it seemed that Jesus, who knew all things, even doubted that. Poor, defeated Peter was grieved because Jesus in His third question said, "Phileo thou Me?" He greatly needed the help that the Holy Ghost was promised to bring.

But how different is this Peter from the Peter who later wrote, "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter 1:22-25. It is worthy of our notice here that the word that Peter uses in this scripture for "love" is agapai, that love which is heavenly in its quality, that forgetting self, gives all. The Peter of the epistle is also the Peter of Pentecost. How great indeed is the change in that Peter from the one at the last supper, and beside the fire! The Holy Spirit had come according to the promise, and had fulfilled His purpose to teach and guide and testify, and to bring to the church the things of Christ. His coming explains the marvelous change in Peter.

The Spirit: Enlarges Understanding

Observe, too, how utterly those men had failed to understand the gospel. Again on the occasion of that last supper, "Simon Peter said unto Him, Lord, whither goes Thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou cannot not follow Me now; but thou shall follow Me afterwards. Peter said unto Him, Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake." John 13:36, 37. "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." John 20:24, 25. Without a better understanding of the truth of the gospel, those men were not at all fitted to go "into all the world," as it was Christ's purpose they should do, "and preach the gospel to every creature." No marvel, then, that they were required to tarry in Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high."

With the coming of the Spirit, their understanding was enlarged, their knowledge was increased, their experience was broadened, their perceptions were made clear, and their testimony was given with power. When the enduement came, their understanding was made full where their ignorance had been utter. At Pentecost they taught the truth with such clarity of reasoning as caused the people to wonder. Under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures had become to them a revelation of Jesus. The extent of their knowledge and the confidence of their testimony greatly amazed the scholars. "When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13; see also verse 21. That which the Spirit had wrought in them testified of Christ with convincing power, and made it possible for them to glorify God by the acts of their service.

So, too, must it be with every Christian. We can no more understand the gospel nor live it in our lives, nor testify to its power, than could the disciples of old until they had received the Spirit and given Him control of their lives. Not until the Comforter dwells within the heart, and instructs and guides and controls us, can we either discern the will and way of God, experience the power and satisfactions of the gospel, please God, or render Him acceptable service.

"Let Christ work by His Holy Spirit, and awaken you as from the dead, and carry your minds along with His. . . . Consecrate yourself to Him and all associated with you will see that your energies are inspired of God, that your noblest powers are called into exercise to do God's service. The faculties once used to serve self and advance unworthy principles, once serving as members of unrighteous purposes, will be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ, and become one with the will of God." – "Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers," page 396.

"In the great and measureless gift of the Holy Spirit are contained all of heaven's resources. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If all were willing to receive, all would become filled with His Spirit." – "Christ's Object Lessons," page

4. The Promise of the Spirit

ON THE Day of Pentecost, as Peter spoke to the multitude of Jesus, the Seed of David, he said:

“This Jesus bath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He bath shed forth this, which you now see and hear.” Acts 2:32, 33.

The coming of the Holy Spirit at that time is by this text seen to have been in fulfillment of the promise of the Father. It would be natural in reading this statement to conclude that it has reference only to the promise made by Christ to His disciples on the occasion of the last supper. But in reality it is an Old Testament prophecy. It was of this fact that Peter reminded his hearers at Pentecost. “This is that,” said he, “which was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, said God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: . . . and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit.” Verses 16-18.

Promised Through Abraham

The apostle Paul in writing to the Galatians has also reminded us of this by the following statement: “Christ bath redeemed us from the curse of the law: . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Galatians 3:13, 14. The promise of the Spirit and the blessing of Abraham are intimately associated in this teaching. That this one, with other promises, was made to Abraham through Christ, is shown in the remaining verses of the chapter. The bringing of the Gentiles into the blessing promised to Abraham is a work of the Holy Spirit through the merits of the crucified and risen Christ. Paul clearly teaches in this chapter that without the Holy Spirit there is no means of our being brought within the promise to Abraham. That promise was to be fulfilled in and through a spiritual seed. It therefore cannot be effectuated through the flesh. That which is of the flesh is carnal, and that which is of the Spirit is spiritual. We receive not the Spirit by the works of the law, by our own good deeds, but by the hearing of faith, for we are not made perfect, neither indeed can we ever be made perfect, by the deeds of the flesh.

Christ, when speaking to His disciples of the coming of the Spirit, said, “Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you.” Luke 24:49. From the moment that God gave assurance to fallen man that He would shed about him spiritual influences and do a spiritual work in his behalf, the coming of the Holy Spirit became “the promise of the Father” to us.

The Promise Fulfilled

Again, just before His ascension, Jesus commanded His disciples that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, “you have heard of Me.” Acts 1:4. That this promise was that of the coming of the Holy Spirit is understood by the next verse. But observe that just before His betrayal, when Jesus assured them of the coming of the Comforter, He was reminding them of “the promise of the Father.” The promise, though from of old, had not then been fulfilled, but was to meet its fulfillment, “not many days hence.” It did meet its fulfillment at Pentecost, when the disciples “were all with one accord in one place. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:14. Then Peter, explaining all this, went back far beyond that night of the supper and betrayal, and declared by the Spirit’s power, “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; . . . I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.” “The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:16,17,39.

Indeed, the Old Testament prophecies are laden with promises to us concerning the Holy Spirit. Permit me to remind you of but a few of the instances that might be cited:

Old Testament Laden With Promises

“When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together.” Isaiah 41:17-19.

“Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:19.

“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon your offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses.” Isaiah 44:3,4.

“Ask you of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.” Zechariah 10:1.

“It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” Joel 2:28.

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments, and do them.” Ezekiel 36:26, 27.

Somehow it seems, as we read these scriptures, that all through the years God was making ready to meet our great need by the outpouring of His Holy Spirit upon us. Understanding how utter is our need of the gift, He long ago declared, “I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen.” Isaiah 43:20. How wonderfully was this truth illustrated, too, during those forty years of wilderness wandering in the experience of Israel! “They thirsted not when He led them through the deserts: He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: He split the rock also, and the waters gushed out.” Isaiah 48:21.

In this figurative way the promise has come to us over and over, reminding us that God has purposed and is ready to pour out His Spirit as water for our need. We may be sorely pressed, our need may be great, our enemy determined and relentless, but it is the Spirit of the Lord that shall lift up a standard against him; and “unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob . . . this is My covenant with them, said the Lord; My Spirit . . . shall not depart out of thy mouth . . . from henceforth and forever.” Isaiah 59:20, 21. In all this language of Old Testament prophecy and experience is emphasized the abundance of the gift. “Springs,” “rivers,” “pour,” and “waters,” are all words that give us assurance of abundance, while the expression, “Shall not depart . . . forever,” proclaims a purpose to abide which is most assuring.

God Has Not Failed Us

Now in the light of both Old and New Testament statements there can be no question about God’s willingness to fulfill His promise to us. He has already given the Holy Spirit. The Comforter is come. The apostle’s record of Pentecost, and, indeed, the whole book of Acts, supply us with indisputable evidence that God has not failed in His giving. Our greatest need today is the Holy Spirit, yet our need is not explained by any suggestion that God has failed us as the giver. Jesus has forever made it impossible for us to shelter our need with such a claim. Hear His words: “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” Luke 11:13. No, God has not failed as the giver of the Holy Spirit. The failure is within ourselves to receive the gift. “This promised blessing, if claimed by faith, would bring all other blessings in its train, and it is to be given liberally to the people of God.” – “Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers,” page 174.

We Have Failed to Receive the Spirit

The promise is to us, to our children, and to the many afar off. He has poured out the Spirit in fulfillment of that promise. His promise is to fill us with His Spirit, and thus to control us in all things by His Spirit; yet the great body of Christians for whom God has purposed so much is neither filled nor controlled by the Holy Spirit. The reason is that though God has given us His Spirit, and though the Spirit has come, we have not received Him. We have not been in earnest about having our hearts cleansed so that the Holy Spirit can abide in us.

It is possible that we have not yet yielded all to the control of the Holy Spirit, and thus are making it impossible for the Spirit to fill us and to bring into our lives the things of the Spirit. If our hearts desire the things of the flesh, and we yield in our lives to that desire, we cannot know the fullness of the Spirit, neither can we experience the fullness of His power. We have only as much of the Spirit as we have been willing to receive. We are willing to receive the Spirit only as fully as we are willing to deny the flesh and to yield our hearts to His control.

Born of the Spirit

They who close their hearts to the things of the world are born of the Spirit, and they love the things of God which are revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "The world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides forever." 1 John 2:16, 15, 17.

Gift of the Spirit Our Assurance

The gift of the Spirit is our assurance that God is dwelling in us, and we in Him. The presence of the Spirit in us is the provision of power for us to do the will of God. But nothing of this can be done in any personal sense unless we receive the gift. "Hereby we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." 1 John 3:24; 4:13. The difference between the child of God and the child of the world is in this matter of receiving the Holy Spirit. Observe this in the words of Jesus:

"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth. Whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you." John 14:16, 17.

Knowing the Spirit

The Holy Spirit is in the world, but the world knows Him not. It believes in only that which it sees. It loves only that which is of itself. Because it does not see the Spirit, it does not know Him; and, knowing Him not, it receives Him not. He is not of the world, therefore the world loves Him not; and loving Him not, it cannot receive Him. But the child of God, being born of the Spirit, though it sees Him not in any visible form, both knows Him and loves Him, and receives Him. Because we know Him and love Him, He dwells with us, and because we receive Him, He is in us. The Spirit with us and in us is our power for righteousness.

The Spirit is not merely to be with us as our guest, but in us as our master. We are the temple of the Holy Ghost. The temple is hallowed by the Holy Presence within it. The Spirit must be master in His own house. He must be permitted to exclude from it all that is unholy, and to bring into it His own holy things. He in His temple is not to be ruled by our selfish wills, but is to be ruler there, having done there only the will of God, with the purpose of making it possible, because of the perfect will of God being done in us, for us to abide forever.

Thus it is important for us, not merely to know that the Spirit has been freely given of God to us, but that we have just as freely received of the Spirit and given over to His control these unworthy lives which God is so anxious to cleanse and immortalize.

To Walk in the Spirit

Our greatest need is this guiding, controlling, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. But this need never can be effectively met for us until we are willing to honor the Spirit by hearing Him, and obeying Him in all that He has to say to our hearts and to require of our lives. It is possible for us to grieve the Holy Spirit by the attitude that we take toward the things that He says to us and seeks to do for us. It surely must be particularly offensive to Him when, instead of our yielding the ruler ship of our lives to Him, and obeying Him in all things, we assume ruler ship of Him in our hearts, and require that He order our needy lives only after the fashion of our own wayward wills. This course long followed will effectively separate us from His power, and eventually will change the attitude of God toward us. Thus it was in the experience of rebellious Israel. "They rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them." Isaiah 63:10.

We are admonished to walk in the Spirit, to obey His commands, to be filled with His power. Thus shall we be quick to hear His voice in all things, to respond to His leading in our lives, and thus shall our inveterate enemy always effectively be put to flight. Isaiah 59:19.

"We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life. And we must ourselves receive of the living water. Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If, we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised." – "Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel

5. The Spirit and the Flesh

EARLY in the earthly ministry of our Lord, a man named Nicodemus came to Him by night, desiring that Jesus should teach him truth. To him on that occasion, the Savior unfolded truths that lie at the very heart of the gospel. One of these is expressed by the words: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” John 3: 6.

There is a vast difference between these two, the flesh and the Spirit. Naturally we are of the flesh, and the flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God. If, then, we are to enter the kingdom, a great change must take place in us. This change is so great that the Savior spoke of it as being born again. In reality, it must be so complete as to constitute the beginning of a new life. The old life lived selfishly in the interests of the flesh must be brought to an utter end, and a new unselfish life which is of the Spirit, and controlled by the Spirit, must begin. The difference between the old life and the new is as great as the difference between the flesh and the Spirit. “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” But “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Romans 8: 8, 14.

A Birth of the Spirit

Jesus spoke of the new birth as being a birth of the Spirit. “That which is born of the flesh, said He, “is flesh.” Why is this? Because by being born of the flesh, our nature is fleshly. “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” said Jesus. Why is this? Because, by being born of the Spirit, we partake of His divine nature, and His nature is spiritual. Consequently, there is as much difference between that which is born of the flesh and that which is born of the Spirit as there is essentially between the nature of the flesh and the nature of the Spirit. Since the flesh cannot please God and the natural man cannot inherit the kingdom, we must be changed from what we are by nature. The flesh and the Spirit acknowledge and obey two entirely different laws. These, as they are presented to us by the apostle Paul, are the law of sin and death and the law of the Spirit of life. The law of the Spirit of life makes us free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2. Both of these laws operate in the mind. The law of sin and death operates by keeping the mind in a state of carnality; and “to be carnally minded is death.” The law of the Spirit operates by taking control of our minds and transforming us by the renewing of our minds. By this renewal of our minds we are made spiritually minded; and to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Romans 8:6; 12:2.

The Renewed Mind

They whose minds are so renewed, mind “the things of the Spirit,” while those who “are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.” Romans 8:5. We remain in the flesh until we receive the Spirit of God into our hearts, and the Holy Spirit dwells in us. “You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” “If you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.” Romans 8: 9, 13. The deeds of the body are mortified by the Spirit only when we have received the Spirit into our hearts, and given Him complete control of our lives. He must be the master. He must be the leader. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For . . . you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Romans 8:14-17.

The inheritance is for the children. We become children only through the Holy Spirit. Our birth in the flesh has been a spiritual failure. By it we have death. But by the Holy Spirit’s bringing us to a new birth, we have life and peace. “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh” (Romans 8:11,12), but to the Spirit, to be led by the Spirit; for to us who have been born of the Spirit, He is the Spirit of life. His witness with our spirit, then, is that we are the children of God; and being children, then heirs to the eternal kingdom.

This new life that is taught and guided and led and controlled by the Holy Spirit is a life which yields the fruits of the Spirit. These are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” Galatians 5:22, 23.

Fruits of the Spirit

When the Spirit fills the heart, and we walk in the Spirit, and live our lives in the Spirit, these fruits of the Spirit appear in the life. They cannot be made to appear in a life lived in the flesh; for the works of the flesh are these: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: ... they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5: 19-21. To follow after these things in our lives is to sow to the flesh; and "he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." Galatians 6:8. "The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." Galatians 5:17. To be led by the Spirit is to sow to the Spirit, and "he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Galatians 6:8. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Galatians 5: 24, 25.

The fruits of the Spirit were evident in the lives of the disciples. It had not always been so. Before the coming of the Spirit to their hearts, there had been strife and variance and envy and wrath among them. But when they were filled with the Holy Ghost, they were of one accord and had all things in common. They were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own. There was love for one another in their hearts, and, because of this, there was great power in their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Acts 4:32,33. They had come to understand that though they had all understanding and all knowledge and all faith, if they had not love they were nothing.

Joy in the Spirit

There was also joy in their lives notwithstanding their sufferings for the gospel. Though their reception of the Holy Spirit led them to sacrifice all their earthly belongings and to endure persecution, it is written that they "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Acts 2:46. Though they were brought before the councils of men, and beaten in their presence, "they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name." Acts 5:41. When the spirit of persecution was stirred up against them, and they were expelled from the cities and coasts, "the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost." Acts 13:52. When the multitudes rose up against them, and thrust them into prison, they sang songs at midnight. The joy of the Lord was their strength. Almost every chapter of the book of Acts records the persecution of these men, in some cases even unto their death; yet always they rejoiced, and were able to say, "I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." 2 Corinthians 7:4.

Peace in the Spirit

Before the coming of the Holy Spirit there was strife in their hearts. But when the Spirit filled their hearts, the "peace which passes all understanding" came with Him. They were "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; . . . perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." 2 Corinthians 4:8, 9. They were themselves, and prayed always that others might be, "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness. Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." So fully was the peace of God theirs, and so completely did they enjoy its blessings, that they could admonish the saints, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts," knowing that if the peace of the Spirit had ruler ship there, the individual life, the home life, the family life, and the church life would all be right. See Colossians 1:11-13; 3:15-22.

Patience in the Spirit

In the days before the cross the disciples gave abundant evidence of possessing a very un-Christ like impatience. Some of them were hasty and rash and cruel. Observe this in the lives of James and John when the Samaritans refused to receive their Lord. They then said, "Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" Well, indeed, might the Master rebuke them, saying, "You know not what manner of spirit you are of." Luke 9:54,55. This was not the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives, but rather the fruit of the evil one. That occasion called not for retaliation, but for love, and love suffers long, and is kind!" 1 Corinthians 13:4, RV. But after the Holy Spirit had taught the apostles

concerning Christ, the fruit of the Spirit adorned their lives, and with all humility of soul they suffered joyfully, and could speak to others of being “strengthened . . . unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness!” They could tell of the unity of the Spirit being kept in the bond of peace by the long-suffering forbearance of one another in love. Ephesians 4:2,3. They were no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit; and, living in the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, the fruit of their lives revealed that they were Spirit taught, Spirit-filled, and Spirit-controlled men. They had become men in whose hearts was the living word. They had become men in whose mouth that word was with mighty power. The motions of the flesh with them had ceased. The moving of the Spirit had wrought in them with great power. The carnality of their minds was gone. They had become men of the Spirit. With minds renewed, with lives transformed, with hearts filled with humility and meekness, they suffered and succeeded, and the Holy Spirit revealed in them, through both their sufferings, and their successes, the fruits of His own divine character.

Controlled by the Spirit

As it was with the apostles, so it still must be with God’s people. The strivings, and ruler ship of the flesh must cease. There must no longer be a mastery of us by the passions and purposes of our fleshly natures. The Spirit must be given control, and under its sovereignty we must find freedom from the operations of “the law of sin and death.” Our minds must be brought to yield obedience to “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:2), and our lives must reveal in their fruits the development of character that is all of the Spirit. It still is true that flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God. That kingdom is spiritual, and only spiritual things can enter it.

The Holy Spirit has been sent to this world to prepare God’s people for their place in the eternal kingdom. He is seeking with all earnestness to fill us and seal us and make us forever children of God through the righteousness of the Savior. Have we received the Spirit? Are we walking in Him? Does He rule our hearts? Are we led by Him in all things? If so, then we are the sons of God, and if sons, then heirs, “heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Let us not, then, walk any longer “after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh,” and cannot enter the kingdom of glory. “But they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit.” Romans 8:17, 4, 5. They please God, and shall inherit the unspeakable things which He has prepared for them.

6. The Spirit and the New Life

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews, who came to Jesus by night, saying, “Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God.” To him Jesus replied, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:2, 3. It is probable that words of greater import have never been spoken to man. They make known that man is utterly without hope of entering the kingdom of God until he has become possessed of an entirely new life. The old life is wholly unacceptable to God. Therefore, any mere change of that old life, any mere alteration of some of its ways and habits, any mere betterment of its ideas and purposes, is altogether inadequate. For entrance to the kingdom of God a new life altogether is demanded. It is not that a man shall be merely changed; he must be born again, and thus be brought to a life that is wholly new.

The Old Life

The old life is of the flesh, and that which is of the flesh cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, therefore, is by its nature disqualified for a part in the eternal kingdom. In consequence of this, it is needful that there be a birth, other than that of the flesh, to a life that is wholly different from any life that is possible to us by natural birth.

Perhaps there is no other statement of the Bible which so clearly declares how desperate is our case through the sinfulness of our flesh. The old life is hateful to God, so hateful, indeed, that He gave His only-begotten Son to redeem us from it, and to make a new creation of us possible. The old life is not to be made over, but to cease. The new life is not the old life rebuilt, but it is possible only when the old life is dead. It is not the old life elevated to something better, but a life that is molded and fashioned, motivated and controlled, by spiritual powers. These powers the old life knows not. Neither does it acknowledge them. It is incapable of accepting them, and altogether without desire for their acceptance.

New Life Wholly of the Spirit

To produce this new life in us God has sent to us His Holy Spirit, and all that the new life embraces is of the Spirit. Thus we must understand that none of the things of the new life is of the flesh. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3:6.

It was to bring this new life to us that our heavenly Father provided us with a Savior. "God . . . gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should . . . have everlasting life." John 3:16.

Old Life One of Condemnation

The condemnation which is in the world is all because of the old life. But the life that is born of the Spirit is free from condemnation. It is in the flesh that sin has been condemned by God's sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. But it is in those who have been born again that the righteousness of the law of God is fulfilled. They walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Having been made free by the new birth from the law of sin and death, they no longer mind the things of the flesh, but the things of the Spirit, and being spiritually minded, they have life and peace. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the law of their life, and for them there is now no condemnation. Romans 8:4, 5, 2.

New Life Independent of the Flesh

This new life, born of the Holy Spirit, is not only without condemnation, but it is wholly independent of the flesh. This must be so in very deed, else we are led to death by the flesh upon which we depend. Observe how very clearly the apostle Paul has stated this important truth:

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die." Romans 8:12, 13.

Walking in the Spirit

Since, then, our trusting in the flesh leads us to death, it surely is a tragic mistake for us to seek this new life by means of the things of the flesh. The way to the life that is everlasting is in Christ Jesus. In other words, this new life for us is in Him who is our life, and is obtainable only by those who have died with Him to the old life of sin. There can be no new birth until the old life of the flesh has suffered death. That old life must be put away as utterly as though we had been buried with our Lord in His burial. There must be no mourning for it, no weeping around its tomb, but rather an absolute committal of it forever to the place whence there shall be no return. The old leaven must be cast out forever, that the lump may be entirely new. Then, after such a death and burial of our old life in the flesh, we must be raised with Him from the dead, not to a continuance of the old life or any part of it, but to the blessedness of the new life in Him. The apostle Paul speaks of it as being raised to walk in newness of life. In reality, it is to a life lived on entirely new principles, with new motives and objectives, with a new power in control and a new purpose motivating all action.

This walking in newness of life is described by the apostle as walking in the Spirit, and is possible only to the man whose past life has ceased, and who is living again in newness of life as completely as if he had not previously lived, and his birth by the Spirit is the only birth that he has experienced. When we are dead because of sin, we are released from the enslavement of sin, and it then is possible for new and untainted life to be given us. Being raised from the dead, and no more under the dominion of sin, but having entered into life through Him who is our life, we have in very deed been raised from death to life, and it is God's purpose that that life in us shall be indestructible. "I give unto them eternal life," says Jesus; "and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." John 10:28.

Now all this can come to us only by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is He who convinces us of our sin. It is He who leads us to hate sin and desire righteousness. It is He who makes known to us this way of life. It is He who leads us to repentance. It is He who creates in us the wish to die to sin. It is He who leads us to surrender all things of the flesh in that death. It is He who intercedes for us with groaning which cannot be uttered. It is He who brings us again from the dead, and gives us the life that is all spiritual. All this the Holy Spirit does through Jesus Christ our Lord. He convinces of sin that we might desire righteousness. But the righteousness of which He witnesses is the righteousness of Christ. He teaches us that we must not merely die to sin, but that our death to sin must associate us with Christ's atoning death for our sin. In other words, that we must die in Him who died to atone for our sins. Then, because of our having died in Christ and of our thus having entered into His death, the Holy Spirit gives us the new life, and empowers us in that new life to live in harmony with the will of our Father which is in heaven.

Life That Is Never Ending

All this the Holy Spirit is able to do because Christ by His death on the cross has released us from the domination of sin, and because, having risen from the dead, He has obtained for us life that, controlled in us by the Holy Spirit, is never ending. It is to this life that we are called by the gospel. It is this life that God has given us in His Son. It is this life that we have by having His Son. It is to this life that we are born again of the Holy Spirit. It is from this life that sin through our flesh has separated us. To our obtaining this life our flesh is still opposed. We therefore must crucify the flesh with its lusts, and be born again. The flesh has always loved darkness, and glories in the works of darkness. But the Spirit is light. "Everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." John 3: 20, 21.

Witness of the Spirit

To walk in the Spirit is to walk in light. To walk in the flesh is to walk in darkness. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. . . . For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides forever." But "whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world." The continual witness of the Holy Spirit with our spirit is that on this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." That we do indeed have this inward witness is attested by the following words: "It is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is truth." "This is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believes on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believes not God hath made Him a liar; because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 1:6, 7; 2:15-17; 5:4; 4:9; 5:6, 9-12.

The Holy Spirit of truth has been sent to abide in our hearts. But the purpose of His abiding in us is to bring us to fullness of life in our Savior. Being born of the Spirit, we are brought to the possibility of growing up into Him who is our life. At our first birth we were without hope, and without God in the world. Born of the flesh, we could but fulfill the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath. Ephesians 2:12, 3. But being born again of the Spirit, we are God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Verse 10. We were dead in sins. But we now have been quickened together with Christ, and have been raised to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that through us the exceeding riches of God's grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus might be shown to all ages.

Perfecting Our New Life

As children of God we have access to the Father through Christ by the eternal Spirit. By the Spirit we are strengthened with might in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. That we being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that we "might be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 2:18; 3:16-19. By the Spirit, too, we are given gifts for our perfection, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children; . . . but . . . may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Ephesians 4:11-15.

Thus it is that the Holy Spirit by whom we are born again works with and in us to perfect our new life, and make it a fit abiding place for the Master's presence. Through Him in Jesus we being "fitly framed together grow unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom you also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Ephesians 2: 21, 22. In the heart of every newborn, loving, obedient, and believing child of God, Christ is pleased to dwell. "Hereby we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." Hereby, too, "know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." 1 John 3:24; 4:13.

Seeing, then, that we who were dead have been made "alive unto God," "how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "Reckon you . . . yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God Let not sin . . . reign in your mortal body. . . . Neither yield you your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your

members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you.” “Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” “Being . . . made free from sin,” we have “become servants to God.” The fruit of our lives should, therefore, be unto holiness, that the end for us shall be indeed life everlasting “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6.

Christ Living in Us

The facts upon which the possibility of this new life for us is based, are those first stated by Paul when he preached the gospel to the Corinthians, that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, that He rose again according to the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4. In Him, we who were dead in trespasses and sins have been raised to sit in heavenly places, made partakers of His holiness, and of the divine nature. Our lives are hid with Christ in God. We are crucified with Him, nevertheless we live, yet not we, but Christ lives in us. Ephesians 2: 5, 6; Hebrews 12:10; 3:14; Colossians 3:3; Galatians 2:20. In the new life there is no place for lying and stealing and bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking. These, with all malice, uncleanness, and covetousness, are put away, and should not be so much as named among us. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, for the old man with his deeds has been put off. Ephesians 5:3, 4. Well has it been said by another: “The man who knows he is risen with Christ, and has set his affections on things above, will be a just, trustworthy, ingenuous, unselfish, and truthful man.

He will add to his “faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.” 2 Peter 1:5-7. He will seek not to be ‘barren nor unfruitful.’ ‘Whatsoever things are true. . . . whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,’ these he will think upon and do.”

“Delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.”
Psalm 40:8.

“What said the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”
Romans 4:3.

“As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:12, margin.

“Therefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”
Galatians 4:7.

“Blessed is the man that endures temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.” James 1:12.

“We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”
Hebrews 3:14.

7. Regarding the Law

MORE than a thousand years before the Babe of Bethlehem born, the Holy Spirit, through the psalmist David, bore testimony to the fact that the law of the Lord is perfect. Psalm 19:7. This important truth is now much misunderstood by many Christians. Some have come to believe that, in some mysterious way, that perfect law has become imperfect. Others are persuaded that the law of the Lord has been changed, while others believe that it has been entirely repealed. There is no good reason for us to suppose that these views, opposed though they are to the plain statement above referred to, are insincerely taken by those who hold them. The simple fact is that many thousands of sincere Christian people entirely misunderstand the teaching of the Holy Spirit regarding the law of God. They seem not to have been impressed by the Spirit’s instruction given so personally to each one of us, “My son, keep My words, and lay up My commandments with thee. . . . Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of your heart.” Proverbs 7: 2, 3.

In reality, the teaching of the Spirit regarding God's law is far other than many believe, and is a matter of first importance in the word of truth, for without it, neither the need for the cross of Christ nor for the service of the cross can be clearly understood.

An Important Teaching

One of the most important of the teachings of the Holy Spirit is that by which we know that righteousness is not to be obtained by sinful man through his keeping of the law. An understanding of this vital teaching is basic to a proper appreciation of Christ's sacrifice in our behalf. Were it possible for man, having become sinful, ever to make himself righteous by his own works of obedience, the sacrifice of Christ's life never would have been needed. The cross of Calvary stands upon the unalterable fact that the human race is so utterly ruined by sin that man can by no means help himself. It must, therefore, remain an important part of eternal truth that man, made sinful by his disobedience of God's law, cannot now be made righteous by his own acts of obedience.

This fact does not, however, imply that the keeping of the law by us is not important and imperative. Neither does it imply that because of man's failure to render perfect obedience to God, His law is not still perfect. That perfect law still points out sin. In the sight of that law all the world is guilty before God. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20.

Immediately after stating this truth, the Holy Spirit proceeds to make clear the fact that though man's obedience cannot make him righteous, there is a way whereby he can be made righteous without the deeds of the law. Observe His teaching of this truth:

Justified by Righteousness Received

"Now the righteousness of God without the law [the deeds of the law] is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Romans 3:21, 22. This means that unrighteous man, though he cannot be made righteous by his obedience of the law, is made righteous by his faith in Jesus Christ. The righteousness that he then has is not his own righteousness, but the righteousness of God which he has accepted by faith in Jesus Christ. To this perfect righteousness in us the perfect law of God witnesses without condemnation of us before God. It is thus that we become justified in the sight of God. This is the very clear teaching of the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul to the Romans.

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus. . . . Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Romans 3:24-28.

But immediately after giving us this wonderfully clear instruction as to the sinner's justification through faith in the righteous Savior, the Holy Spirit shows that this justification of the sinner without the deeds of the law does not cancel man's obligation to do God's will. He reveals clearly that the faith by which we are justified does not make void the law, but establishes the law. Romans 3:31.

The Function of the Law

It is perhaps in this epistle to the Romans that the Holy Spirit most clearly sets forth the truth about the law, and our relation as Christians to it. One cannot read this epistle and believe that man is delivered from sin either by the law or by the deeds of the law. Deliverance of man from his sinful ways is not the function of law. The law of the Lord either approves or disapproves human conduct. All human action, and even thought, that transgresses the law is sin, and the wages of sin is death. With unusual simplicity and directness the Holy Spirit here has set down the truth that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Every mouth is stopped by the law, and by it all the world is shown to be guilty before God. Romans 3:23, 19. This is the function of the law. By it is the knowledge of sin, and "where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 3: 20; 4: 15.

But when the righteousness of God, which is declared for the remission of sins that are passed, is accepted by us, the law witnesses to that righteousness being manifested in us in whom sin had hitherto abounded. This, too, is the proper function of the law, which not only declares man guilty, because of disobedience and therefore under sentence of death, but acclaims him just when, through faith in the blood of the Savior, he has accepted Christ's righteousness for himself, and thus has been brought from death to

life. Neither of these functions of the law belongs only to a past age, and neither could be performed by any other than a perfect and enduring law. It is as necessary now as in the time of Adam that man shall know his need of a Savior because of sin. It is as necessary now as then that, knowing his need, he shall obtain genuine righteousness. There is but one way now, as there always has been but one way, for man to have knowledge of his sinful condition. It is by the perfect law of the Lord that we have knowledge of sin, and therefore understanding of our need of a Savior. "Nay," says Paul, "I had not known sin, but by the law." Unless the law had said, "Thou shall not covet," we should never have known the sin of lust. Unless the law had said, "Thou shall not steal," we never should have known the sin of theft.

Character of God's Law and Will the Same

It is the will of God that we shall neither covet, nor steal, nor commit adultery, nor bear false witness, nor break the Sabbath, nor worship other gods, nor take the name of the Lord in vain, nor break any of the commandments of His law. What kind of law, suppose you, must it of necessity be that makes known to us the will of God for us, and enjoins our obedience? What kind of law must it of necessity be that makes known our relationship to that divine will? Must not that law, of necessity, be as perfect as the divine will which it reveals? Must it not be just as holy, as just, as righteous, as that divine will? Must it not of necessity be as enduring as that divine will is unchangeable?

Because of the importance of our knowing this, the Holy Spirit has written for our learning that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. I am carnal, sold under sin," but "the law is spiritual." Romans 7:12, 14. Not holy and just and good and spiritual under the old covenant alone, but holy and just and good and spiritual under the new covenant also. The perfection and unchangeableness of the law are established in the basic truth that the law of Ten Commandments is God's will for us, and must in the very nature of things be and remain as perfect and as unchangeable as the holy and unchangeable God, whose will it expresses. It is for this reason that we who have sinned cannot obtain from it the righteousness that we need, for the law being perfect and unchangeable condemns us as sinners, and must continue to do so until we have obtained that righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ. That having been obtained by our faith from Christ in whom is no unrighteousness, and not by our works from the law, the law then no longer condemns us because of our past, but witnesses to our having been made righteous. Both by its condemnation of us for sin, and by its witness to our having obtained righteousness by faith, it is established as a perfect law. Romans 3:19, 20, 31.

Righteousness by faith is of Him in whose heart is this perfect law, and who in the flesh delighted to obey this law and thus to do His Father's will. Of Him the Holy Spirit wrote by the hand of David: "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. Our having received His righteousness by our faith in Him, makes us children of God under the new covenant, and under that covenant the perfect law of God is written in our hearts. We, then, like our Savior whose righteousness we have received, delight to do our Father's will. Christ did the will of the Father by obeying His Father's law. We can do that holy will in no other way. His obedience, when we accept it as our own, becomes our righteousness. Thus, the righteousness which we receive by faith in Jesus is wholly free from our own imperfect past, and is wholly the perfection of His own spotless life. For He did always those things which pleased the Father, "and no unrighteousness is in Him." John 8:29; 7:18.

Great indeed is the misunderstanding of gospel truth which leads men to believe that our acceptance by faith of the righteousness of Christ releases us from obligation to observe that law, the obedience of which by the Savior is the very righteousness that our faith in Him secures for us. The freedom which through the gospel we enjoy, is not freedom from the obligation to live right morally, which abolition of the law would give, but is rather release from the condemnation of the law which Christ has secured for us by His having paid the penalty for our disobedience by His death for us on the cross of Calvary. This release from the condemnation of the law makes it obligatory that we be obedient to the law for the future, and so continue to live free from its condemnation. Disobedience to that law would bring us again under its condemnation. It is God's purpose in setting us free that sin shall not again have dominion over us, and "being . . . made free from sin," we "become servants to God." Becoming servants to God involves our keeping His law. What the law could not do because of the weakness of our flesh, namely, it could not give us its own righteousness, "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:3, 4, margin.

Righteousness of the Law

So, then, the righteousness which is fulfilled in us by the sacrifice of Christ, and through our faith in Him, is the righteousness of the law. This, by our disobedience, through the weakness of our flesh, we had failed to obtain. But God, “not willing that any should perish” because of our failure to be righteous by our own effort, sent His Son, a sacrifice for sin, that the righteousness of the law in Him might become ours. We on our part must be willing to forsake our disobedience, and let Him, by His Holy Spirit, make us obedient; that is, we must walk no longer “after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Why is this change from disobedience to obedience, from flesh to Spirit, necessary? “The minding of the flesh is death, but the minding of the Spirit is life and peace. Because the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Romans 8:6-8, margin.

The New Life Is Obedient

In the reading of this scripture we must not fail to observe the important relationship, here stated, of the law of the Lord to life in the Spirit under the new covenant. As clearly as words can possibly state it, we are here told that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. For what reason? Because the flesh is disobedient. It is not subject to the law of God. Herein is the great distinction between the flesh and the Spirit. The one is not subject to the law of God, the other is. The one displeases God because of disobedience. The other pleases Him by obedience. The carnal mind, “the minding of the flesh, is enmity against God because it transgresses His law, and cannot be subject to it, and “to be carnally minded is death.” “But the Spirit is life because of righteousness,” and “to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

If any man have the Spirit, his obedience to the law of God will make that fact manifest, for “you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ,” his disobedience of God’s law will make that manifest, and by his disobedience it will be known that “he is none of His.” But “if Christ be in you,” the law is not canceled, or shown to be imperfect by that fact, but your old life is dead, and the Holy Spirit which is dwelling in you “is life because of righteousness.” Then the law of the Lord, written in our hearts under the new covenant, witnesses “that as sin hath reigned unto death” in us, even so might grace henceforth “reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:21.

“Blessed,” indeed, “are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in His ways. Thou has commanded us to keep Thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all Thy commandments.”

“Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments; for therein do I delight.” “So shall I keep Thy law continually forever and ever. And I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts.” “Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.” “Let, I pray Thee, Thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant. Let Thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for Thy law is my delight.” “Let my heart be sound in Thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.” Psalm. 119:1-6, 34, 35, 44, 45, 73, 76, 77, 80.

8. Regarding Righteousness

THE demand of the law of God is perfection. Through unbelief it became impossible for man to meet this just demand. Disbelieving God, he fell into disobedience, and having disobeyed, he was brought immediately under condemnation. From then until now he has been wholly unable to release himself from the disapprobation of the law, and offer the perfection of life that the law demands. Until the guilt of disobedience came upon him, man was justified in the sight of God by his own works. But from the moment of his disobedience, his works condemned him, and his life was without justification. In the beginning, the life which was given him of God was perpetuated by his obedience. Then he was given to have and to enjoy life only so long as he was obedient. His living, then, was wholly dependent on his right doing. He was to obey that he might live.

Obedience the Consequence of the New Life

But after yielding to sin, it was impossible for him to live by his obedience. His works then were

evil, and could no longer justify him.' His life was forfeited, and by no earthly means could he deliver himself from death. Until his deflection from the ways and will of God, the law had said to him, "Obey and live." But now, because of his disobedience, it can speak to him only of death. The law requires righteousness, and in him, being a sinner, there is no righteousness. It demands perfection, but "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores;" and so utterly hopeless is the condition that man of himself can discover no way to close up the wounds, no means to bind up the sores, no ointment with which they might be mollified. Isaiah 1: 5, 6.

But it is right here that the Holy Spirit comes to man in his utter hopelessness, and whispers of a way for him to obtain righteousness. "Come now," says He, "and let us reason together. . . . Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." Isaiah 1:18, 16, 17. You in yourself are hopeless and helpless. You must die, for you have disobeyed. But there is a way whereby you may live again, in order that you may become obedient. In this new life obedience is not the condition on which you are given life, but the consequence of your living.

The Ruin. Is All Ours

But being unclean, well indeed might the sinner ask: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with the calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Well might he say, too: "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean," yet, if I then am plunged into the ditch, the filth of the ditch upon my clothes will abhor the uncleanness that after my utmost efforts at cleansing myself has remained in my soul. Micah 6:6, 7; Job 9:30, 31. Such a course would be futile and foolish, for "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." With such sacrifices the sinner cannot be made perfect. "Sacrifice and offering Thou [the Lord] would not. . . . In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou has had no pleasure." Hebrews 10: 4, 1, 5, 6. Understanding all this, it is natural for the despairing sinner to cry, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mark 8:36. "How can he be clean that is born of a woman?" Job 25:4.

But it is in the utterness of our ruin, in the completeness of our downfall, in the absolute hopelessness of our situation, that we do have hope. The ruin is all ours. The deliverance from that ruin must be all God's. He has marked our soul drawing near to the grave, and our life in the hands of the destroyer, and knowing our utter helplessness, He has sent His Holy Spirit as His messenger of righteousness to us, to be to us an interpreter of His grace, "one among a thousand, to show unto man His [God's] uprightness. Then He is gracious unto him [the sinner], and said, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. His flesh [the sinner's] shall be fresher than a child's [a new life given him] : he shall return to the days of his youth [to his former innocence]. . . . For He [God] will render unto man His righteousness. He looks upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He [God] will deliver his [the repentant sinner's] soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things works God oftentimes with man, to bring back his [man's] soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." Job 33:22-30.

The Deliverance All of God

What joy there is for us in this declaration! We cannot possibly escape from the pit by our own efforts, and, thank God, it is no longer necessary that we try. For "when the fullness of the time was come, God," who had "found a ransom," "sent forth" that ransom, "His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Galatians 4:4.

What a glorious truth is this, namely, that the ransom found should be God's own Son, sent forth into this world, made of a woman, made under the law, to take us out of the hand of the destroyer, to draw us back from the grave, to deliver us from going down into the pit, to bring back our souls from the pit, to make our flesh fresher than a child's, to enlighten us with the light of the living! Cursed we were by not continuing in all things of the law to do them. But "Christ, the Son of God," the ransom found to deliver us, "bath redeemed us from the curse of the law" by "being made a curse for us; . . . that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Galatians 3:10, 13,14.

What was it that the Holy Spirit, that interpreter of the mind of God, had promised? "He will render unto man His righteousness" (Job 33:26), in order to redeem him from the curse of the law, and to

bring him again to life free from the condemnation of the law. Christ died that this great blessing should come upon us. Observe that truth in the following scripture: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." Galatians 3:13, 14. What was the blessing of Abraham? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." This was not as a reward of works, but as the fruit of his faith, for "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness." "Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Romans 4:3, 5-8.

Ground of Blessing

Observe the ground of blessing covered in this scripture: iniquity is forgiven, sin is covered, sin is not even imputed; but righteousness that is not our own, being without our works altogether, is imputed to us. How did this blessing come to Abraham? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." "The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Romans 4:13. Being a sinner under the condemnation of the law, Abraham could not satisfy the law's demand for perfection, and therefore could not enter into the promise through the law. But he could believe God's promise. This he did, and his belief, his faith, was counted unto him for righteousness. Thus He was made righteous by his faith, and to his being righteous the law attested.

Now this was not written by the Holy Spirit for Abraham's sake alone, "but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." Romans 4:23-25.

Righteousness Leads to Ruler ship

The reign of sin in us leads inescapably to death. But "they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ." "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:17, 21. Grace is given that we "who were dead in trespasses and sins" might have life, and that in that life, we and not sin shall have ruler ship. Without grace we are the bond slaves of sin. But having received abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, we no longer are enslaved by sin, but are made to "reign in life by One, Jesus Christ."

In this a great change has been wrought. We were in bondage to sin, now we are free from sin. We were the servants of sin, now we are the servants of righteousness. We were under the condemnation of the law, now we are under grace. We were cruelly ruled by sin, now we ourselves have ruler ship through grace. When we were the servants of sin, we were free from righteousness, but then the fruit of our doing was death. Now, being made free from sin, we are "become servants to God," and have our "fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." This all is as it is simply because "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." See Romans 6:12-23.

But has our release from sin, and our obtaining righteousness, abolished the law? Has this work of grace in our lives canceled our obligation to do the will of God? Has grace, in releasing us from the condemnation which we were under as transgressors of the law, merely granted us indulgence in the transgression of the law? Have we by grace been saved from disobedience merely that we might continue to be disobedient? Not so. The life that we have through the righteousness of Christ is the gift of God. Dare we believe that while He requires perfection in us, His grace provides less than He requires? The righteousness of Christ, which we receive by our faith in Him, was wrought by Him in absolute obedience to the law of the Lord. The life in which that righteousness rules must, by the same grace which bestows it, be kept obedient, else it will fall again under condemnation through its transgression.

Grace Keeps Us Obedient

In the beginning the life that God gave to man was purposed to be a life of obedience. Only as man remained obedient could he continue to have life. Obey and live, or disobey and die, was the understanding. "Doing was indispensable to living." But once a sinner, man's right to life was gone, and all possibility of self-help was obliterated. Death came with disobedience, and no good deeds that he could do could restore him to life. The law requires absolute obedience. We have failed in this requirement. Nothing that we can do can atone for that failure. The life that has failed is under sentence of death, and exaction of

the penalty is all that will meet the case from the legal aspect.

It is at that point that grace steps in. It does not question the fact of sin. It seeks not to throw doubt upon the perfection and holiness of the law. It labors for no change of the will of God. It brings no excuse for the sinner. It makes no effort to prove the sentence unjust. But it recognizes the desperate case of man, the absolute justice of God, the perfection and holiness of God's law, and the unchangeableness of God and His law and His purpose. And it immediately sets about, not to change the law, or to abolish it, or to create new standards for life, but to redeem man by the provision of a Substitute who would take sinful man's place, meet all the requirements of the law with a life of absolute obedience, pay man's penalty by His own death on the cross, make available His righteousness to all who would accept it, give man life that is without blemish, and justify him before God, whose law he had broken. In addition to all this, grace provides that the Holy Spirit of God shall dwell in the heart and control the life of His redeemed ones, and thus they be kept from the evil.

The Gospel Is Not Without Law

But when all this has been done by grace, what, then, is the relationship of the one so redeemed to the law? Is the life thus saved from death thereby released from the obligation to obey the law? Does his acceptance of the righteousness of Jesus bestow on him a right to live contrary to the will of God? Does his deliverance in the gospel give license to live as if the gospel were without law?

The purpose of God in giving His Son a ransom for us is to make us as He is. That purpose fulfilled in us will give us confidence in the judgment. 1 John 4:17. But in Christ's heart is His Father's law. He delights to do His Father's will. He came to earth to do that will (Psalm 40: 7, 9), and "as He is, so are we in this world." It still is true that "sin is the transgression of the law." The heart of the gospel is that Christ "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abides in Him sins not. . . . Let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous." 1 John 3:44.

Now it will be well to understand this language. This has been written not of the unaccepted sinner, but of him to whom grace has brought the righteousness of Christ, and by its bestowal has made him a son of God. It is addressed to the man in whose heart is the hope of the second advent of Christ. See verses 1-3. It is merely another way of stating the same important truth found in 1 John 1: 6: "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie." If we "know that He is righteous," and have received of His righteousness, then we also should know that righteous living is required of us by the gospel because He has made us righteous with His own perfection. As truly as "all unrighteousness is sin," and "sin is the transgression of the law," then we cannot as children of light be conscious transgressors of God's law, and at the same time be the possessors of righteousness through faith. It is by faith that we receive the righteousness of Christ by which we are made righteous. But faith does not make void the law, it establishes it. See Romans 3:31.

The Righteous Are Obedient

Speaking to those who have been made righteous, the Holy Spirit, through the apostle John, has said: "Sin is the transgression of the law." "Whosoever abides in Him sins not." "He that keeps His commandments dwells in Him. . . . And hereby we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." 1 John 3:4, 6, 24. Thus it is seen that to receive Christ's righteousness is to have the indwelling of Christ, and the witness to both that righteousness and that indwelling Presence is the Holy Spirit that has been given us. But a very important feature of gospel teaching is that the Holy Spirit in this age of grace is given to those who OBEY God. Acts 5:32.

"The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit. It means divine illumination, rejoicing in God. It means a heart emptied of self, and blessed with the abiding presence of Christ. When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin. The glory, the fullness, the completeness, of the gospel plan is fulfilled in the life. The acceptance of the Savior brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance. The beauty and fragrance of the character of Christ, revealed in the life, testifies that God has indeed sent His Son into the world to be its Savior." – "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 419, 420 (old edition); page 429 (new edition).

From the lives of those made righteous by the blood of the Savior, "the light of the Sun of Righteousness" shines forth in good works "in words of truth and deeds of holiness." They obey God. Therefore the Holy Spirit has been given them, and abides in their hearts. They have received Him by faith. They have surrendered to His guidance and control. They gladly acknowledge His leadership, and "as

many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Romans 8:14. They walk in the light as Christ is in the light. They have fellowship one with another. Being free from sin, they have become the servants of righteousness unto holiness, and their end is everlasting life.

9. Regarding Justification

ALL men are by nature unjust, as it is written: “There is not a just man upon earth, that does good, and sins not.” Ecclesiastes 7:20. “There is none righteous, no, not one. . . . They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not one.” Romans 3:10, 12.

Because of his evil-doing unjust man cannot justify himself in the sight of God, for they only are just whose lives answer in all things to the perfect justice of God’s holy law. Since “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” there is therefore not one whose life answers in all things to the perfect justice of the law. It, then, is an absolute impossibility for any man to be just in the sight of God by his own efforts to obey the law, for “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” Romans 3:23, 20. Consequently, some means for the justification of man must be provided entirely outside of his own unjust life.

Means of Justification

Now the gospel of Jesus Christ is God’s disclosure of those means. Therein is revealed the wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who continue to live unrighteously. But therein is also revealed the righteousness of God given to man, and received by him through his faith, and so it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” See Romans 1:17,18. Without any of our own good deeds, and solely because we have believed on Jesus, righteousness is manifested in us, and in us is witnessed to by the law which previously had condemned us, “even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” Romans 3:22. By this means, though unjust and unrighteous before faith came, we are ‘Justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. . . . that He might be . . . the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.’ Romans 3:24-26.

Observe, please, that it is “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” that we are freely justified by God’s grace.

A Wonderful Exchange

In that redemption a wonderful exchange of righteousness for sin is made. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all.” These words are a prophecy of Christ’s redemptive work. They outline the way by which sin is taken away from us, and we are justified. This bearing of our iniquities in Himself makes it possible for Jesus to justify us before God. Isaiah 53:6, 11. He has taken our sin upon Himself, and the heavenly Father “hath made Him to be sin for us.” But this was in order “that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21. He accepted our sins having them imputed to Him as though He who had never sinned were the transgressor. For these He paid the penalty in full. He was delivered for them all. He therefore died in the place of all. He did this “that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:14.

Having in Himself borne away our sins from us, and by His death paid the full penalty for our sins, Jesus, then, was able to give us His own righteousness. This righteousness is the perfection of His own life lived faultlessly in human flesh. To pay our penalty Christ must needs die in substitution for us. To impute and impart to us His own righteousness He must needs live again after His substitutionary death. But we can obtain His righteousness only when we believe in Him as our substitute and Savior. We are justified only when, by our faith, we have received His righteousness, and “being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. Thus it is that He “was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:25. Thus it is, too, that we are justified by our faith, and being justified, “we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” Romans 5:9.

A Necessary Experience

The purpose of our justification is that we shall inherit the kingdom. “According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us

abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:54. justification is, therefore, a necessary experience between the life of condemnation because of sin, and the glorious inheritance prepared for those who love their Lord. In the Lord Jesus we have been called to son ship by the Father of all, but before we can become His children, and receive of His glory, we must be made just by Him. This justification is purposed to lead us to glory. For “whom He justified, them He also glorified;” and this glory is the glory of son ship and inheritance eternal. Romans 8:30, 16-18.

When the work of the gospel is finished, there will be but two classes of men on earth, the just (those who have been justified), and the unjust. Those two are also the only classes that sleep in the grave. When Christ’s priestly work in the heavenly sanctuary closes, it will be said, “He that is unjust [that has remained in his sins], let him be unjust still: . . . and he that is righteous [that has been justified], let him be righteous still.” This decree fixes forever the condition of life for all. The work of obtaining justification for unholy men is then through.

Soon after that the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God will be heard by all, and the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. Then the dead in Christ shall rise. This resurrection is spoken of in the Scriptures as the resurrection of the just, that is, the justified. But the rest of the dead live not again till a thousand years have elapsed after the resurrection of the just. This second resurrection is spoken of in the Scriptures as the resurrection of the wicked, that is, the unjustified. Acts 24:15; Luke 14:14. It is at the first of these resurrections that the justified are to be recompensed. The first has been called by the Savior “the resurrection of life.” The second has been named by Him “the resurrection of damnation.” “Marvel not at this,” He said, “for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

A Wide Difference

It is of tremendous importance that we prepare for that hour. The essential difference between those two classes in the resurrection is in the manner in which they have both lived and died. They all have lived, but their living has brought them to a widely different destiny. They all have died, but their dying was entirely different. Their manner of living determined their mode of dying. They who will be rewarded in the first resurrection renounced sin and accepted Christ while they yet lived. They who will receive damnation at the second resurrection cherished sin, lived without Christ, and died without receiving Him. They of the first resurrection, being already dead TO sin while they yet lived, died the death of the righteous, and went to their graves in the certainty of a resurrection to life everlasting. They of the second resurrection, being already dead while they lived IN trespasses and sins continued to be unjust in the sight of God, and died without having prepared for the (lay of resurrection. The vital difference between those raised to life and those raised to damnation is in this matter of their being made just or remaining unjust. The hope of the resurrection is the hope of the justified, and no man whose life is unjustified has as yet entered into that hope.

Of a certainty we all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. But God has now called us to repentance. Every message that the Holy Spirit has brought to our hearts gives emphasis to that call. Hear Him in that wonderful Pentecostal message, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Acts 2:38. Hear Him again in the preaching of the early apostolic church: “Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” Acts 3:19. Hear Him in the very last writings of the Scriptures: “Be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man . . . open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.” Revelation 3:19, 20. Hear Him again in the very last verses of the Bible, in His final appeal to sinners: “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. AND WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY.” Revelation 22:17.

But how very few of the millions to whom these appeals are made are coming! How very few there are who are taking the water of life freely! Though called, they are not repentant. Though warned, they are still in sin. Though so earnestly entreated, they remain aloof. Though invited into the company of the King Eternal, to sit with Him on His throne, they still are indifferent. How tragically true is the word spoken of the Lord in His long-suffering forbearance of this sinful people! “All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” Romans 10:21.

The Church Entreated

Can it be that the church itself knows too little of the experience of justification? Is it so that God's people are indifferent to their own need, and to the need of the great world all about them? That last stirring appeal of the Holy Spirit is to all to come with concern of soul for themselves. All who thus come are to be concerned for the souls of others. They too are to extend the appeal and say, "Come." But a church that is little concerned for its own need is unlikely to be troubled in heart about the need of others. This call of the Spirit should be heard especially by God's own people at this particular time. The world is in a fearful condition of need, and the end is right at hand. Never were the ways of man more distant from the path of life. Now more than at any other time is it necessary for God's children to come and take of the water of life freely. Where sin is, it should be put away. The kingdom of God is at hand, and sin cannot enter it. Now is the time for each child of God to go through the gates, to gather out the stones, and to lift up a standard in his own life for the people. At this time the Lord is calling to His children, "Behold, Thy salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him." Isaiah 62: 11.

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1: 8, 9, 6, 7.

A Close Relationship

There is a very close relationship between our fellowship with the brethren and our being justified in the sight of God. If we claim to have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we are deceived as to our own standing with God. The man who walks in darkness, and does the works of darkness, is an unjustified soul, and the unjust do not have fellowship with God. Whatever we may think, it is important that this truth be understood by us. We cannot fellowship both God and sin at the same time. If, then, we are consciously in sin, we are unjust in God's sight, and wholly out of fellowship with God but if we walk in the light as He is in the light the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. We then are justified, and have fellowship with both God and God's children. Every soul that has been made just by his faith in the redeeming blood of Christ is at peace with God and with his brethren. He has passed from death unto life, and the evidence of this is within himself. "We KNOW," says John, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John 3:14.

The peace which the justified possess passes all understanding. The promise is that it shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Forgiven, cleansed, justified, and kept by the power of God—such is the experience that God has purposed for His children. How important it is that we believe on the Lord Jesus, and accept Him fully! How urgently we need to come to Him in the spirit of repentant confession to receive the washing of regeneration! How very necessary it is, while mercy waits, for us to be found justified in God's sight through Jesus, our justifying Redeemer!

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ lead us to come and take of the water of life freely, and, receiving bountifully, be used of the Holy Spirit to bring great blessing to others who are in need of the justifying grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus.

10. Concerning Son Ship

"BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." 1 John 3:1, 2.

Son ship is not merely a connection, but a relationship. Our first parent was the son of God, not merely because God had created Him (He also made the beasts), but because the Lord had created Him in His own image and after His own likeness. God had given him not merely a similarity of form and feature, but also of mind and heart and purpose and will. He made man a being with whom He could reason, to whom He could make known His will, with whom He could enjoy companionship. To what heights of intellect and life and glory that communion, if uninterrupted, would have elevated man, we now can know only through the gospel.

Adam's Son ship

But it is written in the inspired record that Adam was the son of God, and as such he was ordained to life. Through him, however, because of his disobedience, "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." Romans 5:12, margin. By that man's disobedience a great change was made in our world. From being the son of God he became an enemy. From being an inheritor of God's kingdom he became an alien; and we, being the children of Adam, became in him alien and hostile to the Fatherhood of God.

Adam continued to look like a son after he had lost his son ship. But he was no longer a son; he was a stranger. He doubtless tried to live as a son, but he knew that sin had destroyed his family connections, and he had become a stranger. He doubtless tried to live as a son in order to make himself once more a son; but he found, as we all must do, that if we are to live as sons, we must indeed be sons. An imitation of son ship will never do; and imitation is the best that man by his own efforts can produce.

There is a great deal that is spurious in the experience of many who are regarded as Christians today. An exceedingly wide difference exists between our being called sons of God by our fellow beings, and our knowing by the witness of the Holy Spirit that we are the sons of God. But the apostle John calls our attention to our being "called the sons of God" by the Father Himself. "Behold, what manner of love," he says, "the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the son's of God."

Strangers to the World

This being called the sons of God by the heavenly Father, brings about a great change in us. From being a stranger to God, we are become sons of God, and by our becoming the sons of God we are made strangers to the world-as strange to the world as God Himself is. "Therefore [because we are the sons. of God] the world knows us not." Why? "Because it knew Him not." It is impossible for us to be called the sons of God by the Father, and the world know nothing about it. We really are sons when the Father calls us sons; and if we are sons, the life we live is the life of the sons of God. That life cannot be lived in this world, and the world remain ignorant of it. But it must never be supposed that the world will love the sons of God. In the world they shall have tribulation, but they must be of good cheer, for Christ their Savior in whom they have received the right to be sons, has "overcome the world." John 16:33.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." John 1:10. The world to which He came hated Him; and, because it hated Him, it hates all who have been made the sons of God through Him. "If the world hate you," He said, "you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." John 15:18, 19. But notwithstanding the hatred and the opposition of the world, Christ has given "to all who . . . receive Him and believe in Him the right to become children of God, owing their birth not to nature or to any human or physical impulse, but to God." John 1: 12, 13 (Goodspeed).

So, then, we are sons of God, not by any human force, but by receiving Christ and believing in Him. This is the only plan that God has for making us His sons. How utterly foolish and futile it is, therefore, for us to assume the responsibility of making ourselves sons of God by our own efforts and motions! How pitiable that we should thus deceive ourselves in this most important matter, and, being self-deceived, take to ourselves the arrogance that is natural to worldly son ship! Were we but to heed the Holy Spirit's teaching on this question of son ship, we should have a church without pride, and a communion of humble, thankful, contrite hearts that would echo and re-echo the words of the beloved and loving John, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

The Fatherhood of God

In Old Testament times God was not well known by His people as the eternal Father. It would appear that though Jehovah gave assurance of fatherly care over them again and again, their minds but dimly comprehended the relationship. The prophet Isaiah had spoken concerning God, "Doubtless Thou art our Father: . . . Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; Thy name is from everlasting." Isaiah 63:16. But there is little in the Old Testament to indicate that God was actually known by them as their Father. Frequently do we read of their referring to Abraham as their father, and to Jehovah as the God of Abraham. Their reasoning required that someone must ascend to heaven, or descend from heaven, to make the Fatherhood of God known to men. The wisest of them all wrote: "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his SON'S name?" Proverbs 30:4.

We are not provided in the Old Testament with information as to who the Son of God is. The New Testament is crowded with that information; and with the revelation of the Son is the manifestation of the Father. One did indeed come down from heaven, and He, the divine Son, has made known the Father to us. He was sent forth by the Father to manifest the Father to us, and, apart from Him, there is no way by which the Father can become known to men. Neither is there apart from Him any way whereby we can come to the Father or become His children. "He was in the world. . . . and the world knew Him not. . . . But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1: 10, 12, margin.

Son ship Predicates Fatherhood

The Savior's works and words and life in every detail were a manifestation of the Father. The purpose of His thus setting forth the Father before men was to establish son ship for those who would believe on Him. He spoke only the words of His Father. He did only the works of His Father. In Him the will of the Father was perfected in the flesh. His works and words bore witness to the fact that He came from the Father, and God Himself bore witness to His son ship, and thereby also to His own Fatherhood; for where there is son ship there must of necessity also be fatherhood. We were, in the beginning, the children of God by creation. We became His enemies through sin. We are now children by adoption through the Holy Spirit, having received the right to become children by believing on the Son of God, and receiving Him into our hearts. John 1: 12, margin.

These sons of God who have been given the right to be children by receiving Christ and believing on Him, are the true Israel of the promise. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." These "children of the promise," being debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and are led and controlled by the Holy Spirit, as it is written by the apostle Paul, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In their hearts, the Holy Spirit is in control. They "have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;" but they "have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Romans 9:8; 8:14-17.

Sons of God Are Inheritors

Observe this in the statement of Paul: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Romans 8:17. The purpose of all gospel power is to make us heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. The end of all gospel service is to bring those in whose behalf it is rendered into the inheritance. When the apostle Paul stood in the place of judgment before King Agrippa, and pleaded there the cause of Christ, he made it clear that his understanding of the objective of the gospel service was not merely conversion, not merely forgiveness of sins, not merely the turning of sinners from Satan to God, from darkness to light, but in addition to all these, it is that those converted and forgiven and turned to light and to God shall receive inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith. Acts 26:13-19.

The Holy Spirit has clearly set forth in the Scriptures that son ship means eternal inheritance. This inheritance is not of the law. It cannot be earned by good deeds. It is of promise, and reachable only in Christ. "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ." "And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Galatians 3:18, 16, 29; 4:44.

Adoption and Acceptance

By Christ we have the adoption of children unto God. In Him we have acceptance by the Father. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, and in order that we might have constant assurance that the promise is sure, He has sent the Holy Spirit into our hearts as an earnest of that inheritance until we are in possession of the promise. See

Ephesians 1: 5-14.

“Blessed,” then, “be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1:3-5.

Our son ship is in the present, if we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have received Him into our hearts. But the eternal inheritance is yonder in the glory of the hereafter. Jesus, with whom we have been made joint heirs, and in whom we have inheritance, has gone “to prepare a place” for us; and as surely as He has gone, He will come again and receive us unto Himself, that where He is, we may be forever. John 14:1-3.

As surely as we are children, we are heirs; “heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so he that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.” Romans 8:17.

In the world we shall have tribulation for no other reason than that we are the children of God. But in nothing are we to be terrified by our adversaries; “for unto” us “it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” Persecutions and afflictions will come to the child of God, for “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” But “if we suffer” for His sake, “we shall also reign with Him.” Philippians 1: 29; 2 Timothy 3:12; 2:12.

Glorified Together

Suffering with Christ is not only inescapable for God’s children, but it is a most needful and helpful experience. It is necessarily precedent to the glory that awaits us in the eternal kingdom. We are “joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For,” says Paul, “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Observe that the sons of God are not merely to be introduced to glorious surroundings in the eternal inheritance. They themselves are to be glorified. The glory is to be revealed IN THEM. “Delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God,” they are to receive glory in their own being with which “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared;” and the whole creation of God awaits with earnest expectation this glorious manifestation of the sons of God. Romans 8:21, 18, 19.

But shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or peril separate us from the love of Christ? For His sake “we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

But “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:36-39.

There is a day coming soon, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In that day “He shall come to be glorified in His saints, . . . and to be admired in all them that believe.” 2 Thessalonians 1: 7, 8, 10.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure.” 1 John 3:2, 3.

11. Concerning Holiness

THROUGHOUT this study, the reader should keep in mind the truth that the new creation which is wrought in us through Christ is not by the working of natural forces, but is the direct product of divine power.

In the beginning God made man in His own likeness, which means that He made man holy, for likeness to God is holiness. In the purpose of the Creator, man was chosen from the foundation of the world to be “holy and without blame before Him in love.” Ephesians 1: 4. Being, therefore, the workmanship of God, the masterpiece of a faultless creation, made in the image of God, and after His likeness, there was no unholiness, and no predisposition to unholiness, in him. Yet he became unholy when, led by the arch deceiver, he believed that he was unlike God, and would become like Him if he disobeyed Him.

Persuaded to Become Unholy

In other words, man who was made holy, because he was made like God, was persuaded to become unholy in order to become like God. Observe the conversation that took place in Eden between the serpent and Eve. The serpent: "Hath God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Eve: "Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die." The serpent: "You shall not surely die: for God does know that in the day you eat thereof . . . you shall be as gods." Genesis 3:1-5. How terribly deceptive is sin! How fearful is unbelief! Thus man chose to live in unholiness outside of God's purpose.

The holiness which he had in the beginning was not obtained by his own effort. It was the gift of the Creator. But the disobedience by which he lost that holiness was his own voluntary act. By it he lost his god likeness so completely that from being the masterpiece of a faultless creation, he fell to become a stricken creature whose whole head is sick, and whose whole heart is faint. He had been crowned with glory and honor, and set over the works of the Creator's hands. All things were put in subjection under his feet, and nothing was left of all the earthly creation that was not placed under his dominion. See Isaiah 1:5,6; Hebrews 2:6-8. Glory and honor and dominion were his because of his holiness, his godliness, his likeness to God.

But the moment he entered into disobedience, he lost everything that he had possessed because of his holiness, and, being unholy by his disobedience, he passed from dominion to doom. So the apostle Paul, after speaking of him as he was when like God, says of him as he now is in sin, "Now we see not yet all things put under him." He has been tricked and cheated by sin. Having all, he was tempted to expect more, and grasping for an imaginary "more," he lost all and received nothing in exchange. Thereafter he not only was unholy, but of himself could produce nothing but unholiness.

The Holy and the Unholy Estate

Before his fall, man's holiness was all-inclusive. It gave character to all his thoughts and words and deeds. It completely filled and controlled him in all his ways. No influence was shed by his life but that which was holy. No impression was made by his personality that was not holy. In everything he was holy. His likeness to God was a reality in everything, whether of mind or soul or body; and because this was so, when he lost his holiness, he was unholy in every respect. There was left no good thing in him. Therefore, no mere act of reparation could meet his need. If ever his ruin was to be retrieved it must be, not by a process of repair or replacement, but by a new creation, and in that new creation he must again be made holy in all things. Since this new creation could not possibly be wrought by the operation of natural forces, it therefore must be, as at creation, the direct product of divine power.

The restoration to man of his lost likeness to God is the great end of all gospel means and ministry. The kernel of all gospel truth is the glorious fact that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. The great God, whose holiness we had cast away from our lives, came down from heaven in the person of His Son, who, in sinful flesh, bearing our likeness, was made "to be sin for us." This was in order "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." God in His divine Son, has taken all the hateful things which were ours through sin, and has, in Jesus, given us His own righteousness. Thus, if our sinfulness is all taken away, and the sinlessness of our Savior is imputed to us, we no longer are in the likeness of sin, but in the likeness of God, and are thereby made holy. This, however, is no mere change of possession, but a change of being. We cannot be rid of sin by the mere motions of an exchange. We must die to sin. Neither can we by the same motions be made righteous. Having died to sin, we must live again to God. We are then a new creation, for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17.

The Old and the New Life

This language is very comprehensive. This new creation which takes place by turning a man away from his sins and making him again like God, involves the whole man. It does not mean merely the correction of some of his habits, or the adjustment of his weaknesses. It has to do with "all things" of his life and being. ALL the OLD things are passed away. The old life, the old habits, the old purposes, the old aims, the old pleasures, all the old worldly things, have perished as far as the new man in Christ is concerned. They have died with the old man. They have been buried with him, and they have thus passed away. The new man is new without and within. Christ is formed within him, and no one thing of his life is independent of that fact. He is in agreement with everything godly. He can have no agreement with things

that are ungodly. He recognizes and rejoices in the fact that from sin in every form and fashion he has been wondrously delivered. He now wills to forsake all unholiness, and to live godly and righteously in all of his ways. He no longer has fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reproves them. He glories in the likeness of this new life to God, and wills to be holy, as God is holy. Ephesians 5:11; 1 Peter 1:15,16.

This new man “after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” He is renewed in the spirit of his mind. The old “carnal” mind is gone, and with the new mind he serves God. The carnal mind is incapable of knowing God, and of being subject to the law of God. It is a “reprobate” mind. Its thoughts of God are distorted and far from truth. Its attitude toward the requirements of God is the attitude of a rebel. It not only is not subject to God’s law, but it cannot be made subject to it.

From Enmity to Peace

It therefore is impossible for man to be made again like God while he is unwilling to have his mind renewed. The renewed mind is a spiritual mind. “To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Romans 8:6, 7. An unholy man does not have peace. He cannot have peace. He is carnally minded, and “the carnal mind is enmity against God.”

There is a wide difference between “enmity against God” and “the peace of God.” Yet the whole difference between these two things is comprehended in the change from being carnally minded to being spiritually minded. Those two things are also the whole difference between the sinner and the saint, between the old man and the new. The new man is a forgiven man. He has received pardon for all his iniquity. He is a justified man, therefore he has been made just in the sight of God. He is a regenerate man, for he has been changed by the salvation of the Lord, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He is a righteous man, because he has received the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. He is a holy man, because in his new life he willingly conforms to the will of God, and, being holy, he lives unto God a life that is altogether renewed.

The Ruler ship of God’s Peace

It is “the God of peace” who, “through the blood of the everlasting covenant,” makes us “perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever.” Hebrews 13:20, 21. It is the peace of God, “so far above any human thought,” that through our union with Christ, shall “guard” our minds and thoughts. Philippians 4:7. This “peace comes with dependence on divine power.” It is the gift of the Savior to us. John 14: 2 7.

The man who has received justification by his faith is at peace with God. Romans 5:1. The man in whose heart is the peace of God has his mind and thoughts garrisoned by that peace. There is a wide difference between these two things, being at peace with God and having the peace of God in our hearts. Peace with God is a condition. The peace of God in us is a power. Yet there is a close relationship between the condition and the power. If we are not at peace with God, we never can know the power of His peace; and without the power of His peace our hearts are not kept, neither are our thoughts guarded. It is the Lord’s purpose that each one of His children shall not only be at peace with Him through their justification, but shall also be in possession of His wonderful peace. The troubled heart is not any part of our Savior’s gift to us. “Peace I leave with you,” He says, “My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27. For the trouble made by sin in the human heart, the Savior’s peace is a glorious exchange.

But this peace is no mere passive possession, but rather an active power. Where the fear and trouble of sin have been dominant, the peace which passes all understanding is to have ruler ship. “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts” is the admonition of the Holy Spirit (Colossians 3:15), and this because it is a Christian privilege and right to which we are definitely called by the gospel. Holiness is impossible where God’s peace does not have ruler ship. But where the power of that peace is in control, there is a proper basis for holy living. Holiness cannot exist where trouble and contention are given place in the life. It abides in the heart where the peace of God is the ruling power, and manifests itself in every aspect of the man whose justified life is yielded fully to the doing of God’s holy will.

12. Concerning the Christian’s Warfare

THE forgiven child of God must expect soul conflict, for he has to do with a relentless foe. This conflict is called by the apostle Paul, “the good fight of faith.” It is a war against the world, the flesh, and

the devil. It is a resistance of a saved soul to the striving of sin that is again seeking to have rulership over him. This striving of sin is evidence of the fact that sin, though defeated and dethroned, is still able to fight, and is determined to regain the mastery. It should never be regarded as evidencing that God has failed us, or that His work of grace in us is unsatisfactory. "If we confess our sins, He [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!"

Until we thus came to God and had our sins taken away, we were in bondage to sin. Sin was our master. We were the slaves of sin. When we were the servants of sin, we were free from righteousness. But when pardon was bestowed, we were freed from sin, and became the servants of God unto holiness. This does not mean that when we were the servants of sin, we had no longings for righteousness, but rather that sin possessing us, and controlling our motions, excluded righteousness, and made control of us by righteousness impossible. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, and as sin had reigned unto death, grace through righteousness now reigns unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life" through the same Jesus. See Romans 5:20, 21; 6:23.

Conflict a Necessity

This being so, there must of necessity be conflict. We deceive ourselves if we conclude that because we have changed masters, we are henceforth to live in undisturbed peace. We do not well to believe that because sin no longer reigns in our hearts, it has lost its inclination to fight. Our being justified by the sin pardoning Savior does not assure us that sin shall no longer strive to overthrow us. Our being dead to sin and our being raised again to newness of life does not guarantee that our progress in holiness shall be along a way in which there shall be no obstacle to our feet and no temptation to our soul.

On the contrary, the experience of the pardoned soul is an experience of war. It is not war against God, as when he was ruled by sin, "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits." Ephesians 6:12, margin. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," but spiritual, and are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." 2 Corinthians 10:4. For success we must take unto ourselves continually "the whole armor of God," trusting only and always in the Lord, and in the power of His might. See Ephesians 6:10-18.

Conflict Is Not Condemnation

We must be careful, though, not to misunderstand the dealings of God with us in this matter. Temptation is not sin, and struggle is not condemnation. The Lord Jesus was tempted in all points, but He was without sin. He suffered the greatest agony in soul conflict, but was never thereby brought under condemnation. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12. It is inevitable that, if righteousness is to rule in our hearts, we shall be in ceaseless conflict with all that opposes that rule. The fact of our being ceaselessly beset must not discourage our hearts. Rather should we, like Peter and John, rejoice in that we are "counted worthy to suffer" for Christ's sake. Acts 5:41.

We should clearly understand that temptation does not come from God. We cannot tempt Him, and He will not tempt us. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted He any man." James 1:13.

Every temptation is sent by the enemy of our souls, and is purposed to bring about our downfall. He knows the lusts and weaknesses of our flesh, and uses these to entice us to sin. So it is written by the apostle James: "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death." James 1: 14, 15.

Not to Misunderstand God

God is the author and giver of good. His purpose for us is life everlasting. He changes not. He is the same now as in the beginning, when He made us and ordained us to life in His Son. Concerning this we are admonished: "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1: 16, 17. The apostle evidently considered it a serious matter for us to be mistaken about what comes to us from God, and as clearly as thought can be expressed he has told us that the venom filled arrows of temptation do not come from Him. He sends nothing that purposes our eternal destruction. But every good and perfect thing that we ever think of or enjoy does come from God. Let us not then discourage ourselves by misunderstanding our heavenly Father, but rejoice and be glad in that He remembers us continually with all His many mercies.

Temptation Not Sin

The fact of our being tempted is in itself not sin. Temptation is but the means by which our enemy seeks to bring us into sin, to drive righteousness from our hearts, and thus to make certain our eternal destruction. But when temptation is endured, it can have no such results. "Blessed," says James, "is the man that endures temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." James 1:12.

Often, far too often, we fall into discouragement because of a false expectancy that our new life in Christ shall be free from temptation. Though we may not yield to temptation, we are troubled by the fear that God has not accepted us. We reason that had He really done so, we would not be so severely tried. All this is due to our misunderstanding of both the nature of sin, and the change that has been wrought in us by conversion, and the end that God has in view in permitting us thus to be tried. Sin has been defeated by our deliverance from its power; but it is none the less determined to gain, if possible, the same mastery over the new man that has risen with his Lord, as it had over the old man that was under its power. Since this is so, we must not be discouraged because we are constantly assailed by temptation. But rather should we rejoice, "knowing this, that the trying of our faith works patience." James 1:3.

War With Opponents of God

If we have confessed our sins, we have been fully forgiven, and being forgiven, we are just as fully justified, and being justified, we are at peace with God. See John 1:9; Romans 5:1. This glorious fact lifts the matter of soul conflict after conversion into an atmosphere where misunderstanding of it is impossible. We are at peace with God. He therefore will not make war upon us. He has taken us into His family as children, and "like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust." "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children." Psalm 103:13, 14, 17.

But our being at peace with God involves us in warfare with all that opposes Him. In view of these facts, let us not think when we are tempted that we are "tempted of God," but let us remember gladly that God is on our side entirely in the matter of temptation. Observe how completely this is true: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10: 13.

Sin Not to Have Dominion Over Us

Since, then, God is so fully on our side in this matter, neither our forgiveness nor our justification can be disturbed unless we again permit sin to have ruler ship in our hearts. We do ourselves wrong when, just because we are assailed by temptation, we question God or the completeness of His forgiveness or His justification of our unworthy lives. In reality, we progress in holiness only as we decide continually and under all conditions that Christ alone shall be our Master, that His righteousness shall have ruler ship of us, and that sin shall not again have dominion over us. While Christ is our Master, we walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and, therefore, are not brought again into condemnation. We, then, should allow no false sense of condemnation to discourage our heart while we truly own Christ as Lord of our life, and do not again serve sin.

Temptation a Means of Deliverance

When Moses, at the command of God, was about to lay down his life, he recounted to the people the great goodness of the Lord in all His dealings with them. In doing this, He said:

"Ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou has heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?" Deuteronomy 4:32-34.

Remembering as we read the foregoing words, that God tempts no man, and that temptation never comes from Him, we observe that the temptations which came to the Israelites in Egypt were the first means that God used in their deliverance from bondage. As we have read this wonderful story from our

childhood days, we have had our attention held by the “signs” and the “wonders” and the “war” and the “stretched-out arm” and the “great terrors.” All of these things were directly the agencies of God, used to reveal Himself to His people, and to impress their enemies.

Love May Allow Suffering

But how little we have thought of the terrible temptations and trials which came to the Israelites except to regard them as the agencies of Satan designed for the defeat and utter destruction of that people! This they truly and primarily were. By those temptations the people of Israel were brought to despair, and in a great agony of affliction cried to heaven for deliverance. Their cries reached heaven, and through the mercy of God those temptations became instruments of deliverance, having prepared that afflicted people the more willingly to receive the help that God was so very willing and so abundantly able to bring to them. The signs and the wonders, the stretched-out arm and the great terrors, would all have availed little had not the people been led through their afflictions to desire and seek the Lord’s help. The Lord dearly loved that people, and because He did, He allowed them to suffer. Then through that suffering He brought them forth triumphant and rejoicing—His own peculiar treasure above all peoples.

It still is so. We are brought by the things that we suffer for righteousness’ sake to desire and seek God. If against our besetments we will but war soberly, watchfully, prayerfully, humbly, and trustfully, we shall find that even devils that would destroy us are subject to the might of God exercised for us, and by which we are made more than conquerors.

Almost the entire Bible reveals the witness to God and His glory of the sufferings of His people. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came to know Jehovah through the captive princes of Israel. Daniel 2:46,47. He came to know the might, the reality, and the superiority of God at the burning fiery furnace where the Son of God walked in the flames with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Daniel 3:25-29. The people of Media and Persia were brought to the knowledge of the true God at the den of lions into which they had cast Daniel, the servant of God. Daniel 6:25-27. Christ, the Lord of glory, was manifested through the sufferings of the apostle Paul.

Observe the apostle’s recognition of this in the following words:

A Witness of Trial

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4: 8-11.

Manifest in whom? In those that suffer for Christ. Manifest to whom? To those who behold that suffering. What is the result of this witness of trial in those who suffer for Christ? Life in at least some of those who see the endurance of our faith. Verse 12. Paul himself suffered terribly for Christ; but observe how he regarded those sufferings in their relation to himself as the servant of God, remembering that without exception these trials were all designed by Satan to compass his overthrow:

“I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews.” Acts 20:18,19.

This witnessing of God’s people through their sufferings now is to extend into eternity; for when the redeemed shall stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, “they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name: for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest.” Revelation 15:3, 4.

The Witness to Be Eternal

This great multitude has come fresh from the conflict with “the beast.” The victory they have gotten is eternal, and the witness of their sufferings is also eternal. Their witness is to the greatness of God’s works of righteousness, to the justice and truth of His ways, to the holiness of His character, to the glory of His name, and to the uprightness of His judgments. But the power to witness eternally thus for God has been gained through suffering in which those redeemed ones have come to know that God is in very deed all that their song eternally proclaims Him to be. How true it is that “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the

things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” 2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.

The Reward Is to the Overcomer

The sevenfold reward of the book of Revelation is all to the overcomer. Entrance to Paradise; immunity from the second death; the hidden manna, and the new name; power over the nations, and the morning star; his name forever in the book of life. Eternal continuance in the temple of God; and the right to sit with Jesus in His throne, are all for the overcomer—the one who has struggled and won, the one who has triumphed in the conflict.

There is a great deal said about reward in the book of Revelation, but always in association with the idea of work or victory. In the seventh chapter the gathering of the saved is revealed, an innumerable multitude standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white and with palms in their hands. Whence came they? Out of great tribulation. Why are they there? They have fought a good fight, they have kept the faith. They “have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” What does that mean? It means that they have been in a great conflict. How many? Every one. It means that they are victors in that conflict, for they have retained the white robes of Christ’s righteousness, and have the palms of victory in their hands. All of them? Yes, every one. It is because of this that they are “before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. . . . For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” Revelation 7:4-7.

Picture of Victory

In the fifteenth chapter we have another glorious picture of redeemed souls before the throne of God. This time they are on the sea of glass mingled with fire, and have the harps of God. They sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. But who are they? They are those that have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.” Where did they wage this warfare with the beast and his image and his mark and the number of his name? In their own hearts. When was this victory gained? In the hour of soul conflict when they each one decided that, though it cost them their life, they would be true to God and not deny Him. They are those who in the hour of extreme trial have not denied their Lord before men, and He, true to His word, has not denied them before His Father in heaven.

“Now thus said the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passes through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walks through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior.” “I, even I, am He that blots out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” “Thou art My servant: I have formed thee; thou art My servant: . . . thou shall not be forgotten of Me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee.” Isaiah 43:1-3, 25; 44:21, 22.

The Christian’s Might

Though of ourselves we have no strength for the “good fight of faith,” and we must contend against forces too strong for our unaided resistance, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” “He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might, He increases strength.” “They that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of naught. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.” “Has thou not known? Has thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary?” “Even the youths [trusting in their own youthful powers] shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” See Psalm 46: 1; Isaiah 40:28-31; 41:12, 13.

“Every manifestation of God’s power for His people arouses the enmity of Satan. Every time God works in their behalf, Satan with his angels works with renewed vigor to compass their ruin. He is jealous of all who make Christ their strength. His object is to instigate evil, and when he has succeeded throw all the blame upon the tempted ones. . . . He endeavors to fright their souls with the thought that their case is

hopeless, that the stain of their defilement can never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield fully to his temptations, and turn from their allegiance to God.

“The Lord’s people cannot of themselves answer the charges of Satan. As they look to themselves, they are ready to despair. But they appeal to the divine Advocate. They plead the merits of the Redeemer. God can be ‘just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.’ With confidence the Lord’s children cry unto Him to silence the accusations of Satan, and bring to naught his devices. ‘Do me justice of mine adversary,’ they pray; and with the mighty argument of the cross, Christ silences the bold accuser.”

Christ Our Deliverer

“When Satan seeks to cover the people of God with blackness, and ruin them, Christ interposes. Although they have sinned, Christ has taken the guilt of their sins upon His own soul. He has snatched the race as a brand from the fire. By His human nature He is linked with man, while through His divine nature, He is one with the infinite God. Help is brought within the reach of perishing souls. The adversary is rebuked.”

“When trials arise that seem unexplainable, we should not allow our peace to be spoiled. However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion arise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit. There is by our side a witness, a heavenly messenger, who will lift up for us a standard against the enemy. He will shut us in with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Beyond this Satan cannot penetrate. He cannot pass this shield of holy light.

“While the world is progressing in wickedness, none of us need flatter ourselves that we shall have no difficulties. But it is these very difficulties that bring us into the audience chamber of the Most High. We may seek counsel of One who is infinite in wisdom.

“The Lord says, ‘Call upon Me in the day of trouble.’ He invites us to present to Him our perplexities and necessities, and our need of divine help. He bids us be instant in prayer. As soon as difficulties arise, we are to offer to Him our sincere ‘earnest petitions. By our importunate prayers we give evidence of our strong confidence in God. The sense of our need leads us to pray earnestly, and our heavenly Father is moved by our supplications.

“Often those who suffer reproach or persecution for their faith are tempted to think themselves forsaken by God. In the eyes of men they are in the minority. To all appearance their enemies triumph over them. But let them not violate their conscience. He who has suffered in their behalf, and has borne their sorrows and afflictions, has not forsaken them.

“The children of God are not left alone and defenseless. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. . .

Surrender to God Necessary

“If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ ‘He shall deliver the needy when he cries; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.’”

“The Lord permits trials in order that we may be cleansed from earthliness, from selfishness, from harsh, un-Christ like traits of character. He suffers the deep waters of affliction to go over our souls, in order that we may know Him, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, in order that we may have deep heart longings to be cleansed from defilement, and may come forth from the trial purer, holier, happier. Often we enter the furnace of trial with our souls darkened with selfishness; but if patient under the crucial test, we shall come forth reflecting the divine character. When His purpose in the affliction is accomplished, ‘He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.’ – “Christ’s Object Lessons,” pages 168-175 (old edition); pages 170-178 (new edition).

13. Concerning the Victory

BY THE facts of the case it is clearly evident that the child of God must continually obtain strength beyond his own for success in “the good fight of faith.” “Of himself he has no means of salvation.” The years of his life before coming to God have been wasted. From them nothing can be brought that will

assure him of victory. Everything of the new life is of grace. Against the forces that controlled the old life the warfare must be sternly waged. But both the weapons to be used and the power for victory, each so necessary to guard and sustain the new life, are obtainable only at the Source whence the new life came. These weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and “mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:4

The First Step

The first effectual step toward victory for any newborn soul is the recognition that in himself there is no might. By this recognition he will be guarded in two ways. On the one hand he will be kept from falling into deep discouragement on account of his utter helplessness. On the other hand he will be preserved from going forth to the battle trusting altogether in the strength of his own arm of flesh. When the first of these conditions arises, it is evidence of failure to trust the Lord Jesus and accept His victory as ours in all things. When the second comes, it is evidence of a proud spirit that depends on self more than on God, and which, if not subdued, will in the time of vital crisis, bring its possessor to abject defeat.

It was thus with Peter when he boastfully asserted that though all should forsake the Lord Jesus, yet would not he. So sure of his strength was he that he believed himself not only able to take care of himself, but of the Lord also. Within a few short hours, however, the test came, and with only his own strength on which to rely, he utterly failed, even denying that he had been with Jesus, declaring with cursing and swearing, “I know not this Man of whom you speak.”

Self-sufficiency led Peter to his downfall. It revealed in him a proud, unsubdued heart. It will lead every soul that indulges it to the same sad end. It will develop in every heart that gives it place, the same characteristics and the same failure. There is nothing more treacherously dangerous to the child of God in his warfare of faith.

“Those who accept Christ, and in their first confidence say, I am saved, are in danger of trusting to themselves. They lose sight of their own weakness and their constant need of divine strength. They are unprepared for Satan’s devices, and under temptation many, like Peter, fall into the very depths of sin. We are admonished, ‘Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.’ Our only safety is in constant distrust of self, and dependence on Christ.” – “Christ’s Object Lessons,” page 155 (old edition); page 156 (new edition).

The Second Step

It is important that we remember at all times that though we sin, we are not forsaken. Through repentance and humiliation of soul we may again come to God who already has promised to regard our contrition and restore our soul. “Every provision has been made for our infirmities, every encouragement offered us to come to Christ.” To the weak and needy He has said, “Let him take hold of My strength.” Isaiah 27:5. This is the second vital step toward victory in “the good fight of faith,” namely, unselfishly, trustingly taking hold of and depending wholly on the strength of the Lord. Wonderful it is that God has brought His strength so fully within our reach, and made it so simple for us to lay hold of it.

“God rejoices to bestow grace upon all who hunger and thirst for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we shall receive the gift.

“It should not be difficult to remember that the Lord desires you to lay your troubles and perplexities at His feet, and leave them there. Go to Him, saying: ‘Lord, my burdens are too heavy for me to carry. Wilt Thou bear them for me?’ And He will answer: ‘I will take them. With everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee. I will take your sins, and will give you peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove.’” – “Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers,” pages 519, 520 (Bold face mine).

Wasted Years Restored

One of the very sweet promises of the Bible is given in Joel: “Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for . . . I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, the caterpillar, and the palmer worm. . . . And you shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and My people shall never be ashamed.” Joel 2:23-27.

There are few Christians who do not mourn in soul because of those wasted years when they served sin. But here the Lord is bidding us rejoice, for in Him those years of blight and ruin are recoverable. He promises not merely to take away our regret and remove our shame, but to take away the cause of our regret and shame. For the ashes of sorrow He gives the oil of rejoicing, and with that rejoicing there is no shame. Bless the Lord for this assurance that our future under His power is not to be lived in the shadows of the past. The years that the locusts have eaten can be and are to be restored.

In the book of Hebrews the Holy Spirit has unfolded to us the mystery, the grandeur, and the vast importance of Christ's priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. By that priestly service, through the Savior's death on the cross, we have assurance of salvation to the uttermost. "Wherefore [because of Christ's priesthood, its continuity, and its unchangeableness] He [Christ] is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25.

Saved to the Uttermost

Let us see just what this being saved to the uttermost means. Christ by whom we are thus saved "was delivered [to death] for our offenses, and was raised again [to life] for our justification." He, "being by the right hand of God exalted," "a Prince and a Savior," has made us to be accepted in Him by the Father. Thus He has obtained for us "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Thus, too, "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Our being saved by grace through faith, and our having access into grace by faith, makes it vitally important that we put away all distrust of God, and believe implicitly in the Lord Jesus Christ. While grace has reached down to rescue us from the ruin of sin, our own faith in the Lord Jesus is the only means of access into that grace. Consequently, our doubts of God and of His Son Jesus must be entirely surrendered before grace can operate effectively in saving us to the uttermost.

"It is your privilege to trust in the love of Jesus for salvation, in the fullest, surest, noblest manner; to say, He loves me, He receives me; I will trust Him, for He gave His life for me. . . . Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory." – "Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers," page 517.

He who thus puts away his doubts, and thus believes on the Lord Jesus, is given a life that 9s hid with Christ in God." Colossians 3:3. He is made a partaker of Christ, and with Him has been raised up and made-to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. See Hebrews 3:14; Ephesians 2:5, 6. This surely is salvation to the uttermost.

Those who have thus been raised up have received new life and a new nature. They have been made partakers of the heavenly calling, of the divine nature, of the holiness of God and of His Holy Spirit; they have become sons of God, heirs to an eternal inheritance reserved in the heavens. And already, by faith, are come "unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," "a kingdom which cannot be moved." Surely this is, indeed, salvation to the uttermost.

The Destroying Locusts

The wise man has said, "When pride comes, then comes shame." Proverbs 11:2. This is but natural, for "the wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God," and it is written, "Him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I [the Lord] suffer." Psalm 101: 5.

Pride of heart is a deadly enemy to righteousness. It is responsible for very much of man's rejection of God. It is the very antithesis of the character of the Savior, who is meek and lowly. Pride never confesses wrong, never seeks forgiveness, never admits its insufficiency or dependence on divine power. Consequently, it must always be an effectual barrier to the redemptive power of grace while it is permitted to be a prevailing force in our life. Where pride has the mastery, there is no subjection of our will to the will of God, no experience of being led by the Holy Spirit, no renunciation of self, no acknowledgment of poverty of spirit, no humbling of soul in penitence before God, no real compassion for the needy and unfortunate. Never has the cross been borne by a proud heart, and of all the followers of the Savior none is uplifted in spirit. Pride is the originator of all sin, the most destructive of the locusts that have eaten our years.

Selfishness is another of the, locusts. Born of a proud heart, it is one of the cruelest of the attributes of the old sinful nature. For what depravity and bloodshed and horror is it not responsible? It has clouded the whole way of the human race with sorrow. It has trampled every right principle in the mire. It has defaced the image of God in the soul of man. It has filled the earth with crime and unspeakable misery.

It is the basis of most of the unhappiness of life. It is the enemy of our own highest good and of the good of others.

Criticism, too, is a locust that has eaten our years, a locust of unusual capacity for destruction, another offspring of a proud heart. However little qualified the critic may be to pass judgment on the conduct of others, he is always confident of superior ability. Merciless in the exercise of this baneful influence; generally untruthful in statement and story; and dependable only in his ability and readiness to destroy that which he has no power to reconstruct. In the case of a church critic, he is always self-appointed, and usually self-deceived.

Criticism is the destroyer of Christian courage, the extinguisher of Christian zeal, the ravager of faith. It reduces the mighty workings of God's power to the level of human folly and incompetence, and nothing is so lofty, so true, so efficient, or so sacred as to escape its noxious power. It builds nothing. Its highest purpose is destruction. As long as we have indulged it, it has eaten our years, and our hearts well may rejoice at the prospect of release from its baneful influence and its destroying work.

Faultfinding is still another of the locusts that have eaten our years. It is one that is especially effective in robbing the heart of blessing and contentment if it is harbored in the life. There is no joy in its presence, for it judges all accomplishment but its own to be imperfect. It calls attention to the mote in the eye of another, but never discovers the beam in its own. It never gives encouragement or brings good cheer, for it finds only the faults in everything and everybody; and so far as we have indulged it, it has blunted the finer sensibilities of our own being, venomously attacked our own character, and destroyed our years.

Doubt is yet another of the locusts, one that destroys our perceptive powers, and prevents us from seeing things as they really are. It unsettles our minds in the truth, and leads us to enter into speculative theories that draw us away from the truth. It creates uncertainty in our minds regarding eternal verities. It makes dependence on God impossible, for it distrusts God. It shuts us away from the promises of God, and from the mighty power of God, for it disbelieves God. It exalts the intellect of man above the wisdom of God. It leaves us no basis for belief, no anchor for faith, no assurance for the present, no hope for the future, no salvation from the past. It effectively bars our way to the reception of light and truth, and, all too often, it keeps us willingly imprisoned in the region of the merely fanciful and the unreal. It is a great destroyer, an absolute defeatist. But thank God that where doubt has robbed us of strength, and of the will to conquer, and has enshrouded us with the gloom of defeat, faith is victory, and conquering faith is the gift of God to each one of His children.

Cankerworms and Caterpillars

Then there are the cankerworms and the caterpillars and the palmer worms, the "corrupt communications" that proceed out of our mouths, the "bitterness" that stirs our hearts, the "wrath" and the "anger" and the "clamor," and the "evil speaking," and the "malice," and the impurity of thought and life that should be resisted and not even be named by the Christian. By these our lives are blighted and our years wasted. Thank God for the promise that those years can be and may be restored.

There is a rarely beautiful promise that reaches us through the prophet Ezekiel. It is most assuring in this connection:

"Thus said the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be built. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the Garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate." Ezekiel 36:33-36.

Restoration Is Pledged

Victory for us in God's plan, then, is not merely the rebuking and restraint of our enemy, and not even merely the destruction of our enemies. It is that, and very much more. It is the rebuilding of the ruined places in our life, the replanting of the desolate wastes in our experience, the restoration of the years that the locusts have eaten. It is God's purpose that in victory we shall have not only a sense of freedom from a power that is altogether evil, but much more a joy unspeakable and full of glory in the recovery of wasted years, in the rebuilding of ruins that have been wrought, and in the turning of desolate places into the Garden of Eden. This means that we shall not only have repossessed those wasted years, but that they will also be laden with the fruits of righteousness.

The locust and the cankerworm and the caterpillar and the palmer worm will be gone, and instead

of their blight and destruction and desolation there will be the garden of beauty and joy and fruitfulness.

Great Changes Follow

Where we have lied, we shall “speak every man truth with his neighbor.” Where we have stolen, we shall steal no more. Where we have been bitter and angry and clamorous, we shall ‘be sweet and gentle and quiet. Where we have been filthy, we shall be clean. Where we have been impure, we shall be pure. Where we have been malicious, we shall be forgiving. Where we have spoken evil, we shall speak words of comfort. Where we have hated, we shall love. Where we have hurt, we shall heal. The evil of our former doings has been put away, and in everything we “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philipians 2: 11.

Having the victory through faith in Christ, we not only have put away lying and wrath and bitterness and anger and evil speaking and malice and uncleanness and covetousness and filthy communication, but we have put on “mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering,” forbearance, forgiveness, and love. Victory in the Lord Jesus, then, means that we have not merely been set free from the shackles of the old life, but that we have acquired the precious graces of the new life. So, having victory in Christ, our experience is not merely a plot from which the weeds have been eradicated, but a garden in which the flowers and fruitage of God’s grace thrive luxuriously. Thanks be to God who gives us such victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require. God Himself is ‘the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.’ And ‘whom He justified, them He also glorified.’ Great as is the shame and degradation through sin, even greater will be the honor and exaltation through redeeming love. To human beings striving for conformity to the divine image there is imparted an outlay of heaven’s treasure, an excellency of power, that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen.” – “Christ’s Object Lessons,” page 163 (old edition); pages 164, 165 (new edition).

But is it possible that such victory is for me? Can I claim all that God has promised in this matter of personal victory in Christ? Yes, indeed, and in very truth! God’s servant has borne us a very definite and personal message regarding that:

“I know that the Lord is very nigh to give you victory, and I say to you, Be helped, be strengthened, be lifted out of and away from the dark dungeon of unbelief. . . .

“Forget the things that are behind, and believe the promise, ‘I will come to you, and abide with you.’

“God is waiting to bestow the blessing of forgiveness, of pardon for iniquity, of the gifts of righteousness, upon all who will believe in His love and accept the salvation He offers. . . .

“Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory. . . .

“Be cheerful, and praise the Lord for His loving-kindness. That which you cannot understand, commit to Him. He loves you, and pities your every weakness. He ‘hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.’ It would not satisfy the heart of the Infinite One to give those who love His Son a lesser blessing than He gives His Son.” – “Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers,” pages 516-518.

This Is All for You

“Not in our learning, not in our position, not in our numbers or entrusted talents, not in the will of man, is to be found the secret of success. Feeling our inefficiency, we are to contemplate Christ, and through Him who is the strength of all strength, the thought of all thought, the willing and obedient will gain victory after victory. . . .

“That which even the greatest and wisest cannot earn, the weakest and most humble may receive. Heaven’s golden gate opens not to the self-exalted. It is not lifted up to the proud in spirit. But the everlasting portals will open wide to the trembling touch of a little child. Blessed will be the recompense of grace to those who have wrought for God in the simplicity of faith and love.” – “Christ’s Object Lessons,” page 404 (old edition); page 413 (new edition).

Victory, then, is assured to every man who will claim it by faith. No matter how deeply you may have fallen into sin, no matter how barren and waste the years gone by, no matter how fully the locusts have devoured and the caterpillars eaten, by the unspeakable grace of God sure and certain victory has been brought within your triumphant grasp.

It is the purpose of God for you that you shall continually enjoy the victory of faith, that you shall grow in grace daily, and, walking with Him, constantly advance in triumphant Christian experience. It is His purpose that you shall not be broken and despairing and beaten down to the ground, but strong in the power of His might, always rejoicing in victory obtained by the dependence of your faith upon Him. From every place where you are assailed by the enemy, from every battlefield of temptation, you may march on in the power of the Holy Spirit, by whose constant help you are made more than conqueror. From the sad and sinful experience of the past you may turn again to the living God. Your turning thus to Him, momentarily, hourly, daily, is for you the way of strength and victory. There is no real victory but by such a turning, and by, thereafter, steadily following on to know the Lord.

By this your victory and this your walk, the Holy Spirit of God is constantly enabled to elevate, to enrich, and to enlarge your faith, and thus you are lifted to higher and yet higher levels of Christian experience. As the Holy Spirit thus helps you back into the doing of God's will in your daily walk and life, please remember that He is the earnest of the eternal inheritance that the Savior has prepared for you, and which you are so soon to reach, and the grace of our Lord Jesus will ever be with you to keep your heart and mind fixed on that kingdom of glory.

Being a child of God by believing on Jesus, you are in blood relationship with One in whom all fullness dwells. He loves you. He cherishes His relationship with you. As an elder brother He walks with you. He communes with you as your friend. He has all power, and exercises it for you. He is with you in every crisis, and is wisdom and knowledge and counsel to you according to all your need. He is with you in your sorrows and in your sickness. He pities you in your distresses, and comforts and heals you. To you in all things He is tender and gentle and true. He will be with you always even unto the end. You can confidently commit to Him your whole past. You can be assured that He will neither forsake you nor fail you now. You may trust Him implicitly with all your future. Long as you may live, you can never be brought into any situation for which He has not already made provision. He has already trodden all the way through death for you, and will be close to you as the dark shadows of the valley close around you. You cannot possibly be separated from His love.

All this He is and does and will be to you at all times, and He asks of you only that you surrender your heart to Him, and let His Holy Spirit control your life. You are already accepted of the Father in the Son. Give, then, your whole heart to Him, and rejoice and be glad in Him, for He is able to save you to the uttermost, and has pledged Himself to bring every humble, contrite, surrendered soul to be with Him in glory. Having Him you have life, for He is the way. He is the truth. He is in very deed the life everlasting. He is your all.