

Part 2:

From Published Pamphlets

The Bunch of Hyssop

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:16-18).

“And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God” (Rom. 2:3-5).

With the message of the fullest and richest grace of the Gospel comes the most solemn and final revelation of a Judgment to come. As final as it is solemn and searching to the soul. No threat -- no language of denunciation or declamation; but the terribly calm, clear statement of the utter ruin, after every trial and test, of man's estate. Of the sure and certain perdition and eternal ruin of every man with whom God will enter into Judgment, according to His works. The truth has come and disclosed all; it has shown what God IS, what man is, what Satan IS, what the world is, what judgment is -- all things are laid bare. He does not *threaten*; but has *revealed* judgment to come as the solemn result of grace despised.

If we examine the parable of the Great Supper in Luke 14, we find that it was not those who were living in open sin who refused this final call of grace. I say final, because you will note that the Gospel Feast is set forth as the final meal of the day of God's dealings with men. The Lord was at dinner in the house of this Pharisee at the time. The *supper* is the last meal of the day before *midnight* comes. This is very significant and striking. The Gospel comes after all God's previous ways of testing and trial have passed.

The *morning* of innocence, with its lovely moments of freshness, when God came down to visit His creatures, and when His creation was unsoiled with sin, soon passed away,

and man fell, never to return to this state of creation blessedness.

Then came His *noonday* dealings with man, now with a conscience obtained when he fell. During their continuance came the frightful wickedness of men and angels; the earth was filled with corruption and violence; and God had to wash the polluted earth with the mighty baptism of the Flood! Then men set up the devil for God in the renewed earth, and the whole world was worshiping him in the passions and corruptions of their evil hearts.

The *afternoon* testing of the Law followed. It told man what his duty was, both positively and negatively -- it's "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not," taught him what he ought to be. But it never disclosed what *he was*, utterly and hopelessly ruined. Nor did it tell him what *God was*; with a heart full of tender pity and perfect love. Then the prophets were sent to recall him to its observance, lest judgment should overtake him, and these they stoned.

It was in the *evening* that at last God revealed Himself in Christ. Would man now be won? Alas, no! Not one single heart was attracted to Christ of itself. They saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. It was a lovely evening after a day of storm and evil which was ushered in so brightly; but how soon to close in around the darkness of the Cross, where men quenched (as far as they could) the light of heaven!

God had another moment of mercy. The *supper-time* of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, with the message that "All things are now ready," "Come," for the *midnight* of judgment was about to fall. But "all with one consent began to make excuse." Men who were not living in sin, but who were doing lawful and right things -- attending to the farm, the merchandise, or their family affairs -- even they also refused the gift of God.

I know nothing more solemn than the fact, that when the Lord lifts the veil and points to the awful Judgment of a future scene, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16), we learn there the *compelled remembrance* (the deathless sting of remorse) of times gone by, and advantages lost for ever, in this

present day of grace. How dreadful then for the professor, the procrastinator, the careless man! “*Son remember!*” tells its own tale more truly than the many words which might be used to paint the scene. But it is not my present task to dwell on this side of the picture. I desire rather to unfold in some measure the certain way of escape from this judgment to come. The one is as certain as the other.

God had a serious question with Israel on the night of the Passover. They were sinners, and sin had constituted Him a judge. He had come down to deliver them, and to bring them to the land. He appoints a way in which He can righteously pass over us as sinners when judging, the world. The blood of a spotless lamb was to be taken, and placed upon the two side-posts and lintels of the doors of their houses, which were to be closed, and none of the people were to leave their houses till the morning. In the evening the lamb was to be slain, and its blood sprinkled by the believing Israelite in the “obedience of faith.” This was done by means of a “bunch of hyssop” (Ex. 12). Now this points to a significant and important thought in connection with the Gospel. Many know the “plan of salvation,” as it is termed; they are as clear as possible on the truth that salvation is by faith alone, and that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it only, is that by which security from judgment to come depends. They know well those words, that “without shedding of blood is no remission.” Yet they never have had, so to speak, the “bunch of hyssop” in their hands; there is no real link between their souls and Christ by the Gospel. The “bunch of hyssop” is used in Scripture to signify *humiliation*. The Psalmist refers to it in this way in Psa. 51:7, where he cries, “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.” This was the moral cleansing of his soul by complete humiliation.

An Israelite who believed Moses concerning the plan of deliverance on that “night to be remembered,” did not fold his arms quietly, as many, and do nothing. No; he was up and doing in “the obedience of faith” (Rom. 1:5; 16:26). “Believing in his heart” the glad tidings of Moses, he was seen outside the door of his house, before the world, “confessing with his mouth” the acceptance of this message, and thus appropriating his personal share in the efficacy of the blood of the lamb. It was truly humiliating for him to go outside before a world of idolatry, into whose sins he had sunk (Ezek. 20:6-8), and confess that, although he was one of God’s chosen people, he could claim no immunity from judgment but through the shelter of the blood of the lamb. He thus justified God and condemned himself. It was humiliating; but right to do so. “Let God be true, but every man a liar.” Here is the link between the soul and Christ which so many need. The bunch of hyssop has never been grasped; the soul has never bowed in the obedience of faith, and in the reality of its state, not only believed the Gospel in the heart, but confessed it with the mouth to salvation. The sprinkled blood was to meet and satisfy the claims of God. It was to present a righteous ground to Him when in judgment for passing over a man whose sins deserved that the blow should descend on him, even more righteously than on his Egyptian neighbor next door.

The *midnight* of judgment came, but all was settled beforehand, as it must be for us. Our sins cannot be worse in the day of judgment than now. God’s way of escape from

judgment will not then have changed. It is as certain now as then. His love has anticipated that day in giving His Son. His Son has come, and has presented His blood before God. God has pronounced on our state as sinners already; and the day of judgment cannot speak more plainly than, “There is none righteous, no, not one!” (Rom. 3:10). Christ has borne our sins and put them away before that day comes, and God has sent the news of His having done so. “He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). But you may say, I know it all. I ask then, Are you forgiven? Are you safe under the shelter of the blood of Christ? I do not ask, Do you hope to be so? I ask, Are you safe? If you believe God, you are. If you believe your own heart, you are deceived: “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool” (Prov. 28:26).

May you know what it is to have had the bunch of hyssop in your hand, your heart confessing that your only security is, that God, against whom you have sinned, has looked upon that precious blood of Jesus, that He has accepted it already, and the day of judgment will not change its value, or make it less precious in His sight: in virtue of it He has declared, “I will pass over you.” Do you dare to doubt that He has accepted it? You could not, for you know He has. I do not ask, Have you accepted it? -- but, Do you believe He has done so? The proof that He has {accepted it}, is that Jesus is at God’s right hand.

“When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3). He has by Himself purged the sins and he who believes has his conscience purged of them {Heb. 10:2}. Suppose some one has paid a debt which I owed and could not discharge; well, I cannot be sued for it, but if I did not know that it was paid I should be afraid to meet my creditor. To be happy in his presence, I must know that some one has been kind enough to do it. So God declares that it is done: then my conscience is free, and I call now afford to look into my heart, which I dared not do before.

The question of all our sins has thus been settled before the day of judgment, and according to God’s mind; if not, we never can put them away. Christ cannot die again; “death hath no more dominion over Him.” He “was once offered to bear the sins of many.” I say “all our sins;” for all were future when that precious blood was shed -- when Jesus bore them in His own body on the tree. If all were not there, if all were not then borne and put away, they will most surely come up again at the Day of Judgment, and that would be eternal ruin. Thank God, He has borne ours who believe. Others may reject it and perish, but there the love is, and there is the work of Christ to save all who will believe in Him.

“God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8).

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The New Birth

Ye must be born again (John 3:7).

Chapter 1:

What is It?

The Word of God in the third chapter of the gospel of John, is deeply solemn to every poor sinner in this world; "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"! (John 3:3). It cuts at the very root of all the pretensions, and religion, and self-righteousness of man.

Reader, if ever you would see God, except as a righteous Judge -- if ever you would spend an eternity in His presence where is fulness of joy, and would be saved from an eternity of woe with the lost, and with the devil and his angels; you "must be born again." Pause, then, I beseech you, and think of this. It is the root of the matter of your precious soul's eternal history. It meets you in whatever state you may be to-day, amid the varied characters and states of sinners around you, and embraces *all*, as on one footing before God -- moral and immoral -- honest man and knave -- sober man and drunkard -- religious and profane -- young and old -- teacher and taught -- noble and ignoble -- high, low, rich, and poor, there is not one particle of difference in the sight of God! If you would ever see God in light, and dwell with Him for ever, "ye must be born again!"

The grace of God in the gospel brings salvation now to man as LOST! (Titus 2:11). It treats him thus. This is the grand distinction between it and all God's previous dealings -- previous dealings did not treat man on this ground. The law, for instance, addressed man as if he were able to help himself. God knew all the while he was not able to do so, but gave it to demonstrate the fact to man's heart and conscience.

The gospel comes in at the "end of the world," i.e., the end of all God's dealings with man, before judgment takes its course, and it proclaims him "LOST!" How many deceive themselves by thinking, that he is still in a state of probation or trial, as before the proclamation of the gospel. But it is not so. His history in probation *closed* with the cross of Christ.

It had lasted for over 4000 years. When God drove out Adam from the garden of Eden, *He* knew *what* he was; but it pleased Him to try out, under every dealing of His hand, the fallen race, so as to leave every man without excuse, and to demonstrate distinctly the ruin in which he lay; so that every man's conscience ought to bow, and must bow to the fact that he has been weighed in the balances, re-weighed, and found wanting.

Poor perishing sinner, if you would but bow to God's sentence on you, and accept His remedy; instead of trying the

means which your fellow sinner suggests to your acceptance; which flatters your pride of heart by setting you to work, to pray, (?) or to be religious, or ascetic, or what he has so multifariously devised. Perhaps giving you Christ to make up for your failures, or to be a make-weight with what you propose to help you in your salvation. Perhaps telling you, and your poor vanity believes it too, that you can of your own will, become a child of God; can be born of God of your own free will. Poor spinings of human brains which never have measured what sin is in the presence of God; or known what man is before Him.

It is a blessing from God to be clear, simple, decided in our acceptance, without qualification, that man is utterly and hopelessly lost; unable to put forth one effort of his own. "Dead in trespasses and sins," -- "without strength," "none that seeketh after God" -- without "holiness," apart from which "no man shall see the Lord." May the Lord grant to the reader to learn it now, as from Him, who, that you may learn His remedy, declares it.

We read of those who

believed in His name when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man (John 2:23-25).

The very same nature that is in your bosom this moment, beheld Jesus doing the mighty works of God, and believed what they could not deny, and yet such belief never brought one soul from amongst them to heaven. You say, perhaps, as thousands do, "I believe in Jesus Christ; I know He was more than man, nay, that He was God Himself; I know He died for sinners, and rose again, and ascended into heaven." And it may be after all this you are one to whom, up to this moment, Jesus has not committed Himself -- one who has no part or lot in the matter.

I write not to discourage, to dishearten souls; especially the souls of those who have the weakest real faith in Jesus. God forbid. But with the desire in my heart of bringing the formalist, if this should meet his eyes; the careless; the professor of religion without vitality; to judge their state in view of these solemn truths.

If we see the necessity of this new birth, that man may see God and His kingdom; we then can go on to see how God in loving, living grace, not only reveals his ruin and his fallen

condition, but also reveals how He has met this condition, and unfolds His rich mercy to all through His Son.

You will say then, "How am I to be born again? I desire most heartily to have this new birth." Now, the Lord gives us to understand how this new birth takes place, in answer to Nicodemus, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" He tells us that this new birth is "of water, and of the Spirit." This simply means that the word of God, which is the water, by reaching the conscience of the sinner, by the power of the Spirit of God -- and received by faith into the soul, produces a nature which *man never had before*. It may be by preaching -- reading -- or a thousand other ways, or means used of God: the first principle of this new nature is *faith*, and "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

But some may say, "Is it not literal water, or the water of baptism, which is here meant -- not the word, as has been stated?" {John 3:5}. The answer is simply, No! For if so, none of the saints of old {OT saints} could have had this new nature, and none therefore could ever "enter into the kingdom of God."

¹ The water of baptism was not even spoken of before John Baptist's time, and the Lord declares it (i.e., the new birth) as a positive necessity for all; and, moreover, that Nicodemus ought to have known this {necessity} from the prophets which he taught, who did not dream of water baptism. Ezekiel had spoken of Jehovah's promise to Israel, to gather them out of the nations, and bring them into the land of Israel, and there He would sprinkle *clean water* upon them, and put *His Spirit* within them, cleansing them from all their filthiness, &c., (read carefully Ezek. 36:24-27).

The word of God is likened unto water, i.e., that which cleanses morally, in Eph. 5:26, where it is said that Christ sanctifies the Church, cleansing it with the "*washing of water by the word*." James (ch. 1:18) writes, "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth." Again 1 Peter (ch. 1:23) "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." The Lord Himself (John 15:3), "Ye are clean through the *word* which I have spoken unto you." These passages show the word and the water as identical.

But, is not the wicked nature which the sinner possesses, and all the sins he has brought forth, to be set aside, and put away, if a new nature is to be bestowed? Surely. The nature which offended God, and the fruits of that nature must be put away out of God's sight -- His righteous requirements against it must be met -- His justice must be satisfied. All must be swept out of God's sight for ever; that He may be set free, as it were, to bestow this new nature on every poor sinner who believes.

Now, sinners are represented of God as perishing under the effects of sin -- under the sentence of death, wielded of Satan by the judgment of God. How then is the curse to be removed? For God does not undo the sentence of death which

He has pronounced, as if it were a mistake. Like the Israelites of old who were dying under the bites of the fiery serpents (Num. 21), who cried unto the Lord, and the Lord did not remove the serpents, but provided a remedy which answered His own demands, and the bitten Israelite who looked upon it lived. So now we read that for this end, i.e., to remove the curse under which poor sinners are perishing, the Son of man must be lifted up -- must be made sin -- and, dying under the judgment of God for sin, be the object of faith for the perishing sinner, in order that whosoever he be of the fallen race, who believes on Him, might not perish, and be lost for ever, but (not merely be born again), have *everlasting life*.

What a grand sight then for a poor perishing soul! The Son of Man bearing in His own spotless person, the curse of a broken law, the judgment of God on ruined man -- the sins -- the nature from which the sins had come, and which had offended God. All these, for every poor perishing sinner who now gazes with a needy look of faith upon Jesus on the cross, effectually bearing all away that stood between his soul and the righteousness of God, for ever!

This is God's remedy, fellow sinner; look then, and live! Are you conscious you need a Savior? God has provided one. Was it for you He was provided? Certainly. Why? Because you needed one. Blessed thought, to be able to know by one, simple, needy look of faith, that all that separated you from God, is put away -- and that your sins, nay, yourself, root and branch have been atoned for, and put away for ever, and that you have got what you never had before, eternal life! Not merely that you are born again, but that believing in the lifted up and crucified Son of man, you have eternal life!

You see, beloved, that Jesus did not merely die to put your sins and sinful nature away by His death on the cross, but died that you might live -- that you might have eternal life as your *present possession*. The double effect of His work is stated in 1 John 4:9-10, "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." Here we receive life through and in Him. But more, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the *propitiation for our sins*."

May you know this priceless portion as yours, for His name's sake.

1. Baptism is the sign of death -- born of water and the Spirit, {means} the reception of life.

Chapter 2:

Repentance

In the last chapter we saw that a man is born from above, or born anew by the reception or belief of the word of God, applied by the Spirit's power to the conscience. In simple words, faith, or belief in the testimony of God by His word, whatever may be the subject He is pleased to use, or the means employed in communicating His word. Faith is the first principle of this new nature. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). And, moreover, that the reception of this new nature by faith in God's testimony is also, for every one who believes, eternal life.

Now, there is that which is an invariable *accompaniment* of the new birth, which troubles many an earnest soul who is looking for peace. I speak of Repentance. There are so many perplexing views of this really important work in a soul that I desire to put it simply before my readers, as the Lord may give grace for it, knowing His love and goodness to souls.

There is one thing I would state, in beginning such a subject, that there is never a real effectual work of God in a soul apart from true repentance. Some have stumbled souls by saying that such a work is a necessary *preparation for faith*, and a reception of the Gospel. That is, that it *goes before* faith, and hence *before* the new birth in a soul. Now, without hesitation, I would say that in *every* instance, in *all* Scripture, where the work of repentance is spoken of as a doctrine, or the fruits of it spoken of in a soul, it *invariably follows* faith. I do not say but that it has gone before *peace*. Peace with God may not be known for many a day, but the work of repentance has always followed *faith*, and consequently *accompanied the new birth* in every instance.

Many have thought that repentance is sorrow for sin, and that a certain amount of it is necessary before the reception of the Gospel. Others have got into the other extreme, and have thought that it is a change of mind about God. Now, these thoughts are both wrong. No doubt, as the apostle says -- "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of" (2 Cor. 7:10). But the Corinthians had been converted long before, and their sorrow of heart for that for which he charged them, led to a judgment of their ways under the power of God's word to them through Paul. He says in another place that "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" (Rom. 2:4). One then "works repentance," and the other leads to it, but neither of them are repentance itself. Repentance is the true judgment which I form of myself, and all in myself, in view of what God has revealed and testified to me, whatever may have been the subject He has used.

We will now examine some of the instances in the word of God.

Jonah, the prophet, went to the men of Nineveh, by the command of God, to preach of judgment. He said -- "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The result of his preaching was, that "the people of Nineveh believed God, . . . and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them" (Jonah 3:4-5). Here was a real work of repentance which *followed* faith in the preached word of God by Jonah. And we read, "The men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah" (Matt. 12:41). Here was a real work of self-judgment in view of the testimony of God. For this, simply, is repentance; it is the judgment we form of ourselves, and all in ourselves, under the effect of God's testimony which we have believed.

Now turn to an example of repentance in the passage in Ezek. 26, to which we have before alluded. It spoke of the new birth to Israel by water and the Spirit which is necessary for them to enter into the earthly blessings of the kingdom.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you . . . and I will put my spirit within you . . . *Then* shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and for your abominations" (Ezek. 25-31).

Here is again a real work of repentance in a soul which has been born again of water and the Spirit.

John Baptist's testimony to Israel was, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Belief in his testimony that the kingdom of heaven was at hand produced the truest repentance in their souls, i.e., they judged themselves and their state as unfit for God's Kingdom, and they did works meet for repentance -- works which proved the sincerity of their self-judgment.

The Lord Jesus himself preaches in Galilee, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). They could not repent till they believed the good news of the kingdom. Faith in the testimony as to it produced repentance, or the judgment of self in view of such a testimony.

The mission to the disciples, in Luke 24:47, was "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." These things were announced *in His name*, but unless there was *faith in His name* no repentance or remission would follow.

Many instances could be adduced from the word of God to show that true repentance is always preceded by faith, or belief in the testimony of God, and is inseparable from the new nature which is thereby implanted in the soul.

When a soul is born again, and has thereby a new nature

which it had not before, it begins to discover the workings of the old. Sometimes this work is very deep and long, and often the most wretched experiences are gone through, ere the soul learns peace with God. Tempted perhaps to think betimes that it is not a child of God at all.

Perhaps my reader is one who is in this state of misery and unhappiness of soul. You can look back, it may be, on a time when all went smoothly, and no trouble of soul came in to disturb your life. Then you had but *one nature* as a sinner. Some word of God, awakened your conscience, and since then your life has been miserable. You enjoy moments of hopefulness perhaps, in thinking of the love and grace of God, and the tenderness of Christ in dealing with poor, lost souls; and then come the accusings of conscience and a broken law; things that you know were right have been neglected, and things which were unfit for God's presence practiced, and your soul is miserable, and there is no peace. How like your state of soul must have been that of the poor prodigal on his way to his father's house, uncertain how all would end; at one moment looking at his rags and filth, at another at the fulness and plenty of the father's house. So with you; the very new nature which you have got is that by which you are discovering the workings of the old. As long as you had no new nature there was no trouble of soul, but now the very trouble is the result of having a new nature which you had not before. It is your new nature which, loving the things of God, and having its source from the Spirit of God, which has learned to loathe what you find in self, and to long to be right before Him. (See carefully the state of a soul in Rom. 7:14-25.)

How often, in such a case does the soul seek for peace by progress and victory over itself. It thinks, by suppressing this evil desire, and curbing that evil temper or disposition to get peace. In other words, to get peace by endeavoring to get better, *instead of giving up all hopes of getting better and by surrendering every such pretension, and being cast over*

altogether upon Christ! To find that Christ has gone down under the waves and billows of judgment, not only for the sins which troubled the conscience before God, but also for that evil nature which so troubles and distresses the heart. When it was proved that you were utterly without strength, unable to do aught to deliver yourself, Jesus bore the judgment of it all before God, and rising out of it, God has transferred you to His side of the grave -- that you live now by His life in resurrection {John 12:24}, and that God sees you standing in redemption, alive in the life of His Son, and that the nature which so troubles you has been condemned and put aside for ever. How sweet to discover this -- to find that all God recognizes now is the *new man*. That all this terrible experience is but learning what your old nature is in God's sight; that it is a true work of repentance in your soul.

God has given your old nature the place of death in the judgment of the cross of Christ. He does not attempt to *improve* it in any degree. His testimony is, that He has given to you everlasting life in His Son; it is this life and this only, which He owns, and directs, and by which He trains and educates you -- never recognizing in any measure the old nature. Nevertheless it exists in you, and His spirit, through Christ's advocacy, deals with your conscience about it, never letting you alone about its workings, although never imputing them to you, that you may continue to judge them and keep them in the place of death, which He has given them, by being engaged with Christ who is your life; and thus that the only thing which may be active is the life of Jesus in your body.

We will, in the next chapter (Lord willing), look into the fact that God does not change, or remove, or ameliorate, the old nature, in any degree, in imparting a new. Both natures remain as distinct as possible, but there is no necessity whatsoever that a Christian should live in the practice or power of any nature but the new; nay, rather, this is what God looks for in the Christian at all times.

Chapter 3:

Two Natures: the Old Not Changed or Set Aside

In the first chapter we saw that it was a positive necessity that a man should be born again, ere he could even see the Kingdom of God. This grand truth comes out in John 3. It was all over with man's moral history when the Son of God came. If it were possible for man in the flesh, i.e., in his state as a sinner, and responsible for it before God, to have been recovered or restored to God, it would have been proved by his receiving Christ when He came. It would have proved that man in the flesh was recoverable, though he had sinned. But no! "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." -- "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."

How important it is for a sinner to accept this place of

total, irrecoverable ruin. This is the state in which God meets him, and discloses the purpose of His heart in His gift "of eternal life which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Like Israel in the 21st chapter of the Book of Numbers, who had wandered for thirty-nine years in the wilderness, and in the fortieth year, when they spoke against God, and loathed the light bread, and were dying under the bites of the fiery serpents. There was nothing now to mend in them, when God says, as it were: -- "I'll disclose a purpose -- *I'll bestow life where there is nothing but death!*"

So in John 3, God discloses His purpose by His Son. He does not mend man as He is -- He bestows eternal life! To this end the Son of Man must be lifted up -- a rejected Christ on

His cross, outside the world, bearing the judgment of God against sin, is the door of exit for the sinner out of a charnel house -- a place of death and ruin, where there is nothing to mend, into a new sphere in His resurrection -- having eternal life! The Son of Man on His cross must bear the wrath and judgment of God on the old man, setting aside that which offended God, and thus leave God free (so to speak) to bestow eternal life in Christ, as His gift to every one who believes. But if there was this necessity on man's side, there was another feature which came out as well. It was not the need of man merely which was the occasion of His thus acting. It was to disclose *Himself*. His Son comes down as the missionary of His heart, to ruined man, to reveal that it was the emanation of His own mind -- the device of One whom man maligned, and whom Satan had slandered, to give proof which none could now gainsay, that "God is Love"! Love which gave *unasked*, its most prized and valued possession -- the Only begotten of the Father -- to reveal Himself -- to give man a good opinion of God! It is God," who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

This gift of eternal life does not in any way mend or remove the old man. True the old man is judicially made an end of before God in the cross. Nor is it something in man apart from Christ. "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is *in His Son*" (1 John 5).

Has my reader accepted this? learned that his evil nature, as it is now, will never go to the presence of God? If so have you accepted eternal life in the Son of God? Thus owning by faith as dead, as God has done, the evil nature which you now possess?

This life comes to the sinner, who by faith accepts it, through death. The sinner lies in death; "You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh" (Col. 2). God sends His own Son, a sacrifice for sin -- He enters this domain of death. -- When entering into it, He bears the judgment of God which was on man, so fully, that God glorified in all His nature and attributes by its perfection, raises Him up from the dead; and every one who believes, "hath He quickened together with Him." The believer now lives in Christ before God -- God recognizes no other life than this; and "all his trespasses" have been "forgiven" (Col. 2:13). All left behind, as it were, in the grave of Christ -- the nature atoned for, and set aside judicially in the death of Christ: the believer lives now on the other side of death and judgment, in the life of the risen One {John 12:24}, who was dead; while at the same time his old nature remains in him. This eternal life is something that he had not before: he is now a child of God, having put off "the old man," and put on the "new" (see Eph. 4:21-24; Col. 3:9, 10).

Let us be clear and distinct in our apprehension of this, where so many are at fault. It is true, that for condemnation, and before God, the old nature is set aside -- root and branch -- tree and its fruits -- and is gone for ever: it is not *on* the believer in His sight; and yet, all the while, the old nature is *in* him -- an enemy, and to be treated as such, and overcome. He will bear about this nature till he dies or is changed.

God had sought fruit from man in the flesh, and had got none. The Lord in His own ministry in the gospel, always addresses man in the flesh, in this state as responsible. When He had tried him out, and had got no fruit in the flesh, we find Him saying of it, "The *spirit* is willing, the *flesh* is weak." He then charges Himself with the judgment due to it, dies, and rises out of the judgment, imparts, as God's gift, His own life, as risen, to the believer, who now lives in Him -- Christ is His life -- his life is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3, 4). God never seeks fruit again from the old man -- never addresses it, or recognizes it in any shape whatsoever. Souls, when they are not in liberty, *do* recognize it, and often with deep sorrow -- often seek fruit from it -- seek, too, to repress its workings in their own strength, and with the desire and conviction that it should be repressed before God. God addresses the new man, recognizing the Spirit as life, and as making good the life of Christ in the believer. This nature never amalgamates with the flesh. Each has its own distinctive character. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit," i.e., it has its nature from the Spirit of God, who quickens, or gives life; the flesh profits nothing.

Now, although this is so, there is no necessity in any wise that the Christian should walk in the power of old nature, or practice its outgoings in any sort whatever. Nay rather, God gives grace and power, as we may see, to overcome its workings, and keep it practically in death, where He has placed it -- to reckon it dead, as He reckons it.

Paul's own case is a remarkable one, and illustrates the fact that the old nature, the flesh, is never set aside in the believer, or changed, or improved by the very highest realization of the place he has in Christ. Even then, it needs the dealings of God to correct it, and enable the believer to hold it dead. We find in 2 Cor. 12, that he had been in the third heaven, and could glory as to his being a "man in Christ." He comes back to the consciousness of his life here below, and the flesh in Paul is so incorrigible, that God is necessitated to send him a thorn in it, to buffet him, lest the old man might be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations. One would have thought, that if ever a man's evil nature was likely to be removed, or extracted, or changed, it was Paul's. Yet, no. Paul comes back to his conscious existence as a man, and he discovers that God in grace sent the needed corrective, to that which would otherwise have hindered him. Paul thought at first, it was something he had better be rid of, and he prayed thrice for its removal; but when he discovered it was the Lord's grace in supplying that which kept him in the sense of his weakness as a man, that the strength of Christ might he unhindered to act in him, he then says, "I glory in my weakness" (as a man -- not infirmities), for "when I am weak *then* am I strong."

In fine, God does not remove the old nature when He imparts the new, -- nor is His working the making better of the old. The believer is a compound creature, having two natures as distinct as possible the one from the other --

The old man which is corrupt, . . . and . . . the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:22-24).

Chapter 4:

The New Man -- Eternal Life

Let us now gather up what we have learned in our former meditations before we pass on.

1st -- The absolute necessity that a man should be born again -- that is, born anew -- before he could ever see God's kingdom. This new birth is not the putting the same nature into another condition, but the impartation of another which is totally distinct from the old. This nature is produced by the Word of God reaching the conscience by the Spirit's power, and thus laying bare the roots and springs of one's being, as unmendable, evil, and bad; and the soul, cast over upon Jesus, and believing in Him, has eternal life. Thus the person who believes in Jesus has received Him as his life, having been born again, on the ground of redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ.

2nd -- The new birth (i.e., the Word of God reaching the roots and springs of one's nature) has produced such a judgment and a loathing of self, that the soul has been perhaps thrown into the deepest distress before it has got peace. All this was the true and necessary work of repentance, the learning what the old nature is in God's eye, which followed the new birth.

3rd -- This new nature is quite distinct from the old -- never amalgamates with it, never improves it, and never sets it aside. Both natures remain to the very end, until the Christian is changed at the Lord's coming, or until death. Yet he is entitled to recognize only the new nature as *himself*; and the old as an enemy to be overcome.

We will now meditate on the eternal life of the Christian, which he possesses in Christ. The soul is often feeble in this. There are often vague thoughts of what eternal life is. One thinks it is eternal blessedness; another thinks it is heaven when they die; another that it is future bliss, etc. *Eternal life is Christ! He is the life* of everyone who has been born again.² In God's eye, man -- the whole race -- lay in moral death. He had a purpose before the world was, to bestow eternal life (Titus 1:2, 3). None had been entrusted of old to make this secret known. It was too glorious a thing for God to tell through man, even though he be a Moses or a David. It was reserved for His Son to disclose! *He* is the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us in the Son of His love (1 John 1:1, 2). He came down from heaven -- became a Man upon earth, and displayed before our eyes the virtues and beauties of eternal life; characterized by two features; i.e., complete dependence upon God, and undivided obedience to Him. He was the bread of God which came down from heaven to give life unto the world. When He came, it brought out that

there was not one single principal which governed the heart of man, that governed His; and not one principle which governed the heart of Christ governed the heart of man! His love was straitened -- for His love He had hatred and scorn: a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Yet the mighty love of God was pent up in the heart of that lowly Man! He found no channel for it to flow in here, and so He was straitened till He poured it out unto death! God's righteousness required that an end be made before His eye of the first man, that He might, so to speak, be free to treat the race as dead -- gone out of moral existence before him. The Lord Jesus comes in and enters as the victim, in divine and mighty love and grace, into that scene of death where man lay. The world was shrouded with a pall of judgment, and no effort of man could cast off or break through the pall! He goes down into the scene. The pall of judgment, like a shroud, enclosed the blessed One. He bears in His soul, on the cross, the judgment of God which enshrouded the race -- the first man -- and pours out His soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. He rises out of the mighty waters, having exhausted their power, and established the righteousness of God -- breaks through the shroud which wrapped itself round Him -- annuls death -- destroys him who wielded its power; He emerges from death, and stands -- the last Adam -- in His victory, in the majesty of His resurrection, the fountain, the stem, and source of life to every one who believes!

He is the last Adam -- the Second Man {1 Cor. 15:47}. The history of the first man in God's eye is ended, excepting the judgment of the lake of fire! Faith believes this, and lives by the faith of the Son of God. The believer knows he has the old nature *in* him, but that in the eye of the Judge it has been judged on the person of Christ! His life is Christ risen out from among the dead. It is hid with Christ in God.

How feeble are our souls in this ! How constant is the recognition of the old man. Some looking for fruit from it still; some giving it a place in their soul's experience, hearkening to its unbelieving suggestions; others giving it a place before God in their religion; others, too, looking for a status, a recognition in the world for it again -- reviving the man that God has swept out of His sight for ever.

How glorious to know that there is *but One Man alive* before the living God! -- One man on whom His eye can rest with full complacency -- One life which fills the sphere, to which it belongs, with its beauty and that He is my life -- the One in whom I live for ever! This life is not in me -- God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is *in His Son*! His Spirit, through whom I am born again, has communicated this life to me, and linked me up with the Son of God, for ever! Oh for the eye of the soul to gaze, and gaze, and take in His excellency.

2. {This statement is too broad, too unguarded.}

To breathe the air, so to speak, where that life alone is. To draw down the supplies from Him. To live this life here below, and thus rise superior to a world amid a scene where there is not a breath of air but is detrimental to its display: and yet to be sustained in vigor and power in the midst of it all! to know experimentally the power of the word, "Christ liveth in me."

Do you say, I have never experienced it -- never tasted its wondrous power, and yet I see it is all true.

I have been reviving and recognizing the old man -- yielding to its dictates -- hearkening to its unbelieving suggestions -- seeking a place of recognition for it in this evil world -- supposing I could serve God with it -- giving it a place of recognition in all my practical ways -- obeying its lusts -- its pride -- its vanity -- its gratification, and now I find that one throb of its whole being has never had recognition in God's eye. How am I to drink in the excellence of this other life, and live in its power?

Well -- this is not learned in a moment -- yet it is where God begins with me. All my exercises of soul and conscience have been leading up to the consciousness of that glorious level -- the new creation in Christ! but there it is where I have begun -- it is there where God has begun with me. When my soul is consciously there, I am in the state in which I should begin to put forth leaves and fruit, and Christ be magnified in my body here below.

Now the great point is this, *Do you accept it fully and wholly: and, by His grace, are you determined to have nothing else?* This is the great thing, the acceptance of it! People go to work to curb this propensity, and clip that folly: to give up this lust and that vanity, in order to get into the consciousness of this life. If they but once accepted and tasted it, they would find that the things which minister to the old nature are not looked for in heaven. They would begin to hate the things and dread the things which come in to interrupt the soul's joy of abiding in Christ. They would not be looking for the scene around to minister to them; but they would discern that they are down here, with the sweetness of their own things flowing through their hearts, to minister to it the life of Him who has delivered them from it.

Many a Christian here fails. He knows he is in Christ before God, and wonders why he has not the joy of it. Look at him in his daily life, and you will find he is ministering to the old man. Surrounding himself with those things which fill *his* eye. Yielding to those things that belong to *him*. Nurturing those desires and propensities which emanate from the old man. Giving it a place of recognition and revival. Taking it up again out of the death where God has placed it; and all the while wondering why he is not happy in Christ!

Oh for the soul to be peremptory with itself through His grace. To get the eye upon Christ in the sense and acceptance that He is its life. Would it not then be easy? If you have known the joy of this even for a moment -- if ever you have tasted its sweetness, you will rise above yourself and everything around which would distract your eye from Him. You would dread the encroachment of aught which would turn your eye from Jesus, or fill your heart and engage your mind to the putting out of Him.

May the Lord give his beloved people to know this -- to live, and move, and abide in Christ. To feed upon that death which severed your connection from the whole scene -- yourself included -- that death which was your deliverance from it, and which -- fed upon -- sustains the severance, and links up the heart to Him who died. and rose, and ascended into the bright and blessed presence of God.

Chapter 5:

Walking in The Spirit

We now come to look at the power of this eternal life in Christ, which is possessed by the believer.

In Gal. 2, we find the language of one who has experimentally accepted this wonderful portion. The Apostle writes, "I am crucified with Christ," -- here is the distinct and positive acceptance by faith, that, in God's sight, Paul the sinner existed no longer! The unrighteous being's existence had come to a termination in the Cross of Christ! God's righteousness demands that the whole race of the first Adam, which had revolted from him, be ended judicially in His sight. He could no longer allow the unrighteous thing to continue. In love He provided a sacrifice which would satisfy fully His demand. In His gift of His Son, He expressed that love which was without measure or end. "In the end of the world" His own Son comes in -- enters in grace, when His hour came, into that terrible judgment to which the first man became subject -- He bears its fullest outburst -- dies -- and is buried. He is then raised up and glorified of God, whose righteousness it was at once to set on His throne, the Man who had done so. He thus brings to a judicial ending the whole race. Until this was done God never gave man the place of *death* -- never pronounced the sentence that man was "dead in trespasses and sins." We read, Christ "died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor. 5:14). This was the state Christ's death proved them to be in. Here, then, is the unspeakable privilege for faith's acceptance, to know that I am *dead*! It is not that God asks me to be *better*, but tells me I am *dead*! "Nevertheless, I live" says Paul, the believer. "Yet not I." No! that sinful "I" is swept away -- gone for ever! "But Christ liveth in me." Yes! He has brought to an end, in God's sight and to faith's acceptance, the "I" that broke my heart with its vileness; and rose up out of the judgment having done so, the only life, the life of every one who believes! "And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Here then is the whole matter out, to the acceptance of faith: -- I live by an object -- I have my eye upon Him who is my life in heaven; the Holy Ghost has come down, and dwells in my body (1 Cor. 6:19), linking me up to Christ, and making good His life in me; so that it is "not I but Christ liveth in me."

The Holy Ghost then, is the power of this life. It is by the Holy Ghost, in the first instance, using the water of the word, that the soul is born again. The word reaching the conscience, made the conscience bad. But the water and the blood came out of the side of a dead Savior (John 19:34). The blood purges the conscience, and makes it good. So that he that believes has got life out of the death of the One who had borne, when He died, the judgment of God; and who has Himself, as risen, become his life. The Holy Ghost then makes good this life -- Christ --

in the believer;

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin (its only fruit), but the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. 8:10);

the practical righteousness which flows from this. This life is in resurrection, at the other side of death and judgment. It is *Christ risen* who is the life in which we rejoice and live before God {Col. 3:4}.

Now we have a principle in Scripture which we but feebly apprehend. It is *Walking in the Spirit*. We read, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16.) "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4), &c. If we may characterize one thus walking in the Spirit, it would be by saying, He has got his eye upon Christ. The soul has got the apprehension that Christ is its life, and that it is united to Christ by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, when ungrieved, maintains the soul in unbroken engagement with Christ Himself, who is the life; and the Christian thus walks in the Spirit, outside the flesh, and what his evil nature loves and lives in. The thoughts of Jesus -- His lowliness and meekness, gentleness, grace, separation from all evil, while surrounded by it, in this evil world -- the tenderness of His gracious heart -- the absence of all living to self, which was found in Him -- the beauties, and graces, and mind of Christ, thus engage the soul, which adoringly worships in the thought, *that He is my life*! The result of all this is that, the soul thus occupied, is walking outside itself -- outside the flesh, in the life of another, by the Spirit. He walks in the Spirit, and no trace of his evil nature appears. It is not that it is removed or changed; but it is kept in the silence of death, where God has graciously put it. It is not by efforts to reduce it to order, and so to get the victory -- a victory which would only restore the flesh to its own importance and recognition: but by the engrossment and engagement of heart with Him, who is my life, outside of self altogether. Thus the flesh is left in its true place -- *dead*, not made *better*.

How frequently does the Christian excuse himself for failure, by pleading the fact that he *has* got another nature; a horrible nature in him! How frequent are the excuses which come up before the soul! because, forsooth, he *has* got two natures, while in practice he should have but one.

The case of Stephen, in Acts 7, gives an example of a man walking in the Spirit. In Acts 1:9, the disciples gazed after the ascending Lord Jesus, till a cloud received Him out of their sight; but they saw nothing more. In the second chapter, when the day of Pentecost had come, the Holy Ghost descended, and took up His abode in and amongst the disciples. In the seventh chapter, we find a man

full of the Holy Ghost, who looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God (Acts 7:55).

Here then is an example of a man living and walking in the Spirit; his eye is upon Christ. His testimony follows, as suited to those around him (Acts 7:56). This provokes the enmity of the world, and they stone him with stones; but so completely superior is he to their murderous hate -- so engrossed with Him, who is His life in heaven, that he is living as much in the translated state here below as if he were there altogether. He is spending his last moments here for Christ, without an anxiety or troubled thought about himself. He is "delivered unto death for Jesus' sake," and the "life of Jesus" is manifested in his body (2 Cor. 4:10). All the passions and resentment of evil in his nature are so completely subdued that they appear no more than if they had no existence whatsoever.

How often we find souls trying to reduce to order their evil nature in their own strength -- true souls too -- conscious that it should be reduced to order in God's sight, as before man. Many a long fruitless life is spent thus. Praying, perhaps, and mourning over a nature which distresses and breaks the heart, in the laudable effort to subdue its workings, and quell its risings; but without effect. The soul has not apprehended the power to subdue it in anywise. As one has said,

The flesh of man likes to have some credit: it cannot bear to be treated as vile, and incapable of good -- to be excluded and condemned to nothingness, *not by efforts to annul itself*, which would restore it to all its importance; but by a work that *leaves* it in its true nothingness, and that has pronounced the absolute judgment of death upon it, so that, convicted of nothing but sin, it has only to be *silent*. If it acts it is only to do evil. Its place is to be *dead*, not *better*. We have both right and power to hold it as such, because Christ has died, and we live in His risen life. He has Himself become our life.

Rather should the soul turn away in abhorrence of the evil thing, and get the eye distinctly upon Christ. This is the normal office of the Holy Ghost in the Christian, to keep the soul engaged with Him -- to give thoughts of Jesus, and keep them flowing through the soul. His interests and engagements, aims and ends, become those of the Christian who has His life; and the result of engagement of heart with Christ is the easy and natural subjugation of the evil thing. It is treated with the non-recognition it deserves: its desires, aims, and lusts are checked; they are held in death and practical subjection; they are passed by without recognition; and the soul drops easily and happily into practical life in the Spirit. Members are mortified; not by trying to mortify them, but by the superior engagement with "things above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God" (Col. 3). It is "through the Spirit," we "mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8:13); and the consequence is that, instead of the continual unhappy strife between the two natures, the flesh "lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," the Christian walks in the Spirit, and does *not* fulfil them in any wise. Instead of the sad "works of the flesh," the "fruit of the Spirit" is the easy and natural outflow of that life which the believer possesses in Christ -- "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" is the exhortation founded on the fact that the Spirit is our life, connecting us with Christ. "And they that are Christ's *have crucified* the flesh with the passions and lusts." The flesh *has been crucified*, and faith acts upon this wondrous privilege and deliverance, and "walks in the Spirit," who is the power of this eternal life. The good Lord give His people to know it, and practice it, for His name's sake.

Chapter 6:

"In the Light." -- Confession

The question remains, what is the sphere and measure of walk for the new man? It is a deeply interesting one. May the Lord give us to apprehend it.

The blow of judgment which fell on God's dear Son on the cross, rent the veil which was between God and the sinner. The same blow which disclosed and expressed, at the same moment, the love and the righteousness of God, removed for ever the sins and sinful condition which shut out His people from His presence. Thus the Christian who possesses eternal life in Christ, has been introduced into the presence of God in Light!

The sphere of his walk then, is the *presence of God in the light*! God has cleansed him, and begotten him anew for such a sphere; and now the standard and measure of his ways is nothing less than the *Light -- within the veil*! Everything inconsistent with God's presence in the light is judged as of the "old man"; thus

the "new man" rejoices in liberty, in the presence of God. He was "once darkness;" now he is "light in the Lord"; and the exhortation is, "walk as children of light." The light makes manifest all that is not of God in his ways.

What a wondrous measure is this? Yet the new man rejoices that no less a standard is given of God.

Called into fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, how could there be this fellowship, except in the power of eternal life? Impossible. Fellowship is the property and outgoings of eternal life. The Christian can walk in no other place; he can have no other standard than this. The life he possesses in Christ brings him to the presence of God in light. The light does not judge him, as questioning his title to be there. The brighter the light the clearer the title is seen to be. But the light makes him judge himself for all that is inconsistent with it.

When the flesh is at work in one way or another (even if the action is purely inward), if there is anything whatever that the conscience ought to be exercised about; the soul is not, cannot be, in the enjoyment of communion with God in the light, because the effect of the light is to bring the conscience into exercise. But when the conscience has nothing that is not already judged in the light, the new man is in action with regard to God.

The possession of an evil nature never makes the conscience bad in God's presence. It is only when it is at work in any way, that then the conscience becomes defiled. The cloud is felt, preventing the soul's enjoyment of communion in the light. Here then comes in God's blessed dealing with that which is made manifest in His presence, where there is failure in our ways as Christians. It is the advocacy of Christ {1 John 2:2}, bowing the heart in self-judgment and confession of sins. Just as a man with his dress soiled or in disarray, enters a room full of light and mirrors, instinctively arranges his dress -- the light discovers whatever was astray; so, one cannot help confessing when, in the light, there is the slightest soil; anything which the light reveals: "for whatsoever doth make manifest is light"; and God is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Alas, when the sinful nature is yielded to, and permitted to appear in the shape of "sins"; the conscience is defiled and unhappy; the Spirit is grieved; and the more sensitive the conscience, the more keenly it feels the stain. Here it is that we learn what has produced this bowing of the heart and conscience before God about the sin. *The Advocacy of Christ has been in exercise.* Not because I have repented of the sin, and judged myself about it; but because I had sinned, and it needed that my soul should be bowed for the failure before the Lord. A living person -- Jesus -- deals by His word and His spirit with my heart and conscience, makes me feel the sin, and bows my heart in confession to Him who is "faithful and just to forgive," and "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It is, "If any man *sin* (not "repent of his sin"), we have an Advocate with the Father" (1 John 2:2). He forgives the sin, and cleanses the heart from the remembrance of that which had caused the sorrow and distress of soul.

True confession is a deep, deep, painful work in the soul. It has not merely to do with the actual failure, but with the root of the matter, which, unjudged, had produced the sin. Peter's case, in John 21, gives an illustration of this dealing of Christ, when he needed a sense of his sin, not heretofore possessed. Peter had "wept bitterly" over the sin (his denial of Christ), yet the roots were unreached, and liable to break forth again. The Lord deals with him -- not charging him with the sin, or even making mention of it. "Lovest thou me more than these?" Hast thou still that overweening confidence in thyself? For he had boasted that if all others would deny Him, yet he would not. The Lord did not look to the stream, but to the source; He laid it bare, exposed it to Peter's heart and conscience. The root was reached, and all was out before His eye. The spring was laid open, judged, and dried up. Blessed dealing of One who loves us perfectly, and cares too much for us to spare us when we need to learn ourselves. Nothing charged upon us, as imputed to us, but nothing allowed -- to allow it, were not love -- were not God. The heart adores Him when it sees His ways. But O, how little do souls profit by His ways! By and bye it will be seen how He had

vindicated His own care -- and how the exercised souls profited by them, and the careless ones lost by the way.

How wonderful is the place, the calling, the sphere of walk, of the Christian! Walking in the Spirit, outside flesh and self, in and by the life of Jesus. The light of God's presence, its sphere, where no soil of sin, no spirit of the world can ever come. His whole being is open and simple in His presence; finding no motive for concealment from Him now, even if such were possible.

God Himself the resource of the heart, against all that is within. Thus the "light" is "armor to the soul." It learns to be peremptory with itself, in refusing all that is not of God: it thus walks in the joy of uninterrupted fellowship with Him. It has the consciousness too of being well pleasing to Him. The eye is not turned inward to look for fruits there, but outward and upward to Him. It lives by another. Christ is before the soul distinctly and undistractedly. Flesh is detected in its roots -- the fruits need not appear to learn what it is. It is seen as that which would break the communion and separate the heart from the joy of walking with God, and is refused. Things around are seen in their true value. The soul grows in His presence -- not as contemplating its growth, but as not having yet attained, or being already perfected, in full and actual conformity to Christ in glory, it presses on towards the mark for the prize of its high calling of God in Christ.

Beloved Christian reader, we have got a life which connects us with heaven *now*, but which is to be displayed while we are here on earth. We have members to mortify, but no recognized life below (Col. 3). It is fashioned in us *by the putting off of self* -- living in the denial and non-recognition of self. *Its* issues and outgoings are only those which God can own. The life of Jesus here was a life of perfect dependence, of undivided obedience; His perfect will was surrendered -- "not My will, but Thine be done." He is our life {Col. 3:4} -- "He that is joined unto the Lord in one Spirit" {1 Cor. 6:17}. His words tell us what He was when here -- they were *Himself*! {John 8:25}. They are they by which we live; they form and fashion us in conformity to Him. When we are not formed by them, *we are checking {restraining} the outgoings of our life!* stunting our growth up to, and in Christ!

The Lord give us, with steady growth, to go on from day to day, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Him. The life within us springing up to its source, in the brightness of the Father's presence where He is, until we are fully conformed to Him, body, soul, and spirit, and with Him for ever! Amen.

Glasgow: Bible and Tract Depository, n.d.

God's Sovereignty and Man's Responsibility

I desire to say a few words on the subject at the head of this paper; adding a little as to the true nature of the work of Christ, its results in redemption, with the complete deliverance of the Christian from his sins, and his whole *state* as sinful child of Adam. Although he ever has sin in him to judge and condemn, his responsibility is now on an entirely new footing, *viz.*, that of relationship as a child of God, a possessor of eternal life in the Son of God, and called to manifest the life of Jesus in his mortal body.

It is of immense importance in the present day, when grace is preached and more clearly known in comparison with days gone by, that the true nature of Christian responsibility should be understood; as also the ground on which the sinner's responsibility now rests. Here the high Calvinist goes astray, both with reference to the sinner's responsibility in despising and refusing the grace of the Gospel, under the plea of waiting for the call of God, and of the Christian's true responsibility in manifesting the life of Jesus in His mortal flesh. The possession of eternal life in Christ expresses itself by the action of that life, asserting its existence and its practical qualities in undivided *obedience* to every word of God, and complete *dependence* on its source and spring, by a broken will, and a heart subject to Christ.

Much has been said and written on these subjects; but except in Christ they cannot be reconciled. The Arminian unduly presses one side, *viz.*, man's free will and responsibility, and loses the truth of God as to the other; while the Calvinist, on contrary, unduly presses the other side, that of God's sovereignty and electing love, and so loses the balance of Scripture as to the former.

It has been wisely remarked by a better instructed scribe, that "Scripture does not teach by negatives." It teaches by direct truth. Hence, when the direct truth has been apprehended by one school of doctrine, it has framed its own line of things so as to lose the beautiful balance of the sanctuary, and thus damage has come to souls as to the full knowledge of the truth in all its bearings.

When the Arminian declares that God's love through Christ's sacrifice is "unto all" men, and the presentation of the Gospel as wide as the sun's meridian ray, he speaks the truth, for, blessed be God, so it is. But when he adds to this direct, affirmative truth of Scripture his own negative deduction -- *viz.*, therefore there is *no* electing love of God, he has lost the balance of the sanctuary.

When the Calvinist declares that the saints for whom Christ died are the objects of God's eternal purpose, and His peculiar electing love, he states the truth. Blessed be our God, so it is. But when he goes on to add to this direct truth his own negative deduction, he errs. When he says, that because God foreknew His own, and chose and called them in His electing grace, and that Christ died in their stead, therefore the love of God by the Gospel is not "unto all," he too has lost the balance. When both say "yes," they say well; when they add their "not," the whole truth is not known. If a Calvinist with

his electing love of God, and an Arminian with his free will and responsibility of man, were to put their affirmatives together, and not add their deductions and "nots," we should have the truth! Let them then seek what Scripture teaches as to the reconciliation of those two affirmations; and they will find that both have had a measure of truth, while both too, have lost one aide of the scale!

The great principles of the sovereign purpose of God, and responsibility of man, are interwoven throughout all Scripture. They are found from the Garden of Eden to the Great White Throne.

In the Garden of Eden they were marked by the Two Trees of Paradise -- the Tree of life, and the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This latter marked the responsibility of man to God, as an intelligent creature. Adam had been made in innocence. Innocence was the absence of the knowledge of good and evil. The sense of his responsibility was marked -- not by an exaction -- but by a prohibition: he was not to eat of the fruit of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, and thus to retain his place. He had nothing to gain, but everything to lose.

He forfeits all; he breaks the condition of the retention of his creation blessings, and the favor of God. Thus he becomes the possessor of a conscience which he only received *when* he fell; as God says, "The man is become as one of us to know good and evil." This conscience may be thus defined: the sense of responsibility, united to the knowledge of good and evil. He has lost a state which can never lie regained. He never can be innocent -- never can unlearn the knowledge of good and evil.

Thus he comes under the sentence of dying and death in this world, and, further, he is driven out from the presence of God; and finds in the solemn future, that after death comes the judgment. God retains His own sovereignty -- barring the way to the Tree of life, lest man should partake thereof, and perpetuate his ruined condition; and man leaves His presence, with the responsibility of his condition as a sinner, known by a conscience and the sense of alienation from God, with the fear of what is to come, pressing on his soul.

Subsequently (for I pass over the scene from Adam to Moses), God gives His law from Mount Sinai, which in the main is coincident with man's conscience, but adds the *authority* of the Lawgiver to what conscience felt was due to God and his neighbor. The first Table was what God claimed -- here it was an exaction -- towards Himself: the second Table was what God directed in a *fallen* world to fallen man, as to his parents, his neighbor's property, and his wife; personal rights having been set up in the world when man had departed from God. The law embodied the two great principles of responsibility and life. But it put having life as the result of fulfilling perfectly the responsibility. "This do, and thou shalt live." "The man that doeth these things shall live in them." Just as if I were to say, "if you do so and so, you will receive a fortune," it would be a proof that you had not the fortune yet. It would be quite another thing if I told you how to use and

spend your fortune when you had one. Thus, through the Gospel, God bestows eternal life as His gift, and then directs it, as we shall see.

Thus *in* Eden there was innocence without grace to sustain it; and *out of* Eden there was responsibility and law without life to fulfil it. Then came Christ after all the testing of man was over. When He came, He exposed the true condition of man as wholly lost. For His love He had hatred and scorn! God did not fully pronounce on man's condition, until he had had every chance of recovery presented to him. If there had been any latent good in man, which it only required fresh culture to bring forth and develop, it would then have been found. But no! God was there in perfect love and goodness, disclosing man's state, and reconciling the world to Himself -- not imputing their trespasses unto them. If they would now receive Him, all should be forgiven. But they despised Him in His lowly path of love, and sought to have the world without Him. If you say, "It was my fathers that did it, and if I had been in their days, I should have received Him;" then you are a Pharisee: this was the ground they took also (see Matt. 23:30). The history of the world was told out, and man's condition proved: sinning, lawbreaking, and God-hating is the tale!

Jesus unites the two principles of the Two Trees in Himself. As Son of God He had life in Himself; He was the "eternal life which was with the Father" and was "manifested" in the Son, as man on earth (1 John 1:2). He takes up willingly the responsibilities of His people, accepts the cup of wrath -- God's divine and righteous judgment against sin; thus uniting in His own person on the cross the principle of the Two Trees. In His holy soul He bears all the terrible judgment of God for sin; He makes His soul an offering for sin; and bears our sins in His own body on the Tree. Thus clearing away by one complete act of suffering and wrath all our responsibility as children of Adam: not one vestige of it remains! Having done this to the glory of God. He rises again -- God raised Him from the dead and expressed His perfect satisfaction and glory in what Christ had accomplished, by setting Him as man on His throne on high. Thus the second Adam risen and now in the glory becomes the Head of a new race. He has cleared away their responsibilities, and become their life! He is the life of every one who believes. The Holy Ghost is given consequent on this, and, dwelling in the believer, unites us to Him in glory. We are born of the Spirit of God, on the ground of redemption; we have eternal life in Christ, and all that stood between us and God's righteousness, has been atoned for by Christ on the cross, and put away for ever -- both what we have done, and what we are. God is thus righteous in justifying the man who believes in Jesus. It is His righteousness to do so.

What then is the Christian's responsibility? It is this. He has a new life altogether -- eternal life in the Son of God -- the characteristics of which are *dependence* and obedience -- both seen to the full in Christ Himself walking here. With a perfect will -- He never did it, but lived in undivided obedience to His Father. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." While He could create a world, He never put forth His power for Himself -- not even to quench His thirst from the well He had created! but lived in dependence on His God. This was expressed often, outwardly by prayer -- all night at times, in prayer to God. And He is our life! Where it exists, it must assert itself somehow: these are its chief features.

We have the treasure in earthen vessels, but are entitled to

reckon ourselves dead; we have died with Him, and are alive to God only through Him, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. The power of this life is the Holy Ghost. He, when we grieve Him not, engages the heart with Christ: with the eye upon Him we "can do all things." In the sense of utter weakness in ourselves (for strength here is only sin), the heart lives by Christ; He governs all the motives of our lives, and power works in the weakness of His people, for when we are weak, then we are strong.

What then is the sinner's responsibility? It is this. Christ has offered His blood to God! On the day of atonement of old, (Lev. 16) the High Priest went in with the bason of blood to the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled it upon the golden throne of God, and the holy place was filled with a cloud of incense. The incense came from the burning of ingredients which composed the holy material; "stacte and onycha, and galbanum . . . with pure frankincense" beaten out small -- the minuteness of a perfect man's nature, (that man, the Son of God), presented as sweet savor to the eye of God during His perfect pathway here. It was the blood of such an One which was presented; and more -- One who had first borne the judgment and had willingly drunk the cup. Such in measure was the sacrifice of Christ to God. As a consequence, it is God's righteousness to set Him in glory, and to rend the veil from the top to the bottom -- every attribute perfectly unveiled and glorified by His work, and to send out the gospel to the wide world -- to all! I say every attribute, yea, the very nature, of God is glorified more than if there never had been sin. Where could we see *love* to the sinner -- *where righteousness* against his sin -- *where truth, majesty, holiness, light?* IN THE CROSS! The moral glory of God unfolds itself at this unrivaled scene, where it was more fully told than even the displayed glory will reveal it. Thus He can say, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

But this is God's side -- the first goat, so to say, of Lev. 16. There is another side too, that typified by the second goat: in it we have not God's side but ours. If the blood of the first goat was offered to God, in that place which was all *gold* within (i.e., God's righteousness), the other goat tells us of the substitution of Christ for His people, in the place of responsibility outside, the brazen altar; sins, transgressions, and iniquities, were all confessed on its head, and it was sent away into the land of divine forgetfulness. On the ground of Christ having offered His blood to God, I can tell a world of sinners of the grace of God, and that He desires that all should come in. There is nothing to hinder -- wilt thou come? It is the meeting place with God for every sinner in this world, who will come to God by Him.

You say, I have no power, I must wait for my call; till God gives me power to accept, I cannot come. Here is where so many err. They look for ability and talk of want of power; but God never attaches responsibility to *power* but to *will*! Suppose your child was outside that closed door, and you called him in. He refuses. Again you call: again he will not come. You go to punish him for not having come; he remonstrates and says, The door was locked, I could not come. Nay, you reply, that is no excuse; for you should have known that I had the key, and when I called, you should have known that I would have met you and unlocked the door. It was his *will* that hindered him; the plea of want of power will not excuse a soul at the day of judgment. It was his will that

hindered -- he *would* not come.

When the sinner comes to God, I can tell him another thing. I can tell him of the *substitution* of Christ in the second goat, on the day of Atonement; as he had been invited on the ground of the *propitiation* offered to God -- of the first. The *two* goats are Christianity.

The sinner is now guilty of despising the riches of that grace, which rose in the triumph of God's own heart above his total ruin. And while it tells him of a judgment to come, it looks not to him for power to accept the grace of God in Christ, but unfolds that *God has accepted* what His Son offered to Him for sin; that thus His heart has now a righteous channel to express itself, namely, through that precious blood. What hinders then? His *will*? Alas, his will!

Consequently you will always find in the preaching or teaching of the Apostle Paul, that he treats men not for their sins in detail (though they are guilty of them too), but for resisting the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven in His testimony of grace. "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering." "Behold! ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." They are guilty for despising the grace of God -- the Spirit of grace that strives with them, and are treasuring up for themselves "wrath against the day of wrath and righteous judgment of God." Men *hated* the grace and lowly revelation of God in Christ below, "they hated me without a cause;" and they *despised* the revelation of pardoning love which rose in the triumph of His love above the hatred.

Then comes the final action of judgment at the Great White Throne, where the principle of the Two Trees of paradise is again found. The book of life marks God's *sovereignty*, and the books, in which were detailed the works of men, mark their *responsibility*, and they are judged according to them, and cast into the lake of fire! Men are not judged for what they *are*; but for what they have done!

If we examine Scripture, we shall find these two principles side by side. If there is a Calvinist side, so to say, in the shepherd seeking a passive sheep, and in the diligence of a woman sweeping the house for a passive piece of money, there is an Arminian side as well, in a prodigal returning to his father!

As to the Gospels, as has been remarked, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, give you Christ presented to man's responsibility, and consequently men are invited to "come;" John on the other side unfolds God come to man, and sovereign election marking all His ways. There is not one invitation in that touching Gospel to a sinner to "come." The plaint of His heart is that, spite of all the testimony they had had, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." And "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

In 1 John 4:9, 10, you also find the principle of the Two Trees -- God's Son manifested that we might have *life*. How often you see a soul in an agony of exercise, just because the life, *is* there, before it knows all the blessedness of the work of Christ, who was made a propitiation for our sins (v. 10); bearing away all our responsibilities, as children of Adam, before He bestowed upon us eternal life.

If the Lord be pleased to help souls, with this short examination of these momentous subjects, and clear the vision

of some, it will be a fresh mercy from His hands.

London: Allan, n.d.

“There Is One Body and One Spirit”

and

“The Unity of the Spirit”

For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth (2 Cor. 13:8).

Third Edition, Revised, with Notes, Etc.

London: Allan, 1872

Preface to the Third Edition

It is with much thankfulness to the Lord of the vineyard, that another edition of this tract is now sent forth. The Lord has deigned to mark it with His distinct approval, and it has been used largely for the instruction and blessing of His people.

The tract has been the object of many attacks; but this was to be expected when it was, in the Lord's hands, an instrument of blessing to many.

Kind suggestions have been made by some who have found it useful, as to altering sentences here and there. But I have thought it best to re-issue it almost entirely as it was, lest the great point of the present actuality of the Church, the body of Christ, maintained on earth by the presence of the Holy Ghost in union with Christ in heaven, and composed only of those alive and here at any given moment, should be weakened.

Those who may have read a small volume of *Lectures on the Church of God*,¹ will know that I hold that the Church -- the body of Christ, as a thing of God's counsels, and in result as presented in glory by and by -- is composed of all believers from the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven {Acts 2:32, 33}, until the Lord's second coming, when He will raise the saints who have died, and changing the living, will translate all to glory.

This view of the body of Christ is presented in Eph. 1: 22, 23, and, as far as I am aware, there only. All other Scriptures view the body, as presented in this tract, on earth, where the Holy Ghost as to His personal place constitutes in the unity of one body those believers only who are here at any given moment.

This aspect of the truth had been much lost sight of -- and indeed unknown to many -- until this tract was first put forth. It caused much enquiry, and was used largely to establish or to re-establish the truth.

I may add, that when it was written, I was engaged in bringing the truths of the Church of God before a number of the Lord's people who had not learned it before. A good many got hold of it at that time; and I myself was conscious of having received a grasp of the truth which I had not before experienced, and which seemed as a distinct revelation to my own soul. I showed the rough MS to other fellow-laborers, and some thought it would serve the Lord and His people to print it. But the tract was not written for publication, but in leisure moments, as a sort of index of the truths then under consideration, and for my own satisfaction.

Trusting that it may still find a place in the Church, and be a channel of further blessing from the Lord to souls, it is put forth again in confidence in Him who deigns to use the weak things of the world to confound those things that are mighty, that no flesh may glory in His presence.

F. G. P., Blackrock, March, 1872.

1. *Blackrock Lectures*, R. L. Allan, London and Glasgow.

Part 1

“There is One Body and One Spirit”

Eph. 4:4

I trust the following remarks on the momentous subject at the head of this paper, may be found useful at the present time, and that an ever gracious Lord may vouchsafe His blessing on the perusal of them to many of His people, and open up to their minds this most important of all truths, and enable them to seize it in some measure from this outline, and link their souls practically to the divine principles set forth therein.

The Lord has been most graciously working in many places around in these last days. Souls have been new-born to Him, and brought into the liberty of His grace in a moment, so to speak, through the Gospel. Souls thus set free from the bondage of sin and Satan have also found their freedom from the trammels of the sects and parties in the professing church. They have, in many cases, begun to act upon their privileges, and as the disciples of old (Acts 20:7), have assembled themselves to break bread, and thus show forth the groundwork of their redemption and liberty, in that which calls to mind the Lord in His death. Difficulties have arisen, and many have found that they still wanted a divine principle beyond this to guide them, and yet, possibly, feared to go deeper into these things, lest they should be led into something which, perhaps, they have been warned about, and perhaps have learned to fear. The confusion in which things are, and the sad failures of ourselves and of our brethren, have often been the means of driving timid souls away, and they have shrunk from enquiring more deeply into the divine principles, seeing the failures and hearing the recriminations of others.

In such a state of things, the enemy, as ever, seeks to keep the soul from learning the leading truth of God. Satan's successful effort at the first was to seek to blot out in practice, if he could not blot out in fact, the great ever-living truth named at the head of this paper. The vessel, Paul, who communicated it to us through his inspired epistles, had to say at the close of his ministry, “All they which are in Asia be turned away from me” (2 Tim. 1:15). Ephesus was the capital of that proconsular province, and was the place where was an assembly of God, to which those high truths of the “mystery which was hidden from ages and generations, but is now revealed,” were written (Epistle to Ephesians); and in the close of the course of one who was walking in the power of his own doctrine, he has to say that all in Asia had turned away from him. God has been pleased of His own sovereign grace to revive out of the rubbish of centuries this wondrous truth, which has lain so long dormant. Many have learned it, and have sought in their weakness to walk therein. They have, in much weakness, and through evil report and good report, and failings innumerable, sought, in reliance upon a

gracious God, to glorify Christ in the pathway of obedience to His revealed will, and the counsels, and purposes, and workings of God.

The enemy tries to keep the Lord's people from learning this, His leading truth of the interval or period in which we live. What then I desire is, that the eyes of my brethren's understanding be enlightened by the Spirit's teaching to discover *what they really are before God*, members of the one body of Christ, by one Spirit, and that they may act accordingly.

It is quite impossible that, as a Christian, I can be an individual merely, in the present time. I am a member of the body of Christ as well. And while seeking, as an individual servant, to serve my Lord, I find I have besides, in common with the rest of the body, a corporate responsibility to Christ, the Head of His body, the Church. I seek not then, to evade this responsibility by looking at the failures of others, or to try and use the truth of the Lordship of Christ over me as a servant, to evade my corporate responsibility to Christ, the Head of His body.

The Epistle to the Romans is that in which the Spirit of God treats us and looks at us with the most distinct individuality -- as sinners, and as justified persons. And yet when He comes to the duties and walk which flow from our individual blessing and position, He at once turns us to our corporate responsibility, so that we cannot dissociate these things. No one could read the 12th chapter of Romans without discovering this. As an individual I am exhorted to present my body a living sacrifice -- my reasonable service -- to be transformed by the renewing of my mind, &c. Then, as to my corporate place, in the exercise of gift, or otherwise, I am to exercise it with respect to the body. “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts,” &c.

I desire that my brethren may simply discover *what they are*, own the truth, and carry it out practically, walking therein with those whom the Lord has called and privileged to do likewise. Of this I am persuaded, that no one ever learned a truth after a divine manner till the soul was using practically what it had learned. It has then had its true power; so that to talk, as many do, of the body of Christ, &c., and never to have really acted upon this truth, is, depend upon it, but to prove that the truth has not been received into the conscience and soul, while, no doubt, there has been enough seen of it to guide the steps thereinto. With this desire I pass

on to my subject.

Distinctive positions of a Jew and a Gentile in the Old Testament Times

It will be well to seize the distinctive positions which the Jew and the Gentile occupied before God in the Old Testament days, before the formation of the body of a rejected and risen Christ was revealed. The quotation of two Scriptures will mark this distinction plainly.

As to Israel, I read,

Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen (Rom. 9:4-5).

As to the Gentile,

Wherefore remember, that ye, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world (Eph. 2:11, 12).

The simple reading of these passages will show that all the blessings, and privileges, and promises, and hopes that God then gave, were confined to the elect nation of Israel, and that, to partake of these blessings, a Gentile should come in and partake of them subordinately to the Jew, in whom they were vested as the vessel of blessing.

We read in 1 Cor. 12:12, 13,

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Now, before the formation of such a body out of both Jew and Gentile could take place, it was necessary that *Cod Himself*, who had surrounded Israel with a "wall of partition," should remove the same. It was not sufficient that the wall of partition which God had placed around the Jew had been almost obliterated by the unfaithfulness of those who had been thus hemmed in. The partition wall existed as fully in the mind of God, and to faith, as though there had never been an unfaithful Jew on earth. God had placed it there, and God must remove it Himself, ere He would form the body of which we read here.

The prophets had spoken of a day of which it was said, "Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people," &c. But even in such a state of blessing, "Gentiles" remained "Gentiles," and "His people" remained "His people." They never spoke of this "body," where Jew and Gentile alike have lost their national position -- where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free. There are three things before God in the world. Paul

enumerates them in 1 Cor. 10:32. They are, "The Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God." In the last mentioned, both Jew and Gentile have ceased to be such before God, believers from amongst both having been incorporated into this body of which we speak. The prophets spoke of the time when that which we know familiarly as the millennium, or more correctly, the "kingdom," will have been established on the earth; then the Jew will be the central nation, and the Gentile will rejoice with the people of Jehovah: a state of things which will come in *after* the Church has been gathered, and is with Christ in heaven.

The foreshadowing of the removal of this "wall of partition" was frequently seen in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Himself in the gospels. Instance the woman of Samaria who could not understand how that the Lord, a Jew Himself, should ask drink of her who was a woman of Samaria, as the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. (See John 4, see also the case of the Syrophenician woman in Matt. 15.) Before this "wall of partition" was removed, it was "unlawful for a man, that is a Jew, to keep company, or come unto one of another nation" (Acts 10:28).

The Wall of Partition Removed

This hindrance to the formation of the body of a risen and ascended Christ was formally removed by God Himself in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, where He wrought the redemption of His people. We read,

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath *broken down the middle wall of partition*: having abolished in his flesh the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make (create) in himself of twain {of the two}, one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby (Eph. 2:14-16).

The cross, then, besides being the scene where the Lord wrought redemption, was the removal of the difficulty, or wall of partition which then existed between Jew and Gentile. It was the basis or groundwork for the formation of this body, and to reconcile a people from both Jew and Gentile to God -- giving access to both by one Spirit unto the Father (v. 18), the name by which God has revealed Himself to each member of the body, in His Son Jesus Christ; as heretofore He had revealed Himself under the name of Jehovah to the one elect nation -- the Jew (Ex. 6:3).

All this, however, does not *constitute* a body. It only *removes the hindrance*, and is the ground or basis of the whole work, as of redemption. The next thing, therefore, which is wanted is to have the Head of the body in heaven, raised up from the dead -- a glorified man.

Christ -- the Head of the Body, in Heaven

The remarkable quotation of the Eighth Psalm by the Apostle Paul in Eph. 1:22, will be helpful to us in understanding this - read Eph. 1:19-23:

The working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, *and hath put all things under his feet* (quotation from Psa. 8), and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.²

The Eighth Psalm speaks of a “Son of Man,” to whom dominion over all creation is given. If we consult Gen. 1:26, we find that God gave to Adam and his wife a joint headship over all creation; but this headship was sinned away and lost when man fell. The whole creation, now groaning and travailing, was made subject to vanity through the fall of man. (See Rom. 8:19-23). This headship is given, as Psa. 8 tells us, to a “Son of Man.” And we discover who this Son of Man is in Heb. 2:6, &c., where the Apostle, quoting the Psalm, tells us that we do not yet see the grand result of all things being subject to Him. He says,

For in that he put all under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.

Thus we find who this “Son of Man” is. It is Jesus. This brings us back to Eph. 1, where Paul quotes the Psalm. Christ, then, as *Man glorified*, has been taken up of God from the dead, and seated in the heavenlies, “Head over all things, to the Church, which is his body,” and is waiting there for the manifest assumption of this Headship, during which time the Body is here.

We have now the Head of the body in heaven, a glorified Man, as well as the difficulty removed. But this does not yet constitute the body; and before we look at it we must turn aside for a moment and see what Scripture says of union with Christ.

What is Union with Christ?

In the Old Testament times the saints were new-born, but they were not united to Christ; they possessed life, although the doctrine of it was not made known. The Abrahams and Davids, &c., were all saved -- they were new-born by the power of the Holy Ghost -- saved by faith -- lived and died in faith in God’s promises of a Saviour to come. But faith in itself is not union. We could not speak to a patriarch of being

united to a man at God’s right hand, by the Holy Ghost sent down; because there was no man there to whom to be united -- and “the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” (See John 7:37-39.) Even when Christ was here, a Man amongst men, there was no union between sinful men and the Lord. Hence He says,

Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit (John 12:24).

On the cross He enters in grace into the judgment under which man lay -- bears the wrath, and all that the righteousness of God required; and in His death lays the ground that God may bring those whom He saves into a new state, through redemption, to Himself -- He rises from the dead; having borne the wrath -- ascends to heaven, and is glorified -- a Man at God’s right hand. The Holy Ghost was then sent down, and *dwells* in the Church (Acts 2). He makes the body of the believer his temple (1 Cor. 6:19). He seals him -- having believed -- until {for} the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13; 4:30). He unites him to Christ -- “He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit” (1 Cor. 6:17), anoints him -- seals him -- baptizes him with all other saints³ into one body (1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 1:21). Hence union with Christ is by the Holy Ghost dwelling in the believer’s body, and uniting him to Christ in heaven, since the accomplishment of redemption.

This union neither existed, nor was it even contemplated for the Old Testament saints in the counsels of God. If we turn to John 7:37-39, we find the line drawn with great distinctness between what is now, and what was then. The Lord Jesus in the chapter cannot show Himself to the *world*, because His *brethren*, the Jews, did not believe in Him; and so He cannot bring in the Feast of Tabernacles, which is always used as a figure of the kingdom. The kingdom is then put off till another day, and instead of that, going up *in secret* He stood in the last day of the feast, and cried,

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified).

The gift of the Holy Ghost to dwell in believers is thus

3. {J. N. Darby wrote:

As to a person subsequent to Pentecost being baptized with the Holy Ghost, I should say he was introduced into an already baptized body, but by receiving the Holy Ghost by which he is united to the Head-Christ. I am not anxious as to the word baptism, but it is not generally employed as to the individual reception. Acts 11: 16, 17 and 1 Cor. 12 are the nearest to applying it to an individual or individuals; but it is not actually used. But the receiving of the Holy Ghost is equivalent; they having what was originally treated as baptism of the Holy Ghost, and are looked at, as they are, as partakers of this same thing . . . As to 1 Cor. 12: 12, 13, it is the aorist (ἐβαπτίσθημεν) and therefore says nothing of continuity. it is continuous, if we speak of individuals receiving the Holy Ghost (*Letters* 3:466, 467).

2. In Col. 1:18, we find Him spoken of as “Head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead.” His headship is now connected with the fact of resurrection. It is as risen and ascended, that Christ is Head of the Church.

brought in, and the kingdom which had been refused is put off till another day.

The disciples were told by the Lord after He rose from the dead, to remain at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, which they had heard of Him. (See Acts 1:4-5.) This promise was made at length in John 14:16, 17-26, ch. 15:26. The Holy Ghost -- the "other Comforter" was to be given, and to this end it was positively expedient that Jesus should go away (John 16:7), otherwise He -- the Holy Ghost -- would not come. The Lord tells them in Acts 1:5,

John truly baptized with water; and ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.

The Lord was seen of them for forty days after the time He rose from the dead (Acts 1:3), and there was an interval of ten days from His ascension till the day of Pentecost (or fiftieth day) was fully come. When it came (Acts 2) the promise was fulfilled; and Peter tells the Jews (Acts 2:32, 33),

this Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore, 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 ye now see and hear.

The Formation of One Body by the Baptism of the Holy Ghost

We have heard of the Lord's promise -- "Ye shall be baptized by the Holy Ghost not many days hence," brought to pass on the day of Pentecost. The little band of disciples, at first some 120 (see Acts 1:15), then about 3,000 (Acts 2:41), increased largely afterwards (Acts 4:4), were baptized of the Holy Ghost, according to the Lord's promise; but still this was only the Jewish side of the blessing. In Acts 10 Peter opens the door to the Gentiles, bringing them into the same position and privileges, not merely as individuals, but by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. When they of Judea heard of this (see Acts 11), Peter was called to account for what he had done, and he rehearsed the matter from the beginning to them, and declared that the Holy Ghost had acted in a similar manner to that which he had done at the day of Pentecost with the Jews, and the Gentiles too had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Thus we have, in the clearest way, the Jew and Gentile receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost.⁴

We must now turn to Paul, for it was to him alone of all the Apostles was the revelation of the "mystery" committed, of which he speaks in Eph. 3:6, &c., which had heretofore been "hid in God" (Eph. 3:9), not even in "Scripture," but "in God" -- His eternal purpose.

That the Gentiles should be *joint-heirs*, and a *joint-body* (with the Jews), and *joint-partakers* of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

Thus should the passage be read.

Paul describes at length this body in 1 Cor. 12:12-27, where he says, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is (the) Christ. (This name, "the Christ," is here applied to the members and head, as to Adam and his wife jointly, in Gen. 5:2). For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit, for the body is not one member, but many, &c., &c. Here both Jew and Gentile lose their places, as such, and are brought into one body, and united by the Holy Ghost to each other and to Christ, the Head, a Man glorified."⁵

Now this body is in the world, as is the Holy Ghost, whose presence constitutes it. It is *not* in heaven. The Head is in heaven, and the members have a *heavenly position by faith*; while in *fact*, they are in the world. This body has been passing along through the world; its unity as perfect as the day in which the presence of the Holy Ghost first constituted it. Nothing has ever marred its unity. True, the outward manifestation of this body, by the oneness of those who compose it, is gone; true that the "house of God," as it first appeared in the world, has drifted into a "great house" of 2 Tim. 2:19-22; true, that all that was committed to man's responsibility has, as ever, failed. But the body of Christ was in the world then -- was here through the dark middle ages -- is now in the world; remaining all through the ruin of the professing church; its unity perfectly maintained by the Holy Ghost, who, by His presence and baptism constitutes it; for He as ever maintains the unity of the body of Christ!

Let me put a figure before my reader, which will convey simply the fact that the entire number of saints *in the world at any given time* (just as I write these words for instance), indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is that which is recognized of God as the body of Christ. Let us suppose a regiment of soldiers, a thousand strong, goes to India, and serves there for many years. All those who composed that regiment die off or are slain in battle, and their places are filled up by others -- the numerical strength of the regiment is kept up -- after years of service, the time comes for it to return home -- not a man who went out, is in it now, and yet the *same regiment* returns without change of its number or facings or identity. Thus with the body of Christ. Those who composed it in the days of Paul, are not here, yet the body has passed along through the last eighteen centuries, the members of it dying off; and the ranks filled up by others, and now at the end of the journey the body *is* here -- the Holy Ghost who constitutes its

4. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is only used with reference to the corporate body of saints upon earth. By it individuals are brought into a corporate relationship to each other and to Christ. {But see footnote 3.}

5. In v. 27, the Apostle recognizes the assembly of God at Corinth as the Body. "Now ye are the body of Christ; and members in particular"; *i.e.*, in the *principle and ground of their gathering* they were the body of Christ.

unity, being here – as perfect in its unity, as ever it was.⁶

In Eph. 2:21, we have the purpose and mind of God, as the whole Building, *i.e.*, the entire complement of the saints from the day of Pentecost, till the moment when *all* are in heaven. In Eph. 2:22, we have what the entire number of the saints are, who are alive in the world *at any given moment* between those two points of time which I have mentioned, viz., between the day of Pentecost and the moment when all shall have been taken up to heaven.

Eph. 2:21,

In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

Here we find a temple or building *growing*, but not yet grown: that is, it is *growing* up day by day, into that which it *will* be finally when in glory -- a holy temple in the Lord.

Eph. 2: 22,

In whom ye also (the saints and believers in Christ Jesus, to whom the Epistle is addressed) are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

This gives me what the entire number of saints *now* or *at any moment*, constitute corporately in the world. They are a habitation, or dwelling-place of God through the Spirit.

These two thoughts may be illustrated thus. When Jehovah was passing through the wilderness, from Egypt to Canaan, He dwelt in a tabernacle, which in itself was perfect in all its parts and furniture -- a complete thing. It moved along through the wilderness towards the Land of Promise, and was a habitation of God. But when at last Israel was settled in the land, Jehovah had a temple -- a magnificent

structure in dimensions and furniture, and appointments, far beyond the little tabernacle which was His dwelling-place in the journey.

Thus, with those two verses, v. 21 shows us what God will have in the Land (in heaven itself with us) when the temple now growing under His workmanship will have attained its full proportions, and be in glory. But v. 22 tells us what the saints are meanwhile -- God's dwelling place -- His tabernacle or habitation through the Spirit.

This may serve to illustrate in some measure, and bring home to our hearts and consciences for our practical walk, what we are as a present thing. How responsible then, we are, in observing such a truth -- to cast in our purposes, our aims, our all, into it -- to act upon it. Not merely to know it as some nice truth or doctrine, but as a living member of it; to walk in it, to link my soul on to the practice of it, with those who are observing it in weakness; to separate myself from all that in practice disowns it; to act upon the living, abiding truth, that which occupies the mind and purpose of God; that which is *now* a “spectacle to the principalities and powers in heavenly places,” disclosing to them “the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:10). How solemn on the other hand to disown it!

What an amazing truth! Although the oneness prayed for by the Lord Jesus in John 17 has almost vanished away; and man's unfaithfulness, yea the unfaithfulness of God's people, under the highest blessing ever vouchsafed to them in this world, has been shown in the almost entire obliteration of that oneness which the Son demanded of the Father. Although all that men could do to mar it has been done, still there *is* that which never changes, never fails, and never is spoiled; because (are we not ashamed to say it) it is not in our power to do so, for it is kept, as it is constituted, by the presence and baptism of God the Holy Ghost -- the body of Christ, in the world!

How beautifully do we find Christ's prayer for their oneness answered in Acts 2, 4. We read there, “They lifted up their voices with one accord.” “The multitudes of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.” His prayer was answered for the little moment, “that they all may be one,” as in practice they were. But soon, indeed, did this oneness of practice fail. Then we find, in Acts 9, Saul of Tarsus, afterwards Paul the Apostle, called out to reveal to us something that *could never fail* -- the unity of the Spirit -- the body of Christ.

The difference between *oneness* and *unity* is important; because we are exhorted “to endeavor to keep the *unity* of the Spirit”⁷ in the bond of peace.” To endeavor to keep practically that which exists in fact, by the presence of the Spirit of God. Not to *make* a unity but to keep, by the bond of peace, that unity which exists by the Holy Ghost.

Suppose a number of persons are led to have one aim, one mind, one object, one heart, and one purpose; this would be oneness of practice. But this would not constitute them

6. I take opportunity to add a few remarks here. The main point sought to be established in this tract is easily seen to be *the present actuality of Christ's body here upon earth*. There are many vague notions as to this grand truth in the minds of the saints. Some have thought that the body of Christ is in heaven; some that it is in course of formation since the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost -- a body gradually being formed, part of which is in heaven, part on earth, part (if the Lord tarry) not yet gathered in; that this formation progresses till a certain moment (the Lord's coming), when it is completed, and taken away to be with the Lord. (See Preface to Third Edition.)

Now it is quite true that all the saints between those two great events are *of* the body of Christ -- *of* it in the mind and council of God. But those who have died have lost their present actual connection with the body, having passed away from the sphere where, as to personal place, the Holy Ghost is. They have ceased to be *in* its unity. The bodies of the dead saints, once the temples of the Holy Ghost, are now in the dust, and their spirits are with the Lord. Their bodies not being yet raised, they do not now enter into account of the body as recognized of God. As those on the retired list of an army, they have passed into the reserve, or freedom from service, as it were, out of the scene now occupied by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. We read, “If one member suffer, *all* the members suffer with it,” &c. (1 Cor. 12:26), *the dead do not suffer*. The passage treats of those who are alive here, in a place where they may do so.

Thus the body of Christ, as now recognized of God, embraces all believers here upon earth, at the moment I write, as at any given moment. 1 Cor. 12 treats of the church of God upon earth: healings, &c., are not set in heaven. The difficulty with many is not reading Scripture as God's mind at any given moment -- speaking of a thing before His eye. The Apostles spoke of a thing before their eyes; they never looked for a long continuance of the Church; they looked for the Lord's coming. All was viewed as contemplating this, though prophetically ruin was predicted, and felt as it came in.

7. See *The Unity of the Spirit*, Part 2.

into a body. But suppose that such were united together by an indissoluble bond, this would be unity. The Holy Ghost is this bond of the Body, and consequently its unity exists independently of the oneness of practice of those who are thus united.

Is it not a blessed thought, however, that this oneness, so well pleasing to the Lord, *does exist* amongst those who endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

The Lord's Supper

The Apostle Paul received a special revelation with respect to the Lord's Supper. He was the vessel chosen of God to reveal to us the mystery of Christ and the Church. He alone of all the sacred writers speaks of the body of Christ. We read in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17,

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we, being many, are one bread, one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" (or rather "loaf").

Here we learn that the Lord's table is the expression of the communion of the body of Christ. (Of course we speak of it now as the Lord's table in the truth of the divine revelation concerning it.) There is immense importance in this truth. Because we learn that although the professing church has distorted the Lord's Supper into a means of grace, and a life-giving sacrament, and a fresh sacrifice, in fact almost everything but what it is, still, if the Lord's table is spread according to God's mind, it expresses the communion of the one body of Christ, which is here in the world.

Now, if only two or three Christians in a place are gathered together on the ground of the one body of Christ, by one Spirit, to eat the Lord's Supper, they are a true, even though feeble, expression of the one body. It is as in the communion of the one body, they break the one loaf, which is the symbol of the fellowship of the one body.

1 Cor. 10:16, 17 teaches us what they *are*; they "are one body." 1 Cor. 11:23-26 tells us what they *do*. They *eat* a supper, and *show forth* the Lord's death.

Many have thought that they could now come together *as individuals merely*, to break bread. But such a ground is unknown in Scripture, since the revelation of the truth concerning the Church of God, through the Apostle Paul. The ground of the unity of the Spirit of God in the body of Christ is the *only* one we can take, except in ignorance or in disobedience to the revealed will of God. I must either *own* what I know to be here -- to exist in the world -- as a fact, *i.e.*, the one body of Christ, formed by the one Spirit of God; or I must *disown* it, which is indeed a very solemn matter. Coming together as disciples has been done in ignorance of these divine principles; and the Lord is very gracious and patient with us, in waiting upon us in our slowness to learn His mind. But when I learn the truth, and have my understanding opened to see what I *am* before God, a

member of the body, by one Spirit, it is not taking up new ground in our mode of meeting together; but rather defining in its full sense *what we really are*, and discovering with this, all the responsibilities attaching to such a wonderful truth. I learn my responsibility to Christ the Head, and towards every member of His body on earth -- I learn my deep responsibility to own and recognize all others who are thus owning and acting upon (however weakly it may be) the grand truth of one body, by one Spirit. It gives me a divine resting-place for my feet in the midst of the confusion of the great house of Christendom; a reality which will keep my soul steady in the midst of every ruin. It is the only thing which can do this. Coming together as individual Christians merely to break bread, is simply impossible. If done in ignorance, well -- but with the knowledge of this unity, to do so would be the *disowning* of God's highest truth.

It has been thought that now in the ruin of the church, the only thing we can do is to hold the Head {Col. 2:19} as individuals. But to suppose that we can hold the Head, and disown in practice that we are members of the body of which Christ is Head, is mischievous. A member of Christ has a Head in heaven, as a member of a body of which Christ is the Head. If I had a Head merely as an individual, I should have a head *without a body, or one member would be the body*. This demonstrates the inconsistency. *Body* and *Head* are correlatives -- while *Lord* and *Servant* are also correlatives and individual. We are to hold the Head, but it is as members of His body, by the Holy Ghost uniting us to Him, we are to do so. "Not holding the Head, from which the whole body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19).

How far from re-constructing anything is all this; for the body of Christ does not want re-construction from my hands. The Spirit of God constitutes it, by His presence and baptism, and its unity has never failed. I therefore merely *own* in practice what I *know* to be here in fact, but I cannot do it as an individual where there are other members of the body of Christ. Both *must* be together if grace is given for it, as the body, *i.e.*, on the ground and principle of it. Besides all this, our being together, and our owning this, do not pretend to manifest anything. This would be towards the world. I seek not to *manifest*, but to *express* what I am in common with all the other members -- the body of Christ -- in the symbol of its unity, the breaking of one loaf.

Before closing, I would revert to one further matter of much importance, as to seek to act upon it has been stated to be an impossibility; and not only so, but a denial of the ruin of the professing church. I mean the divine competency of the saints to carry out the discipline of the assembly; or to keep outside everything not of the Spirit of God. I feel quite sure that the carrying out of the discipline of the assembly, in putting out from its midst, will be, nay, should be resorted to as the very last extremity, when grace exercised to the uttermost has failed, and when it has become a question of the assembly accepting the evil as its own, or clearing itself from it. I would add, too, that of this I am sure, that where the Spirit of God is ungrieved and unhindered in an

assembly, the evil will not remain long undiscovered, or in the midst.

We read,

What have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them also that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore, put away from amongst you that wicked person (1 Cor. 5:12, 13).

Now this divine competency remains unchanged. Nay, it is binding on the saints. The Lord holds them responsible for this. The thought has occurred to some, “Is not this putting out from the body, if we are gathered together as such, *i.e.*, on such a ground?” I reply, it is not. Scripture makes no difficulty in the matter whatever; it says “from among yourselves,” not “from the body” -- which could not be done. Otherwise there would be no means left to exclude evil from the midst of the two or three when gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus. The idea is so contrary to all that we know of Him who has said, “Holiness becometh thy house for ever.”

The Apostle addresses to the Corinthians this responsibility, binding it upon “all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours (1 Cor. 1:2); recognizing them (1 Cor. 12:27) as gathered together on the ground and principles of the one body of Christ; and unless we can remove that Scripture (1 Cor. 5) from the word of God, the divine competency and authority for this remains unchanged.”⁸

8. While on this question of the competency of the saints, under the Lord's authority, to carry out the discipline of the assembly, I add a note: We hear of such expressions as cutting off assemblies -- assemblies at one place legislating for another. Naturally such thoughts must make souls shrink back in fear. There is no power in Scripture for one assembly cutting off another; nor is there power for one assembly legislating for another, in any wise. There was at one time divinely-given apostolic power and authority for the latter. (See Acts 15, 16, &c.) Such was only when apostles were here, not otherwise.

What Scripture teaches is the competency and duty of each assembly to carry out its own discipline, under the Lord, who has promised His presence and guidance in the matter. “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” I am sure that when two or three, meeting in godliness and truth, come to a decision before the Lord in cases of discipline, that it is owned of the Lord, and the person who is the subject of it will never get comfort till he bows to it.

What is mistaken for, or put forth as, the cutting off of assemblies, &c., is, that when persons by a certain course of action, have *put themselves* practically outside the unity of the Spirit, by a course or action subversive to foundation truth, they have ceased to be guided by the Spirit of God. Assemblies, which are walking in the truth and unity of the Spirit, are forced to recognize the act of those who have slipped away. But *the act is that of persons who have slipped away, not that of those who have discovered it, and refuse to slip away after them.* They have cut themselves off, and put themselves out of the unity of the Spirit.

Then, an act of discipline done in any assembly walking in godliness and truth, is to be recognized most surely by every other likewise, to the ends of the earth. A person outside of one is outside of all. Do we suppose that when Corinth put out the wicked person (1 Cor. 5) from their midst, according to God's mind, that Ephesus, &c., would not have accepted the act? Would Ephesus have re-opened and re-judged the case? Certainly not. Ephesus accepted the act of Corinth.

It is the habit of individuals, too, at times, of passing judgment upon the acts of an assembly. Upon this I would simply say, that the two or three

(continued...)

It is a fine saying of Paul, in 2 Cor. 13:8, “For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.” Blessed thought, that God permits us -- poor weak things in ourselves -- to be *for* the truth in this world. The working of our own restless wills hinders this betimes; as far as we ourselves are concerned; and hinders others with whom we may come into

8. (...continued)

gathered in truth and holiness have the promise of a faithful Lord to guide them in questions requiring *united* decision. The individual has *not* this promise for his guidance, be he ever so gifted in divine wisdom in the things of God. How could he expect to have the Lord's promise to guide him *individually* in cases where a *united* judgment is required, and which has the Lord's sanction and promise of guidance in the assembly?

It has been stated that

Its (the Church's) PLACE, as a corporate witness of the ‘manifold wisdom of God,’ is lost. Its manifested UNITY has given place to every kind of division. Its ORDER is a scandal. Its AUTHORITY, which depended upon these other features being maintained, is, *à fortiori*, gone too. Its power of GOVERNMENT necessarily has been forfeited.

As to the first, the remark is true -- The candlestick (*i.e.*, a light for others) has been removed. But it is to “Principalities and powers in *heavenly places*,” it is a witness of “the manifold wisdom of God” -- not to the world. This has not been lost.

As to the third it is too true likewise.

As to the fourth and fifth, the statements have not the least foundation in Scripture. The authority was given long after its manifested unity was gone, and never depended upon it in anywise. In fact, its manifested unity was gone soon after Acts 2, 7. The earthly order at Jerusalem was broken up at the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 7-8). The Church was the body of Christ, and acting as such, before it knew it was so, and before the conversion of Saul (Acts 9), the instrument through whom it was revealed. Even then its “manifested unity” was well nigh gone.

Besides this, in the very epistle to the Corinthians, where the authority of the discipline of the assembly is given (1 Cor. 5) and bound upon “All that call upon Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours,” we find the manifest unity *did not exist*, for they were saying, “I of Paul,” &c., so that its authority never depended upon its manifested oneness.

In this epistle (1 Corinthians), too, we have no mention of elders, or office-bearers of any kind, but we have the principle taught us of submission to those who guide the conscience of the assembly through the ministry of the word (what an elder would have done), as to the course to be observed. It is, I doubt not, given in this epistle, where no elders are found or noticed, as a resource for times of failure, and when no apostolically appointed elders exist.

I beseech you, brethren (ye know the house of Stephaus, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints), that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth us, and laboureth (1 Cor. 16:15, 16).

I am sure that an individual divinely gifted with wisdom, maybe used of the Lord to guide the conscience of the assembly in cases requiring such, or in cases where an assembly might have acted mistakenly and needs to correct its action, but this without even doing more than guiding the conscience aright. It is the assembly which acts before the Lord, not individuals for the assembly, which in principle would be Popery.

Before closing this note, I would mention the tendency of confounding things which differ, *i.e.*, the act of “*putting out*” from an assembly with that of refusing to “*let in*” or receive that which is not suited to the Lord's presence, or of the Spirit of God. It is a common thing for those who have not been admitted amongst those in the fellowship of the Spirit of God, to talk of it as if they had been “excommunicated.” Such should remember that they must first have been “*within*,” to be the subjects of such an action, had it become necessary. Refusing to admit them because of their being a bar to their fellowship with the saints, as in the unity of the Spirit of God, is a very different action from that of putting them out. In one case, they were outside; in the other, they must have been within.

contact. We hinder our own growth up to Christ, and our increase through the knowledge of God, as well as, perhaps, disturbing simple, true-hearted souls. Yet with all this restless striving, "we can do nothing against the truth." There it stands in all the beauty of its own perfection -- unhindered and unmarred by all our strivings. How blessed it is to be *for* it in our course here below. To cast into it the energies of our hearts and witness for it. Tis thus we make "straight paths for our own feet," and those who are lame souls, weak in the faith, are "healed," by beholding our firm conscious tread in the truth of God. They are thus encouraged to go on firmly, rather than "turn out of the way." God is glorified and Christ magnified (wondrous word!) by the firm walk of a true-hearted disciple standing for the truth, by the grace of the Lord, in this evil world.

May the Lord bless my reader, and give him the single eye, and confirm and strengthen him in that which alone will keep his feet steady in the perilous times of the last days. Paul, when he had given the characters of things in the last days (2 Tim. 3:1-9), turns at once the mind of the disciple upon those things which alone would keep him at such a time. When he had departed from iniquity in a great house of Christendom (2 Tim. 2:19); and purged himself from the vessels to dishonor (v. 21); and having fled from youthful lusts, was following righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with those who had likewise purged themselves -- He turns the faithful disciple's heart to what we find enumerated in 2 Tim. 3:10-17. They are in their large features, three in number, namely --

1. "My doctrine";
2. The Scriptures; and
3. The Person of Christ, as an object of faith.

Have we then Paul's doctrine? If so, we have that which, with the Scriptures which were completed by it, and the Person of the Christ of God, will keep us in the pathway of truth in the evil day, through the grace which an ever faithful Lord supplies.

Appendix.

The principle ⁹ in the confusion around is, Matt. 18:20.

Where two or three are gathered together in my name,
there am I in the midst of them.

But this principle cannot be pleaded and sought as a ground of coming together to the rejection of the truth of the unity of the Spirit, in the body of Christ. To come together pleading the promise of Matt. 18:20, and at the same time to disown the ground of the body of Christ, is indeed impossible. This promise was given before there was any failure; it is a fundamental principle; and the resource to faith, when the

outward manifestations of the one body of Christ, by the oneness of its members (as in Acts 2 - 4) has failed. Faith in the unity of the Spirit, in the body of Christ as existing here on the earth, is what we need the more. And then, when we cannot restore the state of things, in Acts 2 - 4., through the oneness of the members of the body, we have the principle ¹⁰ "where two or three," &c., as the resource; and to be counted upon by faith. Still, the Spirit of God gathers together the two or three faithful disciples, on the ground of this unity; and on no other. Of course when there is *ignorance* of the principle of one body and one Spirit, the promise of Matt. 18:20, has been looked for, and the faithful have rejoiced in the faithfulness of the Lord; and have found His presence in their midst. But to press this principle, to the disowning of one body and one Spirit, now that this truth has been made known, would be indeed to err. It needs but little discernment to see, that the Spirit of God constitutes the body in unity, which therefore exists here in the world by virtue of His presence; and He Himself would be disowning this, did He gather disciples apart from the principle of one body, and on any other ground.

The thought here strikes one, how solemn is the position of those who have attempted to set up another table claiming to be the Lord's (sad to say, this has in some cases been done), and gather together another assembly, in a place where an assembly has been already gathered on the ground of the body; and where the Lord's Table has been already spread, as in the communion of the body of Christ. If done in true-hearted ignorance, well -- the Lord bears with such in patient grace, and instructs those who have a single eye. Nothing can justify such an act. Nothing would alter the principle of those who are already gathered on the ground of one body of Christ, unless there was an acceptance of something in their midst of that which touched upon the foundation truths of Christian faith, such as anything touching on the person or glory of Christ, or the acceptance of a line of action which would show an indifference on such a subject, or would be a denial of the truth of one body and one Spirit.

One has to bear with mistakes, and to seek, if we have grace for it, and with patience, to bring our brethren aright, if they have erred in judgment. But unless an assembly accept

9. "Resource," I would rather say, than "principle." The ever-abiding principle of the Church's existence here is, One body, and one Spirit." Separation from evil is faithfulness to its nature, as to Christ, whose body it is.

10. {See footnote 9, which was applied here also in the original.}

as the line of its action anything which would be subversive of the foundation truths of faith, it has its claim on me as an assembly of God. To set up another, is to break practically, as far as I can, the unity of the Spirit, which I am exhorted to keep. If we have grace for it, let us labor, Nehemiah-like, to bring our brethren into the consciousness of their position, that they may walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, and be fruitful in every good work, and thus grow through the knowledge of God, and not by any act of ours reader confusion more confounded.

Part 2:

“The Unity of the Spirit”

Eph. 4:3

Preface

The Unity of the Spirit is a sequel to the tract entitled *There is One Body and One Spirit*. Many souls have, more or less, apprehended the truth of “one body and one Spirit ;” but have not yet grasped the force of the exhortation, which founds their practice on this fundamental truth.

It is hoped that, in the Lord’s rich mercy, this may be helpful to souls.

I, therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Eph. 4:1-6).

Here we find that there are unities connected with the *Spirit*, with the *Lord*, and with *God*. I treat here of the unity of the Spirit, as being specially connected with the, object of this paper. The observing of this unity is our responsibility; the others fall into their own places accordingly.

I would remark the use of an expression, which is used often to convey a right thought, but which you do not find in Scripture, *i.e.*, “the unity of the body.” “There is one body,” the unity of which is constituted by the Holy Ghost Himself; and we are exhorted to endeavor to keep this “unity of *the Spirit* (not ‘unity of *the body*’) in the bond of peace.” If we were exhorted to endeavor to keep the unity of the body, we would be obliged to walk with every member of Christ, no matter in what association he might be found, or whatever his practice might be -- no evil whatever would give us a warrant to separate from him. The endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit necessarily keeps us in the company and association

with a divine Person here upon earth. It is not unity of spirit ¹¹, as has been put forward, but of “the Spirit” -- the Holy Ghost.

Here I would note that which surely is so plain in the word as to make one almost ashamed of having to insist on it, that is, the personal presence of a divine Person -- God, the Holy Ghost, here upon earth; not merely in each believer as an individual, but corporately, in the Church of God. The individual believer is indwelt by the Spirit of God -- anointed, sealed (Rom. 8:9, &c.; 1 Cor. 6; 1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; Eph. 1:13, 14, &c.), baptized by the Holy Ghost into one body, with all other believers. The baptism of the Holy Ghost does not leave him an isolated person. Its action connects him with all other believers, as a body, and with Christ the Head of His body (1 Cor. 12:12, 13). ¹² The promise of the Lord as to the Comforter, was that he should not only be with them, but in them. The Lord was with them -- the Holy Ghost in His absence, would be both *with them*, and *in them*, consequently the Holy Ghost at Pentecost not only “filled all the house,” but He “sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,” &c. (Acts 2:2-4). He not only filled each one, in Acts 4:31, at the gathering for prayer, but manifested His presence collectively in their midst, by shaking the place where they were assembled.

The saints are the body of Christ by one Spirit; but they are also the “habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22). God dwells amongst them, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them,” &c. (2 Cor. 6:16). We have almost come to the state of the men at Ephesus (Acts 19), in being obliged to

11. Many an assemblage of Christians is but the ‘unity’ of the human spirits.}

12. {See footnote 3.}

insist on this truth, when they said, “We did not even hear if (the) Holy Spirit was (come).” (*Lit.*) Things daily arising make it necessary to do so.

If the Church of God was in a healthy state, there would be no difference practically in the expressions “unity of the body” and “unity of the Spirit.” The Holy Ghost Himself dwelling in the Church constitutes its unity, and practically embraces all the members of the body. If the Church was walking in the Spirit, the healthy action of the whole would be unimpaired. Still the unity remains, because the Spirit remains, even when the oneness, and healthy practice of the body as a whole is gone. The *unity* of a human body remains when a limb is paralyzed -- but where is its oneness? The limb has not ceased to be of the body, but it has ceased to be in the healthy articulation of the body. Hence many Christians, while members of the body of Christ, are not endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

How, then, is the unity of the Spirit to be observed? What is “endeavoring” to do so? What is faithfulness to the nature of the Church, Christ’s body, in an evil day? It in *Separation from Evil*. My *first* duty must be to “depart from iniquity.” It may be moral, or doctrinal evil; evil assuming many shapes; I separate myself *from* it, *to* Christ. Thus separated, I find myself in the fellowship of the Spirit of God. Associated with the Holy Ghost here upon earth. He glorifies Christ, and dissociates me from everything contrary to Christ; associating me with that which is according to Christ. Thus it ceases to be a question of Christ’s members altogether, and becomes entirely a question of Christ, and of the Spirit of God, whom He glorifies. The notion that I may be wittingly associated with an evil principle, or doctrine, or practice, and undefiled, is an unholy notion. I may be perfectly free from it myself as not having imbibed it; but by practical association with it, I have left the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.

Thus separated into fellowship of the Holy Ghost -- the Spirit of holiness and Spirit of truth, we find others who have done the same, and so we can be together happily in the fellowship of the Spirit of God. If there is a spot upon earth where the Lord can be, in unhindered blessing amongst His people, it in amongst those thus together, where there is nothing knowingly allowed inconsistent with His presence in the midst, or to grieve and hinder the Spirit of God. It is not a question merely of how the *saints* may be together, but of a place where the *Lord* Himself may be with them, in free and unhindered blessedness, to manifest His presence amongst those who seek to be faithful to Him in an evil day.

The primary step must be, “Let him that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity” (2 Tim. 2:19). Members of Christ are mixed up with much evil on all sides. I must separate myself from such, to walk in the fellowship of, and with, the Spirit of God, who keeps me in company with Christ. To Philadelphia, Christ says, “He that is holy, he that is true” (Rev. 3). The Spirit of God is the Spirit of holiness and the Spirit of truth. Holiness will not do without

the truth, or the truth without holiness. The absence of either is not the Spirit of God.

Now, in an evil day, when the faithful endeavor, through His grace, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, the *practice* of the fellowship and unity of the Spirit is necessarily a narrow platform, entirely apart from evil, and excluding evil from its midst, while, in the breadth of its principles, it contemplates the *whole Church of God*. Wide enough in principle to receive every member of Christ, all over the world; narrow enough to exclude evil most carefully from its midst. Anything short of this breadth is a sectarian principle, and ceases to be of the Holy Ghost; while the breadth of the principle contemplates every member of Christ. Those gathered thus in the unity and fellowship of the Spirit, necessarily are jealous, with godly jealousy, lest anything should be admitted, either of doctrine or practice, or witting association with such, that would put those who admitted it practically out of the fellowship of the Spirit.

[Before passing on with my subject, I would note that a person may be perfectly sound in doctrine, and holy in life and practice, and yet be a partaker of the evil deeds of another (2 John 9-11) who brings not the doctrine of Christ. The effort is made to graduate the amount of evil by remoteness of contact with it.¹³ Scripture makes but two degrees: either the person who brings not the doctrine of Christ, i.e., personally unsound in the faith, or in other words, a heretic; and he who shows a courtesy to such. He who does so may remain himself sound in the faith, but is treated in Scripture as partaker of the evil deeds of the other. If he has imbibed the doctrine of the other, he ceases to be a partaker, and becomes a heretic himself. These are the two degrees. Evil is evil in Scripture, be the amount great or small; and good is good. It is either of the Spirit of God, or it is not of the Spirit of God.]

Now this “endeavor” does not confine itself to those only who have come together thus in separation from evil, and fellowship of the Holy Ghost. It is not observed merely one towards the other. Its aspect is towards, and has in view, every member of Christ, in whatsoever association he may be -- even those not thus gathered in the fellowship of the Spirit. Those who are thus maintaining the truth, are by this showing their truest and most faithful love to those who are not practically with them. Abiding in the light, in uncompromising fidelity to Christ, and fellowship in the Spirit of God, is their truest love to their brethren. They do not compromise the light and truth of their position by leaving it for the darkness; but, if they have grace, they win their brethren into the light, to walk with them in the truth likewise.

A word here to my beloved brethren, who have been called and honored of God, to occupy such a place, in these last evil days. How deeply responsible are they that all their words and actions may so fully bear the test of the light and

13. {This is seen in objectors who sarcastically speak of defilement carried *ad infinitum*.}

truth of God, that no occasion of stumbling be found in them, to hinder their brethren in any wise. Let there be such simple, blessed devotedness to Christ and His glory seen in them, that their brethren who are seeking God's path in the labyrinth around, may be drawn towards the truth, and the place where Christ is with them so specially; and their feet guided in the path where He is, the place where He can freely be with His people. Let them be found in such a place in an evil day -- and the character of their walk be simple and fervent devotedness to Christ; thoroughly dependent upon Him, as conscious of their weakness -- thoroughly devoted to Him, and to that Church which He loves. I believe, if they were walking in the power and grace of the position they have been called to, that not alone their brethren, who ought to be with them, but the world itself would have to own, “If ought be true on earth, that is !” The counterfeits of the enemy, too, would expose themselves. Let them ever be prepared to make much of Christ and of the path into which He has called them in special association with Himself, in His unspeakable grace, so that He may say to them, “Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.” There would then be a savor and a power in the simple fact, that Christ was everything amongst them, that nothing could imitate?

Through the Lord's great mercy, this endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace has been accorded to His saints, and many have had faith, in seeing the pathway, to embrace it. When such exists, the effort many have made to take a place outside, and independently of those who have been thus led of the Lord, is merely the self-will of man, and to be treated as such.

If the simplest saints, as has frequently been the case, have been drawn together in the Lord's name -- even without any intelligence of what the ground of one body, one Spirit, is -- of *necessity* it binds them with all those elsewhere, who have been before them in the way, because subjects of like action of God's Spirit, and who may have learned the more fully Divine ground of gathering. They *may* slip away very easily from it, and get linked up with evil, if not watchful; and the enemy works incessantly to this end. But it is utterly untenable to suppose that they can intelligently maintain a divine ground of gathering, and ignore what the same Spirit has wrought amongst others before them.

Scripture admits no such independency, more especially when it is coupled with the profession of the truth of one body and one Spirit, without the practice flowing from such a truth. To maintain an independent position, is to accept one which puts them practically out of the unity of the Spirit. Very probably such had come together at first in the energy of the Holy Ghost, in all simplicity, as gathering in the name of the Lord. By falling into such a course they slip away from the company and fellowship of God's Spirit. They had begun in the Spirit, and have ended, or are on the way to it, in the flesh.

Walking in the fellowship and unity of the Spirit, involves distinct separation from all who are not in practice

doing so likewise. This tries the saints much at times. The enemy uses it to alarm the weaker saints. The cry of want of charity is at once raised. But when it becomes a question of being in the fellowship of the Spirit of God, it ceases to be a question of *brethren merely*. If those who are otherwise holy in practice will not walk therein; and others have had light and grace to do so, it *must* involve separation on the part of the latter. To the flesh this is terrible. But human love must not be mistaken for divine love; and fellowship in the flesh, for the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost will not bend Himself to our ways, or be in fellowship with us; we must bend our ways into practical fellowship with Him. Therefore Peter bids us to add “to brotherly kindness, love” (2 Pet. 1:7). Brotherly kindness will sink into mere love of brethren, because we like their society, &c., if not guarded by the divine tie which preserves it as of God. God is love, and God is light; and, “if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” To exact brotherly love in such a manner as to shut out the requirements of that which God is {as light and as love} (and He dwells in the church by His Spirit), and of His claims upon us, is to shut out God in the most plausible way, in order to gratify our own hearts.

I beseech my brethren, as they value and love the Blessed One, who gave Himself for His Church, to pause ere accepting a position which must practically put them outside the unity of God's Spirit. The Lord Jesus gave Himself to redeem you; and not only so, but He died, “that he might gather together *in one* the children of God that were scattered abroad” (John 11:52). It ought to be on our hearts all day long, that *that is scattered* which Christ died to *gather*. He will surely gather them in heaven; but He died to gather them together in one, *now*. It can be but *in keeping the unity of the Spirit of God*; and if not thus, it is not what He died to effect. If it is not gathering *with Christ*, it is scattering, however plausible and well it may look in the eyes of men. God is working graciously in many places; and the enemy is working too, to try and mystify souls just emerging out of darkness, and link them up with the principles of neutrality, indifference, and independency; anything but the truth.

God has, in His mercy to His Church, gathered many saints together in the truth and unity of the Spirit, to the name of the Lord.¹⁴ They have, through much deep mercy, and failings and shortcomings innumerable, been maintained in it. A merciful Lord has sustained them in the pathway, through evil report and good report. To accept ground independently of that to which God had already by these truths recalled souls to walk in and act upon, is to forfeit the

14. A mighty effort of the enemy was put forth to ruin and destroy that which God had, some years before, brought to light, and had committed to His people. (I refer to a now well-known crisis -- 1845 - 1850). A mightier effort of the Spirit of God preserved the truth amongst a remnant of those who had been together, in separating them from the mass. {The reference is first, to B. W. Newton, whose teaching put Christ at an “unspeakable circumstantial distance from God,” a teaching he held and taught throughout his life; and second, to the unholy reaction to this by Bethesda, England assembly -- the origin of Open Brethrenism.}

place in the truth and unity of the Spirit which has been accorded of the Lord, and to slip away from the fellowship of the Spirit of God.

The saints may be assured of this, that they will find, on the one hand, that there is no barrier placed by those who occupy this place which God has graciously given, to their walking in the truth; they will find, on the other, there is nothing that can be a bar to their being with them. The platform is as wide as the Spirit of God -- wide enough for them all in principle. But it cannot admit of that which would exclude the free action of the Holy Ghost in the truth. They will find it to be a place, however feeble and little they are, that He owns and blesses. Sustaining His feeble ones in it, in richest mercy, and according to them the divine consciousness that it is His pathway in an evil day.

In conclusion, I add a word as to the reception of our brethren amongst us. The simple and blessed title to be with us at the Lord's Table is, *The confession of, and membership of Christ, with holiness of walk*. There is no other -- no inner circle. The intelligence of those received, while good in its place, has nothing whatever to do with their reception. *Those that receive* should be intelligent in what they are doing. The moment they look for intelligence in those who seek communion, it is they who cease to be intelligent. But there is a distinction to be observed in dealing with those who have had to do with evil associations, in jealous care for the Lord's name; those who are *wittingly* associated with evil, and those *unwittingly* linked up with it. We read "of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22, 23). Then again, there is surely a wide difference between those who have been mixed up with an ecclesiastical mistake (as the Established systems, ¹⁵ &c.), and those who have been associated with what assumes a divine position, as of God; and have been false to it. Each has to be treated as he deserves.

The basis and principle of the unity of the Spirit, thus contemplated, embrace the whole Church of God. The fact of those who have been mixed up with evil, or worldly systems, seeking fellowship, shows that they are separating themselves to the Lord. This should meet with a ready response. The more deeply we become conscious of the divine character of the place we have been called into by the Lord's grace, the more ready will be the response of our heart towards all Christ's members. At the same time, we will grow in the strength and conviction of the holiness that belongs to God's habitation through the Spirit; and, by His grace, we will watch against the wiles of the enemy in seeking to let in that which would grieve the Spirit of God, and hinder the Lord in identifying Himself with us, and manifesting His presence in our midst.

The Lord in His mercy keeps His faithful ones true and devoted to Him in these evil days. They may be but a remnant; but there were two things which ever marked the

faithful remnant at any time,

1st, *Devotedness to the Lord*;

2nd, *Strict attention to fundamental principles*.

We find, too, that they were ever the objects of His special attention and care. Their very feebleness drew this forth the more strikingly. It was with them He identified Himself most specially. They have but a "little strength" -- but through His mercy they have used it; and it has brought them into the spot where He is. The Lord give them to keep His word, and not deny His name -- to hold fast that which they have, that no man take their crown. Amen.

15. {That is, national church systems, established by the government.}

Part 3:

Scripture Queries and Answers

From Words of Truth, vol. 1
(1867)

Baptism

Q. N., Glasgow, Asks, (1) Baptism; what does it mean -- death only -- or death and resurrection? (2) Does the 6th chapter of Romans teach Baptism in water? and what is the teaching in that chapter?

A. (1) In Baptism one is always baptized *unto* some thing. In Christian Baptism, as many of us as are baptized *unto* Christ, are baptized *unto* death. "We are buried with Him by Baptism unto death" (Rom. 6:4). The thought of resurrection follows, in coming up out of the water; but is not the primary thought of Baptism; which is a going *unto* death; we are baptized for death -- The thought is buried and death.

(2) -- In Rom. 6, the apostle refers to Baptism of water, to show that in it the person had gone to death, and that it contradicted the thought that one might consider himself alive in a sinful state, so as to continue in sin, that grace might abound. The chapter fully refutes the unholy thought, that the full, free, boundless grace of God, which constituted the believer righteous by the obedience of another, (Rom. 5:19, 21) is a principle of sin. The argument is, that if we have part with Christ *at all*, we have part with one who has died to sin, and who is alive to God. We have died with Him, and we cannot be alive to that state to which we have died -- we cannot be alive to sin, and dead to sin at the same time; the objection contradicts itself. Our Baptism was unto death. When Christ died, He died *unto sin*, He was, in His death, discharged from it. He came out of the position to which sin attached as a substitute. Alive in resurrection, He has nothing to do with sin, and lives to God only. We then should *consider* ourselves dead to sin -- having come out by life in resurrection from the sin to which we died -- and alive to God only; in a state outside the former, and so walk in newness of life. *We* have a right to do so, because He died *for us*. The subject of the chapter is practice, not standing, and in the allusion to Baptism, he gives us God's thoughts, as to what Christian Baptism expresses.

Words of Truth 1:42.

Perseverance of the Saints

Q. A correspondent would be glad to know how far the doctrine of the "Perseverance of the Saints unto the obtaining of eternal life" is borne out by the passage, "He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of redemption," or Jesus Christ.

A. The passage (Phil. 1:6) shows the *perfect* confidence there was in the Apostle's heart, that God who had begun a good work in them, that is, the spirit of devotedness to the interests of the Gospel (v. 5) as all other precious fruits which he saw in the Philippians, would continue it until the day of Jesus Christ. His confidence was sure, because it was *God Himself* who wrought in them, both to will and to do, of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:12). And these fruits which he had seen were the proof of the existence of the eternal life which God had implanted in their souls. Just as there can not be the *fruits of righteousness*, till the righteousness is possessed (Phil. 1:11); or the *fruits of the Spirit*, till the Spirit is within; (Gal. 5:22) and "By their fruits ye shall know them." In all these cases it is merely the happy natural outflow of that which the Christian possesses; and is to the Glory of God. Hence, dear friend, I don't like the expression, "Unto the obtaining of Eternal life." We never find the *obtaining* of it a future thing in Scripture. To be sure the full unhindered enjoyment of it -- "reigning in life"; and its full fruition is always, as we well know, a future thing; but its *possession* always a present thing to the believer. It may be clouded and hindered, but it is there. He has obtained it as he has obtained forgiveness of his sins, by faith in the death and blood-shedding of Christ.

Life and *Propitiation* come to us through the death of Christ (see 1 John 4:9, 10). When we hear His words and believe on the Father who sent Him, we have eternal life (see John 5:24, 17:3). We are born again by His word, applied to our consciences by the Holy Ghost. "Of His own will begat he us with the word" (James 1:18). "Being born again . . . by the word of God" (1 Pet. 1:23). We have thus a life in our own souls which as sinners we never possessed. We were dead *in sins*; Christ came into the place of death *for sin*. In

His death He put away sin, and bore the sins of many (Heb. 9:26-28). God raised him up from the dead, and has, by the same power, quickened, or given *life* to us, together with Christ thus risen, "having forgiven us all trespasses (read carefully Eph. 1:19, 23, 2:5, 6 and Col. 2:13); leaving them behind us as it were, in the grave of Christ, and thus bring us into a new place in resurrection before Himself. And so, Christ risen from the dead, and gone up to heaven, is our life, which is thus, "Hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-4); and is -- blessed be God -- as secure as He! We have still the old nature (we had nothing else once) to treat as an enemy, to mortify, and subdue; but our life is secured for ever. Hence, dear friend, it is not a question with us now of *obtaining life*; but of *possessing Christ, who is our life*; and thus safe in God's own hand. "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). The fruits will be seen somehow, wherever there is life in the soul; still the fruits are not to be an object to occupy us. Let *others* see them -- and let *us* be occupied with Him who is our life -- risen, victorious over death, sin-bearing, judgment, everything: and its object and measure. If so occupied we will have but few doubts of the final issue -- rather treating them as they deserve, as of the enemy. Faith, keeping the doer of our hearts, will admit of no such intruders there.

Proverbs 1:26

Q. "An humble believer," Glasgow; asks, What is the teaching of Prov. 1:26? Does that passage mean that God will rejoice over the punishment of the wicked? Does "Wisdom" in the context, mean the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost, &c. &c.

A. In the passage it is "Wisdom" who speaks, crying in the streets to the simple, the scorner, and the fool, to turn at her reproof, and to love not their own ways; and that Wisdom's spirit would be given them, and Wisdom's words made known to them. (The fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom, v. 7.) When they would therefore be reaping the fruits of the folly they had sown, under the retributive government of God in the world, in their fear and calamity they would call upon Wisdom to guide them, but they would not be heard -- it would then be too late to learn Wisdom's ways. Wisdom would then laugh at them as it were (it is a figure of speech), for what they were suffering; having set at nought Wisdom's counsels and reproof, when she cried to them to learn her ways.

The Book of Proverbs refers to the government of God here below, on the principle that "Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). This is true of saint or sinner. Grace saves the vilest, but the Government of God is over all. It is on the principle that if a man squanders his money, or his time, or his health; he will reap the fruit of his ways in the loss of these things, &c. The grace of God in Salvation never sets aside these principles of His dealings with men; nor (does this marvelous grace alter the fact that every man reaps the fruits of his ways under God's

government. A true Christian may do something for want of discretion, and want of hearkening to Wisdom's words, which he may have to repent of all his days.

As to your question, who it is who speak? It is plain from 1 Cor. 1:24. That Christ is the "Wisdom of God"; and that He is made unto us wisdom, v. 30. (Read Prov. 8:22-35, and cp. with John. 1:1-2). Christ's word, that is, the expression of Himself, is to dwell in us richly in all wisdom. The Christian, too, is exhorted to walk in wisdom toward them that are without -- the world, redeeming the time (Col. 3:16., 4:5).

It is plain that Prov. 1:20-23, is not a gospel invitation at all. Hence the danger of using scripture out of its true place and connection. The passage does *not* teach that God will laugh at the punishment of the wicked, and the rejector of Christ, as you have heard. The divinely taught mind shrinks from such an idea.

Words of Truth 1:60-62.

Does the Holy Ghost Dwell in Christendom?

Q. "W." Oswestry, Salop, writes, "I find that some Christians maintain that the Holy Ghost dwells in Christendom. Now I have always thought . . . that the Holy Ghost dwells exclusively in the Church. I would be so glad if you would give me your thoughts about it through the medium of your 'Answers to Correspondents.'"

A. I think that a right understanding of the distinction between the Church as the "*Body of Christ*" (Eph. 1:22, 23), unto which believers are baptized by the Holy Ghost, (1 Cor. 12:13) and thus united to Christ, exalted and glorified in heaven (1 Cor. 6:17); and the "*House of God*," a "habitation of God through the spirit," (Eph. 2:21, 22) in the world, will make the matter in your question simple and plain. When Christ was glorified as man to heaven, the Holy Ghost (not previously given, see John 7:39) descended from heaven and took up His abode in the saints, on the day of Pentecost, as God's house (Acts 2). The Church thus begun, and set up as God's witness, and abode through His Spirit, is styled "The House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). This "House" was, as it were, a co-extensive thing at the first with the "Body," its other aspect, and was the true thing which God Himself fitly framed together; a member in which was a living one, and in union with Christ the Head, by the Holy Ghost. But we find that immediately after its being set up, men began to build on the foundation, wood, hay, stubble; as well as gold, silver, precious stones &c., (1 Cor. 3); and as a consequence, the House as man built it, began to assume vast proportions, and entirely disproportionate to the Body, the true thing. But still *the holy Ghost did not leave the House*. And the House was, as far as man's responsibility went, "God's building." The temple of God and the Spirit of God

dwelleth in you" (1 Cor. 3:9-16, 17); i.e., collectively as in a temple, which is a different thought from the body of the believer, being the temple of the Holy Ghost, as in 1 Cor. 6:19. The House of God drifted soon into what the apostle speaks of in 2 Tim. 2:19-21, a "Great House" containing vessels to honor and dishonor; quite a different state of things from 1 Tim. 3:15, and which has characterized Christendom or the "Great House" since; at which judgment must begin (1 Pet. 4:17).

So that we see I trust, dear friend, that the Holy Ghost, in the first instance, baptizes all believers since 1-us coining down into one Body, ("there is one Body and one Spirit" Eph. 4:4), uniting them to Christ as Head; and God dwells amongst them as a habitation through His Spirit. What a wondrous thought, and what a wondrous privilege; and how much has the Church forgotten her calling. But not only so, He dwells in the "House" here below, and *professing* Christians (as well as true Christians) are responsible for His presence; and are, as far as His presence goes, thus made partakers of the Holy Ghost; although not, of course, "sealed" as the true believer, and indwelt by Him. Thus we often find, as the other day in Italy, a remarkable work of the Holy Ghost, where there may not have been previously a single living member of the "Body of Christ."

A right understanding of the Church as the "Body of Christ," composed of living members, and the "house," or professing Church, is the key to much of the teaching of the Epistles.

Words of Truth 1:101, 102.

Galatians 3:10 and Philippians 3:18, 19

Q. "O.M.A.B.," Boyle asks for replies to the following questions: (1) Tell me the meaning of Gal. 3:10. How can it be said of saints, justified sinners by faith in Jesus, even though they should make the law their "rule of life," as they say, that they are under a curse? To be sure, such practically deny their oneness with Christ in resurrection; they are rendering themselves incapable of hiving in the power of the risen life, but this does not alter the fact that they are one with Christ -- risen, ascended, and seated in the Heavenlies, and that God is looking at them as such. How, then, can it be said they are under a curse?

(2) What class does the apostle speak of in Phil. 3:18, 19?

A. (1) The Apostle, dear friend, is not speaking of the standing of persons, but is showing the *effect of the law* upon all who put themselves under it, or are striving to live on that principle in their relationships with God. That they are in fact putting themselves in a place to which the curse of the law applies, and consequently putting themselves under the curse, for the simple reason that they do not fulfil it, and it curses all who fail to do so. If a Christian puts himself under the law he must be consciously only in the position to which it refers;

i.e., he must be "in the flesh" (Rom. 7:5). Whereas the standing of a Christian is "not in the flesh, but in the spirit" (Rom. 8:9), and, as a matter of course, he is not realizing his place as risen with Christ. The law applies to a child of fallen Adam, responsible to God as a sinner, and to *none else*. It pursues its claim upon him as far as this death of Christ. There, the believer, as having died with Christ, disappears from its pursuit, and it can go no further. It has no claim over one who is dead, and has thus eluded the uncompromising grasp of the law, and is now alive in another state, in Christ risen from the dead. So that, if a Christian puts himself under it, in any way, he practically denies the place where Christianity has placed him, and cannot consciously be in his true position before God. Of course then he breaks the law -- (who ever kept it as alive in that state?) -- and it curses, without distinction, all who do so.

This is quite a different thing than if Paul was pronouncing upon the *standing* of a Christian, as God sees him, "in Christ." Impossible that in *such a position* he could be under a curse; and, were he realizing it, he would not put himself back into a position to which the curse of the Law applies. When consciously there, he walks, not in the flesh, but in the spirit; and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him who does so (Rom. 7:4), but never by being under it.

(2) I believe whenever the Apostle writes such solemn words and warnings as these, that he has his mind upon those who have *professed* the name of Christ, but who, in their worldly fruitless lives, plainly show that it is a mere profession without reality, and are thus the greater enemies to the Cross of Christ -- joining to the name of Christ a life which had the things of earth for its object, instead of that which filled the soul of Paul, i.e., a Christ in heavenly glory, who had been *rejected* by the world.

Doubtless the end of such would be *utter* "destruction," not merely the "destruction of the flesh," of 1 Cor. 5:5, to which you allude. Such solemn words as these, whole searching to all consciences, have in view the mere lifeless professor in the outward universal Church, and ate never used to stumble the true believer, or to throw the faintest shadow of a doubt on the certitude of his perfect, eternal, unalterable security in Christ. But when the walk is careless and disobedient, and one sees that souls are satisfied with the knowledge of grace, without seeking to grow up to Christ in all things, it is blessed to have such solemn words to search the conscience deeply, and provoke the Christian to make his calling and election sure, by adding to his faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity (see 2 Pet. 1:5-11), and walking suitably to his high and holy calling. I am daily more deeply impressed -- may the impression be deeply engraved upon the hearts of both writer and reader -- that in our walk as Christians we should strain every nerve in practical Christianity and obedience to the Lord, as though our soul's salvation depended entirely upon ourselves; and yet with the perfect consciousness, at the same time, that it does not depend on ourselves at all. This is so important in a day of much knowledge of the full free grace of the Gospel, and

much high-sounding profession, and, alas I but little thorough reality, or true-hearted devotedness to Christ. A *yielding up of ourselves* to God, as those that are alive from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God! and a bringing of every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!

Words of Truth 1:121, 122.

The Cross

In reply to a communication from "Elo," London:

There is no subject in Scripture which demands more an exercised heart and a worshiping and adoring spirit than that of which you have written. It is not a subject for a cold, heartless, doctrinal analysis, but one for a heart which has had grace given to see something of the deep need of the soul for what Christ passed through on His cross; and who, with a chastened and reverential spirit, would seek to learn the meaning in some measure, if it could not learn it in its depths, of that unparalleled moment, which, once passed through, *could* not be repeated.

With such a state of soul, much can be, through grace, learned; and I believe the more the soul understands what passed on the cross, the more solid will be the peace which flows from it. With the mere knowledge of, the *death* and blood-shedding of Christ, forgiveness, shelter from judgment, and redemption in measure, may be, and are known; but there will not be the solid abiding peace with God till the soul understands in some measure (who could fathom its full depths!) the meaning of the cry which issued from the soul of Christ on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That (to us) fathomless cry expressed the *position*, according to its truth, in which His holy soul stood at the time when He was enduring the judgment of God about sin! It was a moment when the whole moral nature of God, truth -- majesty -- righteousness -- holiness, against and concerning sin, burst forth in its fullest power and expression, and discharged itself upon the head of Christ. It was a time when the moral nature of God about sin was so brought out, and exhibited, and vindicated, that He can turn towards a fallen world with the fullest display of love and righteousness, and declare himself a just God, in justifying those who believe, *whosoever they be*, and *whatsoever* be the ruin in which their sins have placed them; and do this without the least compromise of His nature in doing so! It was a time when Christ was drinking to the dregs the cup of divine and unmingled wrath -- the cup which expressed the divine judgment of God against sin -- when Christ was forsaken of God; His soul bearing directly the inflicted wrath of God for sin.

Oh for a worshiping spirit to gaze upon Him at that moment. To behold Him drying up, as it were, the river of death and judgment of God upon sin, that His people might pass over dry-shod. Not one sigh of Christ -- —not one sorrow of His holy life, but is of infinite value to us. But it was at this unequaled scene that atonement was made: it

ended in His death. Death consummated the work, but the act of death alone must not be dissociated from the previous scene. If so, it would separate it from the bearing of the judgment of God about sin. The death was the witness to this, but the cup of wrath was drained and finished when the death of Christ completed the work.

Simple souls do not distinguish in this, while they rest in peace on the cross -- the death -- the blood-shedding -- the being made sin -- the being made a curse. And in all these *rightly*; without entering into the meaning of that which God alone can fully know. They know that by means of death they are redeemed -- that they are justified by blood -- by His death they have life -- by the shedding of His blood they have remission. His blood it is which makes atonement for the soul. They are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. But to confine atonement *merely* to the act of *death* would indeed be to err. It would be to omit the fact of the divine judgment of God about sin, which was borne to the full by Him when forsaken of God. When He cried and was *not* heard (Psa. 22:2) This psalm gives us the *feelings* of His holy soul on the cross at the time when the *circumstances* narrated in the Gospel took place, in which v. 1 of the Psalm is quoted. If we take vv. 7 and 8, and compare them with Mark 15:29-31, nothing can be plainer. It was when He made His soul an offering for sin, when He bore sin judicially before God. Simple souls look on the work as a whole, and rightly so, and with adoring hearts, they rest upon it as undergone for them, without entering fully into its meaning. With such, one would pray that the feeling may indeed be deepened, and a more worshiping spirit flow from what they have gained, daily. But when the question is before the soul, it is well to guard against confining atonement to the bare act which was the climax and accomplishment of the work, and forgetting that to which Scripture attaches such deep and pre-eminent importance.

I would add, in conclusion, that God does not call upon a sinner to believe in anything that Christ did, but to believe in *Christ*. He knows what He did, and accepts the sinner who believes in Him according to His *own* knowledge of the value of Christ's work, and not according to the knowledge the sinner possesses of it; still it deepens and strengthens the believer in the knowledge of God and His grace as the soul comprehends how the judgment on man has been borne by the Son of God -- how he ended in Himself that to which the judgment attached; and rising out of the dead, is the One in whom every one believing in Him lives.

How Does God Create Evil?

In reply to "J. M'M., Airdrie," with reference to Isa. 45:7 -- "How does God create evil?"

From Isa. 40 - 48, it will be clearly seen that there is a great question between Jehovah, the Lords and the idols of Babylon. The Lord declares that He had raised up Cyrus, King of Persia, the "righteous man from the east," to deliver His people, Israel, in the face of and in the midst of this

idolatry (consult 2 Chron. 36:22, 23; and Ezra 1:1-4; and many other passages), and the idols of Babylon.

But there was then a danger also to be met, lest this Persian king or his people might attribute to their own gods of Persia this deliverance or victory over Babylon and her gods and idols (see an example of this in 2 Chron. 25:14-16; 18:23).

We are told that the Persians were famous for a two-fold system of idolatry -- Light and Darkness, Good and Evil. And so the Lord Jehovah declares *His pre-eminence* over all these principles, which the Persian mind had deified, and with which it was familiar. It does not convey the thought that the Lord Jehovah directly creates evil; but it establishes His divine pro-eminence as God, above principles which are mere creatures or abstract qualities, and which the Persians held as gods; and to which he might attribute his victories.

Apart, too, from all this, God is Creator; and if He permits, in His wise purposes, a creature to work its own will, still He is Creator, and He made the creature, and permits it. No one in any sense is above Him, nothing can be carried on against Him. He allows evil to exhaust itself, and then His goodness -- nay, *himself*, is manifested in overruling and counteracting it.

Words of Truth 1:199-202.

Leaven

T. S., Crewe. In reply to your question on Matt. 13:33:

You will find it a rule in Scripture, that leaven is always used as typical of evil, whether in doctrine or practice; and this without a single exception. For instance, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees . . . Then understood they how that He bade them, not to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6, 11, 12). See also Mark 8:15, Luke 12:1. In the last verse we read, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Paul writes to the Corinthians, with regard to evil *practice*, "know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (1 Cor. 5:6). And to the Galatians, with regard to evil *doctrine*, subversive of Christianity, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9).

In Matt. 13:33, we are taught in one of six parables, which follow that of the sower, a similitude of the kingdom of heaven, in its new mysterious form, which was about to be brought into the world on the rejection of the King. For one peculiar and striking characteristic of the kingdom of heaven in mystery is that the *King is not here*. This was some of the "things new" which a scribe, instructed in the matter, would now bring out of his treasures, added to the "things old" which the prophets had aforetime written about the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13:52). When it was said that it would be "as the days of heaven upon earth" (Deut. 11:21). And of the throne of the King, "His throne (should be) as the days of heaven" (Psa. 89:29). And again, the Gentiles should know that "the heavens do rule" (Dan. 4:26).

Now all this state of things was entirely set aside for the time, because of the rejection of the King -- of Christ. And, instead of all the blessings consequent upon his reception, a state of things far different would be introduced. The enemy would come and sow tares amongst the wheat in the world, or, as it is called, "the field" (Matt. 13:38). The outward appearance the kingdom of heaven would then assume would be that of a vast sheltering power, under the figure of a tree, which would shelter the birds of the air, or as they are interpreted to be, the emissaries of the wicked one. (See Matt. 13:4, 19, 32). And again, as our parable tells us, doctrinal or moral evil would be introduced into the three measures of meal, or the sphere of the nominal profession of Christianity, till the whole should be leavened. One has only to lift up their eyes, with but a small amount of spiritual intelligence, on the state of Christendom around them, and see how fast this is coming to pass.

Words of Truth 1:220, 221.

Entering Into Temptation

Q. "Eva" asks, "What did the blessed Lord mean when He said to Peter, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation?" What is *entering into* temptation? (Matt. 26:41)."

A. The Lord desires his disciples to "watch and pray," instead of which they slept and prayed not, and when the hour of temptation came they fled; and Peter, who was so confident of his, own strength -- saying, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee" -- most signally failed. What brought him into the judgment hall? Why did he thus "enter into temptation?" -- this was entering into temptation. He had not been told to do so. In Matt. 26:58, Peter followed Christ "afar off," and "went in and sat with the servants to see the end." He "entered into temptation." There he was at that moment -- flesh unjudged and trusted in -- prayer and watchfulness wanting -- a moral distance between him and Christ -- temptation entered upon, and unhallowed companionship sought. *What* a fit one was he at that moment to be the sport of Satan.

How often do the Lord's people thus fail? Instead of distrusting themselves, they enter into this or that, and when the time of trial comes, there is failure and a practical denial of Christ. The flesh has been unjudged, and leads them where the Spirit never would have led.

Thus we see many around us -- with unjudged flesh -- no moral nearness to Christ -- temptations of one sort or another sometimes unthinkingly entered upon -- an infidel publication opened and read -- an association of one kind or other taken up -- unhallowed companionship sought, or fallen in with, without divinely given moral courage to resist them -- the ear opened to a suggestion of one kind or other which is known to be subversive to divine truth -- and thus the poor, weak vessel becomes a stranded one on the shores of infidelity, or the clear divine testimony of one who might have been a faithful, firm, and devoted disciple, lost to

Christ, through the machinations of an ever watchful enemy.

All these things, and many more of a like nature, come under the term “entering into temptation.” It is the exercise of one’s own will and the disregard of the will of the Lord -- self trusted in, and “wisdom from above” unsought.

It would be a useful question to ask oneself, with regard to *everything* in which one is engaged -- whether of a religious nature, or the business or other occupations of life, - - “Am I sure that Christ has sent me here? -- would *He* have me engaged in this association or that occupation? -- would He have me read this book or take part in this or that folly?” If one cannot satisfactorily answer before the Lord, and to Him, such questions, depend upon it, we have engaged in that which is the exercise of our own wills, and thus have “entered into temptation.” We cannot count upon the result if we do these things. No doubt, God *will* take care of His own to the end -- of this I am sure -- but I cannot *count* upon Him if I “enter into temptation.” I may have to learn my folly, like Peter, by a deep and shameful fall. Oh, for a more thorough and growing distrust in self! If this was more fully felt, we would see but little of the shameful failures we have to mourn.

How can I expect to be preserved from contamination if I enter into some place, or companionship, or occupation which the Lord would not sanction, and to which He would not have me go? As long as I am in the path of *obedience*, I can count with the utmost confidence upon the care and protection of the Lord. He charges Himself with all the rest when I am *there*. But the moment I get out of this path I have left the place where He would have me, and where I could count with all confidence upon his care and love.

Depend upon it, the more we know the more we will distrust self. The more knowledge, the more prayer, the more will our sense of dependence upon the Lord grow and increase, so that we will never move one step till we know His mind and will.

I have answered your question at length, dear friend, with the earnest desire that we may be led to seek the paths of life with a single eye, and avoid “entering into temptation” -- “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Words of Truth 1:234, 235.

John 1:51

Q. In reply to “M. S.,” Lyndhurst, with reference to John 1:51:

A. The first chapter of John’s Gospel is a magnificent epitome of the person and titles of Christ, from His existence as the Word of God the eternal Son -- till His millennial glory as Son of Man; His heavenly characters, in the present interval, of High Priest and Head of His Body, being omitted. It begins by showing that He was God, then that He became flesh, and concludes by showing Him the Son of Man -- God and Man. Nathaniel, at the close of the chapter, gives us a striking figure of the faithful ones of the Jewish

nation at the end of this age, before the introduction of the Millennium, who own the Lord Jesus when he appears as the Son of God and King of Israel, according to His titles and person in the second Psalm, “Thou art my Son,” etc. “I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion” {Psa. 2}. The Lord Jesus then says, in view of that time, which will be the introduction of the Kingdom, that “henceforth (this is more correctly the force of the word than ‘hereafter’) ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” In other words, when the Kingdom comes the once slain and rejected Son of Man will be the connecting link between the heavens and the earth: He will reign in His full Melchisedec character, -- “a Priest upon His throne”; and the Lord “will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel” (Hos. 2:21-22).

It is worthy of note that Jacob saw the bottom of the ladder, and heard the voice of the Lord above it, while the angels ascended and descended upon it (Gen. 28). While Peter, James, and John saw the top of it, as it were (Matt. 17), when they were on the Mount of Transfiguration, beholding a fore-shadowing of Christ’s coming glory as Son of Man. In the passage before us, He is seen as the connecting link between the heavens and the earth, when all things in heaven and earth shall be gathered together in Him (Eph. 1:10).

Zaccheus

Q. “Eva” writes, “And Zaccheus stood and said unto the Lord, Behold, the half of my goods I give unto the poor: and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold” (Luke 18:8, 9). Do you think this the language of self-righteousness, or of a heart touched by the grace of God?

A. It is plainly the language of a benevolent and conscientious heart, without the knowledge of salvation, which the Lord brought that day to Zaccheus’ house. The tone of Zaccheus is as different as possible from that of the self-righteous Pharisee who “stood and prayed with himself,” in Luke 18:11, 12. Here was the case of a man who was truly in earnest. Neither his diminutive stature nor the crowd around the Lord were suffered to hinder him. (Would that we might see many as truly in earnest as the blind beggar and Zaccheus!) The Lord Jesus, the good Shepherd, calls his own sheep by name. He said “Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.”

Zaccheus tells the Lord what had been the habitual practice of “an honest and good heart”; but still, however blessed to see human righteousness where it exists, there was no recognition of this when it was the question of bringing salvation to him -- “This day *is* salvation come to this house. For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Christ Learned Obedience

Q. "In what sense did Christ 'learn obedience to the things which he suffered?' (Heb. 5:8). How is this to be taken?"

A. It was an entirely new thing for the glorious Son of God to *learn obedience*. He who commanded all things from all eternity came into this world of sin, and took the place of obedience, and in a pathway of suffering in which he never yielded to temptation, -- "He suffered being tempted" -- never yielded -- *He* learned what it was in this world to obey. We learn obedience by the subjection of our wicked hearts and wills to God. He learned it as one with whom it was a new thing, and who had a perfect will, but who laid it aside -- ("not my will but thine be done") -- who submitted to everything, obeyed in everything, and depended on God for everything. His obedience ended in death rather than fail in faithfulness or obedience to His Father. How contrary to the first Adam was the second {the *last*} in all this! And the Christian is "sanctified unto the obedience . . . of Jesus Christ." May we have grace to be conformed to Him to obey!

Words of Truth 2:18, 19.

Quickening – Sealing

"J. K. M." asks -- What is the difference between being quickened by the Holy Ghost, and being sealed; and when are we sealed?

A. The difference is very great, and is of immense importance, and will account for the different states of soul one sees around. The difference is, that between the state of a saint before, and the proper state since the day of Pentecost, prior to which there was no sealing of the Holy Ghost. The saints, prior to that time, were born again. A saint now, in his normal state as such, is not only quickened, but sealed. Of old, the Holy Ghost was not given; nor was He given until Jesus was glorified (John 7:37-39).

Quickening is the Holy Ghost producing by a new nature, which a man had not before as a sinner, holy desires, hatred of evil, the love of Jesus, the love of all that God is, and of what is due to Him. A soul in being born again, receives a nature that it had not before as a sinner. A soul having this new nature, hating what it finds of the old, and loving the things of God, before deliverance finds itself in the deepest distress -- delighting in the law of God after the inward man -- consenting to God's requirements in the law -- finding to will present, but how to perform that which is good finding not; in the deepest distress of soul because it finds it has no strength to carry out the desires of the new man. Finding another law in the members warring against the aspirations after holiness of the new man {the new nature}, and bringing into captivity to the law of sin in its members. All these are the symptoms to be found in a soul born of God, *without* the knowledge of redemption. Sad to say that this is the most general state in which Christians are found. This is not the normal, proper Christian state at all. Many

souls in such a state are seeking to get peace by progress and victory over self -- that is, trying by suppressing the workings of an evil nature which is found twisted and knotted round the heart, to follow the desires and hopes for which the new man struggles so unsuccessfully against the old.

What then is to bring the sense of deliverance and set the new man {the person} free? The knowledge of redemption -- of Christ's finished delivering work, must be submitted to, and peace found by the surrender of every pretension to strength; and by being completely cast over upon Him for victory and deliverance. In other words, to find that the new nature has no strength, and cannot get peace or liberty by progress; but that it must get peace by surrender to the work of another. *Then* it is, when at the end of itself, and the thought of strength in itself, that it finds that the work of Christ applies to its *ungodly*, and not its improved state -- that when it was *without strength* Christ died for the ungodly. Thus cast over upon the victory of another, the deliverance is complete and the new nature set free. It can thank God through Jesus Christ, in whom, on the cross, God condemned sin in the flesh; i.e., the evil nature which so harassed and distressed the soul.

This will give some idea of the state of a quickened soul without the sealing of the Spirit. Now we will seek to ascertain what the sealing is, and when it comes.

In Eph. 1:13, 14, we read, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest," etc.

Here we find the sealing of the Holy Ghost the *result* of believing the *gospel of salvation* with which it is intimately connected. The Holy Ghost in sealing, gives the consciousness of deliverance and power, and the joy of His presence in the knowledge of the finished work of Christ. This is the normal and healthy state of a believer; and is the only normal and healthy state of a Christian known in Scripture -- the full assurance of faith, and the Spirit of adoption. It is not that a soul has to pray for the Holy Spirit as a seal. Scripture teaches that the reception of the Holy Ghost as a seal, is the result and consequence of having believed the gospel of salvation. This involves a great deal; for here comes in union with Christ -- membership of Christ. Union is only by the Holy Ghost. A Christian has life in Christ, but he is united to Christ only by the Holy Ghost -- life in itself alone, is not union. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17). It is by the hearing of faith the Holy Ghost is received. We read in Gal.3:2, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the *hearing of faith*?"

We find instances which will illustrate these two states of soul in the Acts of the apostles. Cornelius was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always (Acts 10). Here was a soul in which the desires and hopes of the new nature were at work. What he wanted was the knowledge of *salvation* to bring him into the enjoyment of

true Christian state and privileges. Peter is to be sent for that he might hear words of him (Acts 10:22); who when he comes, preaches salvation and forgiveness and peace; and the result of the reception of the words of *salvation*, ("words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved," Acts 11:14) was, that the gift of the Holy Ghost, came upon him and those in his house who believed. Again in Acts 19, Paul finds certain disciples at Ephesus whom he asks, "have ye received the Holy Ghost *since ye believed?*" They were believers of John Baptist's testimony which was the announcement of a Messiah to come, and a Holy Ghost which he would communicate. They wanted the further testimony of the rejection, death and resurrection of Christ, and the efficacy of His work in salvation, and the consequent gift of the Holy Ghost as a seal on believing. The result of Paul's testimony to them was, that they received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

These instances show the difference between saints who had been quickened; and believers who were sealed.

How then do we know when a soul is sealed? when it has got peace with God, not merely a hope of it. When it is sealed? when it has believed the gospel of salvation.

Words of Truth 2:96-99.

The Olive Tree

"J. K. M." It may help your understanding of the passages in Rom. 11, to know that the first allusion to the Church, the Body of Christ, in the Epistle to the Romans is in ch. 12:5. Even there we do not find the doctrine of the Church taught; but the practical walk of the members one with another as "One Body." It is not the subject of the Epistle to the Romans.

The Apostle in beginning his subject of the Olive Tree, writes, "I speak to you Gentiles." He does not speak to the Church *as such*, although his teaching is *for* the Church. It is the Gentile dispensation which he has before him.

The Olive Tree symbolizes the line of the testimony and of the promises of God, under the figure of a tree, of which Abraham was the root, as being the depository of the promises -- the nation of Israel -- his posterity, the branches -- the fatness, the promises of God.

This tree of promise begins in Abraham, and runs on into the Millennium; and God always maintains a stock (i.e., Christ), and the faithful of any dispensation, which sustains God's testimony in the line of promise on earth. The Jewish dispensation proved itself a failure. They were the natural branches, and it was their "own Olive Tree." "Because of unbelief they were broken off." The Gentile dispensation commences, and the wild Olive branches are grafted into the stem, and thus brought into the place of testimony and line of promise; (*to them spiritual*) in which they stand "by faith"; and in such a place responsible to continue in the goodness of God, or failing in this to be cut off. God, who did not spare the natural branches, would not much less spare them. The Gentile dispensation not having continued in the goodness of

God, will be cut off. Meanwhile God has His own purposes to fulfil, "and the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation." "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Then the Jews will be grafted in again, as the natural branches, and thus Israel *nationally* will be saved {Rom. 11:26} -- not individually as now.

It is not in anywise a question of the Church, as the Body of Christ; or of individual salvation, but of Jewish and Gentile dispensations, and the result of the failure in each of them.

Words of Truth 2:139, 140.

1 Peter 1:1, 2

Q. What is the general meaning of 1 Pet.1:1, 2; and why is obedience mentioned before blood? -- E. C.

A. James, in his Epistle, addresses the scattered twelve tribes, as Israel had still the character of God's people in his eye; and he recognizes both the synagogue (James 2:2) and the assembly (James 5:14), as before the final separation of the believing remnant from the nation in general had taken place. It was a transitional moment, and he has the nation as a nation, although scattered, before him. Peter, on the other hand, takes up only the elect strangers of the dispersion, who were anywhere but in the land of Israel -- Pontus, Galatia, etc. -- and sets their eye upon a heavenly hope. Consequently, v. 2 is a complete reversal of the whole hopes of Israel, to this remnant of faithful ones. As to Israel of old, we might read it thus, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of Jehovah, through sanctification of ordinances, unto obedience of the law, and sprinkling of the blood of the old covenant" (Ex. 24), which sealed their condemnation. Now, he can write of the believing ones that they were "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (the name He reveals Himself to Christians in the Son of His love, as Jehovah was His revealed name to his elect nation -- see Ex. 6), through sanctification of the Spirit, (not ordinances) -- who separates us from man, unto the obedience . . . of Jesus Christ" -- i.e., to obey according to His order and pattern, who never did even His own perfect will, but the Father's; "unto obedience (of Jesus Christ) and (unto) sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." The Spirit separates us unto both. Thus separated or sanctified by the Holy Ghost unto His obedience -- i.e., unto that end -- we come under the efficacy of the blood of sprinkling of the new covenant, which purges the conscience, instead of sealing our condemnation.

Hebrews 13:13

Q. Does Heb. 13:13 -- "Without the camp" -- refer to Ex. 33, when Moses pitched the tent "Without the camp, afar off"? or, rather, is there an allusion to it; for I suppose there is no doubt the reference is to Lev. 16?

A. In the Gospel narratives we learn that Israel had refused their Messiah -- "We have no king but Caesar," is their word

(John 19). Jesus said on His cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23). The answer to this intercession was the offer by the Holy Ghost, who came down at Pentecost (Acts 2), by Peter in Acts 3, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it," he says, and that if they would now repent, Jesus, whom they slew, would return, and the times of refreshing would come. Their full answer to this offer of grace was at the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 7), in which act the citizens who hated the nobleman, who had gone into the far country to receive a kingdom and return, sent a messenger (Stephen), after him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (see Luke 19). Stephen sees the Lord Jesus -- the Son of man -- *standing* at the right hand of God, till then ready to bring in the "sure mercies of David." They had now refused these "sure mercies," and the whole earthly order of things is broken up at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad, except the apostles. Hebrews now come in, and in it we find Jesus *seated* and expecting, till His enemies be made His footstool (Heb. 10:12,13). Till the day when He says, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (Luke 19:27). In each Scripture it is a characteristic attitude in which He is seen. It characterizes very preciousely these Scriptures, to the renewed soul, who is free to learn the beauties of the word of God. In consequence, the Jewish believers are called upon to "go forth therefore unto Him outside the camp." They must come outside the earthly order of things, and everything of a religious character which recognized man in the flesh, and connected itself with the world. (Believers were now "in the Spirit," with a heavenly sanctuary and High Priest.) This was most distinctly Judaism at all times. This word of the Lord holds good with regard to every religion which connects itself with the world, and recognizes and provides for man in the flesh, or unrenewed. An earthly formulary, which takes in all the nation, or country, or district, is the "camp" now, and the distinct call of God to the believer is uncompromisingly to disconnect himself with such, and take his true place with Jesus -- "bearing His reproach" -- "outside the camp," or such an order of things.

Thus acting, he recognizes what God requires -- separation from evil -- in order to walk in fellowship with Him. Moses was quick in apprehension in the mind of God, when he pitched the tent without the camp (Ex. 33). He knew that God could not now dwell amid a rebellious and revolted people. Every one that sought the Lord went out to this place of separation to God; and God's presence was found there; and there He spake to His faithful ones.

There is no doubt, as far as the offering went, that Lev. 16 is alluded to. It was the type.

Words of Truth 2:178-180.

Luke 16

Q. What is the teaching of the Parable of the Unjust Steward? Why is the spirit of the world held up for us to follow?

A. The principles which governed the Steward, leading him to sacrifice present for future advantages, are commended. He might have kept his master's money; but instead of this he laid it out in view of the future -- (see 1 Tim 6:17-19).

The lesson taught us in the parable is, *The use of riches now that the dispensation is changed*. It is not now one in which earthly blessing and prosperity -- the increase of basket and store -- is a sign of blessing from the Lord, as once it was to the Jew. The dispensation is that of the grace of God seeking the lost. Luke 15 gives us its picture. It shows us that we may turn riches into a means of fulfilling love. The spirit of grace filling our hearts, (ourselves being the objects of grace) exercises itself in temporalities towards those who need.

In Luke 15 we find one who had departed in self-will from God, with the portion of goods which had fallen to him, (the blessings which man received in creation) and had wasted his substance with riotous living. In Luke 16 man is a steward who had proved himself unfaithful in his stewardship, wasting his master's goods. Fallen man has done both; he has revolted from God, and as a steward, has proved an unfaithful one. God, in his grace, does not canvass our title to the goods we have in our hands, which we hold but on *sufferance*, not certainly as having a *title* to their possession. He does not remove the goods; but speaks of them as "another man's"; and we should use them in view of the future, so that, by and by, we may find we have made a satisfactory use of them, and be enabled to give a satisfactory account of the use we have made of them for Him, who had left them in our hand. If we are faithful in the least, we are faithful in much; and according to the faithful use of that which is in reality "another man's," we get the sense of realization, and the joy of possessing that which is truly "our own"; i.e., heavenly things -- the "true riches." We get the consciousness too of having "done wisely" in our use of the master's goods, while we had them in our power.

Verses 4 and 8 may be read thus, "I know what I will do, that when I have been removed from the stewardship I may be received into their houses"; "And I say unto you: make to yourselves friends with the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail ye may be received into everlasting dwellings."

Prayer to the Holy Ghost

Q. Is prayer to the Holy Ghost a Scriptural thought?

A. The Holy Ghost is God -- a Divine person. When God, as such, without reference to the persons of the Godhead, is addressed in prayer, it includes the Spirit, with the Father, and the Son. In the New Testament prayer is spoken of, not as "to," but "in" the Holy Ghost. (See such passages as Eph. 6:18, Jude 20, Rom. 8:26-27.)

After redemption was accomplished, and the Lord Jesus in heaven -- a Man in the glory of God, the Holy Ghost was sent down from Heaven (Acts 2). The Holy Ghost dwells in the body of the believer individually (1 Cor. 6:19, etc.), and baptizes all believers collectively, into "one body" here on earth (1 Cor. 12:12-27), uniting them to Christ, the Head, in heaven. He is spoken of in Eph. 2:18, as the power of our access to the Father, through Jesus, "For through him (Jesus) we both (believers from Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit unto the Father." As Christians we "live in the Spirit" (Gal. 5), and "walk in the Spirit." Hence, prayer should be in the Spirit also.

It is not that the Holy Ghost is not worthy of all worship and prayer -- He is God. But since redemption has been accomplished, God has been pleased to take a place with us, and in us, through His Spirit, which precludes the thought of the Holy Ghost being made by us the *object* of our prayers. Hence we find the Apostles addressing, under His inspiration, the saints and assemblies of God; saluting them from the Father and the Son -- the Spirit Himself, being the one who, dwelling and acting in the Church, sends the salutation. This is the same in principle. It is, therefore, in Christianity, unintelligent to do so. If done in ignorance, it is one thing, but to do so when we have learned the Lord's mind, and this grand central truth of Christianity, is quite another.

Words of Truth 2:197-199.

The Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10)

"A. B." -- "C." ask: Does the Scripture -- 2 Cor. 5:10 contemplate believers and unbelievers? Will the sins of believers, previous to their conversion, be manifested at the judgment seat of Christ? Will this manifestation be to the praise of divine grace? Will it be only the service of Christians which will then be brought out? If the sins of believers, as well as the deeds which God can accept of, be manifested there, how does this agree with, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more?" (Heb. 10). Is not judgment past for the believer?

A. 2 Cor. 5:10 is a broad general principle, which is applicable to all mankind, irrespective of what grace has accomplished in, and for, those who believe. It is however to be remarked, that when the apostle has before his mind both saints and sinners, he does not speak of *persons being judged*, but of their *receiving for things done in the body* -- *retribution* is his thought. Because, for the saint, judgment is

past -- Christ has borne it for him: he does not come into judgment (John 5:24). "Condemnation" there is incorrect. All must be *manifested* before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive of the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad. The thought is, the perfect manifestation of all that a person is, and has been, before a throne characterized by judgment, yet without the *judgment* of the *person* being in question. It does not say "judged," for then even the saints would be condemned. Yet, when the wicked "receive the things done in the body," they must be condemned {Rev. 20}.

The apostle has no sort of anxiety for himself as to this solemn thought of a judgment seat; instead of that, it has a sanctifying and practical effect upon him, as one now manifested to God (2 Cor. 5:11). While, when he thinks of the wicked, and knows that for such it is the "terror of the Lord," it is an incentive to him to "persuade men."

God, who has wrought us for the glory and assimilation to Christ, works morally in our souls, preparing the vessel by a moral dealing thus for glory. When man fell he came to know good and evil for the first time. Good which he had no power to practice -- evil that he had no power to avoid. God works in the sinner, convincing him of, and cleansing him from the guilt -- whether of nature or practice, according to His knowledge of it, and through the work of Christ. He reveals Christ as one in whom was perfect good, outside and above the evil, as the light by which the Christian thus purged may judge all within Himself. *Without* the knowledge of grace, the soul fears the light. *With it* -- it rejoices to have a perfect standard whereby to judge all in itself that is inconsistent with the light. God works by His Spirit in the conscience which He has purged, to produce this entire and unsparing judgment of self; those who have benefited by His working thus in them, will have gained. If they have not, and that the fruits which God would have produced in them, have been turned aside, they will bear the consequences of the neglect, and lose what they might have gained; and which, if gained, although produced by Him, is counted in grace to them.

When manifested before the judgment seat of Christ they will then be enabled fully to judge according to God's judgment, as being then, divested of the flesh that hindered, all their past career. On one side will be seen all God's gracious care and painstaking wisdom, with which He deigned to deal with them all through their course; on the other, all their own frowardness and wilfulness -- how here they lost by not hearkening to Him; and there they gained and grew in stature by profiting by His ways. Here, capacity, which they might there have had, was stunted to the measure they will have then attained. There, the soul, exercised by His workings, had grown in a capacity for enjoying heaven and Christ, which it never then can recover or regain.

When the sense of this tribunal is kept in the soul, which has been established in grace (for without it none could for one instant bear the thought of receiving of the things done in the body), it has a present sanctifying effect upon the

Christian. He rejoices to judge himself, in the thought that one day he will be able to do so perfectly, in the full blaze of God's presence in the light. What he failed to do now, he will be enabled to do perfectly then. He thus keeps his conscience in the light; maintaining its rights and authority against all the subtle encroachments of the flesh. Holiness due to God governs his heart. The inward energy of holy grace which separates from all the evil within, connects the soul with God -- binds the heart to Him, and rejects every thing which is contrary to Him. When manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, the full sense of the divine grace, but imperfectly learned here below at best, will then be seen. Grace as immeasurable and as perfect as the God Himself whom it reveals. It will be to the praise of divine grace in the believer indeed.

The statement, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," has reference only to condemnation. Christ having done a work which purges the conscience {Heb. 10:2}, and has perfected the believer for ever, God righteously remits his sins; He calls them to mind no more for ever. Divine working in the soul enables *us* to call them to mind, and produces that moral judgement of ourselves about them, which deepens as we know Him the more. This work of manifestation is true now, as far as we have realized the light. Having learned divine grace, cannot I look back upon my whole course now, in perfect peace with God; and wonder and adore my God? Cannot I look back at what I was before my conversion, and, while abhorring myself, adore His grace to me? Cannot I look back at my failures since my conversion -- be humbled about them -- and worship Him, as to how I have learned Him in His patient grace with me; convicting, rebuking, chastening, and restoring my soul; and thus permitting me to grow in the knowledge of Himself and His ways? God be thanked for the grace that enables us to do so in unhindered liberty, and in the unsparing scrutiny and judgment of self I do not suppose that a *period of time* is the thought of this judgment seat. Certainly not an indiscriminate huddling together of righteous and wicked; than which no thought is more foreign to Scripture.¹⁶ It is, as I have said, a broad general principle applicable to saints of all times and dispensations to the end; and embracing sinners as well.

I trust, beloved friends, that what I have said, may lead into some apprehension of its great principles, and have a present sanctifying effect upon the lives of my readers. While, also, that it may prove a spur to the energies of those who know the true grace of God in which they stand, to persuade men -- the thought, that for sinners, it is the terror of the Lord, weighing upon the heart; and the deep, deep love of Christ constraining us to make known Him who died in grace for all!

16. NOTE. Matt. 25:31, etc., is the judgment of the *quick or living* nations -- not dead sinners who have been raised. It happens at the opening of the millennial kingdom, "when the King sits upon the throne of His glory." The judgment of the wicked dead (Rev. 20) is after the 1000 years of millennial glory, when the heavens and the earth as they are now, have fled away from before the face of Him that sat upon the great white throne.

There is no doubt but that ministerial service will be the subject of divine scrutiny. You have this distinctly taught in 1 Cor. 3:8-15. The subject there is "work" -- (ministerial labor); not "works." The subject of 2 Cor. 5 is "things done in the body"; and thus far more general.

God be thanked we go there in the likeness of Him who sits upon that judgment seat. He has come there and received us to Himself as He has said (John 14). He has changed our vile bodies, and fashioned them like His own glorious body (Phil. 3). He who sits there is the righteousness of those (believers) who are manifested before Him (2 Cor. 5:21).

Words of Truth 2:217-220.

Keeping the Unity of the Spirit

Q. C.A.S. asks; How am I to endeavor to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"? What does it mean?

A. The Holy Ghost came down from heaven personally on the day of Pentecost, and dwells in each member of Christ individually (1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 1:13, 14, etc.); and the saints, thus indwelt, upon earth, form God's habitation through the Spirit. He dwells corporately in the whole Church (Eph. 2:22, etc.). He unites each member to the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17), each member to the other members (1 Cor. 12:13); and all the members to the Head. This is the Church of God -- the body of Christ.

This unity has remained untouched by all the failures of the church. It is a unity which cannot be destroyed, because it is the Holy Ghost Himself. He is the unity of the body of Christ.

The Church of God was responsible to have maintained this unity of the Spirit, in practical outward and visible oneness. In this she has failed. The unity has not. It remains, because the Spirit of God remains. It remains even when the oneness of action is well nigh gone. The unity of a human body remains, when a limb is paralyzed; but where is its oneness? The paralyzed limb has not ceased to be of the body, but it has lost the healthy articulation of the body.

Still, no matter what the ruin may be -- no matter how terrible is the confused and unhealthy state in which things are -- scripture never allows that it is impracticable for the saints to walk in the fellowship of God's Spirit, and maintenance of the truth. It is always practicable. The Spirit of God pre-supposes evil and perilous days; still God enjoins us to endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." He enjoins nothing impracticable. We never can restore anything to its former state; but we can walk in obedience to the word, and in the company of the Spirit of God, who enables us to hold the Head. He will never sacrifice Christ, and His honor and glory for His members. Hence we are exhorted to endeavor to keep the "unity of the Spirit" (not the "unity of the body"; which would prevent us from separating from any member of the body of Christ, no matter what his practice). The Holy Ghost glorifies Christ -- and walking in fellowship with Him, we are kept specially

identified with Christ.

In this endeavor, I must begin with myself. My first duty is to separate myself to Christ, from everything that is contrary to Him: -- "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity" (2 Tim. 2:19). This evil may be moral, practical, doctrinal: no matter what it is I must get away from it; and when I have done so I find myself practically in company with the Holy Ghost: and a nucleus for those who are truehearted likewise. If I can find such; i.e., those who have done the same, I am to follow righteousness, faith, peace, charity, with them (2 Tim. 2:22). If I can find none where I am, I must stand alone with the Holy Ghost for my Lord. There are, however, the Lord be praised, many who have done likewise, and are on the line of action of the Spirit of God in the Church. They have the blessed promise as a resource, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). They are practically one, as led by the same Spirit, with every member of Christ in the world who has done likewise. I do not now refer to their absolute union with the whole body of Christ -- but of the practice.

The basis on which they are gathered (i.e., the Spirit of God, in the body of Christ) is wide enough in its principle to embrace the whole Church of God. Narrow enough to exclude from its midst every thing that is not of the Spirit of God. To admit such would put them practically out of the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.

This endeavor does not confine itself to those who are thus together -- one with the other. It has its aspect towards every member of Christ upon earth. The walk of those thus gathered, in entire separation to Christ, and practical fellowship of the Spirit, and maintenance of the truth, is the, truest love they can show toward their brethren who are not practically with them. Walking in truth and unity -- they will desire that their brethren may be won into the truth and fellowship of the Holy Ghost. They may be but a feeble remnant; but the true remnants were ever distinguished by personal devotedness to the Lord, who ever specially watched over them, in the most tender solicitude; and associated Himself specially with them!

Words of Truth 3:18-20.

Indwelling of the Spirit

Q. "J. K. M." If it be true that the Holy Ghost was not given to dwell in the bodies of believers, to unite them to Christ in Old Testament days; and that the personal presence of the Spirit in man after Pentecost, was a new thing previously unexampled in the word and ways of God; what is the meaning of Isa. 43:10-11, "His Holy Spirit within him"; also 1 Pet. 1:11, "The Spirit of Christ which was in them?"

A. Everything good that ever was wrought from the creation of the world, was done by the power of the Holy Ghost. He moved upon the face of the waters in the Creation. By Him, souls were new-born. He inspired the prophets to write, or to speak God's mind. Bezaleel was filled with the Spirit of God, to prepare the Tabernacle, Ark, Vessels, etc. (Ex. 31:3).

David was instructed by the Spirit of God in preparing the pattern of the Temple for Solomon (1 Chron. 28:12-19). The saints were guided and instructed by Him. David prayed that the Holy Ghost might not thus be taken from him (Psa. 51:11). Noah preached righteousness by the Spirit of Christ. John Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. To multiply instances is unnecessary. Still all this is far from *dwelling* in them.

The statement in John 7:39, cuts in a clean line between the saints before the Lord's glorification, and since that time. Had the Holy Ghost been given then, God would have been sealing souls in a state short of the consciousness of redemption; and thus accrediting such a state. Consciences were unpurged then {Heb. 10:2}, (although God was known in grace); and the Holy Ghost could not have sealed and accredited such a state. When the work of redemption was accomplished, and the soul thus introduced into the liberty of grace, the Spirit of God could then take up His abode and dwell in the body of the believer, as a seal of the perfection of Christ's work. We see this clearly brought out in type, in the ease of the consecration of the Priests. The High Priest was anointed with oil (the Holy Ghost in type), without sacrifice; this was typical of the perfection of Christ's person; the Holy Ghost descended in bodily shape like a dove upon Him. The Priests, Aaron's sons, were anointed after sacrifices; this was a figure of the perfection of Christ's work in which they stood. Habits of thought have confounded the state of the Saints before the day of Pentecost, with those since that time. Alas! too, souls are not free -- they are not enjoying the liberty of grace which the Holy Ghost ministers to them now; and consequently they accept a state short of Christian liberty before God. They limit their experience to that of a godly Jew, under law, before redemption. They have almost come to the state of the men of Ephesus in Acts 19: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost": i.e., whether He was come yet or not. Nothing can be clearer than the line drawn by the Spirit of God in John 7:39, between believers before the glorification of Christ, and since that time. Before that time all that was ever done in or by a saint, prophet, or otherwise, was by the power of the Spirit acting in the vessel for the time. Now He *dwells* in the body of the believer, as in a temple (1 Cor. 6:19), seals him, having believed (Eph. 1:14), until the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). He may grieve the Spirit of God, but he never can lose Him. Besides all this, it was an action of the Holy Ghost, in whatever way it took place, in the Old Testament times. This is a different thing from His descending personally from heaven on the day of Pentecost, and dwelling amongst men. His person and presence upon earth is as distinct as that of the Lord Jesus when here. *In* the believer individually, and *in* the church corporately. The Lord's promise of the Comforter -- the Holy Ghost, was that He would not only be *with* them, (not for a limited time, as Christ had been); but in them as well; and that, "for ever." To this end it was expedient that He should go away. If He went not away, the Comforter would not come (John 16:7). The passages you quote have reference to the action of the Holy Ghost in the vessel, whether of a prophet, or otherwise, at the time.

Words of Truth 3:39, 40.

Saints and Faithful

Q. L.H., Jersey. -- In Eph. 1:1, we read, "To the saints, and to the faithful," etc. Are these two classes of persons, or is one the standing and the other the walk?

A. The word "saints" is a general term applicable to all who are Christ's, at any period of the history of God's dealings. But the Spirit of God has been pleased to add the word "faithful." This word may be rendered "believers." It is to be found in the following passages, amongst many, in the New Testament. 2 Cor. 6:15, "He that believeth," or "the believer." 1 Tim. 4:10-12, "Specially those that believe," or, "specially believers," and "Be thou an example to the believers." These examples will serve to show that the word may be truly used in this sense. The Epistle to the Ephesians contemplates only the saints since the accomplishment of redemption, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, teaching truths peculiar to them. It is from God, who has Christ, now both God and Man, in His presence. "Saints" and "faithful" are used of the same persons; the former signifying their condition with reference to the world, the latter giving them a special character as having believed in Christ Jesus. The Patriarchs, etc., had hoped in faith for One who was to come; those before the mind of the Spirit in Ephesians had believed in One who had come, and had wrought redemption, and was now a Man in the glory of God: and who not only had believed, but who were faithfully maintaining the faith they had received; for, when Paul was writing, Christianity, and especially the doctrines he had enunciated, were beginning to be unpopular, not in the sense of the benefits of salvation and redemption, but in the holy and separate walk they inculcated, as the calling of the Church of God. The apostle contemplates this state of things in the mode of his address to the Ephesians and Colossians.

Words of Faith 3:59, 60.

Eph. 1:18

Q. L. H., Jersey. Eph.1:8, "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence?"

A. God has fully unfolded to us, in vv. 3-5, His *calling*, as suited to His own counsels, and His own heart; which is "to the praise of the *glory* of His grace." In these verses He does not take into account our sinful condition, but lets us know His own thoughts as to the way He desires to have us in His presence, as purposed eternally in His own counsels in Christ. In v. 7, He takes into account that we are sinners, needing redemption and forgiveness, and acts according to the "*riches* of His grace," which (grace) He has caused to abound toward us, "in all wisdom and intelligence" (as it may be read), in making known the mystery of His will, which He purposed in Himself, for the glory of Christ. He treats us as friends (cp. John. 15:16, as illustration), in the place of intimacy and nearness. These counsels we learn in ver. 10.

Thank God we are placed in such a position, and called thus to share in His counsels as to Christ; not merely because

we shall share the glory with Him (v. 11), but because His glory is everything to us, and has a real interest in our hearts.

Peter's Fishing After the Resurrection

Q. Was Peter wrong in going a-fishing, and did he not draw others into it? What is the lesson?

A. It is plain that Peter's going a-fishing was not in keeping with the commission given to him by our Lord in the previous chapter, "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you." No doubt it was Peter's suggestion which disclosed a similar weakness in six more of them; in that Peter afforded a vent for the exposure of their weakness, so far is he chargeable with their offence. What a great matter a little fire kindles! But he who applies the torch, is of course the one chiefly to be censured. The lesson I gather from it is, that no amount of acquaintance with Jesus, such as the disciples had; or no amount of intelligence without His personal keeping, or the power of the Holy Ghost; (which these seven were not enjoying at the time), will preserve one on the line, or divert one from earthly interests, in some form or other.

Simon, Son of Jonas

Q. What are we to learn by the Lord addressing Peter afterwards as "Simon, son of Jonas?"

A. I believe it is to show, that He is addressing him as the *man* -- the natural man; -- as he was in nature. Is he in nature still? Can the man in nature reckon on his love to the Lord; or does he see his weakness, and will he cease to trust on the son of Jonas? The Spirit tells us that it was "Peter" who replied to our Lord's question. If you will read carefully Gen. 48-49, you will see this principle carried out in the names "Jacob" and "Israel." "Jacob" was his name in nature, "Israel" what God had called him. It brings the interchange of names most forcibly before us, as carrying a divine meaning.

When He said to him, "Lovest thou me more than these?" it was "more than the *disciples*." Peter had professed, "Though all shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." He had made a greater profession in fleshly confidence than all the others, and had fallen more grievously than any of them. It was this appeal which touched him to the very quick.

Baptism of the Holy Ghost

Q. How is one to know that one is baptized with the Holy Ghost?

A. By faith, founded on the Word of God. It is a positive result to every one who has believed the gospel of salvation. "In whom after that ye believed (or having believed) ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," etc. (Eph. 1:14). "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," etc. (1 Cor. 12:13). Besides, there is the absolute consciousness of it, in union with Christ. The consciousness of the believer is, "In

that day ye shall *know* that I am in my Father and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). This is not merely a new nature; all must have it to possess the other; but positive union with Christ by the Holy Ghost, received on believing, as well as union with all believers here upon earth. Do we not know this? We meet those whom we have never seen before, and are conscious of a closer tie than that of father or mother, brother or sister in the flesh.

If I am to ask a man how he knew his body was joined to his head; he would tell me that he had the positive sense of it. As my hand is united to my body, and acts directly with reference to the welfare of the whole body, not merely for itself in particular; so a member of Christ never has a mere exclusive capacity, or in his own individual interest; and the more he acts as a member of Christ's body so far is the whole body served, or the reverse. If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Cor. 12:26).

What is the "Perfect Man?"

Q. Wm. C., Skreen, asks for an explanation of Eph. 4:13. "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." What is the perfect man?

A. The object of ministry by Christ's gifts, (see vv. 11 and 12,) is the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ, till each, and all should arrive, in one uniform basis of faith, and the full knowledge of the Son of God, to the state of full grown men. Not remaining in the unhealthy state of babes, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. "A perfect man," means simply "a full grown man" -- the fullness of Christ Himself being the measure of the stature desired; the Christian growing up to Him in all things. This is placed in contrast to the state of a babe. *The state of soul of the individual* is what is in question in verses 13-15.

You will find the word rendered "perfect" in this verse, in the following passages; 1 Cor. 2:6, "Them that are *perfect*" (1 Cor. 2:6). "Let us therefore, as many as be *perfect*" (Phil. 3:5). "Every man *perfect* in Christ" (Col. 1:28). "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of *full age*" (Heb. 5:15). There are many other passages in which it occurs. The thought is "full grown."

Words of Truth 3:76-78.

Lord's Supper: Eating and Drinking Unworthily

"D. M. A." Deal. What is meant by eating and drinking "unworthily," of the bread and the cup, in 1 Cor. 11:29?

A. The "unworthily" refers to the manner of partaking of the Lord's Supper, not to the person who partakes. Every believer, unless excluded by some discipline for sin, is worthy to partake, because he is a Christian. The work of Christ has made him meet for heaven, and worthy to partake of that which calls to mind his Lord in the solemn moment of

death, sinbearing, and judgment. If he bring unjudged sin, or carelessness to it, it is to profane the death of Christ, who died to put sin away from God's sight for ever. The Christian cannot be condemned for sin (the world is condemned); but Christ having borne his sin, God does not condemn him for it, although He cleanses him practically from it by chastening. It never escapes His eye -- and while He never imputes it for condemnation, still He never passes it over, and if we do not judge it in ourselves, He deals with us for sin by discipline, which may reach to sickness unto death, as v. 30 shows.

If we eat the Lord's Supper with unjudged sin upon us, we do not discern the Lord's body which was broken to put it away; thus we partake of it unworthily, and God cannot allow such carelessness. Grace makes us worthy to partake, but the government of God, administered by the Lord over God's house, deals with sin or carelessness. Still, if we scrutinize our own ways, and judge ourselves, we are not judged of the Lord. Judging ourselves for failure, is our course, and then *eating* the Lord's Supper. Some have thought they should *absent* themselves from the Supper when they have failed. But He does not say "Let a man judge himself and so let him stay away," but "so let him eat." Staying away is mere self-will. It is not enough to judge the mere *action*; it is *ourselves* we should judge. The state of our heart which allowed the failure, should be subjected to scrutiny and self-judgment. If I am a child, I judge my ways, if they are unsuited to my father; but I do not set about to judge if I am a child, when I fail; but how naughty I have been as the son of such a father. I may behave very unworthily of my kind father, but my behavior is not the ground of the relationship. I cannot be a naughty child unless I am a child: and the relationship is the ground of self-judgment, that I may behave myself suitably to the relationship, and to Him who is my Father.

Words of Truth 3:99, 100.

Judas and the Lord's Supper

Q. Sophia: Does John 13:2-4, and Matt. 26:20-26 refer to the same supper? Was Judas present? And if so, (since unbelievers should not be admitted to the Lord's table) why did the Lord, who knows the secrets of all hearts, admit him?

A. There is no reason to suppose that the two passages do not refer to the same supper, or paschal feast. Judas was present surely; and during its continuance Jesus instituted, that which Scripture afterwards calls the Lord's Supper. The institution of the feast did not reveal other features, which were subsequently introduced into it when it became the symbol of fellowship in the Church, afterwards formed by the descent of the Holy Ghost from heaven at Pentecost (Acts. 2). It was then the church of God began to exist. When redemption was accomplished, and Jesus ascended to heaven as man; the Holy Ghost descended from heaven to dwell in believers, and in the church of God {Acts 2:22, 23}; baptizing all Christ's members into one body {1 Cor. 12:13}, and uniting them to Christ in glory. The Lord's Supper was the recognized symbol of the fellowship of the body of Christ. The first institution of the supper did not embrace what was afterwards revealed unto Paul the apostle as to this. He writes, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" *"For we, being, many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread (or loaf)"* (1 Cor. 10:6-17). This was a feature added to the first institution of the supper. One loaf was that which represented the communion of all who were united to Christ, and baptized into one body by the Holy Ghost. In 1 Cor. 11:23-26, Paul distinctly informs us that he had a special revelation as to the supper; and of course we should expect it to be so, as he alone had received the truth about the Church of God. Now the church -- the body of Christ -- is only composed of believers, members of Christ. When they gather together, as such, in His name, to eat the Lord's Supper, it precludes all thought of unbelievers partaking of the supper amongst them. Even those who are Christ's, and whose walk does not comport with the holiness and truth that becomes the house of God, are precluded from the Lord's table. This makes it simple that no unbelievers should partake of it. If Judas did so, it was before the church had any existence, and before the supper had certain features attached to it, as subsequently added through the apostle Paul.

Is Righteousness God's Gift?

Q. "B." Is it a correct expression, i.e., Scriptural -- to say that the Righteousness of God is, His gift, as life is?

A. Rom. 5:17 is clear as to this, where it speaks of righteousness as His gift: -- "Much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the *gift of righteousness*, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ."

Words of Truth 3:118, 119.

When Does Sealing Take Place?

"Q. N. L. Does sealing take place immediately on believing; or, is it possible for a person to be a believer and not be sealed *in this dispensation*?"

A. Sealing takes place at once on believing. Eph. 1:13 is plain on the subject:

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed (or 'having believed') ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.

The Apostle connects sealing with "the gospel of *your* salvation." God's salvation is announced by the gospel; I have believed in the gospel of *my* salvation, and forthwith I am sealed by the Spirit. A saved man is one who has no doubt. Scripture never speaks of a man being "*saved*" who has any. We must not confound the state of many *quickened* souls with those who have *believed* {in the sense of believed the gospel of salvation (Eph. 1:13)}. The action of God in quickening and in sealing are as distinct as possible. He quickens a sinner who wants life; He does not seal a sinner as such, surely; that were to seal him in his sins; nor does He seal a quickened soul in his misery. He does not seal Peter when he cried out "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5); or when the soul is crying out "O wretched man that I am." He seals a believer {that is, one who has believed the gospel of his salvation}; and "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" {2 Cor. 3:17}; not doubts, and bondage, and fears.

These two actions of the Holy Ghost are never, as far as I know, synchronous -- they do not happen at the same moment; while on God's part there is of course no reason why it should not be so. Many cases testify as to this in Scripture.

The disciples were quickened before the day of Pentecost, yet they were not sealed till then. The Samaritans received the gospel and were quickened before Peter and John came down, and they were not sealed till then; ("as yet he was fallen upon none of them." See Acts 8:5-17). "There was great *joy*" we read, and there is often this without *peace* with God. Peace is a full and perfect word; it is far more than joy. A soul that has peace with God has been sealed by the Spirit. Paul was quickened by a voice from heaven (Acts 9:4), and yet he did not receive the Holy Ghost till the third day after, when he had gone through all the deep work in his soul for the three days (see Acts 9:17). Cornelius was a devout man, one that feared God, and prayed to God always - a *quickened* soul. He is told to send for Peter to hear words of him, whereby he and all his house would be *saved* (Acts 11:14). God does not call him a *saved* man, as merely quickened. When Peter comes he does not tell him he must be born again, which as a sinner he needed and had been, but he points him to Christ, and they accept the message, and the Holy Ghost fell on them. You get the same thing in Acts 19; those at Ephesus who were quickened souls had not as yet received the Holy Ghost.

It is not possible for a person to be a *believer* {cp. Eph.

1:13} in the present dispensation without being sealed. There are many *quicken*ed souls who are not sealed, but no Christian ever dies and passes away from this scene, where as to personal place the Holy Ghost is since Pentecost, without being sealed. This is why you see cases in which there was no liberty, or peace with God, enjoyed during the lifetime, with occasional gleams of joy; and yet when on a death-bed they have got perfect peace with God, and are sealed.

I think we use the word “believer” too indiscriminately, for every state of soul in which God is working. A believer in Scripture language is one who is sealed. Scripture allows but one basis, or normal condition, for Christians. When we come to look at the condition of souls we find that in many cases they are not there; while there is no reason on God’s part why they should not be.

What Does the Number Five Signify?

Q. “C. Somerset.” What does the number five signify in Scripture?

A. Five seems to be used to signify that which is *relatively small*; the number characterizing weakness. In Lev. 26:8, we read, “Five of you shall chase a hundred.” The very smallness of Israel, if faithful, would easily discomfit their enemies in power. In Isa. 30:17, on the other hand, it is said of them in the time of their judgment, “At the rebuke of five shall ye flee; till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill.” In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, we find that after the midnight cry they were broken up into fives -- weakness -- in the interval between the hope of the Lord’s coming being revived in the Church, and the shutting of the door. We find the Lord (Matt. 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, and John 6) feeding the multitude from *five* loaves and two fishes. He is equal to the demand, no matter how scanty the supply, at times of peculiar moment in the gospel history. Paul says, “I had rather speak *five* words with my understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue” (1 Cor. 14:19).

There are many other places “five” is used in Scripture, but these passages will help to an understanding of its meaning as a symbol.

What Is the Meaning of Rom. 6:17?

“R. P.” What. is the meaning of, “But ye have obeyed from the heart the form of teaching into which you were instructed (Rom. 6:17, N. T.) etc.

A. The disciples in Rome had given proof in their practical ways of the Apostle’s doctrine in this chapter by walking in the truth, that the old man had been crucified with Christ. They were counting themselves as dead with Him, and alive unto God through Christ. Thus sin as not having dominion over them, and as set free from its slavery they had become slaves to righteousness (he speaks after the manner of men.) The heart was thus free to yield itself unto God in practical obedience, the conscience being at rest before Him.

I do not believe the thought you express is in the passage.

Their practice corresponded with the true spiritual meaning of their baptism, which was “unto death.” Baptism is never put as obedience in Scripture. It is always the act of the baptizer, never that of the baptized. It is never the sign of what a man is already, or of an inward state.

Many Called, Few Chosen

Q. What is the moral use of the words, “For many are called but few chosen,” in the different contexts, Matt. 20:16, and Matt. 22:14?

A. I apprehend that the two passages show the contrast of the external effect, and internal power. Matt. 22:14 is pretty plain. The gospel message, as men speak, had brought in a crowd, and where the true wedding garment was not, he who had it not was cast into outer darkness.

The application of Matt. 20:16 is less immediate; it is more the general principle. It connects with Matt. 19:29, 30; there reward is declared to be the fruit of sacrifice, and to guard against enfeebling grace this parable is added, when, though there was appointed reward for labor, we are shown to be no judges of it. For those, though coming last, if God calls them to it, who will be first. For there may be a great appearance of labor and yet God not own it. It is still the contrast of the outward appearance, and those whom God has chosen; the fruits of His own grace, and not of following apparent principles by man, while only self is there. Only here it is labor and reward brings it in; in v. 22 external calling of grace.

Words of Truth 3:137-140.

Anointing and Sealing

Q. “B,” Islington. What is the distinction between the anointing and the sealing of the Spirit?

A. The anointing is the action of God, by the Holy Ghost, in sealing a believer as His. If I am to put a mark on something belonging to me, it is then marked as mine. It is the distinction between the putting on of the mark, and the fact of its being marked. God anoints us with the Holy Ghost, and the person who has been thus anointed is sealed.

Words of Truth 3:159.

Eternal Life and Renewing the Sacrifices

“A Learner” asks: “If the Old Testament saints had eternal life, what was the object of renewing the sacrifices year by year?”

It could not be *then* said that they had eternal life {as the NT speaks of eternal life in the Son}. It was only brought to light through the Gospel (2 Tim. 1:10, Titus 1:22, etc.). We know that they were all born again, but there was no revelation then as to the distinction between two natures. They had the conscience of the “old man” unpurged {Heb. 10:2}, and the

desires of the “new man” {the new nature}; but looked at as men in the flesh, they were under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the Father. Under Judaism, they were servants under the law as a schoolmaster, until Christ, and Christian faith, had come (Gal. 3). “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 ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son unto your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” That which the sacrifices pointed to and typified had not come: the continued repetition of the offerings showed this. That of which the brazen serpent was a figure had not taken place. “The Son of man must be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have *eternal life*” -- now named for the first time. In only two places in the Old Testament is it named; and even there it is in view of the future (Psa. 133:3, Dan. 12:2). The Son of God had come and had displayed eternal life in Himself. It “was with the Father, and was manifested unto us” in the Son; a Moses or a David could not display it, and it was reserved for Him to speak first of that which He alone could display. He takes away the typical and oft-repeated sacrifices, unsatisfying to God, and leaving man’s conscience unpurged; establishes the righteousness of God against sin; and God, glorified at what He had done, puts Him, as man, in the glory of God in righteousness. Atonement was made, reconciliation accomplished, and now God in righteousness gives eternal life to every one believing on Jesus. “God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son” (1 John. 5). Our whole state as sinners -- what we were, and what we had done, was thus dealt with judicially on the cross, once and for ever; and Christ, risen out of the judgment, is our life -- we are quickened together with Him, having been forgiven all trespasses (Col. 2:13).

A new nature, capable of enjoying God, was imparted by the Spirit, through faith in the word of God at any time. The recipient of it was born again. Now, more can be said: we have eternal life in Christ -- Christ lives in us; and this eternal life brings us into fellowship with the Father and the Son {John 17:3, etc.}, which could not be till the Father was revealed in Him, and the Holy Ghost given by which we enjoy it.

The Author and Finisher of Faith

Q. “M. W. K.” 1. What is the meaning of “The author and finisher of faith?” (Heb. 12:2).

2. Is there any difference, and what, if any, between the words “Faith of Christ,” or “of the Son of God”; and “faith in Christ Jesus”? Has 1 Pet. 1:21 any relation to this subject? etc.

A. 1. The Lord is spoken of here as the one who had run the whole career of faith as a man on earth, until He sat down on the right hand of the throne of God. The cloud of witnesses of Heb. 11 might fill up their little niche in the career of faith, and be an encouragement to those who were called to walk on the same principle; but there was one who had gone

through the entire course, from beginning to end of the pathway. If the fathers had trusted in God and were delivered, He had cried and was not heard. All -- even the cup of wrath -- must be drained to the bottom before the answer came. He looked for comforters, and found none -- His friend betrays; His disciples flee away; Peter denies Him. Forsaken of God, because made sin, He treads with unflinching step the wondrous pathway, looking to the joy that was set before Him, till He sat down on high -- the “Captain,” or “Leader, and Finisher of faith.” We look steadfastly upon Him, and are not only encouraged, as by the other witnesses, but are sustained and strengthened and upheld in the race that is set before us. In contemplating Him, the new man is in vigor and activity, and the weights and besetting sins are laid aside with ease.

“Author,” in this passage, is the same word as that translated “Captain” in Heb. 2:10, and “Prince,” in Acts 3:15, and v. 31.

2. The expressions are substantially the same. There is, however, a nice shade of difference. In Gal. 2:16, 20, we have the *characteristic way* by which we are justified, and by which we live -- viz, “on the principle of faith,” Christ being the object of it -- in contrast with “works of law.” So “we live,” also, by “faith” in the “Son of God,” as the object and motive and spring of our life.

In Gal. 3:25 -- “Faith,” here, is the object of the apostle’s argument, in contrast to “the law” -- Christ being He who is the object of this faith. 1 Pet. 1:21 has no relation to this subject.

Words of Truth 3:178-180.

Colossians 1

Q. “R. A. H.” asks the following questions from Col. 1.

1. “The firstborn of every creature”; v. 15?
2. “All fullness”; v. 19?
3. What are the “sufferings” of v. 24?
4. “The dispensation” of v. 20? and, “The mystery which hath been hid,” etc., v. 26?

A. 1. The apostle is unfolding the personal glory of the Son of God in these verses (16-19); when the Creator deigned to take a place in that which He created, He must necessarily be “first-born,” or “chief” of it all, in the sense of the dignity of His person. It is a relative name; not one denoting the date at which He did become a man, thus taking a place in it. Just as it is said of Solomon, who was not David’s first-born, “I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth,” in the place of priority given him. He adds, in verse 16: “For by him were all things created . . . and for him”; explaining and enlarging upon verse 15. He must be the chief of it all, even if He appeared last in order of time, as taking a place in it. Adam could not be this, and his children were only those of a fallen man. When God Himself takes a place in that which He created, He could not have a secondary place; but is “firstborn,” or “chief,” because He had created it. Wondrous and yet simple testimony to the deity of Jesus!

2. We should read Col. 1:19 thus: "For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell." This was the counsel of the Godhead. In Col. 2:9, we find the fact: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness (completeness) of the Godhead bodily." The fullness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell in Christ. Christ is God; and Christ is man; yet it is Christ who is both. When He, the Son of God, walked here upon earth, it was not a partial manifestation of God, as if He were but a man. If He, the Son of God, wrought miracles, it was by the Spirit of God: "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God" (Matt. 12:28). Yet, "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (John 14:10); the Father wrought in the Son. It was not one person of the divine fullness of the Godhead acting alone, or to the exclusion of the rest. But all having, not merely similar counsels, but one counsel, end and aim; "all the fullness was pleased to dwell in him."

3. Paul in a special manner suffered those sufferings of which he speaks here. To Christ alone, for Paul, as for all saints belonged those atoning sufferings which He bore once, and for ever; which God never forgets. Still He suffered in many ways here below, in which His love led Him, and He does not exclude us from a share in them with Him -- "the fellowship of his sufferings," and if we are faithful we may know them in measure. Paul knew them in a peculiar way. It was not here so much "the afflictions of the gospel"; as, "sufferings for you" -- Gentiles -- and "for his body's sake, which is the church," of which he speaks. The truths concerning his testimony which led him to prison, and a life of unparalleled devotedness and suffering, which perhaps few, if any, have ever borne.

4. "The dispensation of God" given to Paul completed the word of God. Creation; Providence; Law; Government; the Kingdom; Incarnation; Atonement, every subject had been unfolded in the word of God, but one. When it was revealed through Paul the full circle of revelation was completed: this was the mystery of Christ and the church. 1st, That Christ should -- as man -- be set in the heavenlies, having all dominion, by redemption, (personally He had it as God,) as Head *over* all things in heaven and earth, *to* the church, His body, united to Him by the Holy Ghost come down from Heaven. 2nd, That He was "in you" -- Gentiles -- the "Hope of Glory." This was a new thing. When Christ came He was the "minister of the circumcision (the Jew) for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8). Abraham was the vessel of the promises of God; they were repeated to the fathers, Isaac and Jacob; Israel took the promises on the ground of law and man's responsibility, and forfeited them totally; then Christ came, in whom were all the promises of God, yea and amen. He came to establish the promises, as Heir of them all, to the people to whose fathers they had been made, i.e. the Jews. He was rejected, and instead of becoming the Crown of glory . . . unto the residue of his people" (Isa. 28:5), the Heir of glory goes on high, and the poor Gentile believer, who had no promises, comes in on the footing of pure mercy, not promise; as we read, "that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy" (Rom. 15:9): he gets a place in Christ on high, united to Him who is the Heir of all the glory; and not only

are we in Him, but He is in us -- not the "crown of glory"; but "the hope of glory." "Christ in you the hope of glory."

Hidden Manna and White Stone

Q. What is meant by the "Hidden manna," and the "White stone," of Rev. 2:17?

A. The church had departed from her first love in the state contemplated in the message to Ephesus (ch. 2). God had used the persecution, with which Satan had tried to drive her out of the world, as that which brightened her up for the Lord. This is Smyrna. Satan had not succeeded thus as a "roaring lion," and he now tries seduction, as a "serpent," and had drawn her into the world. This is what we find in the message to Pergamos. "I know . . . where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." Still there were faithful ones. Antipas, a faithful martyr, might be slain amongst them for His name. (Striking meaning, the name Antipas, i.e. "*against all*," when all were slipping away into the world.) Now we find the promise to the overcomer in such a state of things -- the "Hidden manna," and the "White stone." The manna was, in figure, Christ humbled here: there was no *place* on earth that He could take: doing so would but own the world in its state of departure from God. He was the lowliest on earth. Those who were standing firm in this lowly path, where the church should have trodden in His footsteps, would be fed thus with Him, as the humbled, rejected One, which the church was now ceasing to be. It was the "Hidden manna" too. This is an allusion to the golden pot of manna which was treasured up in the ark for a remembrance (Ex. 16). The humiliation of that Blessed One God never forgets. It was no mere passing savor of Him, as merely a means to an end, in accomplishing His great work. But that which abides in God's memory and heart for ever! Blessed to be fed on such food -- "God's treasured store."

The "White stone" was, according to an ancient custom, a mark of approval -- as a black stone was of disapproval -- it is the approval of Christ to those who were satisfied with this lowly path. In the stone a new name written, known only to him who received it. There are common joys of God's saints now: there will be common joys in heaven. But there are secret joys now between the heart and Christ, known to him who is recipient of them alone. There will be such in heaven.

Saul and the Witch of Endor

Q. "J.K.M." If "all Scripture" is "profitable," etc. (2 Tim. 3:16), what edification is the Christian to receive from the narrative of Saul and the witch of Endor? (1 Sam. 28).

A. We learn for ourselves a deeply solemn lesson from this chapter, beside the ways of God with His people Israel, instructive as they are. We find the closing days of one who had once maintained an outward form of piety, and had exhibited much apparent devotedness and zeal in the service of the Lord, but who never had faith. In Saul's case we see how far flesh can go in an outwardly devoted pathway, yet, when the testing time comes, it proved that there never was any real link with God. His outward zeal had destroyed the witchcraft in Israel, when he was maintaining a religious character; but his conscience never was awakened -- he had not faith. In his extremity in the face of the enemy he trembles, and enquires of the Lord, who did not reply to him by dreams, Urim, or prophets: and he has the solemn conviction forced upon him that the day of outward apparent serving of the Lord was gone. Like the sow that was washed, he has recourse to what he had once destroyed, and which even by natural conscience he knew was evil -- to enchantments. Here God meets him, and exhibits a power that causes even the witch to quail -- terrified by a power superior to the enchantments which she practiced. He finds now, when too late, that he had given himself up to Satan's power, and made the Lord his enemy, who tells him his end. Like Judas -- who had habitually yielded to temptation he finds now that the enemy cannot shield him from the judgment of God, whose grace he had traded upon so long.

Poor Saul! Poor Judas! how many a fair vessel, when the day of reckoning comes, will be found like you!

John 3:13

Q. If Enoch and Elijah were taken up to heaven, what is the meaning of John 3:13?

A. They were caught up to heaven. No man had "ascended" up to heaven till Christ. He did so in the calmness of His own divine and indwelling power.

Words of Truth 3:216-220.

The Believer's Confession of Sins

Q. "R. P." 1. How is it said in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"; after it is said in Eph. 1:7 and Col. 1:14, "In whom we have redemption through His blood; the forgiveness of our sins"?

2. As a believer in Jesus Christ, whose blood has cleansed me from all sin, am I not already forgiven -- washed every whit clean -- so as to need no repetition of forgiveness, or application of it?

3. To which does this ninth verse apply -- to the cleansing efficacy of the blood at the first: or the washing of our feet

afterwards by the water of the Word? especially as the next verse says, "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not"?

A. 1, 2. I must preface my remarks on these questions by stating, first, that *a sin is never forgiven until it is committed*; let us be clear as to this: when I, as a poor sinner, believe the gospel, God forgives my sins on the ground of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done; He is just and consistent with Himself in doing so, as a righteous God. He justifies me, and I am pardoned for all the sins I have committed: God remembers them no more for ever. But more; I find, after all, that I am still a sinner, and that if God in grace has removed the fruit off a bad tree, the tree is still there, and may produce a new crop. Then I learn another truth, not only that Christ died for me and bore my sins, but that I have died with Him, and thus for faith, as for God, the old tree is gone, that nature which produced the sins, for which there is no forgiveness; and as dead with Christ, I am justified from sin, and the Christ, who has died and risen, is now the true "I" -- a new graft on an old tree, which has been cut down; "Christ liveth in me." The old tree is there, and if I am not watchful it may -- alas, it does appear; for "in many things we offend all." Now I cannot say that I am forgiven for what I never have committed; for forgiveness has reference to actions which have been committed, not to the nature which produced the evil thing. Forgiveness assumes that the sins are in existence to which the forgiveness applies. Neither can I say that I must sin in the future -- I may do so if not watchful; and if I do so, it is the allowance of the action of the old nature, which, as long as unconfessed and unforgiven, hinders fellowship and joy. As for imputation that cannot be, because Christ has borne the wrath for me, and is in God's presence on high. I cannot enjoy the presence of God -- and God will not allow me to do so -- so long as the sin is unconfessed and unjudged. The righteousness has not changed in which I stand before God, as Christ is there, but the sin is on my conscience. God has said in His Word, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," etc. I lay hold upon that principle by faith, and lay my heart bare before Him; a deep and painful work; much more so than asking forgiveness for which I have no divine warrant after redemption was accomplished, and which is really "taking it easy." It is easy enough to ask to be forgiven, but a painful work for the heart to take the motive from which the evil action came, and the thoughts which conceived it -- ("when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin" James 1) -- to God, and to tell them out in the presence of a grace that does not impute it to me, and which breaks my heart down more than all else could. My heart thinks of the agony it cost Christ to put away that sin before God's eye -- feels, too, what it is to have a sin on my conscience, and learns the restoring grace of God, who is faithful and just to forgive me my sin; and more -- "to cleanse" me -- to remove the remembrance of it from my conscience in full restoring grace.

No doubt we have, as quoted, "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins"; but it is to sins that have been committed, to which this and like passages refer: Redemption, Quickening, etc., go much farther than this. The

former is the total deliverance of the person out of the condition he was in as a sinner, and introduction into another state before God. Quickening is the impartation of a new life -- the life of Christ risen, who had borne the sins away, and in whom I have the redemption. I ought not to sin after having been introduced into such a state, yet, alas, I do. Hence, when John speaks in the verse you quote (1 John 1:9), he adds, "My little children, these things (i.e., the preceding verses) write I unto you that ye sin not." To have said what he did might have been taken advantage of by flesh, and used as license to sin, thus he guards it, and adds the truth, "If any sin, we have an advocate with the Father," One who has gone after us, and dealt with our hearts and consciences with His word and Spirit, making us feel the bitterness of sin, and thus has bowed our hearts before God in confession -- a thing we would never do unless He exercised this advocacy.

We do not need to be justified again -- to be redeemed again -- to be quickened again; all that is accomplished once and for ever. But we do need the sense of forgiveness when we have allowed the sinful nature in us to act in the slightest form. This is the value of the Priesthood of Christ during our whole course here; Advocacy is an action which flows from Priesthood. The presence of a sinful nature in us never makes the conscience bad. It is only when it *acts* that the conscience becomes defiled. The sin can never come to God's presence, because Christ is there. Nor is there imputation *for condemnation* to me. But the conscience is defiled and the bitterness of sin felt. I cannot go to God and tell Him that I have a *sinful nature*, and could not help it, because, if I had used His grace which is sufficient for me, I had not failed. But I go and confess my "sins" -- not "sinful nature" -- and He is faithful and just to forgive me, and to cleanse me, because Christ died; and the righteousness is unchanged, because He is risen and in heaven.

3. 1 John 1:9 is very abstract: i.e., it is a *divine* principle which the apostle states, without *applying* it to the *state* of the individual, as believer or sinner. John's Epistle is full of general abstract statements. He takes things as he finds them, without allowing for the *state* of individuals. Faith uses the divine principle, and gets the good of it. It would pre-suppose that I must sin in the future, to *provide* such a resource for believers *as such*, specially. Yet when a believer does fail his faith seizes the principle, and uses it for his restoration. If a soul comes to God, confessing his sins, believing that God is faithful and just to forgive him, he gets the good of it, but I could not call him a mere sinner now, as grace has wrought in his heart.

The first two verses of 1 John 2 belong to the subject at the end of ch. 1. The apostle has those who have eternal life in Christ specially before his mind in the epistle. He writes these things which relate to communion with the Father and the Son, that their joy might be full. 1 John 1:7 is not an evangelistic statement of the Gospel, although frequently used in that way. It gives three features of Christian position.

1. Walking in the light, we are in the presence of God without a veil, and we walk there before His eye.

2. We have fellowship one with another in doing so: flesh is not at work in us: jealousies are gone: there is mutuality of joy, and all absence of seeking our own.

3. Although we have sin in us, and if we said we had none, the light in which we walk would contradict us: we know that the blood of Jesus Christ has given us a title to be there with God, and God to have us there. The light prevents us saying we have no sin. The blood gives us the consciousness that we can be there with God. It is not repeated cleansing of the blood, as such is done once and is never repeated, but it is the title.

You will say, Were not all my sins future when Christ bore them? True. But bearing wrath, and shedding His blood on account of them before God's eye, in view of all His people's sins, is not forgiveness. My forgiveness is on the ground of what He has done, and the application of the good of His work to me appropriated through faith. I object strongly to Calvinistic statements used at times in preaching, viz., "all the believer's sins, past, present and future, are forgiven"; or the like. No doubt the work was completed full by the Lord Jesus Christ, by which they are put away, and the sense of forgiveness applied to my soul, but the sins must be in existence first, in order that it may be so.

Make Your Calling and Election Sure

Q. "Gershom," you ask how is it that the saints whom Peter addresses as, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," (1 Pet. 1:2), are told in 2 Pet. 1:10, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure?"

A. It seems strange to say to a person who possesses a thing to "lay hold" of it, and "make sure" of it, as you find in many places -- yet it's always the way in Scripture. Timothy had eternal life, and yet he is told to "Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called" (1 Tim. 6). There are many instances of the kind. Scripture always looks upon the Christian, in the two-fold condition, "as having nothing, and yet possessing all thing." It is the riddle of the Christian state. If he looks at Christ on high, and the changeless purpose of God who has called him, he knows that "He who (had) begun a good work in (him) will perform it," and that born of God to-day, he never can be *not* born of God. If Christ bore his sins and put them away, there never can come a moment when He did *not* bear them. He is united to Christ on high, and knows it by the Holy Ghost dwelling in him. To all this condition nothing can be added, and it never changes. But when he looks at himself below, he is a poor worm, in weakness, and feebleness on earth, and has got nothing yet, unless the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, the earnest of all he possesses in Christ. Then he must get to heaven, and "so run," that he "may attain," "Lay hold" on what he has got, "make his calling and election sure" *to himself*, in a walk in which God ministers to his soul the joy and secure sense of his position. It cannot be made sure *to God*, because *He* has called him, and chosen him. A walk, as detailed in the

preceding verses (5-9), fills the heart with the sense of security, and joy in which he dwells. It is the atmosphere of the place where God dwells in unhindered blessedness; and his "entrance" is "abundant" into that scene, when his time has come to enter it. Thus he makes it sure to his own heart.

Words of Truth 3:232-236.

Are Christians Under a Covenant

Q. "M. A. W." You ask for explanation as to the Covenant or Testament (*διαθηκη*) of Gal. 3:17, and Heb. 8, 9; and if we are under the new covenant, or any covenant at all?

A. In Gal. 3:15-29, we have the relationship between law and promise discussed as to how they stand one to another. Unconditional promise was made of God to Abraham 430 years *before* the law, and law then coming in with its conditions could not set aside the unconditional promises. Moreover, in the law there were two parties and a mediator; in promise there was but one -- God Himself, acting from Himself, and requiring no conditional terms. One was a contract, the other was grace. Read Gal. 3:16 thus: "Now to Abraham were the promises made (Gen. 12), and to his seed"; i.e., Christ risen, as Isaac, in figure, raised from the dead (Gen. 22); where God ratified the previously-given covenant (Gen. 12, 15), by His oath, to which no conditions were attached whatever. Gal. 3:17, "And this I say, the covenant previously ratified by God to Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul," etc. The law was added, "for the sake of transgressions," but did not disannul the previous purpose of God, while testing man.

There are really but two covenants in Scripture -- the old covenant and the new. Still the word covenant is used in several places in connection with the Lord, when it is but the enunciation of certain relationships into which He was pleased to enter with man or the creature (Gen. 9:8-17, &c.), or to be approached by him, but without conditions. The context must decide the sense.

In Heb. 8, 9, He shows the setting aside of the old covenant, and the introduction of a second, *yet* to be made with Judah and Israel. Meanwhile a Mediator is introduced previous to the time when Israel and Judah are again in the land. This Mediator has shed the blood necessary for its establishment, but has not yet established it -- the party concerned not yet being under this dealing of God; i.e., Israel and Judah. If Jer. 31:31-40 be read, where the new covenant is enunciated, it will be seen that no mediator is named. Christ having been rejected when He came to fulfil the *promises* made to the fathers, sheds His blood and goes on high, and all direct dealings with Israel are suspended, while all necessary for its ultimate establishment has been accomplished. In Matt. 26:28, He says: "This is my blood of the new covenant"; not, This is the new covenant, but the "the blood" of it. The covenant itself has not yet been established.

Hence in Hebrews, while the writer shows the passing away of the old, and introduction of the new, he never shows

its application as a present thing. The only two blessings of the new covenant which we get, as Christians, are forgiveness of sins, and direct teaching from God. Christians are not under a covenant in any wise. They have to do with the Mediator of it while hidden in the heavens before He renews His relationship with Judah and Israel, to whom alone the covenant pertains. See Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8-12.

Hence, too, in Heb. 9:15, he says: "For this cause he is the mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance"; not, the establishment of the new covenant, but "eternal inheritance," as having to do with the Mediator Himself whose blood had been shed.

It is striking the way the writer avoids the application of the new covenant to Christians while speaking of it with reference to Judah and Israel, and at the same time appropriates to the former the two blessings which flow from it to them.

Heb. 9:16 and 17 are a parenthesis. They show that even in human things a testament has no force as long as the testator lives. Death comes, and then it is valid. It is the same word, but used distinctly in this sense.

Reward in Col. 2:18

Q. H. D. L. What is the "reward" in Col. 2:18?

A. The passage might be rendered, "Let none circumvent you," or "cheat you." That is, as if he said, Do not allow things to get an entrance into your mind, so that you would be cheated out of that which Christianity had given you, in Christ, by voluntary humility, &c. There is no special separate word for "reward" in the passage, but the word is required to get at the full sense of the verb. The words I give in italics are all used to express one word in the original language, viz., "*Let no man beguile you of your reward.*" It is not used in any other place in Scripture.

Lie Not One to Another

Q. "Lie not one to the other" (Col. 3:9)?

A. The Christian as dead and risen with Christ, and as having put off the old man with his deeds, is to act in the truth of this, and disallow and refuse every movement of the flesh, the untruthfulness of which is unchanged, even by a new life in Christ risen. The life which he possesses in Christ is to be seen, and it only. If the believer is "in Christ" on high, Christ is in him below, and his responsibility is that "Christ" should be seen, and never anything else but "Christ."

It is the practice of a Christian who is dead and risen with Christ dealing with his members, and refusing the action of the old man, because he is dead. He is never told that he has to die to sin in Scripture, but to act upon the great fact that he is dead with Christ, and his life is hid with Christ in God. This life is to be seen on earth in his mortal body.

The Foolish Virgins

Q. "Who were the five foolish virgins" Matt. 25:1-11?

A. They are all those who profess the name of Christ. It is the *profession of Christianity*, not exactly the Church as such. When all are awakened by the midnight cry, reality was found in the five wise virgins as well as profession. They had the Holy Ghost, of which the oil is the symbol. The others had no oil. It was with the foolish, profession, or religiousness without vitality. The door was shut, and they were shut out for ever! Lost, I do not doubt.

It is a grave mistake to misapply this parable to the remnant of Jews in the "time of the end." They have not the Holy Ghost dwelling in them at all, as the believer has now; even a babe in Christ has this (1 John. 2:20). If they were not professing Christians, they would not be charged with having no "oil." Nor does the godly Jew go forth to meet the Bridegroom; he flees in terror. It is not with him the Bridegroom in hope, but the abomination of desolation in fear. There will be no time of slumbering and sleeping then, for things will reel to their center in judgment.

Matt. 24 and 25 have three great subject divisions -- a characteristic of Matthew's Gospel.

1st. The desolation and final restoration of the Jews as a nation on the earth (Matt. 24:1-44).

2nd. Under three parables, instructions as to those who would be attached by profession to the Lord during His absence, and until His return (Matt. 24:45-51; 25:1-30); i.e., professing Christians.

3rd. The result to the Gentiles as to their reception or rejection of the testimony the Lord gives them, as to His claims and kingdom; or, in other words, the judgment of the quick or living nations at His establishing the kingdom. In this scene you find three parties: Jews -- His "brethren"; Gentiles who are blessed -- the sheep; Gentiles who are condemned -- the goats. This is not the judgment of the dead, but of the living (vv. 31-46), at the beginning of the millennium. The dead are not judged till the close {of the little season}.

Words of Truth 4:41-44.

Dispensational Teaching of John 1, 2, 20, 21

C. Somerset. What is the dispensational meaning of the 'days' in John 1; and how do they correspond with the 'days' in John 20 and 21?

First, John's testimony to his disciples, who attach themselves to Jesus during His lifetime here (John 1: 35, &c.). Then the Lord's, then that of the witnesses (John 1: 43, &c.). Then, again, Nathanael figures the remnant in the last days; an Israelite in whom is no guile; (cp. Zeph. 3:13; Rev. 14:5) who still sits under the Old covenant -- "apart," (cp. Zech. 12:13) and upon whom the Lord's eyes are in their time of distress, before they see Him. (See Isa. 57:15; 66:2). Then they own Him as "Son of God," and "King of Israel," according to Psa. 2. Still, Nathanael, now that he knew the Lord, would see greater things than these; heaven opened, and a "Son of Man" the object of the attention of the angels of God! For "hereafter" read "henceforth."

Then (John 2), the third day, the Lord, in the marriage scene in Galilee, renews his relations with Israel. Becomes the host instead of guest, and turns the water of purification into the wine of joy of the kingdom. Thus He manifests His glory. Then follows His judicial action at Jerusalem, and cleansing the temple.

These days are wholly *earthly*, and with Israel. First, John's testimony; then Christ's and the witnesses'; and then His connection with the Jews and the temple on His return.

In John 20, 21, there are no "days," and here it is rather the contrary. He gathers His disciples after His *resurrection* and is in their midst in the first scene. Thomas represents the Jewish remnant who believe when they see him (Zech. 12, 13). He pronounces the blessedness of those who have not seen, but have believed. It is not the church (as taught by Paul), but an intimation of resurrection work; not a simply earthly one. There are no "days" here, but three consecutive scenes pointing to a Christ known as having left them in resurrection -- not uniting by the Holy Ghost believers into one body; which belongs to ascension, and John does not teach the church, or mention it as such.

An intimation, I apprehend, in Thomas' unbelief, that the Jew does not believe the testimony of Christianity and Christ risen through the Church {through the church's testimony}. He believes when He *sees*, as the Jews will do, according to Zech. 12, 13, &c., and owns him as his Lord and his God. (See Isa. 25:9.)

In the third scene, you get *seven* fishers and unbroken nets -- the work of millennial ingathering is not marred. When the morning comes the Lord appears, and the nets are drawn to shore -- the Lord has fish already on the land, taken through their night of toil.

Words of Truth 4:62, 63.

Continuous Prayer?

“E. G. D.” seeks to know the propriety of continuing to ask for many things of the Lord -- such as more of the Spirit’s power; increase of faith; conversion of relatives, &c. Or whether, when these requests have been once laid before Him, should we leave them in His hands?

A. God exercises our hearts and our faith in delaying to give the answer to our prayers at times. The earnestness of our prayer will be according to the exigency of our need, and the consciousness that He alone can give the answer. The heart is exercised and kept in dependence, waiting on Him for the reply. Faith is kept alive. Other sources are not looked to when the soul has learned that He alone can do what is needed. It is a mighty engine, that of prayer. Fitting expression of the new-born soul’s dependence on God, in contrast to that nature which ever would be independent of Him, though it cannot escape His righteous judgment.

Daniel had to wait in fastings and mournings for three whole weeks at one time before he received the reply (Dan. 10). At another time, “While I was speaking,” he says, the answer came (Dan. 9).

It marks the fact that we are not indifferent to the result when the heart can in earnest entreaty wait upon God. We may find, like Paul, that it is better for us that our desires were withheld. He learned also the reason why they were withheld after his thrice repeated prayer; thus he could always boast in that which was the taunt of his enemies, and the trial of his friends (2 Cor. 12).

We need to be “filled with the Spirit.” We need that our faith may grow. Many are the needs of our hearts, as of others; and if God is pleased to bless His people, He exercises their hearts in prayer. Paul was indebted to some praying sister, perhaps, who could agonize in prayer before the Lord for those gifts with which he carried on his service in the gospel-field. He could agonize in prayer for those he never saw -- (Col. 2:1) -- and Epaphras, too, could labor earnestly (agonize) in prayer, for those he knew and loved (Col. 4:12).

In the midst of our cares and conflicts we have to “be careful for nothing,” but to “let our requests be made known to God.” He who has no cares, God, keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. But we have also to “continue in prayer.” We have also to “watch in the same,” and withal “with thanksgiving” for His ever opened ear. One of the exhortations in Rom. 12:12 is, “continuing instant in prayer”; “pursuing,” as it might be.

The very “importunity” of the man at the unseasonable hour of midnight, was the occasion of his obtaining the loaves (Luke 11:8). One can lay down no rules in such cases. The truly exercised heart gets its own answer from God. At times we can, with simple confidence, “make known,” and commit the request to God. At others the heart is conscious that it cannot but cry to God until the heart is at rest as to the petition. He will not give it till His own time, and meanwhile the soul is kept in earnest exercise; faith is tested, and patience tried, and the heart watches and waits on Him.

Again, such is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us; and if we know that He hears us, we know we have the petitions that we desired of Him (1 John 5:14, 15). He listens to everything which is in accordance with His will. He cannot fail in power, and we get the reply. The true heart would ask nothing contrary to His mind and will.

Words of Truth 4:83, 84.

This Ministry of 2 Cor. 4:1, 2

“P.” What is the “ministry” (*διακονία*) of 2. Cor. 4:1? Is it the ministry of the apostle, or that which he ministered? It could hardly be confined to his ministry merely, as he uses the same word, though translated “ministration,” in 2 Cor. 3:7, 8, 9 where it is the thing ministered?

A. It is the apostle’s ministry, but ministry of and characterized by what he speaks of. This is a common ambiguity in English. Hope is what passes in my mind, (faith, hope,) but my hope is laid up in heaven. Thought a good thought is thought objectively; or we are of much thought, is the habit of thinking, in the man, and so of others; in ch. 3 the subject matter -- law or gospel is the ministration, *i.e.*, the thing ministered; but it was ministered by Paul, and therefore his ministry -- a candle was lit up in a lantern; it was itself the light -- the candle’s light; but his light, because he carried it. God had shone in his heart to give forth the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. His ministry was this knowledge, still he ministered it, and so it was his ministry.

“Living God” in 1 Tim. 3:15

“F.” Why in 1 Tim. 3:15, do we get the “Living” God? Why “Living?”

A. “The Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:16, 17) is what the Church was built upon. It is the power which has brought it above dying man, and withal is abiding. It is a term of power and dignity above idols, above death in man. He trusts in the living God (1 Tim. 4:10). We are converted to serve the living and true God (1 Thess. 4). See Acts 14:15: We “preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God,” &c. Well, this is His assembly on earth (1 Tim. 3:15).

Indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the Glory

“D.” As believers, the Holy Ghost dwells in us. Having believed, we are sealed until {for} the day of redemption, and He is the earnest of our inheritance (Eph. 1:13, 14). He will eventually quicken our mortal bodies, as we find in Rom. 8. Is there any thought in Scripture as to his *dwelling in us* for ever?

A. There are no specific Scriptures that I know which state that the Holy Ghost will abide in us for ever. But His action

in spiritual power is essential to our power in life. The Spirit is life, and it surely is not to be taken away as power of enjoyment in heaven. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free" {Rom. 8:2}. We are to be fully conformed to the image of God's Son; and we find Him a Man risen from the dead, giving commands through the Holy Ghost after His resurrection (Acts 1:2). We shall have the Holy Ghost thus after our resurrection, and His divine energy will be wholly free to guide and direct in the service committed to us by our God, and in unhindered power of joy and worship. This is now checked, because of His now giving power to restrain and mortify the flesh in us,

Words of Truth 4:103, 104.

The First Resurrection

I had difficulties as to the passage of which you write (Rev. 20:4). Comparing it with other passages, such as 1 Cor. 15:54, &c., which disappeared in seeing that "the first resurrection does not describe a *period of time*, but a *class of persons* having this characteristic name.

In the passage (Rev. 20:4), you will find three divisions named;

1. "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them and judgment was given to them."

2. "And the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God."

3. "And those (οἱ τινας) which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark in their foreheads, or in their hands."

The first division is general, embracing all who reign with Christ, taken up at the Rapture. He sees not only thrones, (as Dan. 7:9; where for "cast down," read "set") but sitters on them; they are now occupied.

The second class are those slain under the fifth Seal. See Rev. 6:9, 10, 11.

The third class are martyr victors under the full power of the beast. See Rev. 15:2.

The two latter classes who seem to have lost the earthly blessings of the kingdom by death, are specially named as having gained by death a place in the heavenly glory, with those who then reign with Christ.

The first of these -- the sitters on the thrones -- have been raised or changed at the rapture; and the last two are said, in company with them, to "live and reign with Christ a thousand years"; and are all then named "the first resurrection."

My chief difficulty was, how that Isa. (25:8) used the words, "He will swallow up death in victory" -- referring to the resurrection at the *end* of the tribulation and deliverance of the remnant of Judah. While Paul uses the same passage, quoting it in 1 Cor. 15:54, with reference to those caught up before it *begins*, and when Christ comes, whether raised or changed. I may here remark that Isa. 24:21 gives the judgment of the hosts of the high ones on high -- Satan's

power (Rev. 12), and the Kings of the earth upon the earth (Rev. 19). Then, after that, in Isa. 25, in the details of the deliverance to the remnant of the Jews, and the removal of the vail of idolatry from the nations, he uses this passage: -- "He will swallow up death in victory," with reference to what happens at the *end* of the tribulation.

In 1 Cor. 15, Paul quotes and applies it to those who are taken up -- raised or changed -- *before* the tribulation. This seemed strange. But the moment you understand that the "first resurrection" is a *class of persons* running all through the crisis, or time of judgment, from the rapture of the saints, till Christ's appearing, it is readily seen how the prophet and apostle legitimately use the same words, having a similar class before them, which are split up into sections, as I may say, in Rev. 20:4, and are technically named "the first resurrection," though not raised and taken to heaven at the same moment of time.

Words of Truth 4:186, 187.

Isa. 49:9, 10

Q. "G." Does Isa. 49:9, 10, apply to Jews or Gentiles?

A. I believe it applies to the Jews. The chapter gives you a complete history of Christ, replacing Israel on earth as Jehovah's servant, from the womb of the Virgin to the throne of the kingdom. In vv. 4, 5, the Spirit of Christ makes the lament that He had spent His strength in vain, Israel would not be gathered by her Messiah! This brought forth those touching words (Matt. 23:37), "How often would I have gathered thee," etc., as the moment of His city's rejection of her King drew forth those tears, which, though they came from human eyes, took their spring in the heart of God.

The answer of God comes to His plaint in the sixth and following verses. It *was* a light thing the gathering of Israel compared with the new and wondrous work He should accomplish -- not now *gathering* a little nation, but *shining forth* as the light to the Gentiles, to make known God's salvation to the ends of the earth. Strictly this is Christ here, yet to show how, when Christ is spoken of in the Old Testament, the Church is seen in Him, though not revealed then; Paul uses this passage in Acts 13:47, applying it to Christ's members, and intelligently taking as a command what he had gathered from the spirit of the word. In v. 7, He is there looked upon as a rejected Christ -- despised of man, and abhorred of His own people; but kings and princes would yet worship Him, because of the faithfulness of Jehovah who would choose Him. In vv. 8 and 10 He is given as a covenant to the people, i.e., Israel; to bring in the earthly blessing; to set free captive Israel -- "Prisoners of hope" (Zech. 9:11, 12) -- and open the prison doors to those who are bound. Thus the true Shepherd of Israel feeds His now gathered flock which would hunger and thirst no more. How analogous is the language of Rev. 7:16, 17, which the elder in heaven uses as to those who had come out of the great tribulation, and were marked and prepared for blessing below in the millennial earth.

The prophecy of the chapter runs on to the gathering of

the tribes of Israel from the north and west, and from the Land of Sinim (China), and the judgment on their oppressors.

Gift: Government

Q. What are "Governments" in 1 Cor 12:28?

A. This word is found only here in the New Testament. He is speaking of members of the body set in the assembly. Those thus designated would be gifted to guide and direct the assembly, as a pilot does his ship in her dangers and difficulties. It might be by the word of wisdom, in the application of divine intelligence to those things through which she had to pass; or the word of knowledge, etc., as in v. 8. The thought is guidance rather than rule. The latter would be by office-bearers, i.e., elders. Here the thought is gifts, or spiritual manifestations in the body of Christ.

Num. 23:19 -- Ex. 32:14

Q. How do you explain the *apparent* contradiction in Num. 23:19 and Ex. 32:14?

A. The context decides the use of the word, and meaning of the sentence. In the latter "*Jehovah*," moved at the touching intercession of Moses, "felt compassion for" the people who had merited His judgments.

In the former, "*God*" is not man that He should lie, or the Son of Man that He should repent. Here the meaning is simply as it stands. His unalterable counsels are as unchangeable as His own nature.

The word is similar in both cases, but bears the meanings given to it, and the context decides that which is most applicable. In the one case it is *Jehovah* in government, whose thought of cutting off *part* of the nation and making of Moses (the faithful remnant) a great nation (Ex. 32:10), is turned at the intercession of Moses. In the other it is God in purpose, which is unchangeable.

Baptism of the Spirit

Q. Why is the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Matt 3:11), referred to so early in the gospels?

A. John Baptist, in announcing Jehovah-Messiah to His people in Matthew's gospel, brings His two advents together whether in grace or judgment. This was suited to His gospel because He has, as Messiah, to do with both. Luke 3:16 also speaks of the two great actions, because as Son of Man the character in which Luke presents Him, He has to do with judgment as well as grace and suffering. Mark 1:8, and John 1:33, both omit that of "fire"; the former having to do with His *then* service on earth, and present service of grace with His servants -- not with judgment. John only speaks of His baptizing with the Holy Ghost as connected with His revelation in grace of the Father. The thought, in presenting it so early in the gospels, is rather the *person* who was to do it, in contrast to His fore-runner, who baptized with water unto repentance, &c. We know it was not accomplished until Acts

2, on the day of Pentecost with the Jews; and Acts 10, subsequently with the Gentiles. See Acts 1:5, where only that of the Holy Ghost is named; not that of the fire of judgment, which will take place at His second advent, with the world. Also Acts 11: 15, 16, where the Gentiles are connected with this baptism. (See also 1 Cor. 12:13.)

Col. 4:12

Q. What is to "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God?" (Col. 4:12).

A. Epaphras' prayer was the echo of the apostle's, as one may say (see Col. 1:9, and 2:1-3). Paul had never seen the Colossians, but had heard of them through Epaphras. He could thank God as to what he had heard of them (Col. 1:3, &c.), but he could agonize in prayer for them, that they might know more of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; thus to walk worthy of the Lord. That they might know, too, the mystery of Christ and the Church; or, as he terms it here, "The mystery of God, wherein are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Conversion only was not sufficient in Paul's mind, and Epaphras had learned this, and his prayer (Col. 4:12) took its tone from his lesson and from Paul.

Words of Truth 5:37-39.

Grieving and Quenching the Spirit

Q. "C.H." What is to "grieve" and to "quench" the Spirit of God?

A. The allowance of flesh in the least degree in a Christian is to grieve the Spirit of God by which he has been sealed until {for} the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). What a motive to holiness is the fact -- true of every believe -- that the Holy Spirit of God dwells in him! He may, alas, grieve Him in many ways. Rejection of light which God has given; worldliness; in fact everything that has not Christ for its motive and object must grieve God's Spirit -- hinder our growth and communion.

To quench the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19) is to hinder His free action in the members of Christ in the assembly. While there are special permanent gifts in the Church, (Eph. 4:11) there are also the "joints and bands," which work effectually in the measure of every part, and by which the Body of Christ increases. If they are hindered in true spiritual service -- a single word for instance -- the Spirit of God is quenched.

There are dangers to be avoided on both sides, specially by those who seek to walk in the truth of the Church of God. On one side the danger is, that because there is liberty "that all may learn and all may be comforted," there may be the undervaluing of special ministry, which is a permanent thing as long as the Church of God is here. On the other, there is the danger of quenching the Spirit in the various helps, and joints, and bands by which nourishment is ministered in the body of Christ, by putting special ministry in the place of the free action of the Holy Ghost in the members of Christ; both

are to be cherished, and the most spiritual are those who will value all that God gives.

The following verses (1 Thess. 5:20, 21) show that it is ministry the apostle has in his mind. While in v. 12 he exhorts them to own those who labor amongst them and esteem them highly in love for their work's sake; in vv 19-21 they were not to quench the Spirit in any, but at the same time to "prove all things" which were said, and "hold fast that which was good."

Words of Truth 5:59.

The Experience of Rom. 7

Q. "R.P." What is the difference between the bitter experience of Rom. 7:14-24; and the conflict of flesh and the Spirit as in Gal. 5. How am I to know in which state I am? Do not both come to the same wretched experience in the end, if in the conflict the flesh gets the upper hand?

A. First; there is no proper *Christian* conflict in scripture but that of Eph. 6:12; this is fighting God's battles against Satan's power. Rom. 7 is not *conflict* but *experience*; not the experience of a person at the time of his feeling its bitterness, but that of a delivered man, who narrates what he felt when learning his powerlessness against the sinful nature he had discovered, and the sad evil of the flesh in which dwelt no good thing. As a man who had floundered in a morass, and found every plunge putting him deeper, drops his hands and cries out for a deliverer, who comes and pulls him out and sets him free. The delivered one turns round to thank his deliverer and tell him, now at peace, what he felt when there. He had much to think of when there, now he relates it on solid ground. So it is experience before deliverance, told by a delivered man. Gal. 5 states the fact of the two antagonistic principles -- flesh and Spirit -- in their contrariety one to the other. Not necessarily conflict. Because walking in the Spirit we are above the influences of flesh, and do not fulfil its lusts.

In Rom. 7 the soul looks back to the struggle before deliverance. In Gal. 5 it is the two principles which remain in the delivered man.

When you are referring your acceptance with God to your own state in anywise, you are still under law. By which I mean your responsibility as a child of Adam; not necessarily the law of Sinai: and your experience is then that of Rom. 7. You have not yet bowed to the injunction, "Reckon yourself dead"; and you are consequently not free from the power of the evil nature which harasses you. You reply, how can I reckon myself dead, when I feel I am alive? I reply, you never will "feel" yourself dead! but you must "reckon" it so, and accept God's word as more true than your experience and thoughts. Then you will be able to say, "Yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me."

Souls go through this painful process (Rom. 7) in order to discover the hopeless evil of the flesh -- "That in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." It is bitter to discover right desires and strivings after God and good, and after *all* to

be led captive to an evil "I," so that you hate what you do, and the evil nature is your master, and you do what you hate. These experiences do not set you free, but bring you to the discovery of how evil the flesh is, and that even the possession of a new nature gives you *no power*! Then you are forced to say, "Who will deliver?" "Who," brings in another, and your eye is turned off yourself to Him and you are free! In Christ, God has condemned sin in the flesh when He was a sacrifice for it (Rom. 8:3).

The "flesh" in the delivered one is unchanged; he learns growingly the total depravity of his nature. But there is a new "I"; Christ is his life {Col. 3:4}, and the Spirit of God dwells in his body {1 Cor. 6:19}; and there is power in Christ to subdue the evil, by engaging his heart with Christ. The very evil he finds in himself becomes an occasion of communion with Him who has borne its judgment, that He may be delivered from its workings. He does not seek to subdue it himself -- that were to labor into sorrow and failure, and recognize *himself* again. He keeps His eye on Christ, and lives by another, and the evil which would spring up if his eye were averted is subdued, and the power of Christ rests upon his weakness, and he can glory in it because of the power of Christ. He never receives intrinsic strength, that would be to take away the joy of living by Christ, and thus an unbroken engagement is needed for victory, and the subjugation of self He walks in the Spirit and does not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

Matt. 16:19 and Matt. 18:18

Q. "A. L. O. C." What is the difference between Matt. 16:19 and Matt. 18:18? Does the first refer to salvation in connection with the bringing in of the members to be added to the Church; and the second to the discipline of the Assembly? Or, do they both refer anticipatively to discipline?

A. The first refers to the administration committed personally to Peter, with reference to the "*Kingdom of the heavens*." The second to disciples -- "two or three" gathered together in Christ's name, and connected with the "*Assembly*"; and valid at any time for two or three thus gathered.

In both cases it is "*whatsoever*" -- thus not referring solely to persons; though slightly differing in form of expression.

To Peter was given -- and to him alone of the Twelve -- the administration of the kingdom of the heavens, brought in in its "mysteries" (Matt. 13), and commencing at the ascension of the Lord. This power he used, as the first great division of Acts testifies (Acts 1-13). He directed the choice of Matthias, Acts 1; he opened the door to the Jews, Acts 2; he bound Ananias' and Sapphira's sin on them, Acts 5; was chief in directing the choice of deacons, Acts 6; discerned Simon the sorcerer's state; and with John communicated the Holy Ghost, in Acts 8. He opened the door to the Gentiles, Acts 10; he was one of the chiefest speakers in the conference about the law, in Acts 15., &c. *Whatsoever* he did

under heaven's authority, heaven ratified. Though Peter did not do all heaven did, for all that! This authority and commission was given to none of the apostles but him, and it ended there. This administration was *continued* to none.

The passage in Matt. 18:18 is authority to the "assembly," and applicable to any "assembly" which scripture authorizes, though consisting of only two or three. It is *continued* to such. There is no individual authority in it at all. For making requests, and acting under heaven's authority, the Lord was in the midst, and gave validity to what they did; though, like Peter, heaven might do, and did, a great deal more than the assembly.

It is of much importance to distinguish between the "Kingdom of the heavens," of which the "keys" were committed to Peter; and the "Church" which Christ builds. It has been remarked that "men do not build with keys," and the Church is built.

Words of Truth 5:97-99.

Kingdom of Heaven -- Kingdom of God

Q. L. T. Would you please define in some measure the terms "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God"? Sometimes they seem interchangeable, and other times not so. Matthew chiefly uses the former, and he only; Luke the latter, as others too.

A. "The kingdom of the heavens" -- the true rendering -- is only named in Matthew. It is a *dispensational* term; while "the kingdom of God" is a *moral* thing. In keeping with the gospels you name, you find the terms used. Matthew groups his subjects together dispensationally; Luke does so morally; both departing from the *historic* order, to which Mark keeps more than any of the others.

With a Jew the term "kingdom of the heavens" was familiar (see Deut. 11:21; Psa. 89:29; Dan. 2:44; 4:26-35, and other Scriptures). It is the "rule of the heavens" owned on earth. It was announced as "*at hand*," not as *come*, by John the Baptist (Matt. 3); by the Lord (Matt. 4); by the Twelve (Matt. 10). Rejected; and in Matt. 12, which *ends* the gospel to the Jew, the curse of Antichrist is pronounced upon the nation, and a Remnant owned who obey His Father's will. Then, in Matt. 13, the Lord begins a new action -- as a sower; and the kingdom of the heavens takes a new character, which the prophet did not contemplate: a sphere overrun with evil, and a mingled crop -- the "mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens"; and instead of the true subjects taking their origin from *Abraham*, they do so from the *Word* of God, which Christ sows; others accepting the authority of Christ nominally, as professors.

In Luke, who is the great moralizer, the term used is "kingdom of God," of which He could say in answer to the inquiry of the Pharisees if it came with observation, that it was "in the midst of you" (Luke 17:21), for God was there in Christ; while of the "kingdom of the heavens" it could only be said it is "*at hand*" and it did not (and could not) commence until the ascension of Christ. To have come in

during His presence it would have been the kingdom of the *earth*, so to say. His authority and that of the heavens was owned, even before the coming of the Holy Ghost, during the ten days of interval, by the disciples, who waited by His directions for that coming. It will run on in its present confused state until the Millennium; hence a good margin of time *after* the Church's history is over, as it had commenced before it.

You get two places where it gets a moral character from Paul -- "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17); "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor. 4:20). It is the "exhibition or manifestation of the ruling power of God under any circumstances." A man must be born afresh to "see," or "enter in" to it, in the verity of it (John 3); not so of the kingdom of heaven, in which tares and wheat mingle. Souls may profess and submit to God's kingdom, as merely profession. Hence, in Luke 13:18, he uses the term kingdom of God where nominal profession is noted in the parable, and where the "kingdom of the heavens" might be used interchangeably. Still, none but the saints would be really of it, as born of God.

When the Millennium comes in, the present confused state of the kingdom of the heavens will be set aside by the judgment of the quick {the living}; and it will then be displayed in its verity in a two-fold, heavenly, and earthly state of things. The Son of Man gathers out of *His* kingdom - - i.e., the *earthly* part of it (see Psa. 8; Heb. 2) -- all stumbling-blocks, and them that do iniquity; and then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father -- the *heavenly* sphere of it (see Matt. 13:41-43).

Words of Truth 5:118, 119.

Heb. 12:23

Q. "A B. M." What is the correct thought of Heb. 12:23: "to the general assembly and church of the first born"? Does the Holy Ghost repeat Himself, or is there a distinction?

A. The passage should be read thus, "But ye are come unto mount Zion; *and* unto the city of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem; *and* to myriads of angels a general convocation; *and* assembly of firstborn (ones) enrolled in heaven," etc.

The writer is contrasting the order of things to which the Hebrews had come under Christianity and grace, with that of mount Sinai and law. They were *not* come to the latter (vv. 18-21), they were come to mount Zion -- the principle of perfect grace from God to His earthly people when wholly ruined in all classes of the nation; people, priests, and Kings, (vv. 22-24). This is the meaning of "Mount Zion" here; it is perfect grace. It refers to God's intervention by His chosen King, David, in re-establishing His relationship with the people at mount Zion when all was ruined; in bringing back the Ark of God (see 2 Sam. 5-6). He opens in these verses a magnificent vista of all that *will be* in millennial glory, but as *now* true to faith. The word "and" divides each thought in vv. 22-24. So that the last clause of v. 22 should not have been severed from the first part of v. 23. These two clauses refer to the great convocation of angels on high. Then comes, "and assembly of firstborn (ones)," enrolled in heaven, by grace; they were not like angels -- indigenous to the place. (Cf. Luke 10:20.)

Women Praying in Meetings

Q. What is the proper teaching of 1 Cor. 11:5? Is there any ground in it for a woman praying in an ordinary meeting for prayer, of course *not* in church?

A. First of all, I believe that in an "ordinary meeting for prayer," Christians gather together "in assembly"; any gathering together of God's people to the name of the Lord, where the Holy Ghost's action is unhindered -- i.e., an assembly which Scripture owns, is meeting "in assembly; and the woman is to keep silence and be in subjection -- showing the sign of subjection by wearing a covering on her head.

No doubt, were there no men present, a woman would be perfectly free to pray or prophesy if she had the gift; and I believe many have the gifts of Christ. But even if so, it must be used in subjection to Christ in His ordered way, and in private, so as not to usurp authority over the man, and mar God's order in redemption. To pray or prophesy with her head uncovered -- she dishonors her head.

In the first sixteen verses the apostle is dealing with the order of headships according to God, which were forgotten by the saints at Corinth. God is the head of Christ (looked at as Man): Christ the head of the man; the man the head of the woman. In v. 17 and onwards, he deals with the coming together of the saints in assembly: "church" should always in Scripture be rendered "assembly"; and there should be no "*the*" in v. 18.

The woman (and man too) in Corinthians had forgotten this order, and the former were I suppose praying and prophesying with disheveled locks. Their hair was given for a veil, not for such a purpose. She ought also with her hair, to have power (a sign of subjection), on her head because of the angels {that is, a covering in addition to her long hair}.

Old Testament Saints

Q. "A. L. O. C." Will you kindly give a little help as to the Old Testament saints. We know they had life, and were saved as we are through faith; but had they the new birth, or new creation, in which the Holy Ghost dwells! Had they it without an inhabitant? What was their spiritual condition? To what things did our Lord refer in John 3, "Art thou a Master in Israel and knowest not these things?" How could Nicodemus know anything about the new birth? Was it the "new heart" and "new Spirit" of Ezek. 18:31?

A. The saints in the Old Testament days were born again. This is a positive necessity for any soul in order to "see" or "enter into" the kingdom of God. Whatever truth God had revealed, and was pleased to use and apply by the Holy Ghost to the conscience, when received by faith, produced a new birth in the soul. The new creation is quite a different thing. Man had not only corrupted his *nature*, and needed to be born anew, but he had been driven out from God, and thus had lost his *place*. The new creation is a new place, or order of things with God, into which Christ has entered as Man, dead and risen. We belong to it now because of redemption, and as possessing eternal life in Christ; but we are still connected with the old, and there are certain things of the old creation owned of God in which we have to walk, while morally we belong to the new order of things before God. Human relationships and the like, are the things to which I refer. They are of the old creation.

You do not express a scriptural thought in your phrase, "In which the Holy Ghost dwells." He dwells in "your body" as a temple individually (1 Cor. 6:19), and also in the House of God as a Temple collectively; "know ye not that ye (plural) are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (1 Cor. 3:16). Hence "Had they it without an inhabitant?" has no force, if you mean that the Holy Ghost inhabits the new creation.

No doubt all the Old Testament saints were born again, and the life they received was eternal, though it was not definitely revealed under that name, until it was first displayed in the Son of God, a Man on earth. They were also morally of the new creation, although the time had not yet come to bring it to light. God was still dealing with and testing man on the earth. Eternal life is the Christian term for what we possess in Christ, for in it we are brought into fellowship with the Father and the Son, and thus have a nature suited to heaven.

The Old Testament saints trusted in God as known in grace. Their sins were passed over "through the forbearance of God," in view of what the cross would accomplish (Rom. 3:25). In it God was proved righteous in His forbearance with

them. Consequently sin was imperfectly known to them, and their consciences were unpurged, while our consciences *are* purged now by Christ's blood {Heb. 10:2}, which fits us to stand in the light of God's presence. The tastes and desires of the new man in its aspirations after God and good were there; the conscience of the old man was there unpurged, but the distinction between the natures was not made known; they were looked upon and treated as concrete men, so to say. In conscience many go no further now, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost characterizing the Christian state, is indeed known to few.

Nicodemus, as a teacher in Israel, ought to have known that a new birth -- "a new heart and new spirit," was needed to partake of even the *earthly* blessings of the kingdom. The passage in Ezek. 18:31 bears on it; so does Ezek. 36:24-31, still more directly. In the latter they would have this new heart and spirit when gathered from the heathen, into the land of their forefathers, there to enjoy their "earthly things." How much more fully needed to enjoy the "*heavenly things*" the Lord had now come to reveal.

The Christian has "spirit, soul, and body," as a sinful man; self-will and "flesh" setting him against God. A new nature has been imparted from God Himself; it has not removed the old, or improved it. The same man, "spirit, soul, and body," is now the property of another. A nature has been given suited to God, and to enjoy Him in light. The conscience is purged by the blood, on the ground of which he has been born of God. The Holy Ghost dwells in his body, and the same man, not now "his own," but "bought with a price," has to glorify God with his body, and hold it as the vessel, whether of the mind and character, or affections now wrought upon by the Holy Ghost, leading him to live by an object outside himself -- even Christ. Thus the Apostle desires that "spirit, soul, and body" may be kept blameless till the day of Christ, when complete assimilation to Christ, even of his body, will take place. He has to walk as dead to the world, dead to sin, dead to the law; dead and risen with Christ. Morally of that new place into which Christ has entered as dead and risen, while still connected with the old creation, and in obedience recognizing what is of God in it; yet remembering that sin has come in and marred it all.

Words of Truth 5:176-180.

Governmental Forgiveness

Q. "A. L. O. C." What is the meaning of the parable of the debtor who was forgiven, and then put in prison until he paid to the uttermost? Is it Jewish? and what is the application to us?

A. I presume you allude to Matt. 18:23-35. The Gospel of Matthew presents Jesus as the Son of Abraham and Son of David, presented to the Jews and rejected; then the consequences to the Gentiles in *two* ways, *viz.*, a new form to the kingdom of the heavens, and the bringing in of the Church, announced as replacing Israel. Consequently, you find, as in connection with the kingdom of heaven, the governmental dealings of God strongly marked. Primarily, you find God's

dealings with the Jew. He, as a servant, owed the debt of ten thousand talents, and could not pay. All God's culture of him, culminating in His sending the Lord Jesus, only enhanced the debt. The Lord on His cross, in the name of that sinful people, pleaded for them in the words, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." They were governmentally pardoned, and vengeance for the blood of Messiah was not demanded at the moment. (I mean governmentally in contrast to that forgiveness which has reference to eternal things). The answer to that prayer of the Lord was the offer of national pardon in Acts 3:14, etc., by the Spirit of God sent down from heaven, by Peter's mouth: "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Thus judgment was delayed for the time, through the compassion of God, although nationally they did not respond to the offer. Then came the free dealings of the grace of God to the Gentiles, through Saul of Tarsus. They owed, in comparison with the Jew, but "an hundred pence"; still, what they owed, they owed to them, for "salvation was of the Jews." Thus, the same servant -- forgetting the gracious forgiveness extended to him -- went out and took his fellow servant by the throat, and demanded the debt. So, you find in 1 Thess. 2:14-16, the attitude of the Jew to his Gentile brother; so with Paul's defense (Acts 22) where the Jews gave him audience to the words, "Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles," and then they took the one who announced it, as it were, by the throat, and would not hear another word. Wrath came upon them then to the uttermost. God delivered them up nationally to judgment by the Gentiles under the Roman armies, and they have remained in bondage and ruin ever since under His righteous government, till they shall pay in suffering and sorrow, all that was due -- until Jerusalem shall have received double for all her sins, and the word "comfort ye, my people," is pronounced (see Isa. 40).

This is the direct thought in the parable; but, as is usual in Matthew, you find not only *dispensational* teaching, but *personal* lessons as well as moral principles. So here you learn the principles by which we should live as those who owed ten thousand talents, and whom grace has pardoned. We must go and imitate God, who has so dealt with us. Alas, how solemn to find that so many having taken up Christianity as a profession, have failed in grace to others, and thus proved the insincerity of their profession; surely they will not escape. The kingdom of heaven always assumes that there may have come in profession under the name of Christ, and that such will solemnly meet its end in judgment where no life is. Life is known by practice, characterized by grace that bestowed it, and thus its teaching is applicable to us.

Words of Truth 5:199, 200.

Commencement of Ministry Concerning the One Body

Q. "E. W. M." Did the ministry of Paul, concerning "one body," the church, commence when he was a prisoner at Rome? Because, at the conclusion of his oral testimony in Acts 26, he says to Agrippa that he was "saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." Now we know his written testimony goes much beyond this.

Does the Acts at all comprehend the church of God as united to Christ in heavenly glory? and is the distinction of Jew and Gentile (the absence of which characterizes the church) maintained all through the Acts?

A. In Paul's answer before Agrippa you will find many more things stated than those embraced in vv. 22, 23. The union of the saints with Christ on high is owned of the Lord by the words, "Why persecutest thou me?" {Acts 9:4}. Paul was to be a minister and a witness of what he had seen, i.e., the appearing of a glorified Christ, and of those things in which He would appear to Paul -- embracing fresh revelations of truth communicated through him at subsequent seasons, for all truth was not communicated to him at the moment of his conversion. But the Jews, being his accusers, and king Agrippa being one who knew the prophets and was versed in the Jewish Scriptures, the statements of the verses quoted (Acts 26:22, 23), rather show that he was saying nothing contrary to the testimony of God in the Scriptures, which the Jews who accused him professed to accept.

Besides, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians during the early part of his stay at Ephesus, and sent it by Titus (cp. Acts 19:22, with 1 Cor. 16:8-10, 2 Cor. 7:6). In it he taught the doctrine of the Church as "one body" (see ch. 12. He also wrote the Epistle to the Romans from Corinth during his ministrations there (see Rom. 16:1), where he commends Phoebe, who served the assembly at Cenchrea, near to Corinth; and in it he speaks of the practical relationship of Christ's members as "one body" in ch. 12.

His ministry of the church as "one body" was no new thing when at Rome. He had taught it all through before he became the prisoner of Jesus Christ.

We must remember that Acts is transitional in its character. Jewish Christians were emerging from Judaism, and God thought of the strong prejudices of His ancient people, and forbore with them until the last testimony to them in Hebrews to "go forth unto him, without the camp" {Heb. 13:13} before Jerusalem was destroyed by the armies of Titus {cp. Matt. 22:7}. The Acts is historic Scripture, the Epistles are doctrinal. This accounts for much; but strong traces abound throughout the book of the Acts to prove that the doctrine of "one body," the church, was the groundwork of all, and that care was taken to maintain the unity. Samaria must receive the Holy Ghost from Jerusalem (Acts 8). Antioch was not permitted to settle the question as to the law, and so to create a breach with Jerusalem (Acts 15). Jerusalem herself must surrender the right of imposing the law on Gentiles. So in many instances.

Words of Truth 5:218, 219.

Quickening, Sealing, Deliverance

Q. "H W. T." You ask (1) "When is a person sprinkled by the blood of Christ?" and also, (2) "Is the unbeliever quickened?"

A. 1. As to the first question: the only passages in the New Testament where ραντίζω -- to *sprinkle*; or ράντισμός -- *sprinkling*, are used definitely with reference to Christians, are Heb. 10:22, "Having our hearts *sprinkled* from an evil conscience"; in Heb. 12:24, "To the blood of *sprinkling*"; also in 1 Pet. 1:2, "Unto obedience, and *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ."

In the first passage, there is reference in the writer's mind to the triple action of washing with water, sprinkling with blood, and anointing with oil observed in the ceremonial consecration of the priests (Ex. 29; Lev. 8). He omits the last mentioned, which was typical of the anointing of the Holy Ghost; for, while teaching Christians as to their own privileges, he leaves it open, as far as the knowledge of remission of sins reaches for Israel's blessing in the kingdom. Then the veil will not be rent for them,¹⁷ and while there may be access *by faith* within it to God, they do not draw nigh as we do, with purged consciences, and through a veil which has been rent, into the presence of God in the holiest. The glory will have then *come out* to them, instead of their going in to it -- which is our portion; therefore, the anointing with the Holy Ghost is not mentioned. Israel's blessings are founded on water and blood. I notice this important difference in passing.

In Heb. 12:24, he unfolds the richer value of the blood of Jesus Christ, than that of Abel; called here the blood of sprinkling, in connection with the New Covenant, as there had been the analogous sprinkling of the book and the people when Moses inaugurated the Old. The blood of Jesus spake of fullest grace to those who shed it; that of Abel cried from the ground for vengeance against the murderer, Cain.

In 1 Pet. 1:2, the apostle states, that believers out of the nation of Israel, being born of God, are sanctified unto two things; (1) To obey after the pattern of Jesus, in giving up their own wills for God's; in contradistinction to the obedience of the law, to which they had been sanctified under the Old Covenant, and (2) thus sanctified, or separated absolutely to God, they come under the value and efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ, through which they are cleansed from their sins, in contrast with the blood of the Old Covenant, which sealed their condemnation.

Thus far, as to the passages where the expression is used.

Now I think that you will find, that in the Old Testament the blood is always presented *to God*, when it is a question of *sins* -- sprinkled on the mercy-seat; before the mercy-seat; at the altar of burnt-offering; on the altar of incense, &c., &c. --

17. {Ezek. 41:24 shows us that the millennial temple will not have a veil; it will have a two-leaved door. There will also be a priesthood under the Melchizedec order, founded on the once-for-all finished work on the cross. What these things indicate is an immense difference from the Mosaic covenant -- a higher position -- but not at all like the access we now have.}

to give a righteous ground for the Lord's relationship with His people, His dwelling amongst them, or of their worship; also, to restore those relationships when interrupted. The only exception seems to have been in the ceremony of the cleansing of the leper (Lev. 14).

But in the New Testament the blood is always, without exception, presented *to God*, though we see it by faith. In Rom. 3:25, Christ has been set forth as a propitiatory, or mercy seat, which answers to the propitiatory in the ark of the covenant, where God's manifested presence was seen in the Holiest of all {see Lev. 16}. And this rightly so in this chapter, for Paul is laying a righteous ground for God's action in justifying the ungodly who believe in Jesus. Rom. 3 is all God's side; Rom. 4 gives our side as sinners. On the day of Atonement (Lev. 16) the first goat's blood was carried within the veil, to meet the claims of the throne of God; the blood was only presented for His eye. Also, in the Passover, He was to see it; and His passing over them was righteous, because it met His eye, and answered the claims of His holiness. So in Col. 1:20, the peace of the throne of God was made through the blood of the Cross, on the ground of which creation will be, and we are reconciled. In Heb. 9:12, Christ enters heaven through His own blood. In Heb. 10:19, we enter into the holiest because of it. In 1 John 1:7, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from every sin, giving God a righteous ground to have us in the light with Himself; and so on.

I do not find in the New Testament the thought, that it was ever sprinkled on the person at all, to cleanse away his sins. He was justified because of it, has redemption through it, and forgiveness; access to the holiest, etc., because it has been offered to God. On this ground the Word of God (which is the water) comes, and by it we are born again -- but born of God on the ground of the redemption which has been accomplished through the blood. This accounts for the different order of presentation of the water and blood in John's gospel, and his epistle. In the former the blood comes first in order: -- "One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water." The blood expiates, and answers God's claims -- and because of its value, He sends out the water of the word (cp. Eph. 5:26); and through it we receive conviction of our sins, and cleansing in the value of the blood. The epistle being our side, as the gospel was God's, the order is reversed. The water and blood is the order (1 John 5); the water has reached our consciences first, to bring us to God in the value of the blood.

I would, therefore, conclude that sprinkling of the person to cleanse away his sins, is not a New Testament thought; and I would also say that the moment the water of the word has reached the conscience of a sinner he is clean in God's sight because of the blood, on the ground of which God has acted, though his conscience may not yet have entered upon the value of it. In fact the first action of the word is to make the conscience *bad*, creating unhappiness as to one's state -- conviction of sins -- anxiety, &c. When the word has been received with joy at the first, it has only reached the natural conscience, or the intellect; there is no divine work, and the

blade withers. A stony ground hearer has probably been produced. This is constantly the case in the ordinary preaching of the day in which we live. When there is a real searching of the conscience by the word of God, unhappiness and exercise is produced; then the value of the blood with God having been learned, the conscience is purged and there is peace.

2. Most assuredly it is an *unbeliever* who is quickened, otherwise he would be a *believer* of his own act. Where, then would be the truth of John 1:10-12; James 1:18? If God did not quicken us by the word, we never should be saved. No doubt, on the other side, man is responsible to believe; but that is beside this question. It is the action of the word of God by the Holy Ghost, on the conscience of the individual producing conviction of its state, and repentance or moral judgment of this state by the quickened one. God has acted on the ground of the blood in quickening him. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). The person who has thus received life may not have the conscious knowledge of redemption for many a day. The throes of a new birth may last long enough, indeed, before the soul is at liberty. When the conscience is purged, and the forgiveness of sins known, the Holy Ghost dwells personally as a seal (a further action) in the person who has believed. It is the knowledge of forgiveness which is thus sealed. Deliverance may not be known at the time.

Before the deliverance of the Red Sea, the cloud and pillar came down. *Before* the learning of deliverance from a sinful state (Rom. 5:12-21; 6; 7; 8),¹⁸ and after the person's sins are forgiven in Rom. 4, the Holy Ghost is given unto us (Rom. 5:5). Forgiveness of sins would be followed by the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:38. It was so, historically, in Acts 10:43, 44, 45. Just as the words "forgiveness of sins" fell from Peter's lips on the ears and hearts of those previously *quickened*, the *gift* of the Holy Ghost followed as a *seal*.

18. {The time that the cloud appeared is not proof of the esteemed writer's application of it to the subject of deliverance. For further comment on this see footnote 4 and 11.}

The Christian and Attractions to the Flesh

Q. "E. A. H.; Clare," asks if a Christian would be attracted by those things which are pleasing to the flesh; or if it is possible to be in such a state of soul as that which would not be gratified by the things which formerly were desired.

A. It must ever be remembered that a Christian has not ceased, in becoming one; to possess the flesh -- the carnal mind, which is as much opposed to God as before his conversion. Of it God says, "It is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be*" (Rom. 8:7); and this even in the saint has not been removed. The more mature we are in spiritual growth, the more deeply shall we distrust and have no confidence in it (Phil. 3:3). It has the same tendencies and lusts; it desires to feed upon that which supports and sustains it just as much as ever. But there is a "new man" which alone can feed on Christ. He is the "bread of God" by which the new nature lives and grows. We are practically living in and feeding either upon those things by which the evil nature is sustained, or the new nature grows, all day long. The "things of the Spirit" sustain the new nature: the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Christ and plants them in our hearts. There is nothing which tests the condition of our souls like everyday habits, dress, conversation: they come forth out of the heart, and indicate the internal occupation of soul -- whether with Christ, and the things of Christ; or flesh, and the things of the flesh. But He ever liveth to make intercession for us; using His blessed services thus, the heart is kept free from the influences of flesh -- that which feeds it is laid aside -- the soul rejoices in denial of those things which would feed the nature from which He died to deliver us; learns His heart, and walks in communion with Him; finding the fact of an evil nature the occasion of more blessed intimacy with Him, that its workings may be refused, and the tendency to start aside from Him like a broken bow, judged. Then the heart feeds on Christ, and the state of soul which refuses the things that would shut Him out is there, and former things that gratified lose their power. It is quite possible that a Christian may be in such a state of soul, as not to desire those things that gave such gratification in times past. The superior engagement of the heart with Christ has produced this, rather than the effort in ascetic zeal to curb that which is discordant with it.

Words of Truth 5:231-235.

Character of Christ's Priesthood Now; Aaronic, or Melchisedec?

Q. "Ina: Kent," asks: 1. What is the character of Christ's priesthood *now*; Aaronic or Melchisedec?

2. Is Aaronic priesthood, intercessory? and Melchisedec, blessing? If so, can Christ assume the latter order of priesthood until the millennium?

3. When did Christ assume His priesthood? Was it not after His ascension? (Heb. 8:4).

A. 1. As a rule, Aaronic priesthood is characterized by *atonement* and *intercession*; that of Melchisedec by *power*

and blessing. He is "the high priest of our profession," as Christians: He will be in result "priest of the Most High God" -- God's millennial name.

The *order* of His priesthood is (as ever) that of Melchisedec -- its *exercise* at present after the pattern or character of Aaron, i.e., intercessional. He was "called" to the priesthood by the word of Him that said unto Him, "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee" (Heb. 5:5). This has reference to His being the Son of God, as born of a woman, and born in time on earth. Cp. Psa. 2:7, and Luke 1:35. This is distinct from His being God's eternal Son.

He is installed in His priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, as having gone on high when he had been rejected on earth, had died and risen, and had ascended to heaven. Cp. Heb. 5:6 and Psa. 110:4.

He was perfected for His priesthood (especially for its present *exercise*), "in the days of his flesh," through strong crying and tears, and His pathway of sorrow and suffering, and then He went on high; Heb. 5:7-9; Mark 14:33-40; Luke 22:40-53.

Having gone through all this, He was "saluted of God an High priest after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 5:10), when He ascended into the heavens. There and then He first practically exercised His priesthood. (See query 3.) When He comes forth again He will exercise it after its true order, as Melchisedec.

There was an action done on the cross by Him as priest before He took His seat on high. It is noticed in Heb. 2:17. But strictly speaking it was *not a priestly act*, though it was the *act of a priest*. I allude to His making propitiation for the sins of the people. In Scripture you will find that priesthood in its true character *follows* the work of redemption. As *sinner*s the people needed a *sacrifice*, but as *saint*s they need a *priest*. The High Priest standing confessing the sins of the people, was not, in this act, in his normal place as standing between a reconciled people and God. Christ was both priest and sacrifice to make propitiation for the sins of the people; but having done this as a priest He enters on the exercise of His priesthood {in heaven}, standing between a people who have been reconciled to God, and a God who has reconciled them to Himself.

Then follows an immense heavenly interval, characterized by the presence of the Holy Ghost dwelling on earth, before Christ comes forth to minister joy and strength and blessing as Melchisedec, in the age to come. Here then, is where Christianity comes in. In the epistle to the Hebrews, He is only known as *gone in*, never as *come out*: though there is a promise that He will. This stamps the primary application of the epistle to Christians in the most characteristic manner. For, as *Christians*, we have to do with a Priest who is *gone in* to the holiest; *Israel* has to do with a priest who has *come out*!

No doubt, His priesthood in the holiest now sustains His people Israel as a separate people on earth, till the morning of their history arrives. They are apparently lost to man's eyes, but the true Priest orders a light for this people "before the Lord continually," "from the evening unto the morning" of

their history: the twelve loaves on the pure table in their two rows, with the frankincense put on them, in type shows how He maintains them in a perpetual memorial before the Lord (see Lev. 24:1-9).

The typical exercise of the Melchisedec priesthood is seen in Gen. 14:18-20. Abram returns from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the confederate Kings in Shaveh, and Melchisedec comes forth in connection with the name of the "Most High," God's millennial name -- then, in millennial day, "*possessor*," manifestly, "of heaven and earth." He deals strength and joy (bread and wine) to the victorious Hebrew -- blesses him, and blesses the God of Abram who had delivered him from his foes.

Thus, in the opening of the age to come {the millennium}, when the great confederate battle of the kings of the earth is fought, and the seed of Abraham delivered from their foes, Christ appears, introducing joy and strength, and as Priest of the Most High God -- then manifestly *possessor of heaven and earth* -- the one now the abode of evil spirits, and the other the scene of man's evil and Satan's lie. He sits as a Priest on His throne (Zech. 6:13), the link between the then cleansed heavens, and the renewed earth, and Jehovah will "hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel" (the seed of God), "*and I will sow her unto me in the earth*" -- i.e., the restored and delivered people, which He never yet has done (Hos. 2:21-23). A stream of full blessing then flows from God in that day through Melchisedec.

Thus this priesthood is all blessing, after He has come forth, at a future day. This answers much of query 2.

At present we only know Him as *gone in* to the heavens, ever living (there) to make intercession for those that come unto God by Him (Heb. 8:25). His order of priesthood never changes. His exercise of it is certainly *not* after its true order; but the activities of intercession constantly exercised to reconcile the condition of a poor, failing, feeble people on earth whom He has redeemed, with the perfection of the place of glory in which He has set them on high.

Ready on the one side to give loose rein to all that is in our hearts, in a scene of corruption suited to its evil; capable on the other hand of enjoying God in all His holiness in the light of heaven; the priesthood of Christ supports our weakness in the divine desires, and all that God has caused to spring up in our hearts, and sustains us against the encroachments of the flesh and the world -- ministering to us the grace we need here below, which He learned in His own path; because He has seen to the righteousness we did need on high before God; and thus we find from our God (not as it is translated "help in time of need" but,) "opportune succor" (ἐὐκαιρὸν βοήθειαν) to prevent failure, and falling by the way. To pick us up when we have fallen, might be, indeed, "help in time of need"; but to minister "opportune succor," supposes that we have discovered our constant need of it, and that we are in the place of danger and liability to fail. Thus prevention is better than cure. His present intercessional priesthood is active to sustain us before God by the way.

Advocacy and washing of our feet come in as actions which flow from priesthood, while not themselves strictly so.

Words of Truth 6:17-19.

When is a Person Sprinkled With the Blood?

Several questions have come to hand, and as it seems that some have had difficulties about the reply in the December number of *Words of Truth*, to the question, "*When is a person sprinkled with the blood of Christ?*" I will take up the remarks and questions of correspondents in detail.

"Then the veil will not be rent for them" (i.e., the Jew). What Scripture can be given for this? etc.

I believe that the want of understanding as to the place and standing of a *heavenly* people with God, in contrast with an earthly people before God, is at the root of this question about the veil. We need *two* things as Christians, in order to stand in the presence of God in the light:

1st, To know how what we have *done* has been met;

2nd, To know how what we *are* has been dealt with.

The first thing that troubles the conscience is the former; a person finds that his *sins* are on his conscience, and then that they have been met by Christ bearing them and putting them away; the conscience knows it, when it believes in Him. But this does not meet what I *am* -- for I am still a sinner in nature. Then I am told that I am dead to this sinful nature -- or "sin," and alive to God through Christ (Rom. 6). Thus both acts and nature, tree and fruit, are met; I can now stand in the light of God's presence, or within the veil if you please. Hence you will find that Paul, who alone teaches the doctrine of the Church of God, treats of this double dealing of God with the tree and the fruit -- because he sets us in God's immediate presence. This is needed for the status of a heavenly people.

Now an earthly people, i.e., the Jew, will not need this as we do; they need to know remission of their "*sins*," so as to walk happily before God. But they are never called to stand within the veil as we are. Consequently, you find in the close of the book of Ezekiel, the priesthood is again established, between the Lord and His people (Ezek. 45:15, 16). The sacrifices are all renewed, and the Feasts, with the exception of Pentecost, which had "fully come," and had expended all its antitypical blessing on the Church formed at Pentecost. The Passover and the Atonement are renewed (Ezek. 14:18-25), and the Tabernacles (Zech. 14), etc., etc.

Thus you have a nation, with a priesthood between it and God, with a divinely ordered ceremonial; but, as I gather, *commemorative* in its character, because the cross work of the Lord Jesus is past; rather than *anticipative*, or *typical*, which was the character of the ritual in the Old Testament.

There is a gate "shut" continually, by which even the earthly prince of the house of David may not enter; "because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered by it." I should mention that there is a prince of David's house, the Lord's

vicegerent upon the throne in the kingdom of Israel, by and by. The Lord Jesus has appeared and set all to rights, but His place is rather on high, in the glorified church; though there may be divine visitations.

Moreover, if you examine 2 Chron. 3, you will find a "veil" characterizing Solomon's typical reign. It will be the same in the Lord's during the kingdom. {There will be a two-leaved door -- no vail in the millennial temple; Ezek. 41:24}.

An earthly people with a priesthood and ritual do not need the truth of "dead and risen with Christ"; but they do need forgiveness of sins -- the law written upon their hearts, etc., and this they will have. A heavenly people need much more, and they have it too. The total ignorance in most Christians of these things produces the kind of spurious Christianity you see around, which even at its best, only admits remission of sins and a purged conscience. Consequently, its followers walk as earthly men, as pious Jews would do; and take part with the powers that be, the wars and fightings, the politics, etc., which the least understanding of the place and standing of the heavenly calling of the church would judge in a moment.

The veil was rent at the crucifixion of the Lord. Its rending marked -- first, that Judaism of the past was over; secondly, that man had consummated his guilt, and stood face to face with God; thirdly, that God had disclosed Himself in perfect grace; and fourthly, that the sins of His people were swept away by the same stroke for ever. God and man are now face to face. For a saint, he is as white as snow; for a sinner, there he is in the presence of the richest grace of God, convicted by the light of God which reveals it, while it exposes him.

But we must distinguish all these moral truths and facts from a dispensational order of things on earth, to be again set up on the basis of Christ's accomplished work. Still, I believe a godly Jew will draw near "by faith" into the presence of God, as a saint consciously does now when he knows his sins are forgiven.

You say again, "The paragraph on 1 Pet. 1: 2, tacitly excludes all believers (except) out of the nation of Israel," etc. So it does. It is addressed to the elect strangers of the dispersion, and to no one else. But they are now Christians, and occupying the same platform before God as those of the Gentiles who had been called into Christianity, consequently, all the blessings of the Epistle are to be appropriated by the faith of those who are Christians now; while several passages would only be thoroughly appreciable by one who had been a Jew.

Again, "It is said, the blood is always presented to God. Is there no application of the blood to us in Heb. 10:22?"

I have already spoken of Heb. 10:22. I believe it to be a reference -- though not solely -- to the consecration of the priests of old. Now the consecration of a priest is not the cleansing of a sinner. Besides, "blood" is not named in the passage at all, though doubtless alluded to, and, as I have noticed, the anointing with oil is passed over in silence. The priest was first washed with water -- typical of the new birth of the word and Spirit of God; secondly, he was sprinkled

with blood to consecrate him; and lastly, anointed with oil -- typical of the Holy Ghost's anointing.

The blood has been presented to God by His Son. We may appropriate its value in any way that faith lays hold on Christ. But it would be absurd to say that it was literally sprinkled on any one, and I am sure it is not. Faith sings, "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" {Rev. 1:5}. Scripture also tells us that our consciences are purged through it {Heb. 10:2}. But all that is faith entering on the value of the once shed blood of Jesus?

Blood was *literally* sprinkled on people and things in the Old Testament -- never in the New. I have named the case of the leper, and the seal of the Old Covenant when the blood was sprinkled on the people, but certainly it was not for cleansing.

I do say, "because of its value He sends out the water," and rightly. For all the testimony of Scripture -- the word, or water, and the gospel of God's grace is founded on, and sent out because of the value of the blood in the sight of God.

You say, "suppose there had been no blood-shedding, might there not have been the blood (*qy.* water,) for condemnation?" This I pass, because it is based on a supposition.

We often see the conscience aroused without any results following. Would it then be correct to say, that "the moment the water of the word has reached the conscience of a sinner he is clean?" Is it not when the sinner looks to the blood that he is clean, although he may not know full redemption?

Natural conscience is often aroused without any results -- most surely. But I do not term this what you have quoted here. If the Spirit of God, in working by the Word, has reached the conscience, and has implanted the Word there, a quickening or new birth has taken place, and in God's sight that soul is clean; but the very fact of his being quickened is to make him cry out "unclean"! Subsequently the soul is led to look at Christ and His work and blood-shedding for peace, and then he *knows* he is clean. The sins that troubled him were all borne away long before, and he was clean in God's sight from them, but his eyes opened upon the fact when he believed in Christ for peace.

I would not term the arousing of a natural conscience through fear, or the like, "the water of the word (reaching) the conscience." Far from it. I believe in much of the Revival preaching that goes on, such cases are frequently taken for conversions, and mistakenly so.

Another correspondent would kindly request the Editor, if time permits, to answer if Heb. 10:22 -- "sprinkled from an evil conscience," is not sprinkling of blood upon *persons*, and for *sins*? etc.

I have already spoken as to this. Blood is not mentioned in the passage at all, though I dare say alluded to. Nor is it so much a question of *sins*, as of consecration, as I have said.

I have read the article in question, and regret that some have found so much difficulty in what seems so perfectly plain. I invite those who have any difficulty to communicate freely in the matter, as the very presentation of their

difficulty will, through mercy, serve to bring out the truth.

Words of Truth 6:37-40.

Robes

Q. "P. J. F." (1) What is meant by their "robes," in Rev. 7:14, and Rev. 22:14?

(2) What does washing their robes signify!

(3) Why are *they* said to do it, or to have done it, rather than having it done for them?

A. (1) Their "robes" is a figure of speech to express that in which a man appears before God.

(2) Washing their robes signifies that they have cleansed them before God, by washing them in the blood of the Lamb.

(3) There is no special force in their having done it themselves. They have gone by faith and appropriated the value of the blood of Him by whom, and in virtue of which they have been washed. It is man's side, so to say -- the subjective. You find in Rev. 1:5, 6, the Lord's side, or objective, and most certainly in their case, as for all, it is done by Him, however faith may appropriate the action. But faith having done so, He counts in tender grace the action to the person who by faith laid hold of His work. All the sufferings were His, by which we are saved; yet He delights to say, "*Thy faith* hath saved thee"! Not, My blood hath saved thee; though that is blessedly true: but the faith in the sinner who read His heart, and trusted the love which He came to make known.

2 Cor. 3:12, 13

Q. What is the precise meaning of 2 Cor. 3:12, 13; with particular reference to the latter part of v. 13? "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech and not as Moses, *which* put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished."

A. The Apostle having now the key to all God's ways then with Israel, in Christ, he can tell it all out with full freedom of speech, as one who had no vail on his face as Moses. All was now open and unveiled; all ambiguity was gone -- the vail was off, and the whole truth out; while the vail was on the heart of the Jew.

They "could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." For, when Moses came down from the mountain the *second* time, the skin of his face shone, reflecting the glory of the Lord, who had just revealed himself in long-suffering, mercy, and grace. But this had not removed the law with its exaction, and matters were thus made worse. For it was bad enough to have broken the pure law of God; but when its claim still remained, and the Lord had thus revealed Himself -- the law's claims alongside the perfect goodness of the Lord made matters worse if it was broken; because it was now broken in the face of this revelation of goodness in Him who claimed it. Thus it was

the law brought down the *second* time by Moses, whose face then shone with the goodness of the Lord, which is termed by Paul the "ministration of condemnation."

This glory the children of Israel shrank from, and could not look at; for they did not apprehend the mind of the Spirit in what was coming by Christ, and thus could not see to the end of that which is abolished, i.e., the whole Jewish system. "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second" (Heb. 10:9).

Census Difficulties

Q. "K. W. B." Q. In 2 Sam. 24:9, the census of Israel and Judah was 800,000 and 500,000. In 1 Chron. 21:5, it was 1,100,000 and 470,000. Why the difference?

A. In 2 Sam. 24:9, you have the "*valiant* men" -- formed men of war, numbering 800,000. In 1 Chron. 21, you have the males generally, who were grown men, capable of drawing the sword; but not designated the "*valiant*" -- i.e., trained men of war.

In 2 Sam. 24 you find the males of Judah generally numbered at 500,000 men; but in 1 Chron. 21 470,000, they are specifically named, who "drew sword."

Most probably the standing legions given in detail in 2 Chron. 27:1-15, were not mentioned in 2 Sam.; they were very well known. Of these, there were 24,000 for each month, with probably not less than 1,000 officers to every 24,000 men. If this 25,000 be multiplied by twelve, as each legion had to serve for a month, it will amount to exactly 300,000, and if this be added to the 800,000 mentioned in 2 Sam., it will be exactly the 1,100,000 mentioned in 1 Chron.

The census of Israel, if this proposition be true, is plain enough. That of Judah not so much on the surface, but in the text giving quite enough to show, that males capable of drawing sword are noted specially in contradistinction to "men of Judah" merely.

Three, or Seven Years?

Q. Why, in 2 Sam 24:13, does God propose to David that *seven* years famine should be sent upon him, while in 1 Chron. 21:12 only *three* years are named?

A. The Septuagint, or Greek version of the Hebrew scriptures, which was translated some 200 years before Christ, is constantly quoted by the Lord and the apostles in the New Testament, and thus in measure authorized by Him. It gives in 2 Sam. 14 "three years," the same reading as 1 Chronicles.

Fifty Shekels or Six Hundred Shekels?

Q. In 2 Sam. David is said to have given fifty shekels of *silver* for the threshing floor and the oxen, but 1 Chron. records that he paid Ornan six hundred shekels of *gold* by weight.

A. The word "silver" in 2 Samuel (in the Hebrew, Kehseph) is constantly used in the Old Testament for "money," just as the French use the word "*argent*" (silver), technically for "money." In 2 Sam. you probably have the value of what David gave; in 1 Chron. the "*weight*," as it states. The weight of the six hundred shekels of gold being in value equal to fifty shekels of money.

There is, it is said, a good deal of difficulty in settling numbers in the Hebrew, owing to marks and figures. But the use of "silver" for "money" makes the matter simple. See Gen. 44:1-8, where you have, in v. 1, money, in v. 2, "silver," in v. 8 "money" and "silver," in same verse all the same word (Kehseph) throughout. This will show its general usage.

Care Meetings

Q. J. H. We have long had the practice amongst us, for those who take an interest in the affairs of the Assembly, to come together to confer and deliberate on things brought before them prior to submitting such things to the gathered Assembly. Some few altogether object to "brothers meetings." They say that everything should go before the Assembly without any preliminary meeting.

Experience has taught us that we have been preserved from trouble and sorrow by having had certain matters discussed by brothers alone before laying them before the Assembly.

Some insist on the presence of sisters at such preliminary meetings, or that they be set entirely aside by having everything done at the Lord's table after the breaking of bread.

Our desire is to be guided by the Word of God, and I shall feel obliged if you would favor me with your judgment on this question.

A. I believe your practice to be a right one, as to the gathering together of those who care for the Church of God, to look into cases of discipline, and of those seeking

fellowship, cases of need, and the various matters in which godly care and oversight is needed.

In scripture I find that there was a *body* technically called the elderhood, or presbytery (πρεσβυτέριον) within the assembly. No doubt, in apostolic days, those composing this body may have been appointed by apostles, or their representatives {Titus 1:5}; but still there was a recognized body -- not merely men or elders individually, who acted in concert; but a *body* so named. See 1 Tim. 4:14. Such a body was known amongst the Jews. See Luke 22:66. "The elderhood of the people," "The estate of the elders," Acts 22:5; both having the same meaning as elderhood or presbytery, while, of course, differing in constitution.

I believe there is a great deal done by such meetings now, composed of those who have a care for the church, and who possess the confidence of the saints, and an aptitude for such care. Many cases, details of which would be hurtful if spoken of before the young, and females, have there been discussed before the Lord; the case carefully examined on all sides, and while no *action* of discipline or reception is taken, or could be, apart from the assembled saints, still the case is matured, and so brought forward, in a way that delicacy is not shocked, where such a case might exist.

It may turn out, too, that many a case need go no further; the personal rebuke of the "spiritual." The interference of the two or three may save all this, and save the Lord's name from reproach, as well as the Assembly from that most painful of all actions -- the exercise of discipline and excision from its midst. Cases, too, of need, where that can be ministered to, with the quiet grace of the Lord, are saved from a parade and the like.

"Sisters" have nothing whatever to do with such meetings. They have their own place defined fully in scripture, and are not to exercise authority. But no action, I repeat, can be taken by such a meeting apart from the assembled saints.

The cases are looked into, and the Assembly -- having confidence in those who thus love the care of the Church -- receive their testimony, and act upon their evidence and wisdom, and the matter, requiring only adequate testimony from two or three faithful witnesses as to the true bearings of the case.

Words of Truth 6:55-58.

New Birth

Q. T. T. E., Ledbury. 1. Am I right in believing that God's *first* action in the soul of the sinner is, by His word and Spirit, to beget a new nature?

2. If so, is the life the soul *then* receives everlasting?

3. That being the case, how would you reconcile it with those passages that put everlasting life as the result of believing?

4. In Acts 10:43, forgiveness of sins is said to *follow* believing. Would that be in its application to the sinner, or a fact as it stands *before God*?

A. 1. I believe that the thought is correct. God's *first* action in the soul of a sinner is the application of His word by the

Spirit to the conscience. This action produces faith in the soul; as we have it in Rom. 10:17, "So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and bearing by the word of God." Faith is the first principle of this new nature.

2. The life thus imparted is, most surely, eternal.

3. But God's impartation of eternal life is never separated in Scripture from our reception of Christ by faith; thus, to believing in Him is attributed the reception of eternal life in Him.

4. I believe that Cornelius was born of God *before* Peter preached salvation, peace, and forgiveness of sins to him and his house. Acts 10:2 is a description of him; in it the Holy Ghost calls him a "devout man," who prayed to God always. His knowledge extended only so far as that which could be known of Christ amongst the Jews, but with no thought of its application to a Gentile. Like the centurion in Luke 7 he owned, as faith ever does, those who were in external relationship with the Lord, and through whom the blessing to a Gentile must then flow; consequently he "gave much alms to the people," i.e. Israel. Peter appeals to him in v. 37, "That word, ye know," "the word which was sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ." But he needed the comprehensive "whosoever" of v. 43, for his faith to claim the blessing. This God presented to him through Peter, and having received it by faith, the Holy Ghost at once sealed his reception of forgiveness of sins. The new nature was there before; now the Holy Ghost, in power and liberty. Forgiveness of sins thus followed believing in Christ and His finished work, and was the *application* to the sinner of that which was previously a fact before God.

Words of Truth 6:80.

Forgiveness, Sealing, Deliverance

Q. E. C., Guelph. Does the expression, "*linked* with Christ," convey the truth taught in John 14:20?

A. If union with Christ is meant by the phrase, the word "*linked*" does not express it; for while the portions of a chain are linked together, and the chain is one, still it is a unity composed of many separate links, which are not united the one to the other.

The thought in John 14:20, is not exactly union, while it approximates closely to it in many ways. Paul alone teaches the union of the members to Christ in one body by the Holy Ghost. John treats more of nature and relationship to the Father, and in the passage alluded to I believe it is oneness of nature and life which is the Lord's thought. The Holy Ghost would be given in answer to His prayer to the Father (v. 16), and when He came He would give the consciousness of (v. 20). They would know, in the oneness of nature and life with Him who had gone away, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, that Jesus was in the Father, they in Him and He in them. It is a consciousness produced by the Holy Ghost acting in the life they possessed in the Son. I do not believe it goes as far as the unity of the body, to which the Lord never alluded; it was only taught by Paul, Union with Christ as a

member of His body is a very real thing. It is not faith which unites to Him. Faith is the first principle of the new nature bestowed when the sinner is born of God. The Word of God has reached his conscience by the Holy Ghost's application, and he is convicted of sin. Many exercises of heart may have to be learned until forgiveness of sins is known, and peace, but the life has been there. As a rule the Spirit of God seals the soul who has believed in Christ for *remission of sins*. It has set to its seal that God is true -- this is what faith does, and God has set His seal on the soul that has believed. The Holy Ghost thus dwelling in the believer unites him to Christ in the heavenly places. This is as real as the union of a human body with its head (if not more so, for it is divine), all being vitalized by the same blood and soul. It does not depend on any amount of inward experiences, but on having received the Holy Ghost. This latter is a consequence on believing in Christ for remission of sins.

Typically, you find that the pillar of cloud and fire descended and took its place to lead Israel *after* the blood of the paschal lamb had been shed, and the question of sins and their judgment had been settled, and *before* they were out of Egypt by the redemption of the Red Sea (Ex. 13).

Historically, you find that forgiveness of sins would be followed by the gift of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:38. Such came to pass in Acts 10:43, 44. The moment the words "remission of sins" passed Peter's lips, the Holy Ghost fell on those who heard. Acts 11:17, shows that it was the *gift* of the Holy Ghost -- in contradistinction to the *gifts* or signs which then and frequently accompanied it. He was given to believers -- not to sinners to make them believers: "Forasmuch, then, as God gave them the like gift, as he did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ," etc.

Doctrinally, you find in Rom. 3-5, that after *remission* of sins is known (Rom. 4:5, 6), and peace (Rom. 5:1), we find the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us (Rom. 5:5), and this even perhaps before deliverance from a state is experimentally learned (Rom. 7, 8).¹⁹

I may be sure that if I have received remission of my sins by believing in Christ, I have, as a consequence, received the Holy Ghost. This being so, I need no further experience to know that I am united to Christ, for it is the Holy Ghost dwelling in me who effects this. The experience will follow the consciousness of relationship, and will be enjoyed in the cultivation of the things suited to it.

Put the thickness of a gold leaf between the body and the head and it is a corpse; and such is the union with Christ and

19. {FGP believed that a person was sealed upon knowing the forgiveness of sins, when the person believed the gospel of his salvation (Eph. 1:12, 13); and the quickening precedes sealing. That is so. The man in Rom. 7, however, is before God in his conscience, on the ground of law (law as a principle). He is in "captivity" whereas one who has the Spirit is in "liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17; Rom. 8:2). It is really a contradiction to say a person has known forgiveness (being in a forgiven status before God) while he is in "captivity"; while he is not delivered (Rom. 7:24). The mistake appears in a number of the author's writings, often connected with a thought concerning the appearance of the cloud on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea.}

His Church, that it is as real as that subsisting between the human body and its head! This union is by the Spirit of God. He unites living members in one body to Christ. "Linking" is a poor word, though a right thing may be meant.

Daniel's 70th Week

Q. "G." Has the first part of the seventieth week of Daniel 9: 24-27 had any fulfillment?

A. The seventy weeks are divided as follow. They refer to the period which was to elapse -- taking the weeks as weeks of years -- i.e., 490 years = 7 x 70 -- from the time noted in the prophecy until the full blessing of the people of Israel, at the close of their striking and eventful history, in which they have been (as in time to come they will be), the display of the Divine Government of God on earth.

From the decree to rebuild Jerusalem by Artaxerxes, in the twentieth year of his reign, and embracing the troublous times in which the wall was re-building (7 x 7 weeks), 49 years. From the building of the wall until Messiah (7 x 62 weeks), 434 years. Total number of years accomplished, 483.

This leaves one week (seven years) still to come. But in Dan. 9:26 we read: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and shall have nothing" (*marg.*).

This leaves the moment of His cutting off vague -- i.e., it does not confine it to the moment of the conclusion of the sixty-ninth week (i.e., 62 + 7) of years, but "after" it.²⁰ This being so, the Lord's ministry of about three and a half years, when He gathered a remnant of the people to Himself, ran on and was counted for those who received Him; while the nation refused Him, and thus the cutting off would have been for the former the middle of the seventieth week, leaving only half the week to come; but all is left vague, and purposely so. I believe that, for the remnant who were gathered, the first half of the seventieth week has gone by, while for the apostate Jews it has yet to come. Consequently, it has a double fulfillment. Just as John Baptist was Elijah for those who had faith for it, yet Elijah has yet to come for fact (see Matt. 17:10-13; Matt 4); so the first half for faith was fulfilled, while in fact it would still have to come.

All comes to this. The "cutting off" is left vague, so that it may be at the end of the half of the seventieth week, or not. But when you come to counting out of days, etc., in Scripture, *only* the *last* half of the seventieth week is ever named. The Lord's coming for the saints may happen at any moment; and, the first half-week being thus left vague, any period necessary (longer or shorter, as the case may be) for what has to be accomplished, may take place between the rapture of the saints and the commencement of the final events of the period of tribulation, during the three and a-half

years or last half-week; at its close the Lord will appear for the deliverance of His people.

The passages of Scripture where it is counted are Dan. 7:25, 12:7; Rev. 11:2, 3, 14; 12: 6; 13:5, 11.

When Messiah was cut off at the Cross and got no kingdom, sixty-nine and a-half weeks were gone for the true saints, sixty-nine weeks only for the apostates. Then comes in the great heavenly Church parenthesis, when all time has ceased to be counted; because the Jews are set aside, and God is gathering a heavenly Church -- the body of Christ -- to which times and seasons do not belong. When that is accomplished He turns again to time, the earth, and the Jew. Half a week only then has to come, the last of the seventieth, for those who had received Him; a whole week for those who did not. The conclusion of it will bring in the full blessing of Israel.

Words of Truth 6:96-99.

Emptied Himself

Q. "J.W.P." I was lately somewhat startled to hear the first two clauses of v. 7 of Phil. 2 applied to the Lord previous to His becoming man. I cannot myself find anything in Scripture to sanction such a thought.

On the contrary, to my own mind (so far as I have light - although yet a learner) to attribute such an application to any part of the statement of those verses, seems to involve not only the marring the truth of the solemn and blessed instruction of the chapter, but to deprive it of sense and meaning. It is urged that the Lord "emptied himself" by His ministrations and appearances to, and on behalf of Old Testament saints, etc. But how is "emptying" Himself involved hereby? Neither can I see the object of the Lord's doing so *before* He became man. Does not the force of the whole passage connect itself with the exhortation in ver. 5?

A. The passage in Phil. 2 refers to the Lord's pathway of obedience as a man here below, resulting in death, without which all was incomplete. It was the perfect contrast to the path of the first Adam, and accomplished in the voluntary humiliation of Jesus -- the second Adam. There was no "emptying himself" in the Lord's ministrations and appearances before His incarnation; to act divinely in these things was not to empty Himself. But as the first Adam, when in the form of a man, grasped at the idea of being a god, that he might command, and left his first estate, under the temptation of the devil; so the second -- existing ever in the form of God -- emptied Himself of His glory (never ceasing to be God, which He could not do), and took upon Him the form of a servant that He might obey. The only one who could leave his first estate without sinning was God Himself. Having thus emptied Himself and become a man, He humbled Himself -- a second step in His pathway -- not merely patiently enduring all that came upon Him in it, but humbling himself, and going lower and lower until He consummated His obedience by death -- the death of the cross. It was the last point of obedience, for in death there is

20. {Most likely, the 69th week ended when the Lord rode into Jerusalem, just before the cross. No, it was not Sir Robert Anderson who first printed this thought. I do not know who first printed it, but we find it in *The Bible Treasury* 13:91 (June, 1880).}

no will. A *man* might humble himself in pride; he will not do so “to death.” With the first Adam death was the penalty for his disobedience; with the last Adam it was the perfection of His obedience -- “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.” The first Adam was the great example of “He that exalteth himself shall be abased” -- the last Adam of “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” The first man was driven out of the Paradise of Eden when he had consummated his disobedience. The last was highly exalted and set on the throne of glory when He had consummated His obedience. And at His name every knee must bow of the created intelligences in Heaven, Earth, and Hell. Angels, men, and devils must own the person of Him who trod this path, from the throne of glory in divine love in humble obedience on earth, until He completed the orbit of His pathway in being placed on high, as man in righteousness. Every tongue must confess Him Lord, to the glory of Him who made Him so -- God the Father. Verse 10 gives His personal glory; v. 11 His official (see Acts 2:36).

The Two Witnesses

Q. “G.” Does the testimony of the two witnesses commence with the last half-week; and, if so, when do the “three days and a-half” of Rev. 11:9-11 come in?

A. I judge that there is but one “half-week” counted {i.e., directly indicated by numbers} in the Revelation, while in the symbolic part of the book there may be allusion to much that is antecedent to it. But the “Beast” has power for “forty-two months” -- not for eighty four. During that “forty-two months” the witnesses prophesy, or, as it is written, “a thousand two hundred and threescore days,” during the raging of the Beast, who slays them in the end. This is, I judge, the last half-week. If you seek to put into the Apocalypse two half weeks in detail, you have the difficulty of placing the last half-week first in order, and the active before the passive testimony, and thus reversing the whole succession of events.

The “three days and a-half” affect both interpretations. By seeking to put in two {numerically designated} half-weeks in Revelation you must allow the three and a-half days to run into the second half-week. By allowing only one {numerically designated} half-week you have the same difficulty at the end.²¹ These days may come in at the close of the last half-week, and may be embraced in their “testimony.”

Words of Truth 6:118-120.

Tribulation Saints

Q. “G.” Why is “the great multitude which no man could number” said to come out of “the great tribulation” (Rev.

7:14), seeing that it would seem to be drawn from among the heathen, to whom the widest of the three circles of tribulation “the hour of temptation” Rev. 3:10), applies?

A. I judge the great tribulation here spoken of to be a general expression for the period of judgment which passes over the earth in the interval between the taking away of the saints to heaven and the appearing of the Lord in judgment with them. It is not the definite tribulation which falls on the Jews in Judea, as given in Matt. 24:15-31. It is a comprehensive and technical expression for the interval or crisis of the world’s history preparatory to the millennium.

Earth-Dwellers of Revelation

Q. Are the dwellers on the earth, of Rev. 14:6, the same class as those thus described in Rev. 13:8 and other passages? If so, would it be correct to assume that the “everlasting gospel” is *not* confined to those nations that are not now under testimony?

A. They that dwell on the earth are they who accept this scene as their portion, like Cain. It is an expression characterizing this class of persons in the Apocalypse.

The “everlasting gospel” is a general and final testimony, of a providential character, sent out of God at the time of the end, just before the establishment of the kingdom for a thousand years. I believe its testimony will be very wide in character, embracing all who had not been shut up to judicial blindness, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved (2 Thess. 2:10-12). To such no testimony will be given; it will be sent to all who had not thus been given up of God.

It may be well to mention that the “everlasting gospel” is a warning to the whole world to flee from idolatry and idols, and fear the one God who created all things. It was the general testimony of the Old Testament, and will be the general testimony then, until one God is known from sea to sea, and to the ends of the earth; idols and false worship then are gone forever. From this we must distinguish the parenthesis in time, from Pentecost till the rapture of the saints, wherein we have the Church called out by the glad tidings, or *gospel of His grace*, which was not proclaimed before this interval? and will not be in that day.

Words of Truth 6:139.

Christ As High Priest

Q. H. How can Heb. 2:17, be reconciled with Heb.8:4? The latter Scripture seems to imply that ascension seems to have been a necessary preliminary to the Lord’s entering upon the office of High Priest; yet the former speaks of His making reconciliation for the sins of the people.

What is meant by *reconciling sins*?

Is not John 17 in character the High Priest’s prayer?

A. To me a very blessed aspect of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that it is the complement, in a certain sense, of that to the Romans. The latter *sets* the believer “in Christ” before God in divine righteousness, recognizing an unchanged evil

21. {There are 75 days between the end of the 1260 days from the middle of the 70th week until the inauguration of the kingdom (cp. Dan. 12). The 3 ½ days run from the 1260th day into this 75 day interval.}

nature, a carnal mind; but also a new nature, the spiritual mind (Rom. 8:1-11). The former shows us the divine provision of grace to *maintain* us there by the priesthood of Christ. This is alluded to in Rom. 5:10; reconciled by His death, we shall be saved by His life, i.e., His priestly intercession on high. So in Rom. 8:34, "Who also maketh intercession for us." Then in Heb. 7:26, we read (as *putting* both thoughts together), "He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

But all this supposes Him to stand in the capacity of High Priest, between a reconciled people and God; and to this Heb. 8:4 refers. He exercised no true priestly service then, until He ascended to glory.

But still there was something which He did as a priest before He went on high. Just as the High Priest on the great day of atonement of old was making good the claims of God,²² and putting the sins of the people on the head of the scapegoat, while after all he was not in his normal place as between a reconciled people and God, so the Lord Jesus, ere He entered on the normal exercise of His priesthood, as a priest He did the work of the cross; both actively as offering Himself, and passively as the victim offered, in making atonement for the sins of the people. This is what is referred to in Heb. 2:17, where the word is incorrectly translated "reconciliation." There is no meaning in reconciling sins; there would be in reconciling people. It should be "to make propitiation (ἱλάσκεσθαι) for the sins of the people."

John 17 is wrongly taken as an intercessional or priestly prayer. Now, the Lord is there as Son, not priest or advocate, and He is occupied in putting His disciples into His own place on earth before the Father and before the world, with an allusion in the end to their place in the Father's house by and by. He looks to the Father to keep them where He had kept them while with them.

Priesthood is for mercy and grace for help in time of need, to a feeble people who have to cry to God, in a place of danger and liability to fall and start aside from Christ.

The "Word"

Q. Why was the Lord Jesus called the "Word"?

A. He is called the "Word," as the *Person who is the impersonation of the mind of God in the abstract*. Eternal in His being -- "In the beginning was the Word"; having a personal existence -- "The Word was with God"; His deity expressed in the words "And the Word was God"; His eternal personality in the words, "The same was in the beginning with God." The Word then, was, before all creation, eternal; in nature divine; in person distinct, and in personality eternal: the expression of the whole mind that subsists in God.

22. {It is helpful to remember that Aaron was not dressed in the regular High Priest's garments on the day of atonement. It was an extraordinary work.}

The Church is Both Body and Bride

Q. W. S. It is commonly held that the Body of Christ is also the Bride. Can you prove me this from Scripture, etc.?

A. There is no doubt that the Body of Christ and His Bride are both names used for the Church. At the same time it is to be understood that there is an earthly Bride of the Canticles {Song of Solomon} -- the Jewish remnant of the last days. In Eph. 5, while Paul is exhorting husband and wives, his mind cannot pass on without thinking of Christ and the Church. He quotes the passage (Gen. 2:23, 24) referring to Adam in Paradise, and Eve taken out of the man -- bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh -- while he slept, and then the statement, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh," used in Eph. 5 to convey the union of Christ -- the second Adam -- and the Church; the Eve, so to speak, for the Paradise of God. "We are members of his body; we are of his flesh and of his bones."

There is no allusion in Rom. 7 as to union with Christ, or to the Church at all. It refers to the law and a risen Christ, and the impossibility of having rightly to do with both together, as for a woman rightly to have two husbands. The word "married" is not in the original at all (Rom. 7:4).

In 2 Cor. 11:2, the Church is espoused to one husband, that she may be presented as a chaste virgin unto Christ.

In Rev. 21:9-27, 22:1-5, the Church is distinctly named the "Bride, the Lamb's wife." Babylon, the whore, said she sat as a queen, and was also described under the figure of a city, or polity; so is the Bride. She is looked at here as a polity or center of administration of the kingdom in heavenly glory. It is not the Father's house, but the displayed glory, in the light of which the saved nations walk (Rev. 21:24).

In Rev. 22:17, "The Spirit and the Bride say, come." The Spirit dwelling in the Church produces bridal affections in her, and she invites Christ while He is absent, as the Morning Star (v. 16).

There is an earthly Bride, of which the Song of Songs speaks -- the elect remnant of the Jews.

Words of Truth 6:158-160.

Doing All to the Glory of God

Q. "G." Please explain the meaning of 1 Cor. 10:31: "Do all to the glory of God." How is this to be the primary object of all we do, such as using natural talents and the like?

A. First of all we should seek to know the direct subject before the mind of the Spirit in any Scripture; for to introduce a thought which is not there only makes it more difficult to understand it. The apostle Paul has specially before him the thought of meats offered to idols, with the conduct becoming those who are Christ's in their practical walk in the world. Whether it were eating or drinking, or whatever we do, all is to be done to God's glory; and not to please ourselves and our selfish ends. We should think of another's conscience, even if our own were free, and all things lawful to us. A

weaker one might be stumbled by our liberty; better then, to deny ourselves than injure him for whom Christ died. Especially then, should we observe this care and solicitude for the conscience of another in the things of God. He is best kept himself who thinks most thus of his brother; and he who in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. No offence should be given by abusing our Christian liberty, whether to the Jew or to the Gentile, or to the Church of God; seeking thus the profit of others and not our own.

As to the use of natural talents the principle holds good. We are not our own, but are bought with a price (and what a price!) We should seek to know what is the will of the Lord in their use. We may be able to serve Him by them in working for our bread, or for others, or to help in the Lord's work if the former be unnecessary. And we have to think of His will, not our own. When it becomes a question of doing our own will it is sin.

The Lord may use our natural talents in His service by bestowing spiritual gifts upon us. Natural ability is recognized in the Lord's bestowing spiritual gifts in the parable of the talents, (Matt. 25). The ability is recognized, then the gift bestowed, and then increase is to be made by trading with the same in His service. But the simple question of every-day life is, whether it is the will of the Lord or my own will, which actuates me in the use even of natural talents and ability; if it be His, it will surely be to "God's glory" in a scene where His glory is trampled under foot, and man's will characterizes the world.

Another writes (from Hastings) as to ministering in every-day life to others, even when such is refused. Let us be assured that the Lord will open a door for service of such nature, as He does for every kind of true service to Him; when He does not, we cannot force one open. The flesh may refuse our services of love (even as it did Christ's), but divine love is never checked by the ingratitude of its objects, as a spring is not hindered by the channel through which it flows. To resist flesh is to feed it; to bow to the will of the Lord in meekness is our path. To recognize flesh in another is but to provoke and call it into action, as recognizing it in ourselves is but to give it a place once more. Flesh likes this, for it cannot bear to be reckoned dead and incapable of good, whether in ourselves or in another.

The Cup of Wrath

Q. "H." here is an expression often met with, "The cup of wrath," and Christ drinking it. The thought may be scriptural, but I cannot find it in the Word, etc.

A. The expression is not cited as a text, but it is the expression of a truth in Scripture. This is a common and every-day thing. Christ made propitiation, and bore the wrath. We say He made atonement for sin, and rightly so; the word signifies that wrath was there, and should be appeased. The same word is used by Jacob, when he says, "I will appease him by a present" (Gen. 32). Christ did all this just because wrath was there against sin and sinners. He met fully

the character of God without *changing* it, and thus opened a righteous channel for His love to flow. It is not said in terms that He bore wrath, lest you should think He was personally under wrath Himself; but as a propitiation He met it, thank God, as we can say. Wrath against sin and sinners is constantly mentioned in Scripture. "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job 36:18). "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," etc. (Rom. 1:18). "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:2). There are many other passages, as a concordance will show. I have not one by me at present.

This wrath must be met, and Jesus met it. But before He went to the cross, where He did so, He revealed the *Father*, which is always God's name in grace as revealed by the Son. When you think of *God* as such, you think of a holy being; when of the *Father* sending the Son, you think of grace! At the cross He met all that the nature of God required, and brought more glory to Him than if there had been no sin, and this, too, as a *Man* (see John 13:31, 32). There (the cross) you see a Man meeting God in righteousness and judgment against sin, as in life He was showing what God was for man in grace. There you see truth, holiness, righteousness against sin, love to the sinner, majesty, all uniting, yet for the moment the evil seemed to triumph over the good. Thus the cross was the perfect solution of the question of good and evil according to the nature of God Himself; evil completing itself and good having its perfect triumph; God glorified, and His justice which refused admittance to the sinner, hanging up a vail between him and God, is disarmed, and now only finds her happy task -- the vail being rent by the stroke which met her claim -- in clothing the sinner in the best robe, whose entrance to God's presence hitherto she denied.

Jesus was the declarer of the Father when here; and all the fullness of the godhead was pleased to dwell in Him bodily (see Col. 1:19; 2:9). I do not believe there will be any other revelation of God -- nor could there be. When God has been revealed there can be no more to reveal. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." We shall see more plainly when flesh and sense are gone, but the object will be the same Jesus -- for ever. Two verses of a well-known hymn, on Rev. 5., convey to my mind the thought better than most human words can do --

All the Father's counsels claiming
Equal honors to the Son All the Son's effulgence
beaming
Makes the Father's glory known.
By the Spirit all pervading,
Hosts unnumbered round the Lamb:
Crowned with light and joy unfading,
Hail Him as the great I AM.

"The presence of his glory" would refer more to the unveiled glory of God, which we never yet have seen, nor could we with mortal eye. So Gabriel spoke of standing in the presence, or before God; Jesus, too, of the angels beholding the face of His Father; which means that they are mystically

represented before Him who thinks in grace of such. To seek to learn some other thought from the passage would be, I fear, but to introduce one.

Words of Truth 6:198-200.

The Restrainer

Q. "A. L. O. C." There are some who maintain that when the Church is taken away, the Holy Ghost will then be withdrawn. Is it so? 2 Thess. 2:7 speaks of a restrainer till the "wicked" sets himself up as God?

A. The personal place in the Church on earth which the Holy Ghost assumed, as sent down from heaven at Pentecost, only remains true as long as the Church of God is here. You must distinguish between His actions on earth previously and Himself now personally dwelling in the Church, which is peculiar to Christianity. When it ceases as a system on earth, as existing only during Christ's rejection and absence, the Holy Ghost's personally dwelling on earth is no more needed; for Christ will then be present Himself and reigning in power. The Holy Ghost will then work, and His actions be known and manifested, as was the case before He came to dwell, and will thus continue to carry out all divine good as God's direct power, and in the unity of the godhead.

Scripture does not state that the Holy Ghost is the One who "letteth," in 2 Thess. 2:9. The wisdom of God has left the restrainer unnamed. Of old the saints believed it to be the then Roman Empire, and were probably right. Now, it doubtless is the power of God working by His Spirit in the Church on earth -- as we can gather from general intelligence of the Word. When the Church is taken away there may be a long or short interval before the manifestation of the "man of sin." God will then use whatever He pleases as the restrainer. It may be the Holy Ghost's action in the godly Jew or whatever He wills. Hence it is left vague in the passage. Any instrument may be at the moment this restrainer in God's hand.

The Holy Ghost will be "poured out upon all flesh" in the millennial day -- a remarkable manifestation of His power and action. As to "dwelling" it is peculiar to the period of Christ's rejection and absence. He is the Spirit of communion, leading the children of God into the consciousness of the possession of their own things.

When He ceases thus to dwell, the Lord gives a testimony to the world, through His earthly people Israel -- the Jew. This is termed the "spirit of prophecy," because it is the desire produced in the hearts of the godly for what they have *not yet possessed*, but are looking for; and this expresses itself as "the testimony of Jesus," i.e., the testimony He gives at that day.

In Enoch you find illustrated the spirit of communion; in Noah the spirit of prophecy. The one walks with God; has the testimony that he is pleasing to Him, and is translated out of the scene before the judgments of which he testified were poured out on the world. In this he is a figure of the Church. The other must pass through the waters of tribulation and

build an ark, prophesies about blessings he had not yet enjoyed, preaches righteousness to an ungodly world, and becomes heir of the renewed earth. He typifies the Jewish remnant in whom the Spirit of God works during the interval before the millennium is set up.

The Paraclete or Comforter is the name given to Him in His actions and sojourn on earth with and in the Church, as the Messiah was the Comforter or Consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25). "I will send you *another* Paraclete," or "Comforter," points to Christ Himself, as amongst those godly ones as their Comforter then; this, too, while Christ is away.

The Binding of Satan, and Sin

Q. Will sin cease when the Enemy is bound?

A. We learn of Israel -- "Thy people also shall be all righteous," etc. (Isa. 60:21). And that the multitude of Gentiles saved through the great tribulation (Rev. 7: 9-17) all call upon the name of the Lord; "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto Jehovah; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" (Psa. 22:27). But we also learn of a solemn outbreak of sin and sinners at its close, when Satan is once more set free ²³ (Rev. 20:6-9). We also find that during this time of blessing the direct manifested government of God will cut off by judicial death those who sin (See Psa. 101 passim; Isa. 65:20, etc.) Those, then, who are born in the millennial day will need to be "born again," as much then as now, though those who begat them are the Lord's.

This being so, sin in man's nature, i.e., the flesh, is the same as since the fall; but Satan, who can act upon it by temptation, will be bound, and the "world" (the present great system built up on man's departure from God) -- "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" -- this moral system will then have passed away, and the renewed earth be under the peaceful sway of Jesus. Consequently the "world" will be no more an evil system to allure the "flesh," through the power of the "devil," and to sin in that day will be wilful sin against Christ, in manifested power and glory.

"The evil heart of unbelief" will show how "evil" indeed it is, in a day when all is light and manifestation, should it be unbelieving at such a time; in contrast to that in which we have to walk in what is unseen and eternal. It came in when man departed from God; not surely in paradise.

23. See Psa. 18, 66, and 81, as to the "feigned obedience" of the nations then to Christ.

What is a Living Sacrifice?

Q. What is “a *living sacrifice*,” the reasonable service spoken of in Rom. 12:1? Sacrifices require the death of the animal in the Old Testament.

A. I believe it refers to the meat offering (more than to sacrifices where death came in), as far as such can be applied to us. It should more correctly be termed the “meal offering,” or “*mincha*.” The fine flour mingled with oil was Christ’s human nature as conceived of the Holy Ghost by the Virgin Mary (Luke 1). Unleavened cakes anointed with oil point to his being anointed with the Holy Ghost at His baptism (Luke 3); the frankincense to those graces which God alone appreciated truly and fully, and all of it was consumed -- all was tried by fire and only emitted a fragrant odor to God. No honey -- the sweetness of nature, and no leaven -- that which is sour and inflated. Salt always added, as the holy grace which binds the soul to God and enables the heart to refuse all that is presented to it which is not of Him. In short, a sinless man was before God’s eye in Christ, and was what none else ever was *in itself* offered to God.

In Rom. 8:2, 3, we are consecrated to God and presented to Him, as in Christ. In Rom. 12 as priests for whom the mercies of God have opened our temple door, we have come out of all man’s corruption, and now present our bodies, hitherto slaves of sin, to God, a “living sacrifice” as the meat offering, and as in Christ and His life in us, “holy,” to which the salt pointed (cf. Mark 9:49, 50), and “acceptable,” the grace of Christ seen in us (the frankincense) -- all presented to God as an “intelligent priestly service,” or “worship,” as it might be; in contrast to the ceremonial which might be under the law without intelligence of heart and conscience.

Earnest of the Spirit

Q. We have in 2 Cor. 1:22, “The earnest of the Spirit,” and in Eph. 1:14, “The earnest of our inheritance.” If the Spirit is the “earnest of the inheritance,” what is the “earnest of the Spirit”?

A. The subject in hand in Eph. 1:1-14, is the calling of God (vv. 3-6), which is our present portion, and the inheritance which we have in Christ in the future over all created things. Christ’s place in the calling and Christ’s place in the inheritance is ours, as joint-heirs with Him. The inheritance being a matter still to come, we receive the Spirit as a seal, as looking back at the fullness of redemption which sets us in the calling, and looking forward as the earnest before we possess the inheritance. He is named, consequently, the “Spirit of *promise*,” as connected with what we have not yet received.

In 2 Cor. 1 the inheritance is not named, but He who is its earnest has been given us. It is a wonderfully comprehensive passage (vv. 20-22). God had made promises of old; His Son comes in the “*yea*,” the fulfillment in His person, and the “*Amen*” -- the certainty of them all. Those to whom the promises were made (the Jews) reject Him, and so the promises are deferred until another day, when Israel will

“*Amen*” the promises of God, when grace restores the seed of Jacob.

Another thing now unfolds itself. God had purposes and counsels before He made the *promises* -- before the foundation of the world. His “delights were with the sons of men” ere the world was (Prov. 8). The history of the first man’s responsibility was closed in the Cross; and the second Man enters into His glory when cast out in shame from this world. The people of God’s counsels are now called; His eternal purposes are unfolded, and God has a fresh and wondrous glory “by us” -- Christians -- the objects of those counsels. God establishes us “in Christ” before Him. Then He “anoints” us with the Holy Ghost for power for our pathway and service while awaiting the day of glory, and seals us as His own to secure all this glory to us. This brings into our hearts the conscious earnest of all, and by the Spirit thus given. The affections are thus kept in the joy and enjoyment of our own things.

The context in each case makes the difference of language simple.

Elect Angels

Q. “I charge thee before God . . . and the elect angels” (1 Tim. 5:21)?

A. The elect angels are the witnesses of God’s preserving a creature unfallen; men, the saints, of His redemption of creatures who have fallen. The fallen angels are those who exercised their own will without a tempter, as man, and lost their place irrecoverably. They are reserved in chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day. Angels are either “elect” or “fallen,” as far as I know from Scripture.

Missions of the Seventy and the Twelve

Q. What was the distinctive character of the missions of the "Twelve," Luke 9, and of the "Seventy," Luke 10?

A. The mission of the "Twelve" was, as sent out by the Lord the Messiah of Israel, before His ministerial rejection, which in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt., Mark., Luke) is seen before the "Transfiguration." His final rejection was in His humiliation at the cross, and supplementally, in His glory, witnessed to by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (Acts 2-7). They were sent out to preach the kingdom of God, and were given power over all evil spirits, and to cure diseases -- the samples of the "powers of the world to come" or millennium, when Satan will be bound, and man's diseases cured. Their mission was general and final, and not specifically confined to Israel. No provision for the journey was to be taken, for Messiah's power commanded the hearts of men for all their need.

When this mission was over (v. 10) they returned, and in v. 18 the Lord seems to ask what the results of His own mission (Luke 8) and theirs (Luke 9) had been. It was refused. Some said one thing, some another (v. 19). Discussion and reasoning is not faith, and no real results as a general thing were seen. Those who had faith confessed Him (v. 20) as "*the Christ*," which is no more to be preached (v. 21); the testimony was over. "*The Son of Man*" was now about to suffer, being rejected; and His followers would have a path of sorrow and rejection in this world like His own (vv. 23-26). The transfiguration scene follows to sustain their hearts in such a path of suffering, unfolding the glories that would follow when that day would come.

The seventy are sent out on their mission now (Luke 10), which is founded on His rejection as the *Messiah*; and the declaration of His coming glory as *Son of Man*, head over all things. His full glory as Man while Son of the Father, is the result of and follows His rejection here.

It is striking that while they are empowered to "heal the sick" (Luke 10:9), they were not empowered to cast out devils, yet they make some tentative efforts in faith, to cast them out (v. 17), which were answered of God. Devils were subject to them, "through thy name," they say. Such is God's answer to living faith, wherever it is found.

Who Are the Two Witnesses?

Q. Who are the "two witnesses" (Rev. 11:3, 4). Do they answer to the "Saints of the Most High," in Dan. 7:22?

A. During the period known as the "Great Tribulation," which lies between the Lord's coming for His saints, and His appearing in glory with them, the Lord Jesus gives a testimony through the Jews as to His claims as "Lord of all the earth." This is referred to in the account of these "two witnesses," in this symbolic part of the Revelation; "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." God is giving an adequate testimony at that day to what is then coming on the earth. The number which may be used to testify does not signify; adequate or sufficient

testimony is the thought. This witness has a double significance, as the miracles show. They are similar to those performed by Moses, when the people of Israel were captives in Egypt (Ex. 7-10); and by Elias, when the people were apostate, worshiping Baal (1 Kings 18); as the shutting up of heaven, and the smiting the earth with plagues and turning the water into blood testify. They are owned as true worshipers in that day, and they have the spirit of prophecy, which is the "testimony of Jesus," i.e., the testimony He gives at that day to His royalty and priesthood about to be established (cf. Zech. 4).

I believe they are godly Jews whom the Lord thus uses in this special manner, some of whom seal their testimony with their blood, looking for a "better resurrection."

I judge that Dan. 7:22 refers to the appearing of the Son of Man in glory who is the Ancient of Days Himself, to deliver the godly ones who are trampled down by the beast. This results in two things here (v. 22) stated generally; 1st, "Judgment was given to the saints of the high (or heavenly) places" -- not "Most High"; and 2d, "The saints possessed the kingdom" -- the heavenly and earthly departments of glory.

Words of Truth 6:215-220.

The Church and Eph. 1

Q. Is there any direct reference to the Church in the opening verses of Eph. 1? We sing --

"Abba chose the Church in Jesus
Long before the world began,"

which seems to be the thought in these verses.

A. There is no reference to the Church, as such, in Eph. 1 until you come to vv. 21, 22; still those only who compose it are before the mind of the Apostle. Individuals were the objects of God's choice before the foundation of the world. Election has to do with persons. Here it is the intentions of God -- His purposes, which are the subject (v. 4). I would alter the word "church" in the hymn quoted, to "saints." It would then be more like the truth, though it is rather too broad a term.

Tribe of Dan Not in Rev. 7

Q. V. J. A. How is it that Dan is not included in the tribes mentioned in Rev. 7?

A. God here draws back the curtain, so to say, and shows us that in the midst of these courses of judgment He remembers mercy, and thinks of His ancient people -- sealing a perfect number, i.e., 12 x 12 x 1000 = 144,000 for preservation for the millennial earth. But *judgment* being then in course He is silent about Dan. He was the first tribe that went into idolatry (see Judges 18 *passim*). It was a son of a Danite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, who blasphemed the name of Jehovah, and cursed, and who was stoned. (Lev. 24:10-16). This apostate is said to be typical of the Antichrist in the end. Of Dan, Jacob a-dying said, "Dan shall be a serpent by the

way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward" (Gen. 49:17). The deceit of the serpent and the treachery of the adder characterized his history.

How sweet to find that when *grace* restores these long scattered people after judgment has been satisfied under the government of God, that Dan has his portion and his ordered place in the land amongst the tribes. Ezek. 48 prophesies of this, and even counts him first in the order given. Jacob prophetically touched on his future blessing, even before he spoke of his apostasy (Gen. 49:16), in the words, "Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel."

Half-Week in Revelation

Q. (1) Does Rev. 11:1 suppose the people to be in their own land, and the worship restored in the command to measure the temple, etc.?

(2) Is this the first half week, at the end of which the beast breaks his covenant? For a second half week appears to conclude with the second woe (v. 2).

(3) Does the third woe give another half week, etc.?

A. (1) The passage supposes that the people are in the land, and worship restored in the measure such will be before the kingdom is established. The external profession of Judaism is not owned, while a true remnant are.

(2, 3) I believe the second half week, and it only, is here (as in all Scripture) counted and named. The first half week is always vague. (See my remarks on this in pp. 98, 99, 119, 120 of the present volume, Nos. 62, 63 {Vol. 6, 1871}). The second woe commences at Rev. 9:13, and runs on to Rev. 11:14, embracing in its scope the parenthesis of Rev. 10. The third woe trumpet is embraced in Rev. 11:15-18, which takes in the closing moments of judgment which usher in the kingdom, and embraces the judgment of the great white throne, as well as the whole kingdom, in general terms.

Words of Truth 6:232, 233.

What is Renewed in Knowledge?

Q. "S." What is the meaning of Col. 3:10? What is "renewed in knowledge"? What kind of "knowledge"? Compare Eph. 4:24.

A. Our language does not admit of the fine distinctions of that employed by the Spirit of God in Scripture. In Eph. 4 you find the "new man" is expressed by a totally different word from that used in Col. 3:10. French has its "nouveau" and "neuf," as perhaps other languages. The Greek has "καίός" (kainos), and "νέος" (neos). In English we have but one word for all. Yet when we say, "That is quite a new fashion," we mean one that has never appeared before. When we say, "That is new fruit," "new wine," we mean that it is new of the sort, but that it has often been before; as, fruit of this year, etc.

Now, Ephesians speaks of the former; a "new man," which is not Adam in innocence, nor Adam righteous by the law, but a totally new *sort* of man, which had not been before at all: as we read, "Created in righteousness and true holiness" (or

"holiness of truth"). This word "new" is used for the "new bottles" (Matt. 9, Luke 5), into which the new wine must be put, etc. The way in which the Lord will drink the wine cup "new," or *anew* in His Father's kingdom -- i.e., in a new and heretofore unrivaled manner of heavenly joy (Matt. 26). So "a new commandment I give unto you" (John 13). "A new creation" (2 Cor. 5). "Behold, I make all things new," and "I beheld a new heaven and a new earth," etc. (Rev. 21). Special care is taken when the thing is *totally new*, and appears for the first time, that this word (καίός) is used.

Not so the "new" of Col. 3:10, for there we have not the new man as to his genus, but the putting on *practically* the new man (because we have absolutely put him on, by the death and resurrection of Jesus), i.e., the practical life in which we live here below. Yet even while this is the case, the word "renewed" is made up of the *first* new (τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον), so that while the practice of the new man is the great thought, care is taken to show that it is that of a totally new sort of man which we have put on.

In short, the two words are characteristic of the Epistles in which they are found. In Eph. 4 it is a "new man" in contrast to the old and all that went before. In Col. 3 it is the practical new life in which we live, though care is taken to show by the word "renewed" that it is an entirely new thing; first formed of God, and then constantly renewed into His likeness by the practical judgment of evil within, and God's nature taking its place in us more fully, by this putting off the old man and his deeds, and our deepening in the knowledge of Him as light and love.

The word "knowledge" (ἐπίγνωσις), too is very striking here. It is not the same as that used for "knowledge" (γνώσις) in other parts of Scripture. It means full personal knowledge; that by which I recognize a person, as I say "I know that man as one I have met before. It is knowledge meditated upon and known *subjectively* in the soul. See Col. 1:9, where the same word is used for the knowledge of His will, and in v. 10, where you find it used for growing by the *true* knowledge of God" as the passage should read.

There is a fine example of the use of these two words in 2 Pet. 1:5 and 8. He desires (v. 5) that we may add "to virtue knowledge," etc. (γνώσις), and in v. 9, that thus we shall not be barren in the knowledge, or full knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις), of our Lord Jesus Christ. The former was the knowledge received, as *objectively* presented to the soul; the latter was the same knowledge meditated upon and known *subjectively*. This is one of the beautiful touches of God's hand in Scripture through the pen and heart of an uneducated fisherman of Galilee!

I do not pretend to give a critical exposition in noting these words, but to present what has interested me as so characteristic as to their use in Scripture.

"Thou Shalt Surely Die"-- What Death?

Q. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." What death was meant?

A. Physical death of the body. The margin reads, "dying thou shalt die." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," etc. The seeds of death of the body were laid in the man when the condition was broken through which he held his

blessings from God. His physical condition became subject to death, which eventually feeds upon him. This goes no further than the body. "After this, the judgment," was not yet spoken, though always true. The only thing that goes beyond government of God in this world in Gen. 3 is the sentence, "So he drove out the man." This exclusion from the presence of God and all good went farther a long way. Total exclusion from His presence for ever we find in the description of those shut out from God and the sphere and blessing in Rev. 22:15, "For without are dogs," etc. Such find their place in "the lake of fire which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

The Serpent of Brass

Q. Why was the serpent (Num. 21) made of brass? What brass? There was none then. What may be the teaching of it, whatever it may be?

A. It is "copper" or native brass: not what we term the latter, which is a mere alloy of copper and zinc of considerably little comparative value compared with copper.

I think we learn its typical import from the symbolic meaning of copper (brass), as used in making the brazen altar and the like. While gold symbolizes the righteousness of God, brass is typical of that righteousness in which God deals with man as a responsible being. Thus in a "*serpent*" we have portrayed the subtlety of sin -- Christ was made "sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21), and "of brass," Christ bearing the responsibility of man in judgment, as lifted up on the cross. The mercy seat was gold.

What is the "Reproach of Egypt"?

Q. What is the "Reproach of Egypt" being rolled away, in its typical application to Christians?

A. They are heavenly men, and it is a reproach to such that the ways of Egypt (man in nature and under Satan's power), out of which they have been taken by redemption, should be seen in them. In Jordan (typically considered) we have our being dead and risen with Christ, and introduced into heavenly places in Him. Circumcision then followed (Josh. 5): it never was done in the wilderness. There, we may walk in grace and faithfulness, but the moment we are "heavenly," another thing comes in. Thus it should be plainly seen that we are dead and risen with Christ, and that we bear the marks of our heavenly citizenship, every trace of Egyptian bondage having been clean rolled away.

Suppose you see one who is a Christian running after the world, and the fashions and follies of the town: Well, you say, you may be dead and risen with Christ, but you had better go to Gilgal and have that reproach to His name rolled away by the practical putting to death of your members.

Words of Truth 7:18-20.

Why Am I Called to Gain that Which I Possess?

Q. "W. S." 1. Why does God require a person to act so as to gain possession of that which the person needs to possess first, so as to enable him so to act? See John 5:40, Isa. 42:18.

2. In what sense is "hearing" by the word of God? See Romans 10:17, etc.

A. Because of the twofold or duplex condition of the Christian at the present time. If you look on high he is seated in the heavenly places in Christ. If you look at him as on earth still, he has to run to obtain all, and has nothing as yet in actual possession which he has, of course, by faith. Thus he possesses everlasting life in Christ, as a present thing, by faith. Yet he is so to walk that he may have present "fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life," if he looked onward, as Paul exhorts Timothy to "lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called." He has to lay hold on what he possessed already. Many passages of Scripture speak thus. Whenever the *responsibility* of a Christian is treated of, such exhortations are given. When *grace* is the subject, it shows that it flows from God.

So with sinners. God's sovereign power in quickening a dead soul to life must never be set over against the sinner's responsibility to receive the grace of God and obey His voice. Men often try to set the one against the other, in order to evade or reason away the responsibility. But you will generally find that they attach responsibility to *power*, or the want of it in man, not to that to which God attaches it -- to man's *will*. The Lord, addressing sinners, says -- "Ye *will* not come unto me that ye might have life"; not, ye cannot. Yet, speaking abstractedly, He also says -- "No one *can* come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Ask a man who speaks of having no *power* to come to Christ, if he has the will -- the desire -- and you will soon test where he is.

This applies in such passages as, "Hear ye deaf, and look ye blind that ye may see" (Isa. 42:18). Besides, the prophet is speaking in figurative language of moral blindness and deafness, not physical.

Hearing is by the word of God. God carries it into the conscience thus; as also He does by the channel of the sight of the eye in reading, and the like. I heard once of a deaf person blessing God that hearing was by the Word of God, who could only hear it, so to speak, by reading it. But God found an inlet for it into his conscience, which is the only door of entrance for the word of God into the soul in its quickening power.

Formulary of Baptism

Q. "F.D." How was it that neither Jews nor Gentiles were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost -- the formulary in Matt. 28:19? Compare Acts 2:38; 10:48; and 19:5, etc.

A. When the commission of Matt. 28 was given, the Lord Jesus Christ was *present on earth*. (He is not seen as

ascended in Matthew). And the commission to baptize is founded on resurrection only, not ascension; which {ascension into glory} brings in the body of Christ, formed by the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven.

In Acts He was *absent in heaven*, and some, in finding the formulary of Matt. 28 not given in Acts, have supposed that the formulary was then changed to the name of Jesus. This I believe to be a mistake. First, because Acts being, generally speaking, historical and not doctrinal scripture (though equally inspired), doctrines could not be founded on it! while at the same time it confirms doctrines given elsewhere. Next, the formulary once given is not changed nor intended to be changed, and is to the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost -- the Trinity of the Persons in the Godhead, as we know the one true God in Christianity. For Christianity is the revelation of not only the unity of the Godhead, as in the Old Testament, but also the Trinity of the Persons -- Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The point in Acts is the recognition of Jesus as Lord when *absent*; and hence this reference to His name where the cases are recorded -- the persons baptized owning Him, being presented to Him thus.

It is striking, however, to notice how that in nearly every case recorded, the Holy Ghost has seen fit to change the words, and even the prepositions -- I have no doubt to prevent (with other reasons) its being taken up as a formulary. In Acts 2:38, it is, "In (ἐπὶ) the name of Jesus Christ." In Acts 8:16, it is, "In (ἐν) the name of the Lord Jesus." In Acts 10:48, it is, "In (ἐν) the name of the Lord." In Acts 19:5, it is, "In (ἐν) the name of the Lord Jesus."

I believe the formulary of Matt. 28:19 to be the correct and only true one which should be used, and when used, I should in addition recognize the Lordship of Christ, presenting the person to Him as such.

Words of Truth 7:59, 60.

Armageddon

Q. What if the thought in Rev. 16:16 as to the use of the name "Armageddon," as the place of the gathering of the confederate kings in the last great battle of the eve?

A. It has been generally understood, and, doubtless, rightly so, that it referred to the "Megiddo" of Judg. 5, when Barak defeated the confederate kings of Canaan in that day of Israel's weakness -- (see also Zech. 12, etc.) -- the Hebrew "Har" . . . being prefixed to denote the mountain of that name. But the following explanation seems still more to the point:

The word is literally Hormah-Gideon . . . , i.e., The destruction of Gideon, and would refer to the well-known total route of the hosts of Midian by Gideon the Judge, after Israel's seven years captivity to the Midianites (Judg. 6:1).

This victory was characterized by the turning of every man's sword against his fellow (Judg. 7:22), and furnished a grand and impressive type of this last great battle of this age, when Israel will be delivered, and the confederate powers of

the world destroyed. That moment is referred to in Ezek. 38:21: "I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his fellow." And in Hag. 2:22, "I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen every one by the sword of his fellow."

"The day of Midian" is also definitely named, and referred to by way of analogy, in Isa. 9:4, 5, as characterizing this complete route of the enemy by the judgment of God. "For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian," etc.

How Did Jacob Prevail Over God?

Q. W. F. W., Rhode Island, U.S.A. How did Jacob prevail over God? (Gen. 32:24-28).

A. By earnest weeping and supplication. God suffered Himself in mercy to be prevailed over, thus showing His acceptance of Jacob's strong crying and tears, and when the wrestling had reduced Jacob to the sense of powerlessness in himself, he clings to the angel in his weakness, and God suffers him thus to prevail over Him.

This scene is referred to in Hos. 12:4 -- "Yea, he had power over the Angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him." Jacob's history remarkably unfolds that of a saint who did not walk with God, yet he was a saint, and valued the promises of God, but sought to enjoy them by human means which were not upright. We need faith for the means as well as for the end which God has in view. He had halted morally for twenty one years, and now the moment came when God brings His controversy to an issue with him. His dividing of the flocks and his present for Esau showed that he had no real faith in God's care, though he prays earnestly enough at the same time. He was a froward man, and we read, "With the froward thou wilt wrestle" (Psa. 18:26, *margin*). God meets Jacob alone and wrestles with him to bring him to the sense of weakness and nothingness, but does not prevail. At last he touched the hollow of his thigh, and it was dislocated. Now he is reduced to the extremity of weakness and powerlessness, yet he clings to the Angel conscious of who was there, and with weeping and earnest entreaty he seeks a blessing from Him whose strength is "made perfect in weakness," and he prevails. He is blessed, and for the name "Jacob," i.e., "Supplanter," he receives that of "Israel," i.e., a prince with God, who had power with Him and prevailed. God answers now with His blessing, having reduced His servant to the consciousness of entire weakness and inability to do without Him. But Jacob bears the marks of the controversy, and he halts upon his thigh for life.

How often we see this! God's controversy with the souls of His people slighted, and at last they are brought to a moment when all is gone but God! Then the blessing flows freely, but the mark of the discipline which was needed to reduce the soul to that point is seen for a lifelong after. Yet

the day dawns and the sun rises on one who has had a deep and blessed lesson from a faithful God.

How all this puts us in mind of our perfect Lord and Savior! His weeping and supplications -- "strong crying and tears" -- mark the perfection of One who felt in its verity the place He had undertaken in love, yet He must go through and drink the cup, and be forsaken of God. Yet here was perfection perfected. If it must be so, He will have the cup from no hand but His Father's. He goes on to the cross, and "*all my bones were out of joint*" was His cry at that solemn moment, when God was averting His face from His Son when made sin for us; and He bears the marks of His sufferings in glory, and for ever!

Priesthood and Advocacy

Q. M. P. Please, define a little between Priesthood and Advocacy.

A. Priesthood is the divine provision of grace to sustain those who have been set in God's righteousness before Him in Christ. It reconciles the condition of a poor feeble creature on earth, liable to fall at any moment, with the glorious position which is his in Christ. I believe that Hebrews is the complement of the Epistle to the Romans -- the one setting us, through redemption, before God in Christ, the other maintaining us there. In its prime aspect it is preventive and sustaining. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." You find at the end of Heb. 4 the provisions made in order that we may not fall in the wilderness -- the detective power of the Word of God to deal with the will, the supporting priesthood of Christ to support us in our weakness. So we are to go boldly to the "throne of grace and find timely help" to sustain, that we may not fail. Priesthood, then, branches out in the other activities of Christ for us into two great divisions: Advocacy, and washing of water by the Word (1 John 2, and John 13.) The former is for *absolute falls*. "If any *sin*, we have an advocate." He is engaged before and with the Father for us, and the result of His advocacy is to turn the Word, by the Spirit, in its convicting power, on the conscience; and then, when confession is produced, the soul having bowed under His action, restoration follows. A double action takes place -- conviction for the failure, and, on confession, restored communion

In Num. 18 you have priestly service in grace to maintain communion. In Num. 19 the provision, not of maintaining communion by priestly grace, but for the restoration of communion individually when lost -- the double application of the ashes and water on the third and seventh days answering to that of advocacy -- the third day showing what sin is in respect of grace -- the seventh what grace is in respect of sin. The ashes and water used here point, the first to the impossibility of the sin being imputed, as the victim on whom they were was wholly burnt -- the latter to the Word of God in its convicting and restoring power by the Holy Ghost. This answers now to the thought of advocacy.

I do not like the word, One who manages your affairs --

it is too long. Solicitor, though good, is not suitable, from its associations in common use -- (Advocate is the same word in Greek as Comforter, in John 14) -- but, One who manages your affairs is the thought.

Words of Truth 7:78-80.

Jephthah's Sacrifice

Q. Did Jephthah offer up his daughter as a positive burnt sacrifice by death? How could this be permitted when God had said, "Thou shalt not kill"? (See Judges 11:30-40.)

A. There is nothing in the passage, when rightly understood, to suppose he did. If you read the margin of v. 31, you will find that his vow was made in the alternative. It ran:

"Thus it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, . . . shall surely be Jehovah's, or (not "and") I will offer it up for a burnt offering."

His only daughter met him, and hence her father's sorrow, knowing that his vow had doomed her to be a virgin for life. He had said, "I will offer, etc., in v. 31, in the alternative of his vow, taking for granted that the first thing which should meet him might be fit for a holocaust or burnt offering. If this word was repeated in v. 39, it might have been supposed that he had offered her up; but it only says, "who did with her according to his vow," etc. -- not, who offered her, etc. The reading of the whole context will show that this is the true explanation, as also her own word, in v. 36, shows the same "Do to me," etc. -- not, Offer me, etc. -- as the original language will show to those who can examine it. There is no thought of her death in the passage, but of her life-long virginity -- the last thing desired in Israel.

Those who read the original will find an example of the copulative conjunction translated "or" in Ex. 21:15, as in the margin of v. 31, as perhaps in other places also.

Words of Truth 7:100.

Sin, Sins, Transgressions, Iniquities, Evil, Infirmities

Q. W. G. H., Perth, Ont. You ask for something of the difference between the expressions Sin, Sins, Transgression, Iniquity, Evil, etc. Also a "practical word concerning Infirmities in contrast with Sins."

A. As to the two first words, generally speaking "sin" is used for the evil nature from which "sins" -- the actions -- the fruit of that nature, spring, coming forth independently of any provocation by or resistance to the law. The latter may be divided into two classes, viz. devil sins and brute sins, if I may so say.

"Transgressions" are sins which become such because of the positive infringement of a known command or prohibition -- a stepping over the line laid down.

There are two words in the Greek language which are frequently both translated "iniquity" in the English Bible (*ἀδικία* and *ἄνομος*) the one correctly so, and simply meaning injustice -- a departure from what is righteous, the other "lawlessness," of which more again.

"Evil" is used for what is malignant, mischievous, wicked. It comes from the same word as that "Evil One," the author of all that is malignant and wicked -- he whose temptation caused man at first to fall, and become the heir of labor and sorrow, pain and misery.

In 1 John 3:4, we read, "Sin is the transgression of the law," which is a totally false translation, and wrong doctrine. It should be, "Sin is lawlessness," i.e., the casting off the authority of God. It is the more remarkable when we kind that Adam's failure is not termed "sin," but "transgression." See Rom. 5:14: "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," etc. Here the apostle is speaking of those who lived between Adam and Moses, and died -- death proving that sin was there, of which it was its wages even in this world. He speaks of such as having "*sinned*," i.e., come short of the mark, while God had not as yet given the law. Yet, when he speaks of Adam's fall, he does not name it "sin" but "*transgression*" -- because Adam broke through a known prohibition which God had given, forbidding the eating of the fruit of the tree -- and thus going beyond the mark which God had laid down.

"Infirmity," or its plural, is frequently used with reference to the sickness of the body, but, when used in a moral and not a physical sense, it might more correctly be translated "weakness." See such passages as Rom. 8:26, "The Spirit also helpeth our weakness," 1 Cor. 2:3, "I was with you in weakness," 2 Cor. 11:3, "These things which concern my weaknesses"; 2 Cor. 12:5-9, which read, "For my power is perfected in weakness; most gladly, therefore, will I rather boast in my weaknesses," etc., "that the power of Christ may dwell upon me." See also 5:10, 13:4; Gal. 4:13; Heb. 4:15, 11:34.

It {"infirmity"} is something of which we can glory, as you may readily perceive. Sometimes persons use the word

with respect to the failings of the Christian, and I think that this, coupled with the way it is *translated* frequently in the English version, leads to the making excuses for these things. Scripture uses it with regard to the weakness of the Christian as a man, and, as 2 Cor. 12 shows, that in this felt weakness (which God makes us feel consciously) He works, and thus the thing done is His work, through the weakness of the vessel. If the vessel works, it only hinders and ceases to be a vessel. If I have a tumbler on my table to hold water, that is its work; if it moves (supposing this possible), it ceases to be of use as a vessel, for the time. So with the Christian; he is "not sufficient to *think* of himself," or to *act* of himself. Then comes in a power, which is not the life he possesses in Christ; nor is it the vessel which contains the treasure, but God, holding the vessel in weakness by and through the sorrows of the way, and manifesting the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh

It is the same word as applied to the Lord, as "crucified in weakness" (2 Cor. 13:4).

Now, as to "sins," we know that these are forgiven us, thank God, through the precious blood of Christ, who died for them, and by faith in Him. God says He will remember them no more. A person learns this through a free gospel, and is happy in the truth of it. Another thing comes, he finds, perhaps through some trip that he has the same tendencies and the same nature as ever in him albeit having learned forgiveness for what he had done. Then comes another thing; he must know not only that Christ died for his sins but that he has died with Christ, and has thus been delivered from sin -- the nature, or state of the nature, for which there is no forgiveness. This becomes a question of experience, as that had been a question of faith, and hence more difficult to learn deliverance. I say to a person, "Christ died for your sins and put them away," and he is happy at having learned this I continue -- "And you've died with Christ -- you're dead." "Not, no," he says; "I foolishly lost my temper this morning over such a trifle -- that proves I am not dead." Thus you find the soul struggles and struggles to get free from the bondage of an evil nature, and really never gets deliverance till it ceases to struggle, and submits to be delivered by another -- even Christ -- and "reckons itself dead to sin." Then all is free. Yet the nature is unchanged, but it is no more "I." There is an old "I" and a new "I" discovered, and no confidence in the old.

It has often been pointed out how that Rom. 3 - 5:1-11 deals with the question of "sins," and Rom. 5:12 - ch. 8, with "sin." The first is met by Christ dying for me, the second, by my dying with Him. Adam brought in the state of sin, in which Cain was born, but Cain murdered his brother, which was the fruit of an evil nature in this state. The one was sin -- the nature; the other the sinful deed produced by it. We must have deliverance from the former, and forgiveness for the latter, before we can stand in God's presence in the light and at peace.

A sinner is not chargeable before God as a matter of judgment for what he *is*, but for what he has *done*. The son of an exile for high treason was not held guilty of what his father had done against the king. He was born in exile; but he

might have returned as a loyal subject. But *he* sins against the king too in the state in which his parent involved him, and becomes expatriated himself for his own sin as high treason as well.

So we, born in sin, have also sinned against God, and thus our practice and our state are both a state of ruin. Take a common case to illustrate sin, sins, and transgressions. My child has had very evil habits; he throws stones and breaks the windows. His conscience tells him that it is wrong. Where did he get the mischievous nature that liked to do wrong? This is sin. But the actions are sins, known, too, by his natural conscience. I send him a message, forbidding this evil practice. Again he does it. This is transgression or trespass. This was like the law given to sinners. It added the authority of God to what the natural conscience knows of good and evil, in forbidding the evil. But the law always assumed sin in the nature, though it did not reveal the fact of its existence. You could not forbid a person to do a thing that he had no intention or nature capable of doing. Hence, “by the law is the knowledge of *sin*,” i.e., the nature, which it has discovered. If you tell the children when you go out, that there is something in that drawer but that they are not to know what is there, every child in the house is at once, as the common expression goes, “dying to know.” The command provoked the nature which is opposed to it. This is what the law did. “Therefore,” says Paul, “it was added for the sake of (*χωρίς*) transgression”; and “sin by the commandment became exceedingly sinful,” i.e., it became transgression. Hence, too, in Rom. 5:13, “Sin is not imputed when there is no law.”

Ambassador for Christ

Q. E. E. W. What do you take to be the credentials, what the power of an “ambassador for Christ?” (2 Cor. 5:20).

A. First of all, the Apostles are the “we” in the passage and context. God was in Christ reconciling; this was during His service on earth. Then He was rejected and crucified, man proving himself hostile to the fullness of His grace in Jesus. Then Christ’s ambassadors are sent with the word of reconciliation. Their credentials were that He had sent them - - their power the Holy Ghost, who was sent down to witness to the glorification of Christ, and to the completeness of redemption in Him. Still while the Apostle had this ministry committed to him in a special manner, the principle goes on, and Christ sends those who can say as He, “We also believe, and therefore speak” (2 Cor. 4:13). This is ever the credentials of His ambassadors, their power the Holy Ghost, who speaks in and by them.

I believe, while there may arise a nice and delicate question as to the translation of v. 20, that it would be too familiar to say that God was the beseecher: it would be wanting in reverence to Him. Still, as done on His behalf by the ambassadors He sends, it amounted to its being done by Himself. Still, the Apostle would not say so formally, but softens it by the “as” (*ὡς*). The thought is conveyed tolerably in the authorized version {KJV} of the Bible: God was in

Christ; then they were Christ’s ambassadors; He was as beseeching by them. This is the evident and lovely thought. I do not think the sense would warrant “considering that,” etc.

Beholding as in a Glass

Q. W. T. What do you take to be the exact force of the word in 2 Cor. 3:18, translated, “Beholding as in a glass” (*κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν δόξαν*)?

A. The context, as the truth of the passage generally, seems to be best rendered by Liddell and Scott as “rejecting the glory.” I have used “mirroring the glory,” but it has been thought too poetical, while “reflecting” conveys the idea in a less poetical word. Contemplating the glory by faith, we become a reflection of it, we reflect it here, and are changed, etc. “Beholding” is scarcely adequate to convey the whole thought.

The passage is, I believe, one of acknowledged difficulty as to translation: but the sense of it is simple.

Words of Truth 7:118-120.

Rom. 4:25

Q. “E. Le P.” What authority is there for translating Rom. 4:25, “Was delivered in *consequence* of our offences, and raised again in *consequence* of our justification”?

A. None whatever. Some have tried to render the *διὰ*, ‘in consequence of,’ others, ‘because of,’ but equally erroneously. This is because of the desire to connect the justification of the believer with the resurrection of Christ, instead of the time when faith operated in his soul. Scripture never separates those things. The first verse of chap. v. would thus be wrenched off from its true connection: “Therefore, being justified *by faith*, we have peace with God.” etc.

I add the words of another:

As regards *δικαίωσις*, *διὰ* is translated ‘for,’ as giving the sense, but in English. The point is not there but in *δικαιωσις*. *Διὰ*, with an accusative is just ‘on account of,’ but *δικαίωσις* is not the thing done, but the doing of it, and it is this on which it turns. If it had been ‘on account of our having been justified,’ it would have been *διὰ τὸ δικαιωθῆναι ἡμᾶς*, and this is not the case till faith comes in . . . The Greek rule is, that words derived from the perfect passive are the thing done, doing it, and the doer; *κρίμα*, the judgment; *κρίσις*, the judging; *κριτής*, the judge; though all are not always there. We have *δικαίωμα*: I am not aware of *δικαίωσις*.

The Likeness of His Death

Q. “Q.” What is meant by “the likeness of his death,” in Rom. 6:5?

A. “As to likeness (*ὁμοιώματι*), the reference is to baptism, but *ομ.* is not merely likeness as comparison. Christ was made in the likeness of man, according to this pattern. It is not the thing itself but, in the case of Christ’s humanity,

clearly not the denial of it. If I have taken my place with Christ, I have taken it with Him as dead and consequently, if it be *His* death, it involves, according to the same pattern, resurrection. He takes the reality of the thing, but takes it as expressed and patterned in baptism. In Romans we are not risen with Him in baptism."

Is a "General Judgment" a Scriptural Thought

Q. "Q." Montreal. 1. Is the thought of a general judgment of all saved or unsaved, scriptural?

2. Is the believer ever brought into judgment?

3. Who are judged at the Great White Throne?

A. 1. The thought is not in Scripture. The giving up by the Church of the hope of the Lord's coming for His saints -- raising those who had died and changing the living was followed by the loss of the truth of a first resurrection out of the other dead, of those who are Christ's at that coming, a general resurrection being accepted. Then came wrong thoughts as to the present state of justification and acceptance in which the believer stood, and assurance of salvation was lost, a judgment to come was looked upon as the time and place to have that settled. This gave wrong thoughts as to the meaning of ordinances which came to be treated as a means to salvation; consequently power by superstition was put into the {hands of the} ecclesiastics, and this continued as a rule till the professing Church sunk into the world. Matt. 25:31, etc., is misused to favor the delusion of a general judgment of the dead -- not seeing that it is the living, gathered before the Lord on earth -- not the dead before the Great White Throne, and the earth and heaven fleeing away from His face who sat thereon.

2. The believer's state being settled here, for him there is no judgment. The resurrection out of the other dead {the resurrection of the "just"}, of which Christ was the first fruits, is that kind of resurrection of which he will partake: its time, character, and the condition of those who partake of it being the very opposite to the resurrection of the wicked, and the fruit and consequence of their acceptance, as it was of Christ's, and of God's seal on the perfection of His person.

He will be manifested before the βῆμα (judgment seat) of Christ 2 Cor. 5:12), and there repossess his life; but he is already glorified before he arrives at it, so that it will be too late then to judge him and see if he is fit for heaven. Fancy the apostles being brought out of heaven to be judged, to ascertain if they were fit for the place they have been in for 1800 years, as well as other saints!

3. The dead in sins are raised for judgment at the Great White Throne. Those of the "first resurrection" have had their kingdom blessings for 1000 years with Christ, before this takes place (see Rev. 20:4-6).

Words of Truth 7:139, 140.

Fellowship One With Another

Q. E. le'P. 1 John 1:7. "We have fellowship one with another," etc. Does not this mean the saints' fellowship one with another? Can it, by any possible means, be made to mean our fellowship with God?

A. The simple meaning is, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship (i.e. Christians) one with another" (μετ' ἀλλήλων). The word is a plural one, but one which has no singular. If "with God" were the thought, it would have been said, "we have fellowship with Him." To say "one with another" would be irreverent and familiar to a degree, when talking of God.

I *reject* entirely its being with God in 1 John 1:7, not merely think the other right. ἀλλήλων is mere mutuality, and God would have as much communion with us as a companion, as we with Him, which is to be utterly rejected as irreverent and wrong. Scripture never speaks so of God; for God's having communion with us as between two equals, and ἀλλήλων is thorough mutuality.

Righteousness of God by Faith

Q. "Q." 1. What does Paul mean when he speaks of possessing the righteousness of God? Phil. 3:9.

2. What is "being made the righteousness of God in him?"

A. 1. The expression is rather "the righteousness from God" (Phil. 3:9). First of all, the sinner who believes on Him that justifies the ungodly, is reckoned righteous of God and by faith. It is not that so much righteousness is reckoned to him; but he himself is reckoned intrinsically righteous before God (Rom. 4). God acts righteously through the precious blood of Christ in so counting him. Christ, at God's right hand, is the proof that God's righteousness is manifested. His first act, when Christ met all His righteous claims as to sin and glorified Him, was to set Christ as Man in heaven. His next act is to count righteous all who believe in Jesus.

2. But this is not all. To the believer has been communicated a new life; even in Christ risen from the dead, the character of which is a justified life -- (Rom. 5:18) -- a life on the other side of death and sin. Christ risen is this life; our life is "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:5). Christ has been "made sin for us," that we might become God's righteousness in Him, as gone on high. He is, in heaven, God's righteousness, and we become God's righteousness, i.e., the expression of it, in Him.

Thus far as to what we now possess by faith. But we are journeying on to heaven to win Christ, and be found in Him, not having our own righteousness -- even supposing we had all that Paul could boast of in Phil. 3:4-6. He throws it aside, and counts it dross and dung, desiring and looking for another thing when he reaches the goal, even a righteousness which is from God by faith.

Thus you find that on the one hand he is already righteous; he is already "in Christ" by faith; while he is still, at the same time, running towards the goal, as in Phil. 3, to be

“found” “in Christ” at the close, and to have the righteousness which is from God at that day.

The anomalous state of the Christian, “as having nothing” in himself yet “possessing all things” in Christ, explains it.

Words of Truth 7:160.

The State of the Godly Remnant of Jews in the Last Days, in Contrast with Abraham

Dear -- , As to Abraham having seen “my day,” as the Lord tells the Jews in John 8:56; it seems to be a general expression. But I daresay that in the scene in the close of Gen. 14, when he returned victoriously from the slaughter of the confederate kings, we find a definite presentation of the “day” of the Lord, which he then saw. Melchisedec met him with bread and wine, and blessed the most High God and Abraham His servant.

This scene presents a tableau of what the ushering in of the “day” of the Lord will be, i.e., the Kingdom. Israel (the seed of Abraham) return in weariness, but victoriously from their conflict with their enemies. Jesus comes forth as King of Righteousness from the heavens and from Jerusalem, the city of peace. He brings forth strength and joy (bread and wine) to refresh the weary remnant of His people, and He blesses the Most High God -- God’s millennial name; then *possessor* of heaven and earth. The former, long defiled by evil spirits and Satan’s power, being cleansed by the casting down of Satan (Rev. 12). While the earth, long in rebellion against God and His Christ (Psa. 2, Acts 4., etc.), are in peace, all conflicting powers being then overthrown (Rev. 19). He also blesses “Abraham of the Most High God,” and is thus as Melchisedec -- a Priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13) -- both King and Priest, the link between the then peaceful heavens, and the earth in blessing under His way. The *night* has passed away; the *day* of the Lord has come.

The knowledge of the godly remnant of Israel differs from that of Abraham, in the first place by the fact of Ex. 6:3. “I appeared unto Abraham, . . . by El Shaddai, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.” “God Almighty” (El Shaddai) was the patriarchal name of God, “Jehovah,” the name by which “I AM” revealed Himself to Israel. Next, Jesus has been “in all their afflictions, afflicted” (Isa. 63:9), and has given a divine character and voice to their cry in the Psalms.

When the time of the calling of the Church is over and she is taken to glory, the Lord will “turn his hand upon the little ones” of His ancient people, in the interval between His having come for His saints and His appearing in glory with them. This period is termed the “great tribulation” through which the godly remnant of the Jewish people have to pass. They are godly; under law; upright in heart, yet confessing their people’s blood-guiltiness, they are looking for Jehovah’s intervention against their enemies. They are persecuted under the beast, betrayed by their false brethren

who have received the Antichrist. All these sorrows find expression in the Psalms. In using them they begin, as I understand it, but dimly at first, to perceive that some One has been in these trying circumstances before them. One, who when He cried to Jehovah, was heard. “This poor man cried and Jehovah heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles.” This encourages them to cry that He may deliver them. Gradually the thought of His being more than man dawns and grows on their souls. Jeremiah may tell them “Cursed is the man that trusteth in man” (Jer. 17:5), while Psa. 2 will say -- “Blessed are all they which trust in him.” This seems a contradiction; but the perception of His divine nature is gradually but effectually taking its place in their soul, until the moment comes when. He appears to their deliverance, and they look on Him whom they pierced and mourn, and find him to be Jehovah’s fellow -- nay, Jehovah Himself.

Another difference between Abraham and them is, that they look for the earthly blessings of the kingdom; not something outside this scene, as Abraham. Though if they are slain they find their reward in heaven itself.

Outline of the Parable of the Talents

Q. “S.” Will you give an outline of the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30). There being an “evil *servant*” is a difficulty to some. May not an unrenewed soul get a *gift*?

A. This is one of three Parables in Matt. 24:45-51; 25:1-30, which refer to the relations of those who would really or ostensibly follow the Lord Jesus during the period characterized by His absence and the calling out of the Church; from Pentecost until the Lord’s second coming. During this time He has ceased to deal with the Jew. At its close He will judge the “quick,” and thus bring in the kingdom (25:30).

The Parable of the Talents is mainly a question of *power*, rather than of *gift*, if you mean by the latter such as the ascended Lord gives in Eph. 4:8-11, as head, of His body to His members.

He is represented as “traveling into a far country,” Messiah rejected by His own people, goes on high. When He departed He called His own servants, and delivered unto them His goods, i.e., spiritual things (in Judaism God had distributed earthly things) varying the power and measure according to the aptitude of the vessel. “Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one”; and then went away. Thus spiritual power is imparted. *Three* things are recognized.

1. The measure of spiritual power bestowed according to the sovereignty and wisdom of the giver.
2. The natural ability of the vessel.
3. Activity in trading with his Lord’s goods.

Then, “after a long time” comes the reckoning, and some are found to have doubled their Lord’s money, and are to enter into the joy of their Lord. The rewards are all the same here, because when the talents were varied it was His sovereignty

to do so. Each did his best, and each doubled his capital, no matter what the amount. We have to be diligent, that we lose not spiritual power. This has been the case frequently with many who have not traded with that which the Lord has bestowed, their power is weakened from want of diligence in trading with it.

It being a question of *power*, the evil servant is judged according to what was at his disposal, and the place he had taken. The question is not that of salvation, but of the power of the Spirit. Hence he is judged as a servant, but an evil one. He is not treated for not being a servant, but for being one with whom spiritual power wrought, and which he abused. Balaam in the Old Testament, Judas in the New, and those who had said, "Lord, Lord," and cast out devils, and done many marvelous works in the Lord's name, are examples of this. A man might speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and not have love -- the divine nature, and be nothing (1 Cor. 13). Heb. 6 also speaks of those who were partakers of the Holy Ghost, and of the powers of the world to come, or coming age, and were unrenewed.

He is judged out of his own mouth, for "with the froward he will show himself froward."

Words of Truth 7:178-180.

The Hope of His Calling

Q. "E A. C." 1. Does "the hope of his calling" embrace all the blessedness into which we are brought in Christianity, at this present time? Or does the word "hope" refer to the glory for which we wait, or both? (Eph. 1:18).

2. What is the meaning of the "riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints?" Does this refer to God's portion and joy in His redeemed?

A. 1. The verses from which you quote embrace the two parts previously unfolded in the chapter. 1st, The "calling" of God, vv. 3-6, and 2nd, the "inheritance," in vv. 8-11. Here (v. 18) the apostle desires that the eyes of their heart (which is the correct reading) may be enlightened to know three things.

1st, What is the hope of their calling.

2nd, What is the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints.

3rd, What is the power which puts us into what the calling and inheritance confer, and which he had wrought in Christ, looked on as man actually, and which He had wrought in the believer spiritually

The "hope of his calling" embraces both; what we have at present in Christ, as well as all we shall enter upon in glory, by and by. In this chapter no time comes into the thoughts, but it gives rather the thoughts and intentions of God which He has made good for us in Christ. It embraces, therefore, present possession of all by faith, as well as actual employment of all in fruition by and by.

2. The "riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," is a peculiar expression. First, let us remark that the saints are never said to be God's inheritance or portion, nor is it here His joy in His redeemed. In the Old Testament, Israel as a nation,

is said to be His inheritance. "Jehovah's portion is his people, Jacob (is) the lot of his inheritance" (Deut. 32:9). This is never said of the Church of God, or of His saints in Christianity.

But the created universe, "all things, . . . both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (Eph. 1:10), are to be brought into ordered subjection under Christ, in the dispensation of the fullness of time. That is at the time, or age, when the perfection of God's ways in government are seen in result, in the Millennium under His Son. In, and with Him, we have obtained an inheritance as joint heirs individually -- as His body, or Bride, looking upon the Church as a whole. We only have it now by faith.

"We see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honor," on high (Heb. 2), yet "we see not yet all things put under him." He sits on high, in the title of all, in four ways.

1. As creator of them (Col. 1:16).
2. As heir of all (Heb. 1:2).
3. As man of God's counsel (Psa. 8).
4. As Redeemer of all (Heb. 2).

There He awaits His glory. We await it here below -- a reconciled people in an unreconciled creation (Col. 1:20-22).

The day will come for "the redemption of the purchased possession" -- when that which has been purchased by *blood*, will be redeemed from the hands of the enemy by *power*. God will take possession of "His inheritance" in and by Christ and the Church.

It is, therefore, God's inheritance of all created things, taken into His own hands by Christ and the saints under Him. He desires that we may know the "riches of its glory."

If you take an analogous thought in the Old Testament. As the land of Israel was Jehovah's (Lev. 25:23); and He took it into His hands and possessed it in His people Israel, so "all things" belong to Him, and He takes them into His own hands, and possesses them in and by His saints under Christ, and thus they become "His inheritance."

Words of Truth 7:199, 200.

The Marks of the Lord Jesus

Words of Truth 7:220.

Q. "A.C." Could you give me the meaning of Gal. 6:17? "From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

A. Paul uses these words in writing with reference to his ministry, which the false teachers were slighting. They had come down and imposed the law in the harvest fields of Galatia, where Paul had been gathering in golden sheaves by the Gospel. He finds the work of the Gospel subverted by these Judaizers -- the bane of the Gospel of Christ ever since. They had not faith to do a work for Christ themselves, and could only subvert and destroy his. "Henceforth let no man trouble me," says Paul, as these false teachers were doing. And he then alludes, in the most touching manner, to the marks of the scourge and lash of the enemy which he bore in his flesh, proof of the reality of his ministry from and for the Lord.

As the slave or soldier of that day was branded with a hot iron in his flesh with the initials of his owner or master, so Paul could point to the marks he bore in his, living proofs of the reality of his truly being the slave or soldier of his Master. These beautiful initials of Jesus were what these false teachers could not show or appeal to, in proof of their service and ownership to his true Master and Lord. They could come and subvert the glories of His Gospel and the liberty of His people in grace, as well as His bondsman's work, but where in the flesh had they such marks of reproach, such stigmas engraved for Him?

Dead in Sins -- Dead with Christ

Q. "Q." What is the difference between being "dead in sins" (Col. 2:13) and being "dead with Christ" (Col. 2:20)?

A. The state of a sinner as "dead in sins" is that there is no spring in the soul to God-ward, but all the whole being going out in the will of the flesh in sin. In the Epistle to the Romans (chaps. 1-3) the sinner is described as what we might term "alive in sins," i.e., every movement of his heart active in the energies of sin. "Dead in sins" would be the aspect of the soul to God-ward, because there is no movement of the heart towards Him.

Christ goes in divine grace into the sinner's place, bearing our sins . . . He dies, having borne them, and rises again, we are quickened together with Him and forgiven all trespasses. God thus having cleared us, counts to us in His grace all that His Son passed through. If He dies, we are "dead with Christ," if He is buried, we are buried with Him (as in the first initiatory ordinance of baptism), if He is quickened out of death (as Man), we are quickened together with Him; if He is risen, so are we; if seated in heavenly places, we are seated there in Him (Eph. 2:6); if He appears in glory, so do we (Col. 3:4). Thus there is complete identity.

"Dead in sins" would describe the state of the *sinner* with regard to God. "Dead with Christ" would describe what God counts the *believer* in grace, Christ having identified Himself with his state when a sinner only.

The Heavenly Calling

Q. "W. T." Is the "heavenly calling" of Heb. 3:1, wider in its aspect than the Church?

A. The writer of Hebrews is addressing a peculiar remnant. They had been Jews (as living on earth, where those are who "sleep in the dust of the earth," i.e., Jews scattered amongst the nations -- Dan. 12:2 -- who will by and by be gathered out of such a condition for millennial blessing), and had come in for all the blessings of a "heavenly calling." This calling is much wider in aspect than the "Assembly which is his (Christ's) body," and takes in all the Old Testament saints, all of whom will have part in the *Father's* Kingdom (Matt. 13).²⁴ "The Bride, the Lamb's wife" will have a higher place in the glory, and we (alone), as "the Bride" in Spirit now, are "in Christ Jesus," not merely "in Christ."

There are three normal aspects in which a person may be said to be a "believer" in Scripture.

1. As one who is earthly in hope -- a millennial saint, for instance.
2. As one who awaits perfection (actual) in Christ, in a glorified body. This all the Old Testament saints will have (see Heb. 11 *passim*); as also those who may be slain during "the great tribulation." These receive a supplementary resurrection {it is part of the *first resurrection*} before Christ *appears* in glory.
3. As one who has lived on earth at any time from Pentecost till the rapture of the Church. Such an one, when sealed, is united to Christ above, and will (as being "in Christ Jesus") have a portion in the glory above those who are as in the Heavenly side of the Kingdom, in the new Jerusalem.

Hebrews, then, is directly addressed to those who had been brought out of Judaism into the Church; yet much of the Epistle will suit the condition of those who will be slain during the tribulation, and even in the millennial kingdom on earth. The believer in Hebrews is seen on earth, but as looking for Him who "shall appear" (ὀφθῆσεται, i.e., "be seen to the eye") apart from sin unto (εἰς) *salvation*" (Heb. 11:28).

Luke 21 gives us *this* remnant, while Matt. 24, Mark 13, would include the millennial saints.

The words "holy and "brethren" very likely refer to Heb.

24. {Surely OT saints will participate in the heavenly side of the kingdom -- speaking of this in contrast with the earthly side. Clearly, those under the law had an *earthly calling*, yet the righteous dead who had been under the law and the earthly calling will participate in the heavenly side of the kingdom. But they did not have the *heavenly calling*. I would suggest that Christians, and they alone, have the heavenly calling, as such. The heavenly calling has interposed the earthly calling, which will be in effect again with the remnant of the Jews formed after the rapture, for the kingdom. Participation in the heavenly side of the kingdom, which all OT saints shall, does not prove they had the heavenly calling.}

2:11, 12.

David's words, "I shall go to him," etc. (2 Sam. 12), are expressive of the thought that *he* would become a heavenly man, and thus a partaker of the "heavenly calling." The heir after the flesh has passed away, and is sure above. This would bring in "the sure mercies of David."

Baptized for the Dead

Q. "M. C. H." Would you give me the meaning of 1 Cor. 15:29?

A. It was as if the Apostle said, in view of this denial of the resurrection which had got in amongst the Corinthians, "Well, since the *object* in baptism is death—for we are baptized 'with a view' (εἰς) to it -- the very fact of our baptism marks us out for death. What fools you are, then, to have become Christians, if, when the initiatory ordinance points to death, there is no resurrection."

As in a "forlorn hope" men step forward to fill up the ranks of those cut down in death, so was the place of those who "are baptized (or 'over' ὑπερ) the dead"; thus filling up the places, as it were, of those, perhaps, who were martyred for Christ's sake. "Now (he goes on, as it were) if dead persons do not rise at all, it would be folly to own practically what our baptism implies."

Look at the scope of the chapter and the arguments of the Apostle against what was amongst them at Corinth, as well as at the objective character of baptism as having death in view and you will see the force of the verse more distinctly.

Words of Truth 8:38, 39.

State of the Soul After Death

Q. "J. M. R." asks for the Scripture thought of the state of the soul of the believer after death, before the Lord comes: if those who "sleep in Jesus" see Him, or if they do not until body and soul are united?

A. "To die is *gain*," says the apostle (Phil. 1:2). Hence an advantage is had by the believer in the death of the body. If the separate state was a mere sleep of the soul, how could such language be used? Surely it would have been much more to be preferred if he were to remain and labor for his Lord in the body, than to lie in sleep while awaiting His return.

Again, in the same chapter, "to be *with* Christ" is the condition of the one whose body sleeps in the dust. This is "*far better*." The words "sleep in Jesus" do not give the force of 1 Thess. 4:14. It is, "sleep *through* (the person of) Jesus." Death itself is ours, because Jesus has annulled it for us. We have died already in His person. When, therefore, the body dies, we are only said to be put asleep through Him. We pass out of the earthly tabernacle, and the result is, "present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). We might freely render this verse -- "We are confident, I say, and well pleased rather to be abroad from the body, and to be at home with the Lord." Surely such

a word or thought as this is incompatible with mere sleep, to be "at home"; to be thus with the Lord is indeed "*gain*." The believer, as already dead and risen, has death as his friend now.

As to seeing Jesus when we are out of the body, we read in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16) that he "*saw* Abraham afar off," etc., and this language is used by the Lord in speaking of the separate state. Paul says, "Have I not *seen* the Lord?" Why then should his passage out of the body hinder his seeing Him? ²⁵ The Lord had to open the eyes of His disciples in order to know Jesus after He rose. Though our body could hinder our looking on a risen Jesus, would it need even a changed body in order that we should see Him now? Still the Lord has not thought fit to answer the question further. Rather, then, let us seek to have Himself and His coming before our souls, as their hope and joy.

Words of Truth 8:60.

Eating Blood

Q. "W. M." seeks to know the meaning of Gen. 9:4, Lev. 17:10-14, as to the prohibition to eat blood. Is the same command binding on Christians?

A. The conference at Jerusalem (Acts 15) settles for us the question of "abstaining from blood." It does not take up Lev. 17 so much as the command to Noah as to this. The question to be settled was, could the Gentiles become Christians without first becoming Jews? Amos 9 is cited for the sake of the words, "And all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called." It is not that the prophecy was fulfilled, but that the name of the Lord could be called on them as *Gentiles*. Jerusalem herself gives up the title to impose the law on the nations, and the apostle of the circumcision uses the remarkable expression, "*We shall be saved even as they*" (v. 2), i.e. through *grace*; the manner in which a Gentile is dealt with, *mercy* being God's way, through grace, with the Jew (cf. Eph. 2:4-8, etc.). When the "apostles, elders, and brethren," write their decision, in vv. 23-29, they embody in it those "necessary things," which were opportune and right for Christians to observe.

1st, The unity of the Godhead to be maintained, in contrast to the "idols" of the heathen.

2nd, That life belonged to Him, they were to abstain from "blood, and from things strangled."

3rd, The marriage tie was sacred, and to be kept pure. In fact they go back to what was right and ordered of God in creation, coupling it with those things I name; not as enacting new laws, but giving what was right to be observed in the midst of an evil world.

25. {Paul saw the Lord in Acts 9. In 2 Cor. 12, he was not sensible of being in the body or not; I take it that the point is that the body was not the slightest impediment. Today, persons use this passage to support the notion of "astral travel" of the soul -- *assuming* that Paul stated that He had left the body. Does James 2:26 have a bearing on this? At any rate, the author's point is established by reference to the rich man.}

Thus, what was enacted in Gen. 9:4, is held good in Christianity. I do not think therefore we are exempt, but bound, as in all things, to do the will of the Lord.

Words of Truth 8:80.

The Holy Ghost as a Seal

Q. "M. M." What is the thought implied in the Holy Ghost as a Seal? Could a soul be sealed without knowing experimentally complete deliverance by death and resurrection?

A. The thought seems to be that God puts a mark upon those who believe, as His, by the gift of the Holy Spirit of Promise (Eph. 1:14), who is the earnest of their inheritance with Christ, over all things (creation, etc.) yet to come. This seal is the demonstration and earnest of their participation in that inheritance which Christ has purchased with His precious blood, and which He will take by power out of the hands of the enemy; that will be its redemption, the purchase having been made. This is when they look *forward*. Looking *back*, He is a seal of the perfection of the work in which they stand, and which was wrought by Christ on the Cross. In connection with the *inheritance*, as not yet possessed, the Spirit is here named the "Spirit of *promise*." While in connection with life, and what we have *now* in Christ (Eph. 4:33), He is termed the "Holy Spirit of God," the same Spirit most surely, but in a different connection of thought (ch. 1) being in connection with what they have not (ch. 4) with what they *have*.

They had *heard* the word of truth; they had *believed* the gospel of their salvation; and they were *sealed* -- having done so. It was not that they were sealed as sinners, but as believers. By hearing and believing, a person is quickened; on believing {the gospel of his salvation, Eph. 1:13}, he is sealed. God does not seal a sinner merely as such. That would be to seal him in his sins. He quickens a sinner; He seals a believer. These two actions never happen together, as far as I know; frequently there may be an interval of years between them. To speak in general terms, the moment a person believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, and receives *remission of sins* {having rested on the finished work}, he is sealed. He may not know deliverance, by death and resurrection, for long after this, and yet have the Spirit in him as a seal. Cornelius' case is one in point. He was a "devout man," and "one that feared God," etc.; his soul really lived to God. But it needed that his conscience should be purged by the work of Christ, and this he had not yet known. Peter tells him -- already a quickened soul -- of Christ and His work, and the moment he names "remission of sins" (Acts 10:31), the Holy Ghost is given to him. He "set to his seal that God is true," and God set to His seal on him that did so. There is always life in the soul first, before forgiveness of sins is really sought; then, when it is known, the gift of the Holy Ghost follows, and that soul is sealed. Deep lessons may be learned of his nature, and the experimental truth of death and resurrection may not be known for long after this. Even the experience of Rom. 7:14-24 may be learned in a *modified* way after the Spirit has been given. However, the experience

there given does not suppose this to be the case. Where free grace is preached, souls that have life find forgiveness, and then they are sealed. The complete deliverance ²⁶ may not yet be known, nor for long.

The Fearful and Unbelieving

Q. "J. W. P." What is the meaning of "the fearful," as distinguished from "the unbelieving," in Rev. 21:8? Is there not a solemn import attaching to the term?

A. The term seems to be used in contrast with "him that overcomes" in v. 7. It might be translated "the cowardly." While pure grace says, "I will give unto him that is athirst (and who but God could create this thirst for what He alone can give?) of the fountain of the water of life freely." Yet the responsibility to overcome sin and the world that he may inherit "these things" -- the eternal blessedness of the new heavens and the new earth, etc., is thus expressed: The "cowardly" or "fearful" who did not overcome -- lacking confidence in the pure grace of God, who must ever be the giver -- are found in v. 8. Thus we find the conqueror and the cowardly contrasted. How blessed to be able to say, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us!"

Words of Truth 8:118-121.

26. {I do not understand the difference between "deliverance" and "complete deliverance," a difference being implied by this language. That a sealed saint can learn something of Rom. 7 in a *modified* way is true, especially when a full, clear gospel is presented and sealing follows quickening in a short interval. We all must learn something about self. However, the express statements of Scripture are:

1. the man in Rom. 7 is in "*captivity to the law of sin*" (Rom. 7:24);
2. whereas "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me *free* from the law of sin and of death" (Rom. 8:2);
3. and thus, where the Spirit is, there is "*liberty*" (2 Cor. 3:17);
4. so that his cry, "who shall deliver me" (Rom. 7:24) is answered when he looks to One who has finished the work on the cross. Resting in His person *and* work, he is delivered and sealed with the Spirit.

If we seek to understand Rom. 7 by trying to fit all sorts of cases of persons into it, rather than being guided by the Scripture itself, we shall have difficulty with the subject.

After this deliverance, the soul learns still more deeply what self is, and what God is for us, in spite of what we are in ourselves; learning more fully Christ's death and resurrection for us, and our death and resurrection with Him, etc.}

The Restoration of Israel

Q. "W." "The second time" (Isa. 11:11). If the future restoration of Israel is the "second time," what is the first? There is nothing about the return! from the Babylonish captivity in Isaiah.

A. It might have been said that the return of the Jews from the captivity in Babylon, as well perhaps as that of some of Israel from Assyria, etc., was the deliverance as forecasted by the prophet, had not the words "the second time" been used. Isaiah wrote and prophesied until the end of Hezekiah's reign, some time *before* the Babylonish captivity. The prophetic Spirit thus makes the return from it only a little rehearsal of the great future one, but names this latter as the "second" great intervention of the Lord, when He would not only recover a remnant from Assyria and Babylon (Shinar), but from Pathros, Cush, Elam, etc., as well. He may refer, too, to the first great deliverance out of Egypt, as typical of the final one; still it was rather a whole "nation," than the "remnant of his people, which shall be left." The first and "second" seems to refer to the return from Babylon, &c., then to come, and the final return when the day of glory arrives.

"We" in John 3:11

Q. "We speak," etc. (John 3:11). Whom does the Lord associate with Himself to make "we"?

A. There is nothing peculiar in the use of the plural here. The Lord speaks as personating the divine teaching of which He was the exponent, using the "we" in contrast with that other of which Nicodemus was the representative, as He refers to by "Ye receive not," etc. The "we" and the "ye" stand in contrast in the same verse, though the Lord, as one person, spoke personally to Nicodemus as another.

Earthly and Heavenly Things

Q. What are the "earthly things," and why so called?

A. The "earthly" blessings are those of this earth -- of the kingdom for which a Jew looked according to the promises of God, and for which a new birth was needed, as the Teacher in Israel, Nicodemus, should have well known from the Prophets, as Ezek. 37, etc., showed. They are called "earthly" in contrast with the "heavenly" blessings which Jesus had come to reveal.

The Kingdom of God and Leaven

Q. "Zeta." How are we to understand the "kingdom of God" in Luke 13? Is the kingdom of God corruptible; if not, what are we to understand by the "leaven"?

A. It is here the kingdom as left to the responsibility of, and taken up in profession by man -- not, of course, the kingdom established by God in power, which works through righteousness. The "fig tree," emblematic of the Jewish

nation, was doing harm to all around; the name of God was blasphemed amongst the Gentiles through them. It cumbered the ground, and would be cut down. Jesus had sought fruit from it in the three years of His ministry, and found none. His intercession on the cross brought the answer in a fresh offer by the Holy Ghost sent down at Pentecost. This offer we have in Acts 3. This was met by the imprisonment of the apostles and the martyrdom of Stephen. Then all closed -- it was "cut down." "This year also," was this fresh grace from God (see Acts 2-7, *passim*). Another tree takes its place (Luke 13:18, 19); but is taken up by man in responsibility, and thus it would become a great sheltering power; while God wrought out His own counsels.

"Leaven" is not used in Scripture as typical of what is good; but there are different uses of it, and possibly different shades of meaning. In 1 Cor. 5:8, we find "old leaven," and "leaven of malice and wickedness" distinguished. It would seem that old creation is the thought in the first-named clause, and the fruits of it in the second. Now the old creation in itself is not evil; but man having fallen, it has become different in state to what God had made. Evil came in, and what was perfectly good fell. The gradual and sure cropping up of the old creation in Christianity is manifest and allowed. The Church was set in the power of a new creation by the ascended Lord, through the Holy Ghost. She was to display its virtues while in the old. The workings of the old man and flesh soon began, and so displaced the place of the new: flesh took the place of Spirit. Thus the old creation -- fallen, and under sin -- worked like leaven, and will do so till all is leavened, -- till the Lord removes those who remain of his people, and nothing remains but the old man -- the old creation, fallen, and yet professing Christianity, and in responsibility that which owns, or had owned, God's authority, His kingdom here on earth. Everything within the sphere of the kingdom in profession has this tendency. Every appeal in a religious way to man in nature, music, architecture, painting, sculpture; that which arouses the senses, gratifies the tastes of the natural man, is that which makes, so to speak, the leaven to rise. So also in sensational preaching -- popular, and suited to gather the crowd. This leaven works in a hidden way at first, "till all is leavened" -- till old creation replaces the new; till Antichrist replaces Christ. Then comes the judgment.

"The leaven of malice and wickedness" would be rather the evil fruits of the old creation, as fallen from God.

"It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Words of Truth, New Series 1:216-218.

Waiting for the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ

Q. "W. T." If the "appearing" of the Lord Jesus be not the immediate hope of the saints (instead of His descent into the air), in what sense could the Corinthians be said to be "waiting for" His "revelation," 1 Cor. 1:7?

A. There are three words used in Scripture when speaking of that event -- the Lord's coming The "coming" or "presence" - (παρουσία) is one of large import, embracing the whole thing, from the rapture to His revelation, when every eye shall see Him. Hence, this word is used generally, and with reference at times to the first action of it -- the taking up of the saints; or the subsequent details of it until He appears.

The "appearing" (επιφάνεια) is used for the closing action of that event when He shines forth and is seen to every eye. The former word is used generally, as I have said; the latter not so but for that closing point of His coming.

The word used here (1 Cor. 1:7) in this sense, (as also in Rom. 2:6; 8:19; 1 Pet. 1:7, 13; 4:13; Rev. 1:1), might rather be translated "revelation" (αποκαλυψις), than by "appearing." It is a well-chosen word (if we may so say) of the Spirit in this passage; for at that "revelation" all things will be made manifest -- declared by the day. Even the use which the Corinthians were making of the manifold gifts of Christ, of which they came short in no respect, as Paul says. The manner of their use of them would then become the subject of the appraisal of the Lord Jesus Christ. How much more suitable then was the Spirit's choice of this word, than that of His "coming" or of His "appearing," which referred to that moment which would reveal all that passed now. He would bring their consciences under its power, while comforting them at the same time with the thought that God would preserve them *blameless* at the day of the Lord Jesus. If he would do this at such a time, they could rejoice that he would, in love, *blame* them for all and everything unsuited to Him *now*.

The New Jerusalem

A. "J. P." I reply to your question without citing your letter. Rev. 21:9-22:5, gives us a description of the *Millennial* glory of the Bride -- the Lamb's wife. No doubt all in that day will "know the Lord," i.e., "Jehovah." But this knowledge of Jehovah does not at all amount to what we now understand by "knowing the Lord"-- Jesus Christ. The former may be external and by sight, and without life being possessed; the latter can only be by faith while He is unseen, and therefore the possessor has life in his soul.

When the Church is displayed in her heavenly glory to and over the earth, she is owned by these nations about whom you enquire, as the channel of Christ's blessing to the earth. These nations, and kings of the earth, who have been saved through the great tribulation, or during the time of it, own this, therefore, and bring their glory and honor to it. (We are told by competent persons that we should read this word, vv. 24, 26, "to," and not "unto.") They could go *into* the

earthly Jerusalem, but not into the Heavenly; rather, therefore "they bring the glory and honor of the nations *to* it."

During the Millennium there are Jews (or Israel), Gentiles, Kings, Priests, &c. -- all the time distinctions which we now know. In the eternal state which follows, all these time distinctions are gone away for ever.

Words of Truth, New Series 1:235-236.

A Perfect Man

Q. "C." What is the meaning of the expressions "a perfect man," and "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," Eph. 4:13? Is *ανδρα τελειον* here the completed mystical Christ of 1 Cor. 12 -- "the church which is his Body"? Or, is it the individual normal state contemplated for every Christian in contrast with "children" of the following verse?

Is the "fullness of Christ" here the same as in Eph. 1:23, the fully developed growth or completeness of the mystic Christ; or is it the growth of the individual Christian to his normal stature in Christ, the effect of the ministry through the grace of Christ, already referred to in the previous part of the chapter?

A. "A perfect man" in this passage expresses the full grown normal condition of the individual Christian; "the measure of the stature of the fullness of (the) Christ" being that standard to which he is to reach, and to be conformed. *Ανδρα τελειον* is also the individual: there is really nothing whatever about the body of Christ -- the mystical Christ and the church in this part of the chapter (Eph. 4:7-15). The expression is used in contrast with the "babes" of Eph. 4:14. Remark too that the apostle uses *νηπιιοι* for babes; betokening an unhealthy state, as in 1 Cor. 2:1 etc.

The "fullness of Christ" here is not the same as in Eph. 1:23. Here it is all individual, as effected through the ministry spoken of before, or by whatever means the Lord works to bring about His purpose in result. In ch. 1:23 the body is Christ's fullness, who is set over all things. In ch. 3, the saint in whose heart Christ dwells, is "filled into all the fullness of God" (*Εις παν το πληρωμα το θεου*). In Eph. 4:13, the saint is to grow to a perfect man -- the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ -- his normal status as you say; the effect of the ministry through grace previously named.

Words of Truth, New Series 2:19, 20.

Was Christ the First Adam?

Q. ZETA: (1) Was Christ the first Adam? etc.

(2) What is the difference between the "day of Jesus Christ," and the "day of Christ"?

A. (1) 1 Cor. 15 is explicit as to your first question. Christ was not the first Adam in anywise. He is said to be the "Last Adam," and "The Second Man." The Second man, in contrast to the first -- retrospectively. The Last Adam -- prospectively {prospectively?}, for there can be no advance

beyond Him, by whom God Himself is made known. He is not said to be either of these, in terms, until He was glorified. Doubtless in title He was all that and much more; but He is not said to be either until He is on God's throne, and God's eternal counsels are then revealed as to Him and all belonging to His glory.

As the "first Adam" was so in title before he left Paradise, the ruined head of a lost world; yet, he was not named so until the Second was brought in; so the Last Adam was not named such until He entered His glory as Man.

God substitutes the Last Adam for the "first," when the "first" had run his course in responsibility, from innocence to the cross. Then He brought in the man of His counsel, to make good in Him all His purposes from eternity. The very terms, "Second" and "Last," show the "first" morally judged and set aside, and that there can be no advancement beyond Him who is brought in.

It is of course another thing to speak of substitution in atonement for His people. For them He was absolutely and positively "made sin" -- the very thing -- sin itself. "He that knew no sin was made sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). The full and righteous bursting forth of the whole, unmitigated wrath of God fell upon Him, as thus made sin. This He met, as one alone able to do so, and answered all that was in God's nature against sin -- exhausting the wrath by so doing, and adding thus to God's glory.

All this, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him: the expression of God's just appreciation in and by what He wrought. It is but the just value put upon that work to constitute him who believes in Jesus an unsullied ray of God's righteousness in Christ.

(2) As to the "day of Jesus Christ," and the "day of Christ," there is a difference between, and in, the use of the varied names of the Lord in the New Testament. "Christ" is His official name. "Jesus Christ" more His personal name, as ascended, looked upon as having gone through the whole path -- incarnation, life, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, glory. He is first *named* "Jesus Christ" in Acts 2. The Gospels were written after that day, and when "Jesus Christ" is then used, it would seem that the mind of the Spirit is upon Him as on high. He then returns and traces His path and history as to how He reached that place.

Hence, in Phil. 1:6, when the course of the saints is before Paul's mind, and the unfailing love and working of the Lord to bring them through, it is more suited to speak of the Person who will have His day, and had run the course Himself; it would then be "Jesus Christ's day."

In Phil. 1:10, the expression "day of Christ," brings the day of the appraisal of all things -- even of their present walk before the mind; this, more than the Person whose day would come, after His path of persevering service here. He prays that they might be "pure and without offence for (the) day of Christ."

Words of Truth, New Series 2:77-79.

Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver

Q. What does "Apples of gold in pictures of silver" mean?

A. "Divine fruit shown out in redemption," for gold is always divine and silver always redemption; and as you see fruit the result of His holy Spirit within us, it is displayed on the beautiful picture of redemption which we are in Christ Jesus.

Words of Truth, New Series 2:120.

Does the Holy Ghost Dwell in the Church -- His Body?

A. E.I.E.P. It is quite unscriptural to speak of the Holy Ghost as dwelling in the body of Christ -- "The church which is his body." He dwells in the "House." The Church looked at as the "body of Christ" -- its Head in heaven -- was formed by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, taking the aggregate number of the saints at Pentecost and baptizing them into one body in union with the Head, and consequently one with the other. No figure could possibly convey more completely the union of Christ and His people. They are, as joined unto the Lord, one Spirit with Him.

The Church looked upon as the place where God dwells here is spoken of as the "House," or "a habitation of God by the Spirit" or spiritually. *God* is said to "dwell" in her, and to walk in the midst of his people.

Both terms embraced the same people at the first. They were coterminous in extent, though not convertible terms. For the "Body" expressed union. The "House" or "Habitation" not so. It has often been shown that into the latter, "wood, hay, stubble," might be introduced, as has been the case, without the Holy Ghost leaving the house though thus defiled; while none could become united to Christ as a member of His body, unless he was a true believer who had received the Holy Ghost as a seal. Consequently, the history of things shows us that evil having crept into the house, the Spirit who dwelt there would point it out and warn and guide the saints, and act on the conscience of the evil, if the ear to hear was there; but all this as dwelling in that which was still the house of God in responsibility. Of course, the body of Christ being only the true living members, it is contained, as you say, the less in the greater.

2. Your body, as a believer, is a member of Christ, though made out of the dust (1 Cor. 6). The whole man -- "spirit, soul and body" is destined to be with Christ in glory, its present condition being changed. The apostle is pressing personal purity and gives prominence to our "body" in this chapter, and in it we are to glorify God.

"Your body," says the apostle, "is the temple of the Holy Ghost," -- adding "which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price; therefore, he says, 'glorify God in your body.'" (The remaining portion of the verse is not authentic Scripture.) It cannot be said that the Spirit dwells in the "new nature." *That* is produced by the Spirit's quickening power through the Word of God acting

on the conscience and producing faith in Christ. Then the Spirit of God having thus wrought, is given as a seal to him that believes, and is said to dwell in his body. There would hardly be any sense in saying the Spirit dwells in the new nature.

Has the Lord “Fulfilled” the Law in Any Sense?

3. You ask if the Lord has fulfilled, i.e., completed or finished the law in any sense whatsoever; and if He ever kept the law for Israel or the Gentile or the Church, or any one? And that He did come “to fulfill” the law, but it is not said that He “fulfilled it,” as all will not be *fulfilled*, (that is all contained in the law and prophets), much before the eternal state?

Now, the Lord Himself states, in the sermon on the mount (Matt. 5), “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” And here we must ascertain the meaning of the word “fulfil.” It does not mean to *obey* it -- nor is the thought that He came to *add* something to it; but to *make good the whole scope* and gist of the law in His own proper person, to complete the circle, and answer to the whole thoughts of God as far as therein was contained. This word is so used elsewhere: “*Fill ye up the measure of your fathers*”; “until the times of the Gentiles be *fulfilled*”; “that the righteousness of the law *might be fulfilled* in us” i.e., its whole import brought to fruition. And lastly I mention Col. 1:25, where Paul’s ministry of “the Church” -- the mystery, having the result of fulfilling the Word of God.” That is, this truth was needed to complete the circle of revelation, all other subjects having been revealed before.

Thus Christ, in His own person, was the summing up and complement of all that God’s mind contemplated in the law and the prophets; though, of course, much more also.

I have no doubt that whatever our blessed Lord did in keeping the precepts of the law, He did for His people. Israel went into the land on the condition of their observing the law; and their non-observance of it was to result in being driven out of it. (See, *passim*, the whole book of Deuteronomy, and especially ch. 28) Having lost it on the condition of obedience, the Lord comes, and it is remarkable that when He enters His course as an obedient Jew, under the law, He cites Deuteronomy in every case when undergoing the temptations in the wilderness. (Cf. Matt. 4 with Deut. 6 and 8.) Everything which He ever did was for His people and for His God; though it must not be supposed that His keeping of the law was a substitutionary thing for our not keeping it, so as to work out righteousness for us. The righteousness in which we stand, or rather which we are counted by God -- God reckons us such intrinsically by virtue of the work of another, Christ; in token of which He has placed Him on His throne -- the result of His meeting all God’s holy nature as to sin on the Cross, so that He could righteously act according to the dictates of that nature in love.

By His having kept the conditions of Deuteronomy,

under which Israel failed, He has earned a personal title to the land Himself; (cf. Ps. 18:20-24), while, of course, also possessing such in the rights of His own person, as son of Abraham and David, while Son of God and Heir of all things.

As you say, much that is in the law and prophets will not be fulfilled, (in the sense I suppose of being *accomplished*), much before the eternal state. So it is. But the presenting in Himself as the complete scope of it morally, is a different thought from the accomplishment by Him of it in detail historically.

Words of Truth, New Series 2:137-139.

Your Body, the Temple of the Holy Ghost?

Q. He who taught His disciples to suffer patiently, and not to resist evil, and that he who took the sword would perish by the sword (Matt. 26:52), said also that “He that hath no sword” was to “sell his garment and buy one” (Luke 22:36). Why this apparent difference, and in the same period of His ministry?

A. The passage in Luke was specially applicable to “the hour,” i.e., the period inclusive from the Last Supper until the death on the cross. Before this He had claimed all for His followers as the Messiah in power, and yet in lowly grace. (See Luke 9:3). To this experimental knowledge of His care and power He appeals (Luke 22:35), using that word “Lacked ye anything,” which calls to mind so beautifully the passage in 1 Kings 4:27, when, under Solomon’s reign, his subjects “lacked nothing.” This was touchingly known by those who followed a greater than Solomon. In v. 36 He announces the solemn change that was coming, because of the “hour” on which He was then about to enter. He says, as it were: -- Now all my intervention thus on your behalf must cease. Those displays of my power to your hearts must now be suspended; I go to face the powers of evil -- to drink the cup. Now you must shift for yourselves. “For this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned amongst the transgressors,” etc. To those who listened it was but a literal direction about selling a garment and buying a sword. His words were far above their ken; and the secret thoughts of their hearts were betrayed, as well as the secret preparations for carnal strife they had concealed in their robes. They answer Him, “Lord, behold, here are two swords.” His reply shows that He felt and knew that His words were beyond them, and He utters “It is enough” -- you cannot hear my words or understand me now. It is not a literal meaning my words imply, as that which you attach to them (cf. John 21:22, 23).

The other passage, Matt. 26, &c., is the sequel to, and result of their carnal thoughts. One of them smites with the sword outright. His carnal zeal, still undiscerning of the Spirit’s mind, leads him in act beyond the thoughts of those who, without understanding, say, “Lord, shall we smite with the sword?” The Lord then pronounces the word which is characteristic of the new Christian place of passive,

unresisting grace -- "All they that take sword shall perish with the sword." Since it came in (the Christian place), it is as inconsistent and anomalous to see a sword by a Christian's side as it would be to see a soldier of the Queen's army fighting against the Queen in the ranks of her foe. The Christian's weapons are not "carnal," though "mighty" in another way. There have been Christian soldiers who knew not the heavenly calling of a Christian, and they have perished with the sword and gone to heaven. This latter is *His* grace. But they knew no better, let us say, in the same grace. If they had, the sword would have been too heavy for a conscience that walked in the light with God in heaven, and heavier each day till it was thrown aside; or, alas! what has happened, I daresay, at times, worn by an exercised conscience, with the Spirit grieved, until the Spirit ceased to strive and the conscience felt no more!

Words of Truth, New Series 2:159, 160.

The Proper Formula to be Used in Baptism?

Q. "Zeta." What is the difference between being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19), and being baptized in the name of the Lord, and Lord Jesus (Acts 10:48; 19:5)?

A. The only *formulary* ever given was unto (εἰς) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19). Some have supposed that this formulary was changed in the Acts of the Apostles. But when the commission was given the Lord was *present*, and baptism is founded on His resurrection -- not on His ascension; while in Acts He was *absent*, and the point was then the owning of one who was not there in person. Hence the recognition of His name. Yet we find in nearly every case the term is changed, so that the thought of there being a fresh formulary is guarded against. In Acts 2. it is "*in (ἐν) the name of Jesus Christ.*" In Acts 8 "*in (εἰς) the name of the Lord Jesus.*" In Acts 10 "*in (ἐν) the name of the Lord.*" In Acts 19 "*in (εἰς) the name of the Lord Jesus.*" The formulary, therefore, in Matt. 28 is the form which should be employed, while the recognition of the name of the Lord is added as presenting the person to Him.

Words of Truth, New Series 2:180.

Kingdom of Heaven Suffering Violence

Q. "J. R." Will you define to me Matt. 11:12 -- "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force"?

A. The expression is found in that chapter in Matthew which specially declares the rejection of the Blessed Lord in His mission to Israel; "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." The sermon on the mount (Matt. 5-7) followed the display of the *powers* of the kingdom as seen in Him, and detailed in a few striking verses at the close of Matt. 4:23-25. The fame of Jesus had spread throughout all the land. This "sermon," as it has been called, enunciated the

character of the kingdom, so different from what the carnal multitude expected and sought for; it supposes His rejection, and His followers a spectacle to the world, and governed by heavenly principles, and that they should look for a heavenly reward. Matt. 10 then details the mission of the "twelve" to Israel and its rejection: they would go forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. Then follows Matt. 11 in which is found the passage in question. The kingdom of heaven had "suffered violence" from the days of John Baptist; he had preached it (Matt. 3:2, etc.), and had been cast into prison (Matt. 4:12). *Nationally*, then, from that moment the kingdom had been refused; thenceforth as it was only received *individually*, the individual had to struggle against everything in order to enter it; he thus became in point of fact, "the violent." He had to undergo the disruption of national, religious, and family ties. If he loved father or mother more than Jesus, he was not worthy of Him. Instead, then, of an entry into the kingdom, established under divine auspices, which brought the person blessed into the blessing with gentle steps, and apart from difficulties or hindrances to be overcome, it "suffered violence," to use the Lord's words, and "the violent" (as He terms those who entered it) "take it by force," i.e., they were obliged to force their way through every barrier, and count all things but loss that the goal might thus, at any cost, be won.

Zaccheus

Q. "W. L." wishes to know the place that Zaccheus took when he stood and said "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man, by false accusation, I restore him four-fold" (Luke 19:8).

A. He recounted the practice of his life, hitherto in secret it might be, with God. Perhaps the taunts of the multitude as to the Lord's having "gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner" drew forth this half sort of vindication of his master, while it exposed the practices of an earnest heart who, being in a false position, sought to ease a sensitive conscience by doing as he just had said. Of the truth of his statement as to himself there could have been no doubt; nor was it questioned by those who were ready to accuse the Lord and him, and amongst whom his life was spent and known. Peace with God, or salvation, were not known to him: these efforts in secret had not answered the claims of an unpurged conscience with God. "Salvation" only came to his house that day as Jesus entered it and became known to His host. The Lord, too, took no notice of these works, and expressly said to all there that "This day is salvation come to this house." It should be known and possessed first ere such things would be owned as acceptable to God.

Wilderness and Desert

"N." My impression is that these words "wilderness" and "desert," as you notice as being frequently used together in Scripture, have but a shade of difference, and seem to be the

variation of thought in the Hebrew language, which gives such strength and force to the poetic strains of the prophets who uttered them. There is no doubt a difference between the words; “wilderness” conveying the thought of untracked solitudes, parched with want of water -- “They wandered in a wilderness where there is no way”; “desert” conveying rather barrenness and drought, where the verdure of the earth is unknown -- “He will make the desert and the solitary place blossom as the rose,” etc. Rivers in the desert would be given, to give drink to His people, His chosen.

Words of Truth, New Series 3:78-80.