

The Bible Standard

“Send out your light and truth! Let them lead me;...”

Psalm 43:3

“LIFT UP A STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE”

Isaiah 62:10

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BIBLE QUESTION & ANSWER
ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE HERITAGE OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks,
Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God” — 1 Cor. 1:24.*

This article was published in the Spring 2018 Present Truth and due to its importance we are republishing it in this issue of the Bible Standard.

One of the greatest blessings given to the justified, consecrated and sanctified child of God is his relationship with Jehovah, our Father, and our Lord Jesus His Son. In connection with this relationship with God and Christ we, as consecrated children of God, have received a rich heritage. Heritage, a word we don't use every day, is defined in the dictionary as: 1. Property that is or can be inherited. 2. Something handed down from one's ancestors or the past, as a characteristic, a culture, tradition, *etc.* 3. The rights, burdens, or status resulting from being born in a certain time or place; birthright. Heritage applies either to property passed on to an heir, or to a tradition, culture, *etc.* passed on to a later generation (our heritage of freedom).

By the heritage of God's people we refer to that which God gives His people to possess. The heritage of God's people suggests that God gives His people something special, different from or additional to the blessings that are general to all of mankind. From the definitions for the word heritage we get the thought that by the expression “the heritage of God's people” we mean the rights, the standing, the characteristics, the culture, the privileges and the wisdom from above that come to a person who is devoted to God and Christ and the cause of truth and righteousness.

We accept the thought given in John 9:25 that once we were blind but now we can see. Jesus abolished death and saved us from its curse so that we might show forth the praises of Him who has called us “out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9). It is “the manifold wisdom of God,” (Eph. 3:10) revealed by Christ unto us “in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,” (Col. 1:9) that brings us special joy. Jehovah's wisdom [our great heritage] in the words that He speaks unto us are “spirit and life” (John 6:63).

Certainly we recognize that God's providences on behalf of all the human family bring rich and wonderful blessings to the consecrated believer and in a lesser

degree the unbeliever. We share many blessings in common with mankind in general — the blessings of creation, life, the sunshine, the rain, good air, fresh water, the abundance of earthly good things resulting from the time and place in which we live, but more than this, because of our special relationship to God and Christ we, as believers, have many additional privileges, benefits and blessings that others do not enjoy, if they haven't given themselves to God and Christ through faith justification and consecration. This is our heritage as God's people, and it is a rich heritage for which we thank our gracious Heavenly Father. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt. 6:33).

If we would make a list of some of the things that are part of our heritage, our special possession or privileges because we reverence God and have consecrated ourselves to Him what would we include? We read of David's declaration in Psa. 61:4 “I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.”

This declaration is equivalent to our personal consecration—v. 5 “For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.” In this Bible text the word vows seems to indicate the thought of consecration of the righteous, and fearing God's name carries the thought of reverencing Jehovah. “Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright” (Psa. 33:1). Perhaps we don't always consider how really important it is to praise God, but, in Psa. 61:8 King David, the Psalmist, couples the giving of praise with the fulfilling of his vows. We can feel the emotions of David being poured out to his Lord “So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.” Those that maintain a consecrated relationship with God can have this same feeling of closeness to the Lord!

Let us examine three supporting Scriptures: Psa. 32:10-11 “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and

For You, O God,
have heard my
vows; You have
given me the
heritage of those
who fear Your
name.
Psalms 61:5

shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.” Oh, how important mental appreciation and heart’s reliance is for the consecrated child of God. Psa. 42:8 “Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.” By God’s graciousness the Lord’s people have as part of their heritage his lovingkindness in the daytime and a song in the night. From these and other Scriptures we understand that the inspired Scriptures encourage the whole human family to praise, worship and thanksgiving.

As an inquiring consecrated child of God we might ask: Why does the Lord urge us to give thanks, to praise Him and to rejoice? A part of the answer to that question lies in the fact that there is a relationship between the spirit of praise and thanksgiving to God and Christ and to having a godly character. Loving gratitude is one of the Divinely implanted instincts of a person bearing the image of God, and one which should be cultivated. This element of gratitude in the intelligent creature is designed to be responsive to the Divine goodness and benevolence. Gratitude is the element of character in man which makes fellowship and communion with God possible. If there were nothing in us capable of expressing grateful appreciation, what pleasure could there be on God’s part in manifesting His goodness to us? And what would there be in us to call out God’s love? But we read in Rev. 4:11 that it is for the Lord’s pleasure we exist and were created. Oh, God endowed mankind with this element of character which is responsive to His own goodness. “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

Since we were created for the divine pleasure (Prov. 4:11) being responsive to God’s goodness institutes a lively and delightful fellowship with Him. We embrace the principle of truth which is honesty in our words, conduct and thoughts. Let us examine some scripture that show forth the opposite view; perhaps this will help us to understand why the fully consecrated child of God should have even more faith that the Lord will deal truly, to give us the blessings He has promised. Prov. 11:20 says “they that are of a *froward* heart are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way are his delight.” (The definition for the word *froward* is habitually disposed to disobedience and opposition; not easily controlled; stubbornly willful; contrary). Prov. 15:8 “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.” Prov. 13:3 “He that keepeth his mouth

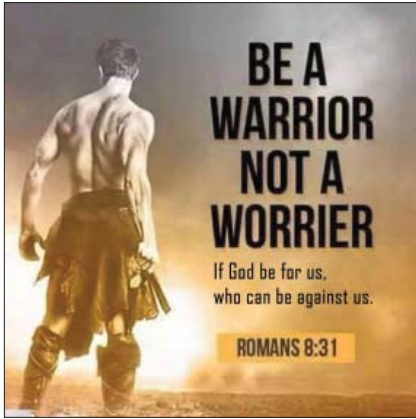
keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction!” What a fearful responsibility attaches to the tongue that wags in a flippant way, dishonoring God!



To cultivate the spirit of praise, thanksgiving, and loving appreciation of all the manifest goodness of God, it is necessary for us to call to mind continually, God’s acts of mercy and grace, “pray without ceasing.” This is the Christian’s secret of a happy life. We will be helped to cultivate this spirit of praise and thanksgiving if in our prayers we frequently tell the Lord how we remember His goodness and how every new evidence of His love and care causes us to have a deeper faith and to realize more fully the sense of His presence and favor; and how through these experiences our love and joy for Him are made to increase. If we call to mind especially our own individual experiences of the Lord’s leading and care, our experiences of His delivering us from dangers and snares of the Adversary—as we meditate upon these things, our appreciation of God and His goodness will grow. As the spirit of love and praise takes possession of our hearts, it will help us to rejoice in the Lord and to give thanks. As we read in 1 John 4:19, “We love him, because he first loved us.” If we have truly appreciative hearts, when we recognize some new evidence of His love, our love is called out more, and we are made to rejoice in God. This consideration has much to do with why Jesus said “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24).

Let us return to our study of Psa. 61:5 “For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* the heritage of those who fear thy name,” and consider the Hebrew word for heritage [yerushshah] which has the thought of to occupy by driving out previous tenants, and possessing in their place. When the Israelites were ordered to conquer the land of Canaan they had to fight and overcome the seven nations already residing there: the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. These peoples or nations represent the weaknesses of our human nature that we must battle against and overcome, in order that we may take possession of the whole Land of Promise, the privileges, *the heritage*, we have as children of God.

The Canaanite and his citadels in the type represent sin, its enticements and strong entrenchment in the weaknesses of the flesh. There can be no compromise or truce with sin on the part of the consecrated; it is to be a war of extermination! And this was the signification of the type. We enjoy the heritage God gives to His people as we fight against and overcome the weaknesses of our human nature and sin, its enticements.



We, consecrated children of God, must recognize His teachings to us; His Word as recorded in Psa. 119:111 “Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.” The Psalmist is introducing into

our minds the understanding that he possesses the Lord’s words, teachings, *etc.* as part of his heritage and likewise. Do all of the Lord’s consecrated people have His teachings as part of their heritage? Yes, we can understand the word testimonies here would be especially the precepts but we will include all of Jehovah’s teachings. All that He has made known through Jesus and the Star Members during the Gospel Age, including The Gospel Age Harvest work which continues through His special servants to this time. This would include as part of our heritage the Parousia and the Epiphany Truth [present Truth] as now due to be understood. What a heritage God is providing.

Jehovah has provided another Scripture that points out that the called, faithful, and chosen ones—the one true Church would not be overcome by their enemies. Let our hearts be cheerful as we read Isa. 54:17 “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.” History proves that some of the experiences which the Church of old was permitted to pass through did allow weapons of destruction to prevail against them. Many physical weapons were used of the Adversary; also weapons of slander, envy, hatred, and malice have been permitted to do their evil.

The apparent contradiction of thought is reconciled by understanding that the promise given was that even though the old creature, the flesh, already

consecrated unto death might be overcome; the New Creature would not be harmed. By helping to mortify and destroy the flesh of the spirit-begotten, their adversaries actually helped them, as new creatures, instead of hindering them as they intended to do. By the trials and vicissitudes of this present life, by warfare with the world, the flesh, and the Devil, the spirit-begotten of the Gospel age formed characters in accord with righteousness. So it is with us as servants of the Lord today. Even though not Spirit-begotten and not directly under some of the promises made to the Spirit-begotten, we, who have the enlightenment, heart-warming and energizing of the holy Spirit of understanding, recognize that the applicable principles still operate to the blessing of the Lord’s consecrated people today. So we say as the Apostle Paul wrote “If God be for us, who can be against us?”—Romans 8:31

Now for instance, take the text 2 Pet. 1:4, “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.” Now how are we to read that text, those who are not of the Little Flock, and that includes all of us, how are we going to apply that text to get any blessings for ourselves; well we would say “unto us also” there are great and precious promises and by these we might become partakers of perfect life. The fact is, we are not Spirit begotten, so we would say, Oh yes there are unto us great and precious promises; by these we may become Consecrated Epiphany Campers and have eternal life. Like those that have gone before us, we are to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold unto eternal life and that applies to every one of His chosen vessels.

The Truth is sure to triumph over all its opponents. As we espouse and defend it we may therefore claim in principle the precious promise of Isa. 54, “This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith, the LORD.” We quote some thoughts given by Pastor Russell “It is not applicable to one individual alone, but as declared, it belongs to all the servants of the Lord—every true spiritual Israelite may claim it, rest upon it and rejoice in it. It may to some extent be applicable to regathered and re-favored Israel after the flesh, in the near future when the Lord will fulfill to them all His good promises; but without question it belongs to spiritual Israel.”

If we as workmen in God’s vineyard have properly studied His Word, and have applied it to our hearts and lives, we will never need to be ashamed. We will never need to hang our heads in defeat in controversy with

those who are blinded by error, but will sometimes be able to convince those who contend with us (Titus 1:9; 1 Pet. 3:15). “For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist” (Luke 21:15); “And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake” (Acts 6:10; Isa. 54:17).

There is much evidence that we are kept by the power of God. The psalmist makes this very clear; “The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand; The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore” (Psa. 121:5; Psa. 121:8). “The LORD is thy keeper” and certainly He has been the keeper of His consecrated ones in spiritual Israel throughout the Gospel Age just as He was the keeper of Israel during the Jewish Age, and as He continues to keep His consecrated people today: Yes, the LORD is our keeper!



As much as He is the shepherd of his flock, He is the shepherd of each sheep individually also. The promise in Psa. 121:4 “Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” is a comforting assurance that God is always awake and alert, and watching over His people. Let us personalize this truth. We can each say, “The great God of the universe, is my keeper” (PT 1970, p. 91).

What is the import of the thought “the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand” (Psa. 121:5)? The right hand is the position of chief favor and we must keep Him at our right hand, *i.e.* we must keep Him closest to us and above all else. The statement “the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand,” leads into verse 6 where we read “The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.” The shade protects from the sun as God protects the spiritual lives of His faithful people in proportion to their faithfulness. Since earth’s day and night make up all time as we know it, the thought seems to be that God’s ever-present protection never ceases. We now have a better understanding of King David’s words in Psa. 16:8 “I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right

hand, I shall not be moved.” Also Psa. 16:9 “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.”

We read from Psa. 121:6 “The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.” We quote from PT 1970, p. 91: “We thank God ‘for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon’ (Deut. 33:14). But injuries can also be received from the sun and the moon, both literally and symbolically. Against these injuries God protects the spiritual lives of His faithful people—in proportion to their faithfulness. The earth’s day and night make up all time; His ever-present protection never ceases. Symbolically (as in the case of Psa. 91:5) the ‘day’ may be applied in the end of the Gospel Age as referring to the Parousia period and the ‘night’ to the Epiphany period. In this setting the ‘sun’ and the ‘moon’ (each of which has a variety of symbolic meanings in the Bible—see E 2, pp. 410, 411; E 8, p. 625), as in Isa. 30:26, seem to symbolize respectively the New and Old Testaments. In harmony with this thought is the fact that the Parousia teachings were mainly derived from the New Testament, and the Epiphany teachings have been and are being derived mainly from the Old Testament. The unfaithful of the Parousia time were smitten—refuted and stumbled—mainly by N.T. Truth as due, whereas the unfaithful of the Epiphany—the Time of Trouble, have been and are being smitten—refuted and stumbled—mainly by O.T. Truth as due. The N.T. teachings are compared to the rays of the sun, because they are comparatively clearly stated; whereas the O.T. teachings are compared to the rays of the moon, because they (as reflected symbolic sunlight) are rather obscurely stated—mainly in types and symbolic prophecies. In contrast with the experiences of the unfaithful, vs. 5, 6 promise the faithful, particularly the Little Flock, that during the Parousia they would not be smitten—refuted and stumbled—by the N.T. teachings set forth at that time as ‘meat in due season’; and that during the Epiphany they would not be smitten—refuted and stumbled—by the O.T. teachings as they became due to be understood. While in each period they might be temporarily bewildered as to these teachings, they would in due time become clear to them. **In proportion as we look to God for our help and as we trust in Him, we will not be smitten—refuted and stumbled—by the truth of His Word unfolded for us in times of need.**

We continue this study of Psa. 121 with v. 7 “The LORD shall *preserve* thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.” From our studies we understand that the word preserve in the KJV also has the thought of keep. The latter part

of this verse shows that it is the soul, the life or personal being that is kept. We turn to our Lord Jesus' words in Matt. 10:28 "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (gehenna—the second death). As we noted earlier many of the Lord's people have had their flesh destroyed by the evil works of their adversaries but it has worked to the development and preservation of the consecrated heart, mind and will. The faithful, consecrated, servant of God is kept from the dominion of sin, the infection of error, the crush of despondency, the puffing up of pride, given aid in the battle against the world, the flesh, the Devil, and kept unto eternal life in God's Kingdom. Psa. 121:8 "The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore." The words "from this time forth, and even for evermore" show that Jehovah's watchcare over His people is even unto death and doesn't end with the Adamic death in this life, but that it will continue eternally in the resurrection life.

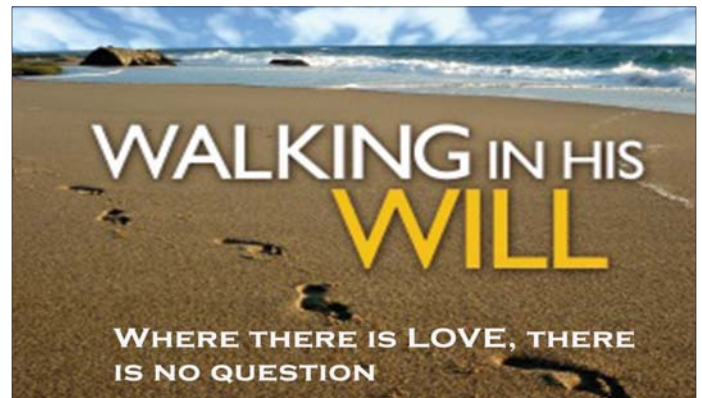
The heritage of God includes the love of Jehovah and Jesus, which never fails. The consecrated people can claim these words from the Scriptures "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:21). We know that God loved all of mankind so much, that even in their imperfect condition He sent His son to die for us, as we read in John 3:16. But God and Christ have a special love for those who are trying to faithfully live in harmony with Their teachings especially while sin is in the ascendancy.

As the Lord's people we have a Father who is exceedingly wealthy, who supplies all our needs and makes all things work together for our spiritual good. Psa. 50:10, 11 brings this to our attention "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine." If our mental appreciation and heart's reliance are properly in place we can claim these words from God: "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him" (2 Chron. 16:9).

In the definition of heritage we found that it can include rights, status, privileges, benefits and blessings that come to one in a special place or relationship. Because of being in this faith justified and consecrated condition, because of having this status, we have fellowship with the Heavenly Father and with our Lord Jesus. We can claim another Biblical promise of the richness of our Heavenly Father

because we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. In 1 John 1:3 God has made a declaration to those in a special place or relationship; "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

God's people: take a moment to reflect on just what the privilege of being God's people can be! God's people have sweet fellowship with each other! We have friends and brethren with whom we can share the sweet treasures of God's Word. 1 John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." As God's consecrated people we receive the precious gift of God's holy Spirit of understanding, a constant comfort and enlightener. Let us take time to ponder these precious words from the Bible: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Tim. 1:7).

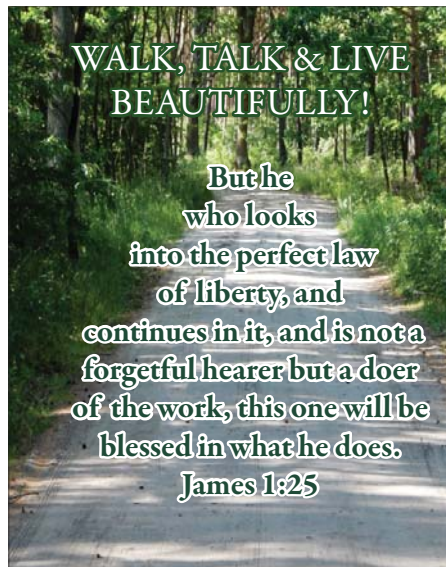


The heritage of God is rest in the Lord, peace and tranquility of heart and mind. The more we serve the Lord and the more intimately acquainted we become with Him the easier it is for us to rest in Him. The consecrated commit their way onto the Lord, they not only have faith in Him but they trust also in Him. As consecrated children, we have Jesus' last legacy, as given to His disciples when He was about to leave the world, as expressed in His words in John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, (not in stinted measure or in perishable quality) give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." On the last night of his earthly life, our Lord Jesus, bestowed upon His disciples His parting blessing, His legacy of peace. It was the richest legacy He had to bequeath, and it was of priceless value. It was

the promise of that tranquility of being, that rest and ease of mind, which Jesus Himself possessed, the peace of God. The peace of Christ, which he gave to His disciples, wasn't centered in Himself but in God, by faith in God's wisdom, power and grace. If we would have this peace which Christ bequeathed to His disciples, it must like His, be centered in God by faith.

God has directed us, if we wish to be His disciple; to take up our cross and follow Him. As His disciples we believe that what God had promised He is able to perform, and that His righteous and benevolent plan shall not fail. Let us maintain a steady, unwavering faith that the peace of God—the peace of Christ will abide with His people. As we learn to take a proper view of the Lord's dealings, as we learn to have faith in Him, as we learn to note his providences and trust his promises, proportionately it is our privilege to have peace and rest in every time of storm and distress.

The heritage of God provides His people with a wonderful education: let us eat these words from James 3:17 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Yes, we shall know the Truth and it shall make us free! As the consecrated child of God becomes familiar with God's Word his privilege and duty is to honor the Lord through blessing His people. In harmony with this God's servants have the privilege and the responsibility to show God's person, character, word and works to the generation that follows them. Psa. 71:15-18 "My mouth shall shew forth thy



righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come."

We of necessity should declare to those who come after us who God is. We need to describe in detail the loving, righteous and just character God possesses. Freely we have received, freely we must give. We must declare and expound the infallible, beautiful, wise and reasonable Word and plan of God, teaching it to the present generation just as the prior generation has taught it to us. We should point out for others the marvelous works of God in connection with creation, providence, redemption and the ultimate deliverance of mankind from the sentence of death.

Jesus speaks to the truly faithful in John 10:27-29 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." The promise of God's mercy, lovingkindness, and everlasting life if faithful and obedient is part of our heritage. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (Psa. 23:6).



JUSTICE

"The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul" (Deut. 13:3).

Our dear Heavenly Father surely is pleased when He sees thankfulness in our hearts, and when He hears heartfelt gratitude expressed through our lips. This is because *gratitude* is a prominent feature of *piety* and *piety* is an important feature of *justice*. When we come to understand *piety* and *justice*, we find that *thankfulness* constitutes a large part of both. But one may ask, What is *piety*? We first answer this question negatively by saying

that *piety* is not a grace that is to be exercised toward our fellow men. If it were to be exercised toward our fellow men, it would be a wrong exercise of it; for it is a quality that properly goes out to but two persons in the universe at the present time. One of these is the Heavenly Father and the other is His Son Jesus. In the next Age, when the Church will be reigning as the subordinate part of the Mediator, *piety* will be exercised toward the Church; but

at the present time the only ones to whom it is proper for anyone to exercise piety are the Father and the Son. So then it is good, in order to understand what is meant by piety, to realize who the objects of piety are. When we come to see what piety is, we will readily see that at the present time it is right to restrict our exercise of it to the Father and the Son only.

Let us call our attention to what is justice? We reply that justice is duty love, and duty love is thankful good will which by right we owe to others. We owe justice; therefore it ought to be given. Whoever the object of justice may be, the idea involved in justice is that we owe him something. When we give to everyone his due, we render justice. We have certain dues Godward and Christward which we are to render to Them; and when we do this we render Them justice; that part of justice which we call piety. Therefore we define piety as the thankful goodwill based on right, and due to God and Christ for the good that They have done to us. Piety is not the whole, but a part of justice—that part of justice which is due to God and Jesus only. When we speak here of giving justice, duty love, it is an action in which there is good will, *i.e.*, love. There can be no justice, duty love, apart from good will. Good will is always present in justice; duty love to God, Christ and fellow men.

There are two kinds of love that God wants His people to have—duty love and disinterested love. Duty love is the love that we owe. We owe good will to God, to Christ and to our fellows. It is thankful good will, because God and Christ have done us so much good. It is based on doing that which is right, because the Creator, after having done good to us, has a thorough right to receive our response in yielding to Him what the creature should yield to the Creator. Therefore it is thankful good will, based on right, [justice] because God has done so much good to us.

We now explain a little more fully the degree of love that it is just to give to God and Christ. If we would give Them only as much duty love as we would give to an ordinary person or to any human benefactor, we would not be doing justice to Them. There is a specific degree of love that the Bible says is due to God and Christ, based on right [justice], and whoever falls short of it does not do justice to Them. It is possible, therefore, to love God and Christ below the standard of justice. Undoubtedly every human being, except atheists and those who sin the sin unto death, has some duty love toward God, but all do not exercise proper justice toward God. Why not? Because they do not have so high a degree of love toward God as they ought to have. Justice requires a certain

degree of love toward God and Christ, and whoever falls below that, fails of justice toward Them.



This brings up the question: What degree of love is required in order that we might exhibit piety toward God and Christ? The Bible sets it forth as that degree of love that is all-comprehensive. We find this stated in Mark 12:30: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” So then any love that falls short of loving God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength falls short of justice. He therefore who out of thankful good will to God and Christ loves Them with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, is doing justice to God and Christ.

We are to see to it that we develop such a thankful good will to God and Christ, based on right, and due to Them for the good They have done to us, that with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, we love Them. But one may ask, What does it mean to love God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength? We answer: Putting God first in everything is loving Him with all the heart, mind, soul and strength. Again, one asks, How can one love both God and Christ alike? We reply, because both are as one: They are in perfect harmony with each other, and everything good that has come to us has come from God by the instrumentality of Christ. They being one in heart, mind and purpose, there is absolutely no rivalry between Them. All things are of the Father and by the Son; therefore there is no rivalry or contradiction between the love we have to the Father and to the Son. We put God first and Christ next after Him, because Christ is the Father’s Agent in all things.

In the spirit of justice what is meant by putting God first? We answer: Preferring Him to everyone and everything—preferring Him to ourselves, our spouses, children, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends, homes, property, native land, knowledge, occupation, love for the artistic, for others’ approval, for safety,

ease, self-defense, life, hiding disadvantageous things, gaining and retaining, destroying injurious things, food and drink—in a word, God first, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence, the Father first and the Son with Him because seated with Him on one throne. It means also that whatever we do we will consult piety and justice as an expression of duty love to Him, and therefore we will love our spouses, children, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, neighbors, friends and enemies, because we love Him. We will love the Truth, because we love Him. We will love our earthly calling in harmony with His will, because we love Him. We will love whatever work is given to us to do, because we love Him. It means that God is the inspiration of everything we do, and that we do it, because He has been good to us; it means that next to Him, Christ is the inspiration of everything we do, and that we do it, because He has been so good to us—we do it as a tribute of devotion for Their goodness to us.



We do not say that this is the only kind of love, or that it is the highest form of love that we are to give to the Father and the Son, but we do say that this is the least love that would be pleasing in Their sight. This must be rendered or sin sets in. It is our blessed privilege as God's children to go further than duty love. It is our blessed privilege to develop disinterested love toward the Father and the Son, sacrificing our rights in Their interests, but in harmony with the blessings given to us we must put Them first, if we would by the grace of God be possessors of piety and justice.

1 Cor. 15:34 calls our attention to a profound statement: "Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." As His consecrated children we desire our dear Heavenly Father to be pleased when He sees thankfulness in our hearts, and when He hears our heartfelt gratitude expressed through our lips. During the troubled times, of this expanded Gospel Age harvest, it is the will of

God that His children shall have trials, difficulties and polishings, in order that these experiences may develop in us a God-likeness of character, that will render us fit to be used of God in the great work which He has appointed to the Lord Jesus. Sometimes Christian people see the doctrine of love in the Bible and forget that there is a lesson which precedes love. This primary lesson is the one to which we draw our attention at this time. It is the lesson of justice—righteousness. What our text really signifies is, "Awake to Justice!" Only after we have rendered justice are we at liberty to practice love toward another. Then we may do as much as we are able along the line of love. Yes, justice first, love afterwards, should be the rule governing all of our dealings with others. Whoever is not disposed to justice to such an extent as to be willing to suffer loss rather than do an injustice will not have a share in the Kingdom.

The law of absolute justice, righteousness, the Law of Love, which will be introduced world-wide during the Millennium must already, even now, have our support in the present time, when so much may be gained by a little deflection from the proper standards of purity or truth or honesty, when so many are in favor of graft if it works favorably to themselves. They are to seek after and appropriate to themselves the principles of righteousness which they perceive will be the laws of the Kingdom for the whole world by and by.

It will be much easier for the world to conform to the laws of righteousness by and by, when every transgression will receive prompt rebuke or punishment and when every good word or deed will receive a prompt reward. Much of the Christian's time must be devoted to self-examination and self-instruction in righteousness as well as building one another up in the most holy faith in the Divine Word. All such are really taught of God. They learn to have much regard for their words and actions. The purpose of justice is to be honest with the Lord, honest with the brethren, honest with themselves. As these lessons are learned, appropriated, the pupils in the School of Christ are being made ready for an inheritance into the Kingdom (Pastor Russell's sermons pp. 351, 355, 372).

As consecrated children of God, Epiphany Camper hopefuls, we have a responsibility to develop our characters, yes, our hearts and lives to the principles Jehovah desires. Therefore unless we are just in our very hearts, unless we appreciate this principle of justice and rejoice to practice it, we shall not be fit for the Kingdom. The Lord places us frequently where we have opportunities

of choosing between this and that, and where, therefore, it becomes a matter of character or principle with us which we should choose. The results are with God.

Some have asked, is God subject to His laws of justice. Oh yes, He is the great center from which all blessings are to come and He cannot violate or transgress against His own law of justice (Ex. 34:7). How could He be “a just God and a Savior” (Isa. 45:21) if, in providing for the salvation of Adam and his race, He had ignored the just demands of His own law, which, because of Adam’s disobedience, pronounced the death sentence upon him, including, of course, the race in his loins (Gen. 2:17; 3:3, 17-19).

There was only one way whereby God could arrange for the salvation of Adam and his race from eternal death without violating His own justice; and that was to provide a substitute, a ransom, for the perfect man Adam, who, by disobedience, had forfeited his right to life. Therefore, because Adam’s race all came under and inherited his condemnation, “none of them could by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom [a price to cover, a corresponding price] for him” (Psa. 49:7), for all of them have themselves been condemned to death; none of them has had a perfect human life to offer for the payment of the death sentence on behalf of Adam and the race that was in his power of procreation, which was a part of him, when he sinned.

God’s justice rightly demands “life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot” (Ex. 21:23, 24)—an exact equivalent. So if Adam (and the race that was in his loins when he sinned) was to be redeemed, it was necessary that a perfect human life, equivalent to that of Adam before he sinned, be provided and sacrificed as Adam’s substitute—a ransom, a corresponding price; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.

This was shown by God’s not recognizing the fig-leaf coverings of our first parents. It was their action that typed the efforts by which some have sought to justify self before God by the works of their own hands. God, on the other hand replaced the leaf coverings with the typical covering of animal skins showing forth the necessity of the shedding of blood (Gen. 3:7, 21). “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement [typically] for your souls: for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul” (Lev. 17:11).

*Thank You God
for everything in my life.
The good & bad.*

*Some were
BLESSINGS
& some were
LESSONS*

This was shown also in the Atonement Day offerings for Israel once each year (Lev. 16; Ex. 30:10), and in other offerings (BS 2009 p. 11).

The requiring cause of the Ransom was God’s justice. This impartial attribute of God’s character, required a Ransom-price if He would redeem the human race from the condemnation of death. There must be made up for man that which justice required (Ex. 21:23-25, Deut. 19:21). Rom. 3:25, 26: “God has set forth [Jesus] to be a propitiation” (Rom. 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30). This refers to the “propitiatory,” or Mercy Seat, situated in the Tabernacle. That the propitiatory represents God’s justice is evident from the fact that the atoning blood was sprinkled before it. This is shown in Lev. 16:14, where the bullock represents the perfect humanity of Jesus and the high priest represents Christ Jesus in his priestly function: “And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward, and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.”

The planning cause of the Ransom was Divine wisdom. 1 Cor. 1:23, 24: “But we preach Christ crucified [the Ransom], unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” Christ crucified — the Ransom — is shown to be the concentration of God’s Wisdom with regard to man’s salvation, in His sacrifice by which He laid down the Ransom. The moving cause of the Ransom was Divine love. It would be a mistake to think that the race’s deliverance cost God nothing — He furnished the price in giving up His Son; that which impelled the Father was His love, which was so great as to empty heaven of its dearest treasure and to send the Son of His bosom into the world to become our Ransom.

We read in Rom. 5:8: “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” The beloved text, John 3:16, is another passage to the point: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The efficient cause of the Ransom was God’s power, especially as it operated through the Holy Spirit working in our dear Redeemer. This is stated in Acts 10:38 NKJ “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.” This power of God acting in our dear

Redeemer enabled Him to lay down His life as the Ransom-price (Heb. 9:14) (BS 2000 p. 26).

Jehovah's justice demanded and Jesus' just obedience and perfect heart made it possible for the Ransom to be laid down. Jesus was the one that could say in the language of the prophet, "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psa. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:1-14). We read this testimony in Rom. 5:19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." What Jesus obediently laid down in death had a genuine merit, which was by His death made available for all mankind—"Justice first then love."



God in justice, recognizing and enforcing His own law, could not permit man to live again, unless the claim of justice was met. Man is the debtor, and unless he can pay the debt he cannot come out of the prison-house of death — cannot have life. How could he atone for himself? How can the one subject to the penalty, and poverty-stricken, purchase his own freedom? He cannot pay this debt, and consequently cannot release himself.

But man's helplessness gives occasion for the display of God's mercy and love in Christ Jesus, for God devised a way in which He could be both just and merciful — "for when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6).

However, Christ's death does not now prevent us — not even as Christians — from dying. It does prevent our remaining in death forever, for Christ came to open the prison doors and set at liberty the captives (Isa. 61:1, 2; Luke 4:18, 19). This He does, not by opposing or skirting God's justice, but by recognizing it and paying that which is demanded by it. He has a right to set those prisoners free. By His own death He purchases the sinner.

Jesus came into the world by a special creative act of God, and consequently was untainted by the curse of sin and death. Not having forfeited His right to life, either through Adam's sin or any of His own (for He was sinless), death had no claim upon Him. Therefore He had something to offer justice for the life of mankind: Himself. He must have had the right to continuance of life, else He could not give it in ransom.

But how could the life of one, purchase the life of many? Only by the principle of substitution. Adam

represented the entire unborn human race when put on test. Consequently, through his failure "death passed upon all men" and all were counted sinners even before birth. Christ in His death purchased Adam from the death sentence, and by so doing purchased all of Adam's descendants — the entire human family (Rom. 5:18, 19).

What wonderful information has been made available to the consecrated child of God through the inspired word. We do not minister that the writers of the Bible were infallible; rather we understand they were inspired through God's character! Yes, we believe that God's character guarantees inspiration. God's character consists of wisdom, power (will power), justice and love, each perfect in itself, each perfect in its harmony with the others and all in this harmony perfectly dominating God's other graces. From many standpoints, God's wisdom requires an inspired Bible. His wisdom is the tactful application of His knowledge securing good results. His wisdom showed Him that an uninspired Bible could not secure the fullness and precision of the Bible necessary to secure the good results aimed at by the Lord in giving His revelation; on the contrary, that such a Bible would wreck the results that He aimed at in giving it; for it would omit essential parts of His revelation, mix it with error and insert foreign matters, all three of which would be fatal to its attaining the Divinely intended results (HE 1944 p. 11).

But His wisdom showed that by inspiring the Bible He could omit from it things not belonging to it, insert into it exactly what He desired to be in it and keep error out of it, both as to fullness and precision; and His wisdom showed that He would have a revelation just as He desired it to be and sufficient to secure the ends in view in giving it. God's power also requires an inspired Bible and cooperated to make it so. Jehovah is not so weak willed as to allow His revelation to be given without inspiration, since He knew that an uninspired Bible would frustrate the purpose of His revelation, destroy its purity, compromise its fullness and defile its contents; and His will power, which exercises all necessary might to secure His purposes, guarantees an inspired Bible, since inspiration is the only way to make it what He desires it to be to secure His purposes therewith. God's justice, duty love, also requires an inspired Bible; for an uninspired Bible would be a disgrace to God, a compromise of His revelation, an injury, through its lacks, faults and immaturities, to its purposes, and an injustice to its users—none of which things His justice could permit. On the contrary, justice, which renders to

each his due, not only saw to it that the Bible was not only harmless, which even at best an uninspired Bible could not be, but was fully beneficent, which to be the Bible must be inspired.

Finally, God's love requires the Bible to be inspired. From its very nature, love requires this; for love is that disinterested good will which, delighting in good principles, *i.e.*, the Truth and its Spirit, delights in, and is in sympathetic oneness with those in harmony therewith, sympathizes with or pities those who are out of harmony therewith, or those who are treated contrary thereto, and delights to sacrifice to advance them. Such a love could not give an uninspired Bible because of its contrariety to good principles; but must give an inspired Bible because of its harmony with, and advancement of good principles. Accordingly, God's character of perfect, balanced and dominating wisdom, power, justice and love, requires an inspired Bible "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

With the joyous understanding and trust in the Word of God we embrace the promised time of restitution under the conditional New Covenant relationship with Jesus as the chief mediator. The Mediator will not hold against anyone the transgressions of this present life. But it will require a long, patient effort to regain the perfection from which the first parents of the race fell. Some of mankind have fallen much farther down than others, because of having inherited greater depravity or because of a more perverse disposition and of a lesser effort to control their fallen nature. But under the

gracious arrangements of the New Covenant, the great Mediator purposes to grant the necessary assistance by helping the people individually to understand the requirements of the new arrangement, by promptly punishing any attempt to do wrong, by rewarding every effort to do right, and by supplying strength, physical and mental, to meet the requirements of His righteous and benevolent rule.

By the close of the Mediatorial Reign those who have responded and made earnest effort to advance, will be brought to a condition of human perfection and of covenant relationship with Jehovah, as Adam was at the beginning. Then they must be subjected to the same test of loyalty as Adam was, with no mediator between them and God's justice. How many will maintain that relationship, and how many will lose it and suffer destruction, we cannot know. That some will prove unworthy of life and meet this extreme penalty of willful sin—the Second Death—is clearly shown "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" Rev. 21: 8. (Rev. 20:7-9, 14, 15; 22:14, 15). These are referred to also in Isa. 65:20 as the old men who will not fill their days with good, but will selfishly use the Millennial opportunities and pretend all the time to be obeying them.

How fortunate we are to have a relationship with the God of absolute justice, righteousness, loving-kindness; yes, "Justice first then Love." Let us tell God of our heartfelt gratitude expressed through our lips.



GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD.

In Everything Give Thanks!

A beautiful and appropriate custom prevails in the United States—the setting apart of a day, usually the fourth Thursday of each November, as a day of special thanksgiving to God for the harvest bounties and all the blessings of the year past. We understand that the American concept of Thanksgiving developed in the colonies of New England. As an annual celebration of the harvest and its bounty, Thanksgiving falls under a category of festivals that spans cultures, continents and millennia. In ancient times, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans feasted and paid



tribute to their gods after the fall harvest. Historians have noted that Native Americans had a rich tradition of commemorating the fall harvest with feasting and merrymaking long before Europeans set foot on their shores.

The Thanksgiving celebration has lost much of its original religious significance, and should not be all about turkey, stuffing and cranberry sauce. The name, Thanksgiving, conveys what the day is supposed to be about. Let us cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to us, and to give thanks

Dear God,

Thank you for the strength, wisdom, joy, and peace You give. When life gets full of stress, may I be quick to remember You are in control of all things and turn to you in prayer!

Amen

continuously. May gratitude [thanksgiving] be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good. Some find volunteering as a way to show their loving-kindness and for many this has become a common Thanksgiving Day activity, and communities often hold food drives and

host free dinners for the less fortunate. However for some it has deteriorated into a mere formalism and an occasion for feasting—a holiday.

For the year 2018 we wish all the Lord's dear ones a Divinely blessed Holiday Season, as we join in thanksgiving, worship and praise to God for the unspeakable gift of His love. While we appreciate the fact that the world sets aside a special day for thanksgiving, we as consecrated children of God give our praise each day for His graciousness to us. All who appreciate God's goodness may offer worship in the sense of thanks, acknowledgment, and appreciation. All of God's consecrated children may come to Him and know that He is ever ready to hear their prayer. These have special guidance in all their affairs, because they have come into the family of God. "Pray without ceasing; in every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thes. 5:17, 18).

As consecrated children of God we have feasted on the bounties of Divine favor. Therefore we can and do most heartily "offer unto God thanksgiving" (Psa. 50:14) for past favors. We not only render unto God the praises of our lips, but also the incense of truly dedicated, consecrated lives? Dearly beloved Disciples of Christ, let us renew our consecration to God in the sense of re-affirming the covenant we entered into at consecration. Let us assure our dear heavenly Father that we are still entirely His, that we still love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and that we have the determination to continue to serve Him faithfully until death, whenever it may come.

Oh, dear faithful ones in Christ, each day can be our occasion for thanksgiving. Shall we set apart only one special day in which to render praise and thanks to God for such unmeasured favor? Or, rather, shall we not set apart *every* day as a day for the expression (in deeds as well as in words) of our hearty thanksgiving to God for all His multiplied favors to us? Thanks be

to God for preparing the way before us in lands where, though we are merely aliens and foreigners, we have such inestimable privileges and advantages for growing in knowledge and in grace, and for advancing the cause of truth; and thanks be to Him for delivering us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light and peace, and calling us to be in His Kingdom.

We as children of God should never be so involved with the cares of the present life that we can find no cause for thanksgiving; for, being graciously enlightened by His Spirit, we know that *all things*, however perplexing or trying they may be, are working together for good to those who love God supremely—to the called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28). Therefore it is our privilege to rejoice at all times and under all circumstances (Phil. 4:4; 1 Thes. 5:16), and our pleasure should be *always* to give thanks to God for *all things* (1 Thes. 5:18).

How glorious is the Divine plan! Surely our hearts go out to our dear Heavenly Father in adoration, worship, praise and thanksgiving for the "unspeakable gift" of His love (2 Cor. 9:15)!

I asked for STRENGTH . . .
And God gave me DIFFICULTIES
to make me strong.

I asked for WISDOM . . .
And God gave me PROBLEMS to solve.

I asked for PROSPERITY . . .
And God gave me BRAIN and BRAWN work.

I asked for COURAGE . . .
And God gave me DANGER to overcome.

I asked for LOVE . . .
And God gave me TROUBLED people to help.

I asked for FAVORS . . .
And God gave me OPPORTUNITIES.

I received nothing I asked for . . . but
received EVERYTHING I NEEDED.

TRUST IN GOD

**Prayer does not change God,
but it changes him who prays**

The Lord's Business

"Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands" (1 Thes. 4:11).

There is a quietness that comes from indolence or passivity, a "laid-back" attitude that refuses to be too personally involved in the general turmoil of life or the needs of others. There is another quietness that comes from confidence — a composure characteristic of those at peace with God, with themselves, and as far as possible with all the circumstances of life.

Maintaining a quiet composure in today's world is far from easy. We are assailed on all sides by noisy clamor, the demands of others on our time and energy, the pressures of doing our own business honestly in conditions dominated by selfishness and moral laxity. It is not surprising if on occasions — blessed though we are by a vision that sees beyond the present time of trouble — we speak angry words and weep angry tears of frustration at the injustice of it all.

WE ARE A SPECTACLE

Make no mistake. As confessed ambassadors for Christ we are on show, and the world is an unjust judge. They judge us by *our own standards*, not by theirs. When our composure breaks down and we are seen as weak, or even caught in a fault, the charge is: "You're not supposed to do that! Don't you people reckon to set a good example to us folk?" And perhaps they feel an element of satisfaction in seeing that we are, after all, far from perfect. We are toppled from the pedestal on which they put us.

Such mortifying experiences come to all of us who are set apart to God's service, and we are in good company. We are not looking for the world's approval, or even that of family and friends, desirable as that may be, but are seeking to please and honor the Lord.

HIS BUSINESS IS OUR BUSINESS

"Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done" (Ezra 7:23). It was the heathen ruler Artaxerxes that exhorted the Jews to attend to the business of their God, and the principle is fitting for God's present-day servants. Let our Christian work and witness be diligent. There is no place for half-heartedness in the Lord's business, and He rejects the lukewarm attitude that leaves it all for somebody else to do.

Most Christian congregations have in their midst some who pay merely lip-service and avoid any real

commitment. They persuade themselves that so long as they attend meetings, fellowship with Christians, give mental assent to the general teachings, and observe the basic ethical requirements, all is well. Their complacency as "passengers" only will not guarantee them a "Well done" in God's judgment.

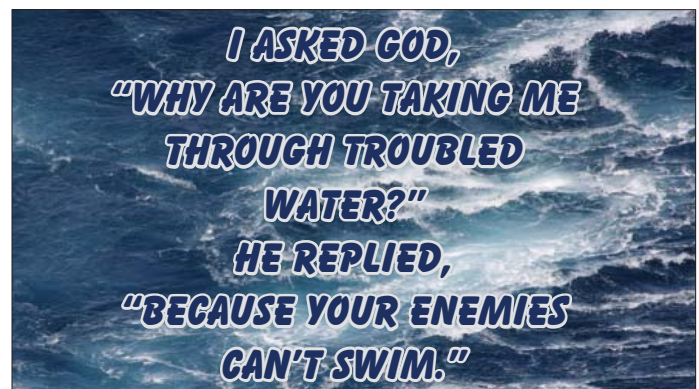
The quiet satisfaction that comes from diligently doing the Lord's business is gained at the cost of much physical, mental, and nervous energy. We are His witnesses, and there is a world out there waiting for salvation, needing the Gospel message to show them the way. There is a famine for the Word of God, and He has employed us as workers to meet the needs of the hungry.

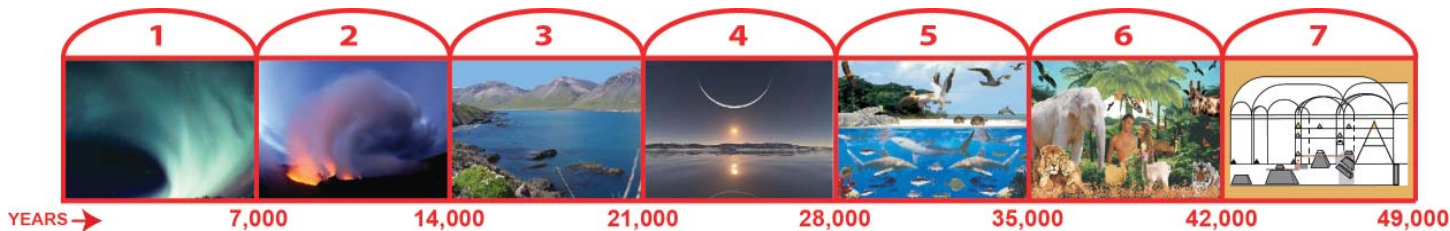
HOW SHALL WE DO THAT?

There was a time when the Lord said to Moses, "What is that in thine hand?" In other words, what can you offer? What are your natural abilities? These are immediately at hand and can be used to His glory. We may have time available; we may have influence, knowledge, money, training, experience, a hearing ear for the troubled, a capacity to comfort others — all qualities that can be used in the service of our Divine employer.

When Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord saying "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" he responded: "Here am I, send me" (Isa. 6:8), and there followed a lifetime of diligent labor for the Lord.

So it is incumbent upon us to work with whatever we have, in any department of the Divine service He sees fitting for us, in whatever place, at whatever cost, that we might share in the yet greater work of bringing blessings to all families of the earth in the age to come. What better reward could there be?





The Pentecostal Rest

Pentecost, the fiftieth day, was the Jubilee day, as the fiftieth year was the Jubilee year. The fiftieth day followed a Sabbath Day cycle ($7 \times 7 = 49$), as the Jubilee year followed a Sabbath Year cycle ($7 \times 7 = 49$). As the antitype of the Jubilee Year will usher the world into the glorious rest in Messiah's Kingdom and in the New Covenant relationship with God, so the antitype of the Jubilee day ushered believers into a rest of faith at Pentecost. So St. Paul explains, "We who believe do enter into rest." All truly Christ's are enabled to keep a Sabbath rest of faith and trust all the time, not merely on the Seventh Day, or on the First Day. Every day to them is a rest by faith in Christ's sacrifice—a Sabbath to the soul—foreshadow of Heavenly Rest.

None could enter into this true Sabbath rest, until Jesus had opened the way. His death was necessary as man's Ransom price. His resurrection was necessary to enable Him to apply that price on our behalf. He ascended on High, there to appear in the presence of God as the Advocate for His disciples. He imputes His merit to cover their imperfections, and to make their sacrifice acceptable to God, that they may suffer with Him and be glorified with Him. For the faithful there remaineth a rest, still more complete—to be attained in their resurrection "change."—Hebrews 4:3, 9, 11.

Under Jesus' direction, the Apostles, His followers, were not to begin their work until they received the Pentecostal blessing—the Holy Spirit—the evidence of their acceptance as sons of God. The only thing they did during that time before their own acceptance, was the choosing of a successor for Judas' place; but evidently God never recognized their choice. In His own due time God brought forth St. Paul to be the twelfth Apostle—one of the twelve foundation stones of the New Jerusalem. (Revelation 21:14.) The error of supposing Apostolic Succession in the Church's bishops was a costly one. It led to many grievous errors.

* The questions marked with an asterisk are especially for children.

LESSON 72

- 1* What does Pentecost mean? See Bible Dictionary. Par. 1
- 2* How was this fiftieth or Jubilee day calculated? The Jubilee year?
- 3 Explain the Jubilee cycles. Studies, Vol. 2, pages 180-186.
- 4* What will the antitypical Jubilee year usher in? The antitypical Jubilee day?
- 5* What does St. Paul say about believers?
- 6 What are those who are truly Christ's enabled to do?
- 7* Every day to them is a rest by faith in whose sacrifice?
- 8* Could any enter this Sabbath rest? If not, how could they enter? Par. 2
- 9* Why was Jesus' death necessary?
- 10* Why was His resurrection necessary?
- 11* What did He do when He ascended on High?
- 12* By imputing His merit to His disciples what did Jesus do for them?
- 13* Jesus' followers were not to begin their work until they received what? Par. 3
- 14 Before they received this Pentecostal blessing Jesus' followers chose who to be Judas' successor? Acts 1: 23-26
- 15* Who did God bring forth to be the twelfth Apostle?
- 16* What error regarding Apostolic Succession led to more grievous errors?

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BIBLE QUESTION & ANSWER

Question—Is Dec. 25 the date of Jesus’ birth? Do the Scriptures indicate that we should celebrate His birthday?

Answer—“Christmas Day,” in celebration of our dear Redeemer’s birth, has for many centuries and in many lands been observed on Dec. 25, but it is now well known that this date is incorrect, and that His birth occurred about Oct. 1 (see *The Time is at Hand*, pp. 54-62; also Bible Standard No. 265—a copy free on request—it gives also the exact time of His death and resurrection). The Dec. 25 date more properly corresponds with the date of the annunciation to Mary, nine months before Jesus’ birth.

The Scriptures give us no instructions whatever about celebrating Jesus’ birthday, though they do tell us to commemorate His death (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24). However, since we have no pertinent Scriptural instruction, and since it is proper to think good thoughts and do good deeds on any day, we do not understand it to be improper, in harmony with general usage, for us to remember in a special way our dear Redeemer’s birth at the Dec. 25 season, providing it is done in the proper attitude of appreciation of the Heavenly Father and His only begotten Son.

We do not see anything in the Scriptures that forbids the practice, held for centuries by Christian believers in many lands, of making Christmas Day a joyful one, by the interchange of little tokens of love in the family and among friends, and by giving to the poor, in remembrance of God’s great gift of love to all mankind, our beloved Savior Jesus (John 3:16; 2 Cor. 9:15). Through Him all of God’s gifts are promised and will be bestowed (2 Cor. 1:19, 20; Eph. 4:8). The sad part of the Christmas season is to see it so terribly and disgracefully abused and commercialized by selfish and ungodly people. Many have more or less taken Christ and His spirit of unselfish giving out of Christmas (or Christ’s festival) and have made it a season of selfish gift-trading, worldly pleasure and revelry, and even debauchery. Thus Christmas has to them lost more or less of its true and proper significance. Also, many parents by

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wrong instruction or lack of proper instruction have, to the detriment of their children, allowed Santa Claus more or less to take the place in their children’s minds and hearts that should be occupied only by God and Christ.

EVANGELIST SERVICES

- Michael Dukette**
 Pittsfield, MA, December, 9
Jesse Julien
 Springfield, MA, December, 2
Krzysztof Witko
 New Haven, CT, December, 16
Roger Mullen
 Carlstadt, MA, December, 16

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OUR LORD’S MEMORIAL 2019

March 19th after 6:00 p.m.