

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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ANNOUNCEMENT

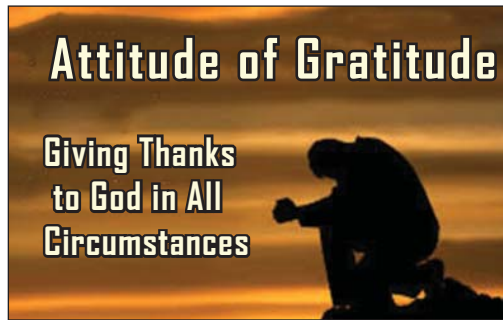
THANKSGIVING — A COMMON BOND

“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2).

During the holiday season mankind becomes very busy in gift-giving and making arrangements for fellowship with family and friends. This can create a lull in our dedicated time for the gifts given by the heavenly Father. As consecrated children we understand that prayer in thanksgiving is an evidence of God’s favor; and earnestness in God’s service will bring His children to Him frequently, to realize at His feet His sympathy with us in the difficulties, discouragements, and trials of life, as well as to ask His guidance and overruling of every affair of life, and through His Word to hearken to His wisdom which will enable them to serve Him acceptably.

The privilege of giving thanks to God and our close friends has long been valued in societies around the world. It has helped to cement the bonds which hold communities together; conversely, ungrateful behavior is generally deemed shameful and reprobate. Generally speaking, it seems to come naturally to human nature to feel grateful at some level, even if the feeling is not always voiced. The thankfulness to which we refer is that which arises from faith in the friendships we have with our loved ones, a trust that allows for the desire to give of ourselves in family gatherings when surrounded by the special memories of the past; also, God privileges us at that time to create new memories, and this brings a common bond of loving-kindness to the giver and the receiver.

Thanksgiving Day appeals to all of us, and we are glad that the Pilgrim Fathers many years ago started the custom. They placed it at the end of the harvest to celebrate successful crops, and probably the Indian’s generosity. The keeping of such a day appeals to all civilized mankind to a considerable degree. By adding to this joy some have come into fellowship with the Heavenly Father by faith, and are able to understand the joys of the righteous spoken of by David, “The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory” (Psa. 64:10). We come to value the guidance of His Word, the leading of the impulses of His Holy disposition



in us, His Spirit, and we learn to note the leadings of His Providence. Increasingly we appreciate the fellowship with those of like precious faith, deriving support and comfort from our association with them.

Jehovah in His graciousness invites us to also celebrate what is commonly called Christmas, a time

of special remembrance of our Lord’s birth. In this time of thanksgiving there are many for whom it remains a solemn, reverent and joyful occasion, and for whom the thoughts and desires of the heart are especially drawn to good family and spiritual matters, to meditation on God’s great expression of love for us in the sending to earth and sacrifice of Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Children and the young-in-heart of all ages in many places go out on Christmas Eve to sing for those nearby of the joys of knowing that Jesus came to earth and was born to save them from sin and death. Much Godly cheer is spread in this and other ways, and people who seldom get to speak to one another find in the Christmas season an opportunity to share the message of peace on earth and goodwill toward men.

During this wonderful time that has been set aside with the general principle of showing honor to Jehovah for His great gifts to man, we examine prayer as one of those, “continue in prayer.” *Petitional* prayer is the uttered or unuttered heart’s sincere desire, going out to God for good things. All of God’s consecrated children wish to receive an answer to our petitions! As called and chosen children we seek every opportunity to seek God’s guidance in our lives. Every trial of faith is an occasion for prayer for the promised hand of God to lead us in our cross-bearing. We pray in times of failure for forgiveness that the lesson of our own weakness may be deeply impressed so that in the next trial we may promptly apply for and lay hold upon the “grace to help” promised. Every service for the Truth becomes an occasion for a prayer of thanksgiving for another privilege to be in the presence of the Great King—let us use them wisely. Let us imitate our Lord in

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our prayer life as we are encouraged to do: “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

As true Christians, we should ever bear in mind that “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Pet. 2:21). If we follow carefully His leading, what a comfort it is to recognize His constant care as our Shepherd! The Christian should never view any of his experiences as being lucky or unlucky but should remember that all things concerning him, if he is living close to the LORD, are ordered and directed by Him. “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in His way” (Psa. 37:23). Be the way ever so thorny, narrow, and rocky, he knows God’s way is best.

This brings a question to every thoughtful mind. Does our Heavenly Father plan and arrange every little step, every little incident in our experiences? No, this would probably be an extreme thought. We are, however, assured that “the angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear (reverence) him, and delivereth them” (Psa. 34:7). Let us, then, strive more and more to see the LORD’S providence in all our affairs. Let us walk humbly and lovingly with Him, knowing that our steps are ordered by Him—not that everything we do, every step we take, is necessarily ordered by Him, even when it proves to be a misstep, but that the general course of a righteous man is under His supervision. God gives His angels, His messengers, charge over His people, “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone” (Psa. 91:11, 12). Real Christians, consecrated Christians, are guided by Jehovah.

CONTINUE IN PRAYER

The Christian who seeks to fight the good fight of faith in his own strength, no matter how watchful he may be, is sure to fail. The Captain of our Salvation assures us that His grace is sufficient for us—for His strength, His power, supplements our weakness, supplying whatever we lack toward overcoming. The more we trust in and ask for the assistance of His power, which never fails, the more sure we are of victory in our warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil. We can say with the Apostle Paul, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Cor. 12:9).

As consecrated Christians, we must ask if we are to receive God’s promises. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he

that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” (Matt. 7:7, 8; 21:22). The Lord assures us that “If ye *abide* in me [having come into Me by repentance, faith, and consecration, coming under My headship], and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you” (John 15:7). What a wonderful promise! But we must be sure that we fulfill these two conditions if we would obtain its reward. Abiding in Him, in full harmony with His will, and making sure that we are not asking contrary to His instructions, found in the Scriptures, we have the full assurance of faith that our prayers will be answered. “Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24). Some have not, because they ask not; and others ask, and receive not, because they ask amiss, that they may consume it upon their lusts—their fleshly desires (James 4:2, 3). We must be very careful to ask only in harmony with God’s will, purposes, plans, and arrangements. We must “abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Pet. 2:11).

There is power in prayer because prayer is the connecting link between our weakness and God’s infinite power, between our need and His abundant supply. Jesus gives us a wonderful assurance in Matt. 7:11: “If ye then, being evil [being imperfect, because of the fallen condition], know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” We note here the same two conditions mentioned above. First, we must be consecrated to God and abide under the headship of Jesus, for only those who have given themselves to God and abide in Jesus may truly call God their Father; and second, we should ask only for the “good things”—God’s holy Spirit and the things in harmony with it, which He is pleased to give (Luke 11:13). We must keep ourselves in the love of God (Jude 21) and our hearts fully in tune with Him if we would receive His blessings.



In every thing give thanks: for this is the will Of God in Christ Jesus concerning you

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Be assured of this: we can always reach God if we pray on His wavelength. When we pray selfish prayers, we are not

in tune with Him. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Also “God is love”; “he that loveth not knoweth not God”; but “he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him” (1 John 4:8, 16). God’s children who love Him with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30), who in their full devotion to Him love Him supremely and are one in Spirit in the Father and in the Son, even as the Father and the Son are one (John 17:17-23), and who are guided by and in full harmony with God’s Word and therefore would not ask for anything contrary to it or to God’s will as revealed in it—these indeed have an infinite source of supply for their needs, and a most precious relationship with the great God of the universe, Jehovah of hosts, and with His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3). “For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Psa. 84:11). If we are in tune with God and come to Him in Jesus’ name, our prayers will be answered (John 15:16). “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God” (2 Cor. 1:20).



THE SEVEN KINDS OF PRAYER

In a wide sense, prayer embraces invocation, praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, communion, and assurance. There are seven kinds of prayer, or seven features of prayer and none of them should be neglected. Yes, let us “offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay our vows unto the most High” (Psa. 50:14).

Prayer starts with an *invocation*, whereby we call upon God or upon Jesus. Ordinarily, the consecrated are to pray to the Father, though it is proper for them also to address our Lord Jesus in prayer (2 Thes. 3:1-5; Rev. 22:20, 21). Our Lord told us how to address God in prayer: “When ye pray, say, Our Father” (Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2). It draws us into a sensibility, a consciousness, of our wonderfully close relationship with our Heavenly Father to address Him in this manner. And what a precious relationship we have with Him!

Praising God for His many gifts also has a large part in our prayers. It assures Him of our proper appreciation of Him and our reverence for Him. It draws us extremely near to Him as we ponder the wonders of His mighty being, glorious character, and marvelous works. “Praise

ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely”—fitting and proper (Psa. 147:1). “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable” (Psa. 145:3).

Oh, the wonderful privilege of *thanksgiving*: “Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving” (Psa. 95:2; 100:4; 2 Cor. 9:11, 12). We have been given the privilege of seeking His counsel at our convenience, so let us then “In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil. 4:6).

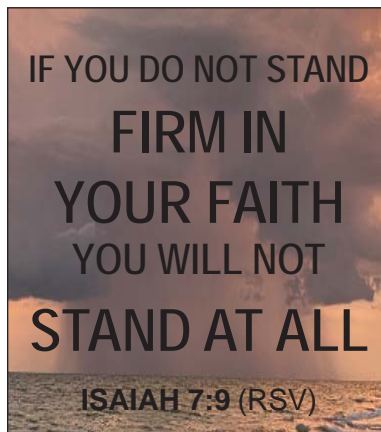
Confessional prayer is of extreme importance—in fact, it is basic to our fellowship with God. “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Prov. 28:13). Let us never take the position, as some do, that we have no need to seek the Father’s loving-kindness in confessing our faults before God or Jesus. Those who deny that they have any sins or faults, or who do not come to God through faith in Christ for forgiveness, have a great load of sins uncanceled, unforgiven, charged up against them; and because of this they (at least in a large measure) lose their fellowship with the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus and neglect to walk in “the paths of righteousness” (Psa. 23:3).

Petitional prayer is the uttered or unuttered heart’s sincere desire going out to God for good things in Jesus’ name, as explained in more detail above.

Communion with the Father and with the Son is a most precious form of prayer (1 John 1:3; 2 John 3). We have “fellowship” (Greek, *koinonia*—*partnership, participation, communion*) with Them in our common interests, in our unity of the Spirit with Them (John 17:21-23), in our intimate relation to Them, in our receiving manifold blessings from Them, and in our spiritual intercourse with Them. How graciously and lovingly He invites us to draw near to Him, assuring us that He will draw near to us! But we must come with pure hearts and clean hands (Psa. 24:3-5; James 4:8). Jehovah takes great delight in having a consecrated child call Him “Our Father” and enjoy His Fatherly care!

Our last and equally necessary prayer is that of *assurance*, and how precious is this privilege! In them, we remind ourselves of God’s gracious promises to us, as we claim them by faith. If we had no assurance in our prayers, they would

be empty indeed—we would not be praying in faith—believing. “And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water”—“the washing of water by the word” (Heb. 10:21, 22; Eph. 5:26).



Jesus gave us a wonderful example of the need of and the power of prayer, and His prayers illustrate its various forms, except confession of sin, for He had no sins to confess; but He did in His prayers acknowledge His dependence on God. All seven forms of

prayer do not necessarily occur in any one prayer. *E.g.*, only invocation, thanksgiving, and assurance occur in Jesus' prayer recorded in Matt. 11:25, 26; for here He thanked God with assurance that the Divine plan was for the understanding of the humble and meek only, and not for the understanding of those wise in their own esteem—the proud and the heady; and at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:41, 42) we see only these three elements, though this prayer implies that He had previously asked God for Lazarus' resuscitation. In His High-Priestly prayer in John 17, while there are invocation, petition, and assurance present, the largest part of it is communion with God. In all His prayers there was the spirit of submission, which we can see especially in His Gethsemane prayers. His oneness in spirit with God made it the most appropriate and natural thing for Him to pray. We may be sure that He prayed regularly in the mornings and evenings, at meals and at every other appropriate time; for always did His heart's sincere desires go out to God; and, as called for, they expressed themselves in words privately and publicly in ways appropriate to God and Christ.

My dear brethren, our faith is often put under special trial, and sometimes everything seems to go contrary to our own desires and expectations. Are we then able to trust God where we cannot trace Him? Are we able to walk by faith with Him when we cannot walk by sight? Have we put on and are we still fully equipped with the whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day (in which we are living), and having done all, to stand? (Eph. 6:13). Does Christ dwell in our hearts by *faith* and are we so well-rooted and built up in Him, and

so well established in the faith, as we have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving, that no man can spoil us through false philosophy and vain deceit? “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving” (Col. 2:6, 7 NKJ).

THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR

I am alive and able to enjoy Jehovah's Truth as due, because of the setbacks that have shaped me and made me stronger.

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.

The privilege of having a father and mother with good parenting skills, who set before us certain character-building traits that have developed us to what we are, consecrated Children of God.

Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you and give thanks continuously because of all the things that have contributed to your advancement; therefore, include all things in your gratitude.

Consider your blessings while taking a relaxing walk in the woods on a crisp Autumn day when the trees are filled with leaves of vibrant and spectacular colors. There is so much to be thankful for and how easy it is to take these beauties for granted!

We should keep in mind that when we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is manifested not by the words we utter but how we live by the words we speak. Just making yourself smile will lift your countenance. When you laugh you release a happy hormone; when we share experiences with others this hormone has been shown to be uplifting.

Oh, how grateful we are to wake up in the morning with another opportunity for reaching our consecrated goals in preparing for the kingdom blessings. Let all that you are: life, love and compassion inspire the hope of doing an act of kindness for everyone.

There is truly a lot of things to be grateful for, from simple things to life-changing things. It is just that sometimes they get overshadowed by our fears or negative thoughts. Let our greatest reminder of gratitude be at the beginning of every day, that as the day starts, We already have the most wonderful thing to be grateful for; God took the time to wake us up!

Let us embrace the words of a song published in 1897: Count your blessings, name them one by one. The last stanza supports our consecrated understanding: “So, amid conflict whether great or small, do not be discouraged, God is over all.”

THE SAME WITH THANKSGIVING

The expression of thanks has long been valued in societies around the world. It has helped to cement the bonds which hold communities together; conversely, ungrateful behavior is generally deemed shameful and reprobate. It seems to come naturally to human nature to feel grateful at some level, even if the feeling is not always voiced. For God’s promises, we are grateful; but this is not a selfish gratitude. God has promised to bless “all families of the earth” (Gen. 12:3), and for this we are grateful. We are grateful to a God who has so much goodwill toward fallen humanity that He gave His Son to rescue them from the curse of death.

One may ask how we can show our thankfulness to God for His many blessings to us. It has been said; service is gratitude in action! We show our thankfulness to God for His many blessings to us by our earnest activity for His cause and His people. This can be expressed in many ways. It may be by tract distribution, opening one’s home for Bible studies, witnessing to the sick or dying in hospitals, or simply fulfilling one’s daily obligations in a pleasant, conscientious manner. Gratitude can be a garment of the Christian’s character; thankfulness should be highly prized. Merely being grateful to God will improve our dispositions significantly. Our perspective on difficulties will be altered. We will be less prone to complain, more willing to help others in trouble. We will think less about our own needs and more about those of others. This, dear faithful ones in Christ, is 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? No, we give of every day 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.



Ephesians 6:10, 13, 17

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
... and take THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, which is THE WORD OF GOD.”

Take time to ponder! Often hidden from natural sight is a cornucopia of blessings. The natural man, therefore, cannot see them. Nor, perhaps, is it a horn of plenty which he would esteem as worth anything. But the eye of faith discerns it clearly and the heart of faith is moved to respond to the Giver—God Himself. So then, when we say “thank you” to God in our prayers, let us mentally enumerate the many things, too

many to count: “How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee” (Psa. 139:17, 18).

As children of light and subjects of Christ our Savior and King (1 Tim. 6:15), we have been walking from day to day and from year to year in the light of His countenance and of His Word, going on from knowledge to knowledge and from grace to grace. The old errors of ignorance and superstition have been gradually displaced with Truth and an intelligent faith in the pure Word of God, as we have learned more and more about His great plan of salvation for the Church and the world. And daily, as we are enlightened more and more by the Truth of God’s Word, we endeavor to bring ourselves more fully into subjection to our King; accordingly, having been delivered from the power of darkness, we grow more and more fully into conformity to the Divine likeness and favor in living life to its fullest with thanksgiving.

Spiritually, we have feasted on the bounties of Divine favor. Therefore, we can and do most heartily “Offer unto God thanksgiving” for past favors (Psa. 50:14). And we are to render unto God, not only 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—not that we are to invalidate the consecration (or dedication of our lives) that we originally made once for all (Rom. 12:1), which with some of us was done many years ago, but rather in the sense of reaffirming and reemphasizing that covenant. 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. Let us then proceed with studious care and diligence from day to day to pay our vows of full consecration unto the Most

High. Let us again follow the thoughts given in Dan. 4:37, “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment . . .” Do we see thanksgiving in these words?

As we review the past and with sorrow look at the imperfections of even our best efforts, and then look forward and see the lion-like difficulties that seem to obstruct our onward course, we will need greatly to reinforce our courage with the special promises of Divine grace to help in every time of need (Heb. 4:16). We are now living in the “time of the end” when “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased”; and ever since World War I broke out in 1914, we have been in it. “That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness” (Zeph. 1:15). The great Time of Trouble with which the present order of affairs among men—based on selfishness—is to end (e.g., Dan. 12:1, 4; Matt. 24:21). Conditions in human society have fallen deeper and deeper into degradation, and we see on every hand the fulfillment of prophecy concerning “the last days” (e.g., 1 Tim. 4:1, 2; Ezek. 7:19).



While living in this time and within a society that thrives in degradation, the fully-consecrated child of God has much reason to have and to offer thanksgiving to Jehovah! Those justified and consecrated believers have the Word of God explaining the need and purpose of this Time of Trouble, and we understand the promise of Matt. 24:21 just cited. With this knowledge we can embrace the words of Jude 17-19, “But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lust. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.” The world of mankind without knowing Jehovah and not understanding the great ransom price paid by His only begotten son (1 Tim. 2:4-6) live each day in fear, filled

with jealousy toward any who have found their place of rest in the arms of Jesus. The non-Christian world has declared war on Christians throughout the world!

Jehovah gives to the Christian believer Scripture that brings comfort and thanksgiving: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” (James 4:8); “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28); and “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa. 55:11). How grateful we are for these texts. Jehovah’s guarantee to the Christian believer is that He has a plan for His greatest creation, man.

Do we find ourselves blessed at this moment in time? Oh, greater than food on our table or money in our pocket are the blessings God gives to His own. In mercy and unrestricting generosity, the Heavenly Father has showered His love upon us. Yes all things are ours if we are Christ’s, and He is able “to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard” (Col. 1:22, 23).

As fully consecrated Christians acquainted with the Truth and its understanding we are specially favored; first, in that we have been delivered from the power of darkness; secondly, in that, we have been translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son; and thirdly, in that we are being made fit to be partakers in the joys of Christ’s Kingdom. While as aliens and foreigners, as pilgrims and strangers sojourning in the most enlightened and civilized lands of the earth, we are blessed with a large measure of temporal prosperity.

Let us not forget to thank God that the lines of His providence have fallen to us in such pleasant places, that civilized ideas have scattered the dense darkness of the ages past and that we are permitted to live amid spiritual enlightenment. What a blessing it is to be relieved from the superstitions which retard the progress of so many of our fellow human beings from advancement toward liberty, truth, morals, peace and prosperity; and how great are the temporal advantages arising from progressive ideas, general education, and personal liberty-advantages of peaceful home and family life, of comfortable dwellings and neat and convenient furnishings, of medical skill, of commercial enterprise, of religious freedom, and an

open Bible. What inestimable privileges are these! And yet we who enjoy them are only a minority of our present world population. The Christian lives each day to the fullest in honor of God's outpouring of love.

Non-Christians make prayers to stone statues or travel for days to the site of Muhammad's birth and first revelation in Mecca making offerings to a dead leader. Not so for the Consecrated Child of God! The Christian recognizes the privilege of working out his salvation with joy and rejoicing each day of his life with the hope of being granted life everlasting in God's Kingdom. To increase this privilege the Christian is privileged to pray to a *Living Christ!*

Let us appreciate the temporal favors more and more and use them to the greater honor of God. And while we realize the inability of our own efforts to lift the shroud of darkness, ignorance, and superstition from the rest of the world, let us rejoice in the coming kingdom of

**KEEP ON
PRAYING
AND GUARD
YOUR PRAYERS
WITH
THANKSGIVING**
Colossians 4:2

light and peace, and the rising of the Sun of Righteousness—which in due time will scatter all the gloom. And let us further consider that our present vantage point is not ours because God is a respecter of persons, but because He is preparing us to have part in His great plan for blessing all the families of the earth. As He prepared an Eden, an oasis in the great world-desert, to be a suitable place for Adam and Eve, so He has prepared certain places and conditions for the development and discipline of His special people, not an Eden, however, but places and conditions where civilized life can be carried on, and where the general enlightenment may be used for either good or evil.

May all be richly blessed in this season of joyful thanksgiving, keeping always in their hearts the good news of the Kingdom, rejoicing in God's precious free gift of salvation made possible through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! "He [God] spoke and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Psa. 33:9).

DO YOU HAVE THE JESUS' SPIRIT?

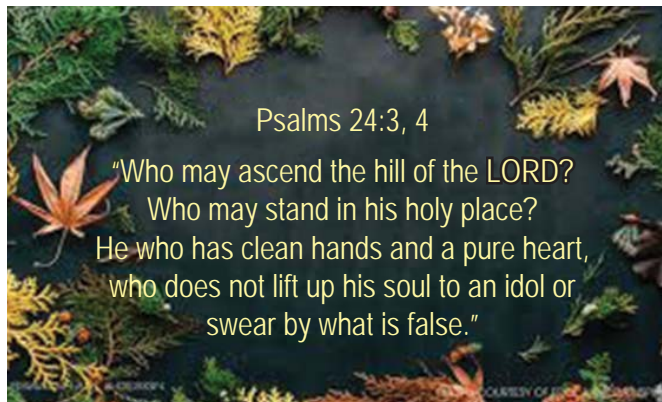
"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1 Thes. 5:15).

When the Samaritans refused lodging for our Lord and His company, the Apostles James and John, in their loving zeal for the Master, said: "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" But Jesus rebuked them, saying, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them" (Luke 9:54-56).

These words are to be the guide of all our Lord's followers today, as well as in the past. We are not to render evil for evil, nor slander for slander, but, to the contrary, we are to speak kindly, lovingly, generously, of those who, as foretold, will say all manner of evil against us falsely for Christ's sake because we are His servants and representatives. And the more prominent our position, the more hostile will be their attacks. If we can remember that they are deluded and that the attacks are really from the Adversary, it will help us to feel kindness and pity toward them, instead of malice and hatred.

It is just as true today as ever that "your adversary, the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." It is just as necessary today as ever that we "Resist him, steadfast in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:8, 9). If from time to time in the past he has assaulted the Truth and all who have sought to be faithful to it, what reason have we for supposing that he would be less on the alert or less aggressive now? On the contrary, our expectation is that

the battle for right, for Truth, will wax hotter and hotter. We are to expect that, having failed to gain the victory over the Little Flock and the Great Company, Satan will with renewed energy lie in wait and attack the non-Spirit-begotten consecrated, primarily the Youthful Worthies and Consecrated Epiphany Campers, especially those in the Epiphany Truth as due here in the Epiphany period in its wider sense. This is also the first lapping beginning of the Basileia period; he hopes to defeat our Lord's purpose and plan of accomplishment in these classes. It is still true that only the faithful and courageous overcomers will stand the testing of this evil day (Eph. 6:11-18).



Psalms 24:3, 4

*"Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?
Who may stand in his holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to an idol or
swear by what is false."*

We will not become discouraged if we continue to trust in the gracious promise of our Lord, that greater is He that is for us than all that are against us (1 John 4:4). “Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully” (Psa. 24:3, 4 NKJ). If one’s life is not honest, if his conduct is not clean, if his conscience is not void of offense toward God and man, if he has sought to exalt himself in the eyes of others, if he has done despite to the spirit of favor and if he has despised or ignored his covenant of consecration to lay down self-will and to accept only God’s will in all things, he should not expect to receive the Master’s “Well done, good and faithful servant.” His only hope is in repentance and in mending his ways before it is too late.

St. Paul called particular attention to “perils among false brethren” in our day, especially pointing us to the heady and high-minded ones (2 Tim. 3:1-9), and telling us that “of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:30). Let us, then, not think it strange, but be on the alert to resist such besetments. It is surely a fact that those who once enjoyed the light of present Truth and have left it seem thereafter more deficient of decency, reasonableness, honesty, manhood, and womanhood than do many worldly people and brethren who have never seen the Truth. One might know in many cases how to calculate on what a worldly foe might do or say or insinuate, for they would likely have limits beyond which they would not think of going, but as for these false brethren, who once had the Holy Spirit and then lost it, there is no calculating what they may do or say, how much they may misrepresent or what unfair advantages they may take. Expecting such assaults, we need not be disconcerted, but should rather remember that “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked but he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him” (Psa. 32:10).



We are not to have any spirit of vengeance or retaliation. As our text tells us, we are not to render evil for evil

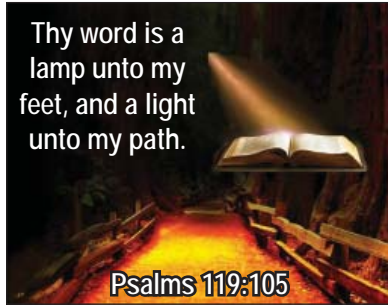
unto any man. Our Lord tells us to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44). The basis of this instruction is evidently that our characters may be developed. Retaliation is a natural element of the imperfect mind and particularly of the fallen mind—the fleshly mind. The more selfish we are, the more inclined we will be to render evil for evil, slander for slander, blow for blow. Our spirit is to be the very reverse: “Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” “Whoever slaps you on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matt. 5:39).

But does our Heavenly Father love His enemies? Yes. The world is at enmity against God, and yet He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to die for the world. But we do not suppose that God has a love for Satan, though at first, prior to Lucifer’s entering into his wrong course, God did have a love for him. But since he has become a wicked, vicious character, God’s great adversary, it would be wrong for God to love him, and it would be wrong for us to love him. Even the worldly condition we must not love. We cannot serve God and Mammon. We must not love sin, but rather “abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good”; nor are we to be overcome of evil, but we are to “overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:9, 21). The Spirit of the Lord is not one of evil surmising or evil speaking. “Love thinks no evil” (1 Cor. 13:5).

In loving our enemies we should endeavor to help them in so far as they are helpable, but when they show themselves to be determined to follow their wrong course, and seem to be more or less incorrigible, we should leave them in God’s hands, for Him to deal with them as He sees best—but we should have no ill will against them. We may have to expose “their pernicious ways,” their errors, etc., in order to protect the Lord’s sheep from their deceptions, but we should not indulge in lengthy harsh criticism and forbidden evil speaking. Only when necessary would the Spirit of the Lord, and faithfulness to Him and His own, cause us to relate an evil (July 14 Manna) and identify the errors with the person teaching them, even as the Apostle shows in connection with Hymenaeus, Philetus and Alexander, all false teachers in the church of Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17).

In harmony with the Lord’s Spirit, Bro. Russell stated (R881): “We claim no liberty to deal with the personal affairs, or the private character, of any of our contemporary editors, but we do claim the fullest liberty to criticize their public teachings, and we accord to them the same liberty.

And while we would not harm them personally, but rather do them good, we will use our best endeavors to knock to pieces, and show up to God's children their sophistries."



Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalms 119:105

May we all, as God's dear children, follow the noble example of our Lord, the Apostles, the Parousia and Epiphany Messengers, and others, in loving our enemies; let us be careful not

to render evil for evil, particularly while we are earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3); let us hate and strongly resist sin and error, but never seek to do harm to the sinner or the errorist; let us follow that which is good among ourselves, and to all men.

As Bible Students we much prefer to discuss doctrines rather than persons; however, at times it seems absolutely to the interest of the Lord's Flock to identify persons with false teachings. It may sound harsh to some; however, adjustment of matters and siftings are a large part of the work Jehovah requires to be done among His chosen people; YES, God requires a proven people!

Our Great Jehovah has set in place progressive arrangements for the distribution of His Word. When we hear the word *change*, we find our mind and nervous system come to attention! We hear this thought "if it's not broke don't fix it." However, times are changing and if one continues to do the same thing, one must expect to have the same result! The LORD expects us to make progress in our Christian walk as indicated by Psa. 119:105. The Truth and its arrangements must move forward, so proper teaching and leadership are available to the class that God is dealing with. The standby text for this thought is Prov. 4:18 "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." This burden of properly identifying those teaching error (sifters) sets in the hands and hearts of the prominent earthly



But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Proverbs 4:18

class, Consecrated Epiphany Campers, at this time. We are of the understanding that our primary work is to send out the light of Constructive Advancing Truth and secondly to maintain the arrangements set forth by our founders.

THE EASY YOKE

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30).

The yoke—a wooden frame used to couple oxen together at their necks—is a symbol of subjection [one that is placed under authority or control] and servitude [a condition of having to obey another]. All in the world are under yokes of some kind, political yokes, financial or business yokes, social yokes, yokes of appetite, habit, selfishness and sin of all kinds.

The man under the political yoke finds it a very hard one. He is busy day and night, planning, scheming and working for office. He diligently studies all the arts of worldly policy to gain and keep the friendship of voters. He spends much time, money and thought, and concentrates much energy upon the risky business of seeking office; if he eventually gains the position he seeks, it almost always brings a multitude of cares and exposes him to a host of enemies in the opposing party or parties, who usually are ready to blacken his reputation at the slightest provocation.



IF WE SOW MONEY & LUST

WE'LL UPROOT GOD & LOVE

1 Timothy 6:8-10

Those under the financial or business yokes are similarly oppressed. They labor long and hard; they scheme, plan, contrive, fret and worry to be rich, and in so doing fall into a snare that robs them of the true happiness, which earthly riches cannot bring, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:8-10).

Those under the social yoke labor hard and sacrifice much in meeting the demands of society upon them. Few in the humbler walks of life know how galling this yoke on the rich really is, and particularly upon those who are vying with others in better circumstances. Women often wear themselves out in this unsatisfying service, while husbands and fathers are driven to despair and ruin, trying to keep up with the financial drain.

The yokes of appetite, habit, selfishness and sin of every kind are indeed hard yokes, and their burdens are truly heavy. To shake off all yokes and free ourselves from all burdens is impossible in this evil day. Satan, the prince of this world, has already imposed upon all the yoke of sin in various forms. And there is none able to bring deliverance from this yoke and its binding fetters but Christ, who will deliver all who come unto Him by repentance and faith.



Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: (Isaiah 26:3,4)

While it is the purpose of Christ ultimately to set all such free from every yoke and to release them from every burden, He sees that they are not yet able to exercise and enjoy the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and so by way of discipline and training, He purposes to bring them into that condition. It is therefore necessary that those who would now be delivered from the galling yokes of sin and of the present general order of things, fully submit themselves to Christ—that they take His yoke upon them. And He invites all who have come to feel the discomfort of other yokes and the weight of other burdens, to come unto Him for release and rest.

In tender sympathy for all the oppressed and sorrowing ones, He says, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you,” *etc.* Millions have responded to His kind invitation, and they testify in no uncertain terms to the ease of Christ’s yoke and the blessedness of His promised rest. And yet this rest is not one of general temporal prosperity and of freedom from care, toil and all restraint.

To take Christ’s yoke upon us is to become a yoke-fellow with Him, and to patiently walk with Him. The yoke is a symbol of servitude, and whoever submits to the yoke thereby submits to the will and direction of another and quietly plods on for the accomplishment of an appointed task. This our Lord Jesus did in willingly submitting His will to the will of the Heavenly Father. God did not impose the yoke upon Him, nor does He impose it upon anyone. Jesus cheerfully took it and patiently bore it; and even though it cost Him the deepest humiliation, He did not esteem it a menial service but delighted to do God’s will (Psa. 40:8; Heb. 10:7).

The invitation to us, then, is to be yoked together with Christ, in the same service and under the same Master. He assures us that His yoke is easy and His burden is

light. But we cannot be yoked with Christ unless we have His Spirit. Two that are yoked together must of necessity be of one mind (Amos 3:3), and that which causes the yoke to rest lightly upon us is our cheerful endurance, which does not chafe under that yoke or try to get away from it, but delights to bear it in view of the end to be gained, as well as the communion and fellowship with a true yoke-fellow, one of like mind.

What a blessed invitation, to come under the same yoke with Christ! And what an excellent opportunity to learn the way in which our Heavenly Father would have us walk! How, indeed, could we miss the way when yoked in with such a Leader! From Him we learn the way; in our fellowship with Him we catch His blessed Spirit. We learn of that meekness which despises no humiliation, however great, and which not only is contented and happy in any situation but is always rejoicing in the privilege of treading the way, as well as in the hope of attaining its glorious end. And we find rest unto our souls—rest from the vain ambitions and fruitless plans and works which other taskmasters would enforce upon us. Oh that all who labor under other yokes and are heavily burdened would cast them off and learn with what ease and delight they can wear the yoke of Christ!

EXAMPLES OF LIGHT BURDENS

However, in viewing the Apostle Paul’s experience, few would say that Christ’s yoke on his shoulders was an easy yoke, or that the burden of Christ’s work which he bore was a light one. But evidently Paul thought so, for he counted it an inestimable privilege to endure hardness (to suffer affliction) as a good soldier for Christ’s sake. He joyfully suffered the loss of all things and counted them but dross, that he might win Christ and be found in Him. He rejoiced to be made a partaker of Christ’s sufferings that he might also share with Him in His glory and in the blessed work of His Kingdom (Phil. 3:7-11).

Blessed work! Paul gloried in the prospect of such a future mission, and to manifest his readiness of mind for it, he zealously and energetically devoted his life to self-denying service in harmony with the Divine Plan. He gladly took Christ’s yoke upon himself: he did not attempt to guide himself, but humbly placed himself under subjection to Christ and obediently followed His guidance wherever it led him—whether to prison and the

stocks, or to ignominious public beatings and stoning that left him almost dead, or to shipwreck and perils on land as well as sea, or among heathen enemies and false brethren, or to wearying labor and painful toil, *etc.* And yet Paul counted this burden of Christ a light one, and His yoke an easy yoke; he spoke of his trials as light afflictions, and said he rejoiced in tribulations (2 Cor. 4:15-18; 7:4-7; Rom. 5:3-5). Even with lacerated backs and feet fast in the stocks in the depths of a miserable dungeon, Paul and Silas rejoiced and sang praises to God (Acts 16:22-25).

War Against Satan Is Mental

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. . . . We demolish arguments and pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

2 Corinthians 10:3, 5 (NIV)



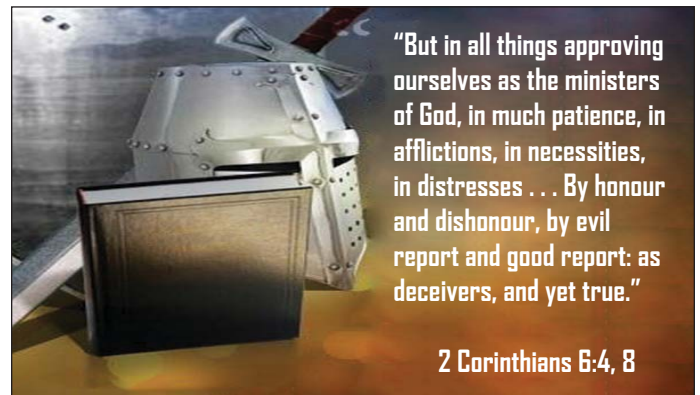
The Apostle James (James 1:2, 3) exhorted his yoke-fellows, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [various trials]; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience,” *etc.* The Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 1:8) said of his yoke-fellows, “Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” St. Stephen had the same rest and joy even while his enemies were stoning him to death. And thousands more of God’s saints can testify to the same thing—even in the midst of poverty, sickness, affliction, temptation, and enemies on every hand, and even in the flames of violent persecution.

From where does this rest come? And how are rest and even joy compatible with such conditions? This rest is the rest of a mind that trusts in Jehovah—“Thou

wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isa. 26:3). “He that is entered into his [God’s] rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his” (Heb. 4:10). No one can know the blessedness of this rest until he has experienced it. And no one can realize its great value until he has been put to the tests of affliction.

Our Lord gives the key to this rest in His words, “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” Truly, in a meek and humble spirit is the secret of rest. The development of meekness is the cultivation of the graces of teachableness, leadableness, peace, long-suffering, mild and loving submission to the will of God, abiding confidence in His love and care and in the wisdom of His guiding counsel and overruling providence. This grace of meekness continues to be shown as this course is cheerfully persevered in through evil or good reports and through favorable or unfavorable circumstances (2 Cor. 6:4, 8).

Let us who claim to be God’s children seek more and more to copy Christ’s meek and quiet spirit. Like Him, let us accept the providence of God and obey His precepts and leading, being armed with the strength which He alone can and will supply to all those who take His yoke upon themselves and learn of Him.



“But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses . . . By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true.”

2 Corinthians 6:4, 8

SPIRITUAL LIVING

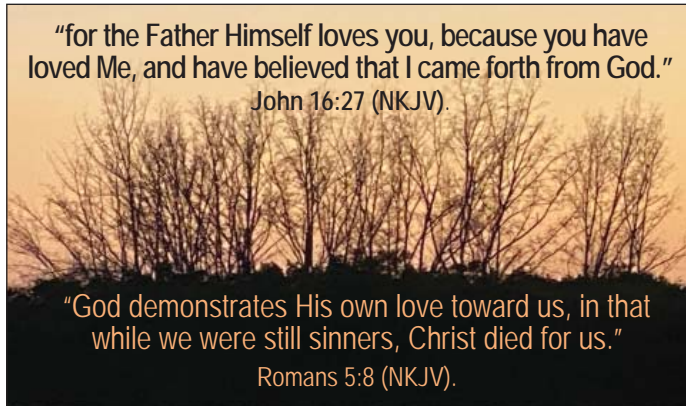
“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple” Psa. 27:1, 4.

The inspired Psalmist in loftiest strains of devotion and fervor puts into the hearts and minds of God’s consecrated people sentiments of faith, trust, love and adoration to God, who is worthy of all praise. While many of these sentiments were based upon his own checkered experiences, they were uttered under Divine inspiration, especially for the instruction and edification of the true spiritual Israel of God. The Lord Himself would indicate
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to us the sentiments of fervent devotion to Him that should fill our hearts and in this view of the matter we see how closely He would draw us to Himself in love, faith and childlike confidence.

While reason and common sense have their rightful place and are indispensable to a religious life, the soul that never mounts upon the wings of holy and fervent emotion, and that is never stirred to its depths by a sense

of the Divine goodness and beneficence, has never yet experienced the blessedness of the relation of sonship. A true son of a beloved and approving father naturally experiences the fervor of tender emotion. Especially is this so of a true son of God who recognizes in his Heavenly Father the perfection of every grace, the crowning glory of all excellence, and who lives in close communion and fellowship with Him and has the constant witness in himself of God's love and approval.



Ah, those were no empty words of our blessed Lord Jesus when He said, "The Father himself loveth you." "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 16:27; 14:23). It is under such conditions that all these holy emotions of love, tenderness, faith, gratitude and praise fill to the brim our cup of joy and with holy ecstasy we sing, "... my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever" (Psa. 23:5, 6).

How full of the melody of fervent emotion, of grateful praise, and of loving confidence are the inspired Psalms! They bid our hearts rejoice and our tongues be glad, and they show us how, by meditating on His Word and obeying His precepts, to "Rejoice in the Lord always"; and "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (Phil. 4:4; 1 Thes. 5:18).

It was in view of the Lord's providences and of David's many deliverances from the power of his enemies, and of the uniform kindness and mercy of God as he meditated upon them, that he exclaimed, in the words of our text, "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" This consolation, variously expressed throughout the Scriptures, comes with all its blessed potency in our times of greatest need: the more desperate and determined the foes we encounter, and the more fierce the conflict with the powers of darkness, the more glorious is the deliverance, and the clearer are the

manifestations of Divine grace. And, as a consequence, faith takes deeper root, and with renewed confidence and assurance lays hold upon all the precious promises of God and love and gratitude well up from hearts refreshed with an increased sense of the Divine favor and blessing.

So, it was with David and so it is with God's *faithful* people who lead a life of prayer, faith and close fellowship with God. Such fellowship with God in adversity and in prosperity naturally tends more and more to center the heart's affections and desires in God, until the one thing supremely desired and sought after is that expressed by the Psalmist in v. 4 of our text, namely, to dwell continually in the house of the LORD, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple.

To dwell continually in the House of the LORD signifies to be continually counted worthy to be recognized of God as among His elect, "whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:6). Those who hold fast their faith, and by faith overcome the allurements and temptations of the world, dying daily to its spirit, hopes and ambitions, and living more and more unto God, shall indeed dwell in the House of the LORD forever. Now they dwell with God in consecration and by and by they will dwell with Him in His Kingdom.

"To behold the beauty of the LORD" is to behold the beauty of holiness, to have this image of His glory ever before the mind's eye as our inspiration, our light, our guide, our pattern and our chief joy. Here indeed is the Christian's secret of a happy life—not that he works himself up to a pitch of nerve excitement or indulges in a frenzy of *emotionalism* and under its spell does things quite foreign to the spirit of sobriety (Rom. 12:3; Titus 2:12; 2 Tim. 1:7), but that he is happy in the midst of whatever may come to him of affliction or pain or loss or perplexity or whatever experiences come through the checkered scenes of this present life. To really behold the beauty of the LORD is possible to those only who dwell in His House, for only to such does He reveal Himself; "He is altogether lovely, And the fairest of ten thousand," (From Hymn entitled "Altogether Lovely" by Wendell Loveless). Only such know how to appreciate the beauty of His holiness, only such can delight themselves in Him—in continual meditation on His law, and in conforming their lives to it.

"To inquire in his temple" signifies that those who are truly of His House are inquirers, students of His holy law and testimony, and that their delight is in so doing. The language of their hearts is, "O, how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day"; "I have meat to eat that ye

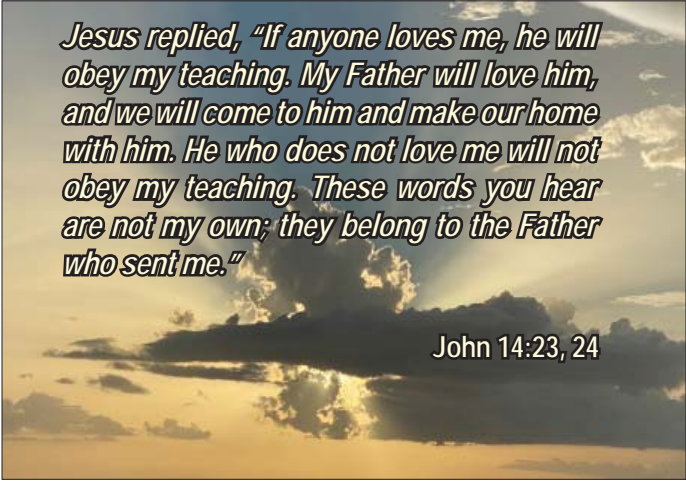
know not of.” for “I delight to do thy will, O my God” (Psa. 119:97; 40:8; John 4:32).

This one desire is the sum and substance of the Christian’s ambition as more and more he becomes dead to self and the world and alive toward God. Let us more and more seek after it and conform to it, for in so doing, Christian courage, boldness, fortitude and zeal will be greatly multiplied. These all are not only born of faith, but they increase and grow strong by a living faith developed and strengthened by the lessons of experience.

Courage born of faith and strengthened by endurance cries with humble boldness in the midst of the deepest darkness of the most perplexing difficulties, and in the midst of the wildest storms and most threatening dangers, “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid” (Psalm 27:1)?

The Apostle Paul surely caught this blessed inspiration when he said, “Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.”; “Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil. 4:4, 6). Mark how throughout the Word of God we are taught, not only to be sober, vigilant, diligent, thoughtful,

prayerful, and always to be abounding in the work of the Lord through whatever it may bring of toil or care or reproach or persecution, but also in the midst of any or all of these experiences to be happy and to be filled with the inspiration of a holy joy. And not only are we counseled to be joyous, but the manner of life which naturally produces this joy is pointed out to us. When we come into the Lord’s family we enter a new and holy atmosphere which those only can realize and appreciate who have the one desire above referred to paramount to every other—namely, to be counted worthy to abide in the Lord’s House.



Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

John 14:23, 24

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

My dear Friends and Brethren in the promises that God has given to those that Love Him. As we look back on the years of training in the Word of Truth, we can see God’s hand leading the movement through this and other transition times. We at the Bible House Headquarters desire to express our grateful thanks for all those who have been or will be made strong by Constructive Advancing Truth as due and can rest comfortably in the Truth as given in God’s word.

As God’s Consecrated Children we are privileged to have the covering of the robe of Christ’s righteousness—Yes, we can, “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (Psa. 29:2). Oh, God’s glory is the result of His nature and acts. He is glorious in His character, for there is such a store of everything that is holy, and good, and lovely in God, that He must be glorious. The actions which flow from His character are also glorious; but while He intends that they should manifest to His creatures His goodness, and mercy, and justice, He is equally concerned that the glory associated with them should be given only to Himself. What have we that we did not

receive from the God of all grace? How careful we must be to walk humbly before the LORD!

God invites all the righteous to give unto the LORD all glory and strength; give unto Him the honor that is due unto His name. Yet it is, perhaps, one of the hardest struggles of the Christian life to learn this sentence: “Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be glory.” It is a lesson which God is ever teaching us and teaching us sometimes by most painful discipline.

We cannot improve on the Apostle Paul as he gives Jehovah’s expression in Eph. 6:10 to be an encouragement to us: “Finally, My Brethren, be strong in the LORD, and in the power of His might.” By faith in God and in His promises, we can become strong in character and we can do this through faithfulness to the vows of consecration. Let us as Consecrated Epiphany Camper hopefuls lift our hands to say: “Here am I LORD; send me!”

Bro. Leon Snyder

May the celebration of our Lord’s birth bring joy to our hearts, and His blessing be with us in the coming year!



THE HOLY (?) INQUISITION

Catholics and Protestants are inclined to call the doings of the Inquisition very unholy. Facing the facts charitably, we remember that it belonged to a less favored day. With enlightenment, thank God, has come a keener sense of the Justice and Love which Jesus inculcated: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake."—Matthew 5:44; Mark 13:13; Luke 6:27.

The Law given Israel at Mt. Sinai expressed merely Justice in its command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." How seriously indeed portions of God's Word were overlooked in the persecutions of the Inquisition! Not only was there no love nor sympathy, but Justice in every sense of the word was violated. Thank God for the light of a better day!

There is in the human heart a treacherous disposition to do evil, if only an excuse for it can be found. As the Jews found an excuse for crucifying Jesus, stoning Stephen, etc., so the Inquisitors found an excuse for their persecutions. Like Saul of Tarsus, they thought they did God service. Matters have changed greatly, but persecution is still practiced along different lines—ostracism, slander, boycotting. The Bible refers to this, saying, "Your brethren which cast you out said, The Lord be glorified! But He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."—Isaiah 66:5.

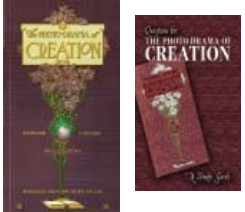
The mob spirit, the lynching spirit, is but a less legal form of "The Holy Inquisition." A Chicago Methodist Episcopal minister, angered at Prof. Farson, is quoted by the Indianapolis News and the New York Tribune as saying: "If I had the power I would skin that man, salt his hide and tack it on a barn door." The secular editor of the News says, "If such a violent outbreak was made by one who preaches the Gospel of Peace, what may we not expect from the sons of Belial?"

Evidences multiply that the mob spirit, the Inquisition spirit is growing. All should be on guard.

LESSON 84

- 1* Who are inclined to say that the Inquisition was very unholy? Par. 1
- 2* What should we remember about that time?
- 3 What has brought about a keener sense of Justice and Love?
- 4* Did Jesus tell us how to treat our enemies? Matt. 5: 44
- 5* What did the Law given Israel at Mt. Sinai express? Par. 2
- 6* Were portions of God's Word overlooked in the persecutions of the Inquisition?
- 7* Was there any love, sympathy or Justice?
- 8* What can we thank God for today?
- 9 What kind of disposition is there in the human heart? Par. 3
- 10* Who did the Jews find an excuse to crucify? To stone?
- 11* Did the Inquisitors find an excuse for persecuting others?
- 12* Who were they like in thinking they did God's service?
- 13* Do we receive persecutions today and if so along what lines?
- 14* What does the Bible say regarding this? Isa. 66: 5
- 15* What is a less legal form of "The Holy Inquisition"? Par. 4
- 16 Is the mob spirit, the Inquisition spirit, growing? Par. 5

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



If you have enjoyed this series of studies from "THE PHOTO DRAMA OF CREATION," you may wish to purchase the book and its accompanying study guide prepared with questions for both adults and children. We have a new shipment of these books in an attractive soft-cover binding.

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TO:

**BIBLE STANDARD MINISTRIES
 CONVENTIONS**

**CINCINNATI, OH CONVENTION
 OCTOBER 23, 24, 25, 2020**

CANCELLED

Due to the coronavirus epidemic, Bible Standard Ministries [LHMM] along with the Cincinnati Ecclesia has made the difficult decision to cancel the last convention in 2020.

Let us not forget that it is our duty to obey the laws of man. But we also have the law of God to consider. The Scriptures do teach in Heb. 10:25 that "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

We encourage those brethren, where it is reasonably possible, to meet with their local class brethren following the governments CDC guidelines of social distancing and number of people allowed per gathering (each state is different). Those who can safely meet and have studies will be blessed and uplifted with the personal fellowship of meeting with those of like precious faith.

We are very much looking forward to resuming our conventions; in the meantime study to show thyself approved, and trust in the Lord with all your heart!

May we continue to rejoice in the Lords plan and His providence .

GOD has not given us
 a spirit of **fearfulness**
 but of **POWER** and of
Love and of a
SOUND MIND

2 Timothy 1:7

The Year Before Us

Standing at the portal of the opening year,
 Words of comfort meet us, hushing every fear;
 Spoken through the silence by our Father's voice,
 Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.
 Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
 For His Word shall never, never pass away.

"I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid;
 I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed.
 Yea, I will uphold thee with Mine own right hand;
 Thou art called and chosen in My sight to stand."
 Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
 For His Word shall never, never pass away.

For the years before us, oh, what rich supplies!
 For the poor and needy, living streams shall rise;
 For the sad and mournful, shall His grace abound;
 For the faint and feeble, perfect strength be found.
 Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
 For His Word shall never, never pass away.

He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
 His eternal covenant He will never break;
 Resting on His promise, what have we to fear?
 God is all-sufficient for the coming year.
 Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
 For His Word shall never, never pass away.

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