

The
PRESENT TRUTH
 and
Herald of Christ's Epiphany

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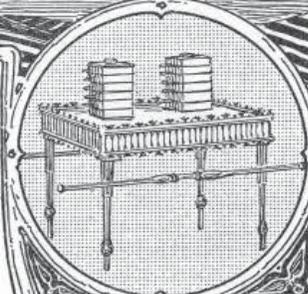
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"The Lamb opened the seventh seal." "Ye have approached Mount Zion, and the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. . . See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh . . . saying . . . 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven' . . . Wherefore, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." "Christ being come an High Priest . . . by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle . . . obtained eternal deliverance."—Rev. 8: 1; Heb. 12: 22, 25, 26, 28; 9: 11, 12.



Constructive Advancing Truth regarding the One True Church.

(In its narrow and broad view.)

*“The promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off,
even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:39);*

“Keep yourselves in the Love of God” (Jude 21);

*“Surely the Lord God will do nothing [in the outworking of his plan]
but he revealed his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).*

There are many Scriptures that apply only to the Little Flock, such as those promising immortality, the Divine nature, joint-heirship with Christ, a place in the Throne and membership in the Bride, the Royal Priesthood, etc. Also there are many Scriptures that point directly or primarily to the Little Flock, but also have an indirect and secondary application, as well as an application in principle, to others of the Lord’s faithful servants. To recognize this is to rightly divide the word of Truth.

Primarily speaking, the church (ecclesia) refers to the Little Flock, the Body of which Christ is the Head. But we have learned in our studies that the word ecclesia has a more general and expanded meaning — those called out from the world, the chosen and faithful lovers of righteousness, fully consecrated to God.

The scriptures also refer to a false church (Rev. 2:9; 3:9). This too has a primary meaning (the counterfeit christ) and also a more general meaning — blind, practicer of unrighteousness (wherein most of the world resides).

So there is *the* True Church, a small company of which Christ is the Head, and also the *True* Church Expanded or broader view. This generates the question: are we (Consecrated Epiphany Camper hopefuls) among the false church, or are we among those called out and separated for God’s use here in the Expanded Gospel Age? We answer the latter! There are many evidences that the great Jehovah continues to call out from the world, more consecrated classes that are a part of His True Church. The Father draws to the Son for “justification by faith in his blood” those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, and are feeling after God (John 6:44).

Our study of this subject now progresses to the characteristics of this True Church, how God has advanced the Truth regarding His Church and supported with pertinent references found in the Truth literature and backed by Scriptural references.

Its Spiritual Beginning

The major portion of the New Testament consists of written addresses to the Lord’s people, and each Epistle shows great order and ability in presenting the Truth logically and forcefully. The Book of Acts, however, contains records of several preached discourses, among which none are more interesting than the one now before us for consideration.

Apparently the eleven Apostles had been talking to little groups of people, here and there, as they came together after hearing of the miraculous manifestation of Divine



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Free from all sects, parties, organizations, and creeds of men, but bound to God as it understands His Word, this magazine stands for —

- The defense of the Parousia Truth, given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as basic for all further development of the Truth;
- The defense of the arrangements, charter and will given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as binding on controlling corporations and associations among Truth people; and for
- The exposition and defense of the unfolding Epiphany-Basileia Truth, as meat in due season for the Lord’s people, as He is pleased to provide it.

power in connection with the Pentecostal blessing. The Apostles may have spoken each in a distinctly separate dialect and were heard by different groups of different tongues; or maybe they spoke in one tongue and were miraculously heard and understood in different tongues by their different hearers. We are not informed which, but the miracle would be about equally great either way, and the result the same (PT '89, p. 34).

Waiting for the power from on high, the eleven apostles, and with them apparently a considerable number of believers (possibly 120, Acts 1:15), were rewarded with the blessing of Pentecost. They were “with one accord in one place,” perhaps having been expecting the blessing during the preceding nine days of their assembling. But Pentecost being a specially holy day, it may have appeared probable to them that it would bring the consummation of their hopes, so with one accord or agreement the full number were all present at the time. There is a thought here respecting the propriety of the Lord’s people being at one, or in accord, in respect to the things they are seeking for and waiting for. It is to this end that the Lord has exhorted us through the Apostle, that we forget not the assembling of ourselves together, and so much the more as we see the day drawing near—not the day of Pentecost, but a still greater and grander day. While Pentecost brought merely the first fruits of the Spirit, the day we wait for is the day of consummation of all our hopes and all of God’s promises (BS '92, p. 41).

We cannot all come together in the literal sense, as did the apostles and the early church at Pentecost, but we can come together in one place in another sense. We can come into the consecrated condition of heart and of life, and into oneness and fellowship with the Lord, and with all who are in the same holy condition, partakers of the same blessing of the inner light. Our natural dispositions are various, their crooks and twists different, but our new minds are one, enlightened by the same Father, through the same spirit. We are to seek accord, and are to restrain, mortify and cast out the weaknesses of the flesh and the contentious disposition which may sometimes be ours—to be infused or energized by one spirit of obedience to the one Father, and under the control of the one law of love.

A Further Message and Response

The Apostle Peter’s Pentecostal message, Acts 3:19 was a Gospel of mercy, of forgiveness, of sympathy, even for those who had crucified the Lord. Like the sermons of all the apostles, this sermon contained not one suggestion of eternal torment, but was full of mercy and grace—“speaking peace through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The result

was that three thousand were prompted to accept Jesus as the Messiah. They were convinced by their reason and by the evidences presented in the sermon by the Apostle and others of the brethren, they complied with the advice of the Apostle. Temporarily their sins were covered by the merit of the Lord’s sacrifice.

Christ’s sacrifice for sins was not intended to justify people living in sin, but to justify those who, renouncing sin, sought to live separate from it and to come into harmony with God. This is still our message. No one has a right to alter or amend it in any degree. The Divine law still condemns sin in the flesh. The Divine provision for the covering of the sins of those who believe in Jesus applies only to such as seek to put away sin, and to strive for righteousness. For such alone are all the Divine arrangements and blessings.

St. Peter’s message was, Repent ye therefore, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Spirit; for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even as many as the Lord your God shall call* (Acts 2:38, 39). Everywhere the Scriptures remind us that no man taketh this honor to himself—only those called of God, drawn by the Father, can now come unto the Son and receive all of these blessings. This remains true to this day (R 4308).

How different and special is the dealing of God with the Church of this Expanded Gospel Age? We answer very much. A special call is going forth to the Pre-Millennial seed of Abraham, those consecrating while sin is in the ascendancy. These are “drawn” by the Father, as Jesus declares, “No man can come to me [now], except the Father which hath sent me draw him,” and “him that cometh to me [drawn by the Father] I will in no wise cast out [reject]” (John 6:44, 37). Some of our Lord’s followers were drawn to Him of the Father before He had completed the sacrifice for sins at Calvary, and others have been drawn throughout the Gospel Age; as the Apostle declares, “Even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:39). Here is a reversal of the Divine purpose. The Gospel Church, under the Abrahamic Covenant arrangement, are drawn to the Son by the Father, given unto Him (John 17:6, 12). Special calls continue until the purposes of the expanded Gospel Age are complete (PT '63, p. 25).

Recognition of the Facts

The great need of the present time is a recognition of these facts, an abandonment of all those creeds and

traditions of men, and a return to the teachings of Jesus, the twelve Apostles and the Old Testament Prophets. Only then can we hope to regain the position lost . . . Only then can we return to the “one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” one Father, one Jesus our Head and One True Church (Eph. 4: 5, 6). We continue to understand that the One True Church was and is to consist only of those (regardless of race, social standing or sex—Gal. 3:28) who would follow in Jesus’ footsteps (1 Pet. 2:21), present their human bodies to God, as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1; BS ’81, p. 14; ’56, p. 55).

Perhaps this is a good time to ask: why should God make such a difference in His searching out the different members of the true Church? Surely there is a logical reason connected with the matter, if we can but ascertain it. And surely it is True that “The Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). If all mankind had been at heart “Israelites indeed” there would have been no need of a mediator and a New Covenant—the Abrahamic Covenant would have been quite sufficient. It is because the world of mankind is estranged from God, rebellious against the Divine Law, and lovers of sin, that the Millennial Mediatorial work is necessary. The Great Mediator (Head and Body) after making “an atonement for the sins of *all the people*,” at the close of this Age, will take *all the people* in hand, and, by instruction, chastisements and corrections in righteousness, will cause their every knee to bow and every tongue to confess, in harmony with the Divine arrangement, or cut them off in the Second Death.

We with good authority understand that all men are born sinners, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psa. 51:5), all are children of wrath, under the Divine sentence of death, but there are other respects in which all are *not* alike. Some hate the chains of sin, wherein they are held, and long for freedom and for reconciliation to God, while others love sin and are estranged from God. He is not in their thoughts. Here, then, we have the ground for the difference in His dealings with the two classes. He takes note of those who are weary and heavy laden, these feeling after God, if haply they might find him, He is pleased to “draw,” during this Expanded Gospel Age, through the knowledge of the Truth, to Jesus, that at His hand they may be justified and become acceptable to God in consecration (Rom. 12:1). The ungodly are not “drawn” or called to consecration during this Gospel Age, but are left to be dealt with by their Redeemer when He shall assume the office of Mediator between God and men—the world.

But is it not Scripturally declared of believers that we were “enemies of God through wicked works?” And does not that place us on the same level with the world, in enmity against God? We answer, No, there is a difference. The worldly mass are enemies against God, not merely in respect to their works being imperfect, such as He cannot accept, but also and especially because their hearts are estranged from Him. They love unrighteousness. Believers, on the contrary, although they were at one time enemies through wicked works, are no longer enemies, though still somewhat imperfect, and God, who reads the heart, deals with them from that standpoint, and leads them to Christ, that the merit of His sacrifice may offset the demerits of their sin and their imperfect works.

Again the Apostle says that we were strangers, and “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.” Yes, we, who were Gentiles, were entirely separated and alienated from God, until Christ came, and we found access to Divine favor through Him, whereas the Jew had a measure of Divine favor and opportunity for development, before Christ came. St. Paul says the middle wall of partition or separation between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, so that, in God’s providence, the honest-hearted Gentile was no more an alien and a foreigner to God than his Jewish neighbor (Eph. 2:12-19; R 4485; R 4368; PT ’63, p. 25).

Adapted for Our Use

The True Church of our day certainly recognizes how much deeper and more meaningful is the testimony of our hearts to the value of the Bible as we come, step by step, to a proper appreciation of the glorious and wonderful words of life. God does not reveal His secrets to everyone, but only to those who have certain qualities of heart and mind. This feature of God’s instruction will continue *along with adaptations* (for the class being called now) of Bro. Russell’s and Bro. Johnson’s writings to fit our current needs (BS ’16, p. 4; BS ’58, p. 75; PT ’54, p. 59).

Bro. Jolly brought these thoughts to our attention unceasingly in his later ministry. As antitypical Hiram, he was the final member of the Great Company to finish his course on earth. With his death he completed the Epiphany Temple’s Inner Court. Bro. Jolly’s Youthful Worthy assistants after his demise carried on the work of completing the Epiphany Temple’s Outer Court. Since then his other assistants (Youthful Worthies and Consecrated Epiphany Campers) carry on the work of building up the Epiphany Camp as he has instructed and directed, until it is finished, as of now, this date remains unknown (PT ’75, p. 38).

Let us also keep this thought in mind! As was shown in PT '72, p. 15, if God makes an exception to the general principle "to the Jew first" in the case of the Youthful Worthy class, who come in under the New Covenant but are mainly of Gentile lineage there is surely no reason why He cannot make an exception also in the case of another consecrated class—the Consecrated Epiphany Campers, who will also come in under the New Covenant but are mainly of Gentile lineage—which class likewise is faithful to Him in consecration while sin is still in the ascendancy.

Be Imitators of God

Ephesians 5:1, 2

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour."

"Keep yourselves in the Love of God"

Jude 21 invites the True Church to "Keep yourselves in the Love of God." Accordingly, the "yourselves" of our text are the Little Flock, who are the only ones who have been sanctified by the Father. Accordingly, the exhortation of our text applied, strictly speaking, to the Little Flock, *though in principle* it may be applied to the good Youthful Worthies and Consecrated Epiphany Campers. Yes, with all propriety it applies now to the clean Youthful Worthies and Consecrated Epiphany Campers. Just because they are such they should seek to gain the love of God and then maintain it, because of their present calling and their future prospects as such, otherwise failure will be theirs. Therefore, God will make it worthwhile for them to possess His love *for them* (PT '85, p. 23, 25).

The God of grace and justice assures His loyal Truth people of today (yes, the One True Church in 2019) of this principle with these wonderful words, "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). Those who today stand loyal to the Parousia and Epiphany Truth and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), who "walk in the light of the Lord" (Isa. 2:5), will have the *same kind* of blessed experience that the Little Flock had during *their time* in the Gospel Age; for "if God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31; PT '64, p.62).

Manna from the Bible Truth as Due

Jehovah privileges the True Church (the fully consecrated of today) with this message: upon Truth already provided

the Lord superimposes more Truth, adding line upon line, precept upon precept (Isa. 28:10, 13). The night-long falling of the manna upon the dew suggests the progressive development of the Truth (Prov. 4:18), ever reminding us of the thought expressed in a hymn, "Still there's more to follow." Oh! The Divine Program has not changed, but more explicit statements have been given in the Truth writings respecting it (E 11, p. 318).

The Truth as due has come to God's people *adapted* to their varying providential needs, circumstances and experiences; for the Word of God was so framed by God that it is not only *adapted* to the needs of God's people in general, but it is also *adapted* to their individual needs amid their varying circumstances and experiences. This shows the practicability of God and of God's Truth. That God arranged His Word so as to be *adaptable* to the general needs of His people is apparent from Amos 3:7: "Surely the Lord your God will do nothing [in the outworking of His plan] except He revealed it as His secret unto His servants the prophets." God saying, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Gen. 18:17). Examples: Abraham and Lot knew of the destruction of Sodom beforehand; Noah knew of the flood in time to build the ark (E 9, p. 20).

Our Lord and Head has said, John 15:15: "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things *that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*" Our Lord certainly shall know of the times and seasons in *due time*, since he is to accomplish the plan, and unless *he has changed*, he will make known the plans to those close to him and associated in his work—*his friends, his saints* (SITS 1, p. 21).

Notice how Jehovah ensured the progress of Truth during the Parousia and the Epiphany. Bro. Russell had five special helpers successively, the first four making total shipwreck: Messrs. Barbour and Paton, Mrs. Russell and Mr. M.L. McPhail, whose fall in 1908 occasioned another brother to take his place, who kept that favor to the end of Bro. Russell's pilgrim work. Pastor Johnson, armed with the basic Truths *progressed* with present Truth till his demise (E 9, p. 32).

Next, notice how Jehovah enabled our dear Pastor Jolly to bring another jewel of understanding concerning the adapting of Truth to our day. At an Oct. 27, 1968 Question Meeting, the question was asked: Can we adopt words of the new creation to the Great Company? Now for instance, take the text 2 Pet. 1:4, "there are 'unto

us' great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature"; now how are you going to read that text, you 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, either the glory celestial or the glory terrestrial. . . If we are not Spirit begotten, we would say, Oh yes, there are unto us great and precious promises: by these we may become Youthful Worthies or Consecrated Epiphany Campers and have eternal life. We are to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold unto eternal life, and that applies to every one of us. So I would adapt the text.

We follow with another jewel from a question Meeting with Bro. R.G. Jolly, Sunday, October 31, 1971: So I would say that the Youthful Worthies and the Consecrated Epiphany Campers will finish their course before the New Covenant is established . . . and since that time the Consecrated Epiphany Campers are coming in. Are they a part of the Laodicean stage of the church? Yes, in that wider sense, in the largest wide sense, yes. And the Laodicean stage of the church goes on in its widest sense until the Gospel Age is fully ended.

The Light of the Consecrated

Rom. 12:1 states "I beseech you therefore, Brethren." This statement calls for a definition of what brethren are! Brethren are: (1) Those who have pledged themselves to the Lord for a reformation, and (2) those who have consecrated their lives even unto death. Christ becomes endorser for these who have turned from sin, believed on the Lord Jesus, and consecrated themselves. He covers their Adamic sin and guarantees his continued merit if they are faithful. The Lord has pledged to these who have consecrated their lives to him, even unto death, that he will hear them and give to them, according to his wisdom, the experiences and blessings most helpful.

The brethren all have the lamp, the sure word of prophecy called by Peter, a light in a dark place. While they keep the proper attitude of brethren, as faithful, meek and humble students of the Word, they will at no time be in darkness: *they* will have the Truth supplied as meat in *due season*. Never have those living in full harmony with God been left in ignorance of necessary Truth, to grope their way in the dark with the world. Throughout centuries the consecrated brethren that make up the One True Church which Jesus formed, is not any of the Christian denominations, but it was, rather, the assembly of true

Christians from in and outside of all denominations. The One True Church consist only of those (regardless of race, social standing or sex—Gal. 3:28) who would follow in Jesus' footsteps (1 Pet. 2:21), present their human bodies to God, as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1).

The True Church, or religious body, which we and other consecrators (many of whom have never heard of the L.H.M.M.) have had the privilege of joining, is, according to Bro. Johnson (E 6, pp. 102, 103), "invisible both locally and generally, though manifesting itself through its works, arrangements, meetings and servants visibly, whether it be in one place or all places. In other words, there is *no visible general organization* of the Church of the Living God that makes the various Ecclesias or various individuals organically parts of a general visible Body."

In 1934 Pastor Johnson penned these additional words: "First of all, He would have us bear in mind only One True Church, or religious body, the one that the Lord organized, with Himself as its only Head, which in the wide sense includes the Great Company and Youthful Worthies, all of the Church of the Firstborn (E 4, pp. 323, 330, par. 5, p. 333, par. 1). This is the only religious body we should claim to have joined." And we can say additionally that this includes the Consecrated of our day, those having the same spirit and relationship with the Lord as these prior consecrated classes.

Bro. Jolly confirms and expands this Truth in PT '56 p. 43: "From the Lord's viewpoint, that there is but One True Church (Col. 1:24; Heb. 12:23), and that other organizations called churches are not so recognized by Him. Secondly, that this one Church which God recognizes, is only a 'little flock' (Luke 12:32). So we need not be on the lookout for the largest organization as the True Church of Christ. Thirdly, we are informed, that this 'little flock' does not contain many of the rich, or great, or wise according to the wisdom of this world" (1 Cor. 1:26; HE '34, p. 33).

The Fifth Elect Class

We, Epiphany-enlightened Consecrated Epiphany Campers, living in the Expanded Gospel Age Harvest, with a clear and concise understanding and full belief, state that "the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Heb. 12: 23), including the Great Company as well as the Little Flock, have all finished their earthly course and have attained to their places in the heavenly Kingdom. This part of the One True Church is complete! We also understand, with good principled proof, that the leadership role of the Youthful Worthies is now complete. With this understanding we recognize the fifth elect class

called by God at the present time, who consist of the Spirit-enlightened, non-Spirit-begotten consecrated ones, now being prepared for their important role as special helpers to the Worthies in bringing the restitutionists, during the Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ, into their proper understanding to have life everlasting on a perfected earth.

Although the term “Consecrated Epiphany Campers” is not found in the Scriptures, the three words that make up their name are Scriptural. Consecrated=heart condition; Epiphany=time period; Campers=place of residence! This clear designation can be explained as the name for that class who come in among God’s people, the antitypical camp of Israel, and become consecrated followers of Jesus after the Gospel Age very elect have all been chosen but before Christ in His second Advent appears or is revealed to the world as the destroyer of Satan’s empire and the establisher of God’s Kingdom. This class will be privileged with the “resurrection of the just” (Luke 14:14). This term also *distinguishes them* from those who will consecrate during the time when the Highway of Holiness is set up. Those we could *appropriately designate* as Consecrated Millennial Campers (PT 2002, p. 43).

All of the Spirit-enlightened, non-Spirit-begotten consecrated ones are under the headship of Christ and are not to presume to teach Him, but are to rejoice in their privilege of learning from Him. Accordingly, the brothers should continue the practice of having their heads uncovered in the meetings, and only brothers should serve as teachers in the ecclesia meetings. And the sisters should rejoice in their privilege of helping to keep the brothers (and themselves) humble and fully subject to the Lord’s teachings, by having their heads covered in all ecclesia meetings and keeping silent as to teaching in the doctrinal meetings. They preach a wonderful and much-needed sermon in pantomime, by their acts.

It is very fitting that such practices should continue. While the symbols of Christ’s Headship and the Church’s Bodyship are primarily involved, the same principle applies in all ecclesias of God’s present-day consecrated people, for they are *all parts of the church*, the ecclesia (the called-out ones), in the wider sense. We are not to forget that others than the Little Flock are pictured as being in a *married relationship with our Lord Jesus*. Ruth in her married relationship with Boaz types earlier Youthful Worthies in a symbolic married relationship with our Lord Jesus (Ruth 4:10-13; E 4, pp. 394, 395).

Application to the CEC’s

The teachings of Jesus and the Apostles about the deeper meaning of the Ten Commandments and about other

things in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-12), about marriage and divorce (Matt. 19:1-9), about the election of elders (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5), about sisters wearing head coverings in ecclesia meetings and their not teaching in the ecclesia doctrinal meetings, etc., apply to those consecrating between the Ages just the same as they did to the Little Flock and the Great Company. Christ’s disciples who consecrate between the Ages are not to think that these instructions applied only to the Spirit-begotten and not to them, *or that they apply only in a lesser way to them*. There is only one kind of consecration—full consecration to God, to do His will—for all the pre-Millennial seed of Abraham and only those who make and keep such consecration will be given favored places as antitypical Levites and Nethinim in the Kingdom (PT ’82, p. 94).

We should keep in mind also that (as shown in PT ’68, pp. 44-46) God will never turn His favor away from His loyal people, whether they are of His Spirit-begotten children, or of His consecrated Spirit-enlightened but not Spirit-begotten servants and friends of the time prior to and since the time of the High Calling. The Youthful Worthies in the antitypical Court and the Consecrated Epiphany Campers in the antitypical Camp now are tentatively justified by faith, have “peace with God” and “the peace of God,” are of the Epiphany Household of Faith, are God’s friends and prospective sons, have fellowship with Him and are privileged to pray to Him as their prospective Father. Will they lose this blessed relationship with God when they come under the New Covenant and its Mediator and when they come under works-justification instead of faith-justification? Surely not!

In the setting of the One True Church, God will highly honor the Consecrated Epiphany Campers; for they are proving themselves faithful under greater trial than the restitutionists in general will have. They will be privileged to be the special assistants of the Worthies and will be very able helpers to the world of mankind as they with them go up the Highway of Holiness. Let us state again that the Consecrated Epiphany Campers are separate and distinct from the spirit begotten classes such as the Great Company, (see E 4, pp. 115-117), and the Church which is the Body of Christ, which consists only of 144,000 members (Rev. 7:1-4; 14:1).

The True Bible

We have used the word Truth 23 times so far in this article. Perhaps we should dwell on where this advancing Truth message originates. Without hesitation we answer, God’s word “The Bible”, expounded for our

understanding by chosen vessels of God! Yes, the Bible the greatest of Books. Many of the world's best and noblest characters have acknowledged the grandeur of God's Book, even those who were not themselves professedly consecrated Christians. These testimonies come to us from the outside rather than from the inside—mainly from those who understood very little of the true Divine Plan of the Ages. How much deeper and more meaningful is the testimony of our hearts to the value of the Bible as we come, step by step, to a proper appreciation of the glorious and wonderful words of life which it contains and the true meaning of its exceeding great and precious promises, by which in the LORD'S plan it is designed that His One True Church, is being prepared to be the LORD'S instruments for the eventual blessing of all the families of the earth (Gen. 12:3; 22:16-18; BS '16 p. 4; BS '58 p. 75). Perhaps this would be a good time to ask, for whom are the words of Jer. 15:16 written? "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts." Well, God does not reveal His secrets to everyone, so it is only to those who have certain qualities of heart and mind (the consecrated).

With this thought in our hearts and minds we consider John 10:10 "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." In this text our Lord Jesus refers to two classes: the obedient of the world of mankind, and the Church, which is His Body, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22, 23), who with Him shares in the Divine nature, with life "more abundantly," in the sense that it is inherent life, not requiring to be sustained. This is stated in the very strict and narrow sense! We must accept that in the narrow sense the second part of this scripture points directly and primarily to the Little Flock, but, in the wider sense it also has an indirect and secondary application, in principle, to others of the Lord's faithful servants. Luke 21:15 is a scripture that may apply also to the Lord's loyal servants of other classes (PT '64, p. 62).

Trials of the Time of Trouble after the very elect classes are complete in their membership but before the Highway of Holiness is opened up under the New Covenant may also be said to receive a life more abundant than that given to other restitutionists in general, for they will have the highest honor among them. And in a certain sense the restitutionists in general may be included in the second blessing of John 10:10; for mankind in general will not

only be given life as a result of Jesus' ransom-sacrifice on their behalf, but will also have it more abundantly than Adam had it originally—in the sense that they will be greatly enriched by the lessons they have learned in their school of experience with sin and its terrible consequences (see SITS 1, pp. 122, 124); they will enjoy life with billions of others in blessed fellowship, and they will have an earthly home more extensive and filled with marvelous discoveries, inventions, improvements and conveniences far beyond anything that Adam enjoyed or even dreamed of (BS '68, p. 3).

We conclude this study of Constructive Advancing Truth for the Consecrated Epiphany Campers regarding their place in the One True Church by revisiting Jude 21; which invites us to "keep yourselves in the Love of God." Accordingly, the "yourselves" of our text are the Little Flock, who are the only ones who have been sanctified by the Father and called into and preserved in Jesus Christ. Accordingly, the exhortation of our text applies, in its narrow or restricted sense, to the Little Flock, though in principle it may be applied to the good Youthful Worthies and Consecrated Epiphany Campers who are the faithful in Christ Jesus now. The experience of consecration gives these Campers more than any others, so close do they in many cases come to being of the elect, the privilege of being among the chief helpers of the Ancient and Youthful Worthies in their Millennial service in the Kingdom (PT '59, p. 42).

God has not given to the Consecrated Epiphany Campers the spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7). Yes, we "keep" hold and guard the love of God the same as all other Saints: *hagios*, holy ones, dedicated ones, consecrated ones and appointed ones (Ezra 8:20). In fact, all consecrated ones are sanctified, holy to God, and therefore saints in this wider use of the term (PT '68, p.54).

Let us, as Consecrated Epiphany Camper hopefuls, accept into our hearts the trials, testings and sifting actions that God places before us. The privilege of possessing God's love now, will make it worthwhile to keep ourselves in the love of God.

GOD HAS PERFECT timing
Never Early, Never Late.
IT TAKES A LITTLE
PATIENCE AND A WHOLE LOT OF FAITH...
But it's Worth the Wait.

CHRIST LIFTED UP

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me”—John 12:32.

There have been various speculations with reference to the Lord's meaning, relative to being “lifted up.” It seems to be a peculiarity of human nature, especially until we come to a position where we have learned that *our own thoughts* are frequently stumbling stones to us, and have learned the lesson that we must cast aside our favorite opinions and seek the meaning of the words from the context, to decide that a passage *must be understood* in some way more difficult to understand than the simple narrative itself. And many a Bible student has gotten himself into quite a labyrinth of difficulty from endeavoring to make out of simple statements something more elaborate than the Lord put into them, and yet the simplicity of the Truth, the simplicity which all the children of God should observe, will be to receive the Word as little children, and understand it just as it reads. With the idea of elaborating the thought, many have undertaken to say, and to imagine themselves, that the lifting up of the Son of man, meant His glorification: I, if I be glorified, will draw all men unto My glorified condition, is what they prefer to have it mean, and therefore they so construe it. But that would be a wresting of scripture, for nothing of the kind appears in the passage.

The passage clearly and distinctly says the lifting up referred to was a lifting up at the cross. “These words spake Jesus signifying what death he should die.” If we would always let the context tell us just what is meant, how much difficulty it would save ourselves and others. The same Greek words here rendered “lifted up,” are elsewhere used, as for instance, in John 8:28, “Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have *lifted up* the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he; and I do nothing of myself, but as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things.” Who was to do the lifting up? Not the Father, nor the Lord Jesus himself, nor the Holy Spirit, but *ye*—when *ye* have lifted up the Son of man. It evidently then does not refer to an exaltation to glory. The same Greek word is used also in John 3:14. “And as Moses *lifted up* the serpent in the wilderness.” Did Moses glorify the serpent? Not at all. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be *lifted up*, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

It is a fact of course, not a fact taught by this passage but taught by other passages, that our Lord Jesus after He was lifted up upon the cross, after He had died for our

sins, was highly exalted, and that He is glorified now, and forever. But what we are here noticing is, that this fact is not taught in this passage, nothing in this passage favors any such construction. Some who take the view which we have presented, that the “lifting up” referred to the glorifying of the Lord have an object in view, they wish, as they sometimes say, to do away with the wooden cross. They wish to set aside the importance of the *death* of Christ which this text, properly understood, shows. In the very next verse the Jews show that they understood exactly what our Lord meant, when they answered, We have heard that when Christ cometh He will never die, He will live forever; how is it that you say the Son of man will be lifted up. We see that the Jews understood it, the disciples understood it, and our Lord expressly spoke it, with reference to the death He should die, and not with reference to His exaltation to glory.

Now, then, it makes just this difference. Taken in the way the Lord gives it, it makes the cross of Christ the very center of the whole plan of redemption, just as the Lord meant it should be, just as the Scriptures everywhere present it to be, the very center of the whole plan. For our Lord to be crucified, to be “lifted up,” to die, was a necessity which lay at the foundation of the divine plan. The death of Christ, “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” was the only way by which mankind could be brought into harmony with God. We see, that the *drawing* of mankind was dependent on the death, the lifting up, of Christ. Not only is the cross of Christ now a stumbling-block, which very many do not like, and which many are ignorantly stumbling over, but it was a rock of offence to the Jews. They could not understand why the great Messiah who was to be so powerful, and an everlasting deliverer, must die. They could not see how or why the cross was connected with the fulfillment of the Covenants. But, our Heavenly Father's ways, as we have learned, are not man's ways, and His plan was, that the one who should restore Israel and the world, and be the King of glory, should be also the one that would prove and show His worthiness by His obedience even unto death, even the death of the cross, as the Ransomer of all. So, then, we see that the cross of Christ is truly indeed the center of God's plan for blessing all the families of the earth. If I be lifted up I will *draw men*; if I am not lifted up I can never do so. Whenever, therefore, any attempt

to show that the cross of Christ was not a necessity, that the penalty of sin was not death and that it was not necessary for our Lord Jesus to *redeem* mankind from it—by giving His own life as our ransom price, let this, one of the hundreds of passages that point to *the ransom price*, Christ's death, as the *foundation* of all our hope, be the answer to such, and show that sinners were not drawn to God until first the penalty against all had been paid, by our Redeemer, who “bought us with his own precious blood”—His death—the sacrifice of His life. Not until all were redeemed, at Calvary, was the gospel, the good tidings of great joy, sent forth unto all people, drawing all by promising everlasting life to all who would obey the great Redeemer. The fact is incontrovertible, that “life [everlasting, for restored human sons of God], and immortality [the grand superlative degree of life, which pertains to the divine nature only, and is offered as the great *prize* to the overcomers of the Gospel age—the church] were brought to light through the *gospel*. And the gospel was never declared (except in a prophetic and typical way to the typical Israelites), until after His resurrection our Lord sent forth His disciples saying “Go ye into all the world and preach this gospel [good tidings—of a hope for life through the ransom given for all] to every creature.”

“I WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME.”

We are instructed in 2 Cor. 5:14 that “The love of Christ constraineth [draweth] us.” Nearly two thousand years have passed since the ransom price for sinners was paid—since the Son of man was lifted up—and even in this most favored day we see that the vast majority of men are still in ignorance of this great gift of God, and that they have not been drawn by the Lord even in the remotest sense conceivable. And when we think of the still greater mass of mankind who have died during the centuries past without being drawn, our faith in the Master's promise compels us to look to the Millennial Age for its fulfillment. And why not? If infinite wisdom permitted four thousand years to elapse from the time that sin entered the world, and death, the penalty of sin, was inflicted with all its train of woes, before the ransom was given, why should we not presume that a long period might elapse after the ransom had been paid, before the general drawing promised should take effect.

Our Heavenly Father loved His creatures all those four thousand years before sending the Redeemer, and He sympathized with them in their fallen and dying condition just as much as He does today, for He changes not. Now He has allowed two thousand years or more to elapse, and yet the drawing power of Christ, we might say,

has not begun to affect the world. Strange! says human shortsightedness, if God so loved the world as to give His Son to redeem all, and if Christ so loved us as to freely deliver Himself up for us all, wherefore this tardiness in bringing to pass the promised blessings? Why should two thousand years intervene before the drawing of all men begins?

Careful study into the wonderful plan of God discovers both love and wisdom even in this seeming tardiness, for all this time the drawing power of Christ has been exerted upon five special classes (PT '77, p. 38) in whom the love of God and of Christ, as manifested in this lifting up, awakens such a sense of gratitude as to draw them to follow in His foot-prints at any cost of tribulation, distress or persecution. And these classes of zealous, devoted faithful souls the Lord designs to associate with Himself in the great work of blessing, drawing and saving all His purchased possession.

Christ drew some—a “little flock” He terms it, in comparison with the masses of men. And these became His bride, and the first fruits of His great sacrifice. As the Apostle expresses it, it is the love of Christ that constraineth or draweth us now, and how strongly that cord of love has drawn the saints, has been wonderfully manifested in their sufferings, self-denials and self-sacrifice, even unto death, and that often in the most revolting forms. Many in the days of Papal persecution rather than deny their faith or walk according to the spirit of the world were so drawn by the love of Christ as to submit to all sorts of indignities and ignominious deaths by cruel rackings, burnings and tortures of every description.

What a wonderful power is the love of Christ, made manifest to us through His lifting up on the cross for our redemption! It has not lost its power yet to draw some, and to hold them in loyalty and fidelity to Christ even against all the subtle and deceptive influences of this “evil day,” and these perilous times. Yes, the love of Christ still draws the Saints, so that they do not seek to do their own pleasure but the will of God. And this will of God in them controls in all the little affairs of life—in the house-keeping and the training of families, and into business life, at the counter, the office, and the workbench, it influences them when seen and when unseen, in the light and in the dark, in thought as well as in action and word. The love of Christ is constantly constraining a faithful few, restraining all evil propensities and strengthening, ennobling and beautifying character, while affecting all their relationships with families, friends, neighbors and business associations.

The power which constrains or draws the Saints into harmony and union with Christ, and through Him with our Heavenly Father, is the Truth. The more clearly we discern the Truth, the more it can influence or draw us. The Truth shows us our condition in sin and condemnation, and by showing us God's provision for our recovery, the Truth discloses to us the love of God and our Lord Jesus. A little Truth draws a little, and the full clear Truth, received into good and honest hearts, is a power, *the power of God, working in us to will and to do His good pleasure*. Without this power of the Truth we cannot even *will* aright; the Truth directs our wills, and to such as have consecrated wills in harmony with God, the Truth is the greatest motive power to good deeds. A knowledge of this same Truth of God, of which the lifting up of Christ is the foundation principle, will be the drawing and moving power of the Millennial Age also, and in a similar manner, only there will no longer be besetments, or drawings of the adversary in contrary directions. Satan will then be bound, restrained from deceiving and drawing away from God. It will no longer cost what it now does, and what it has cost in the past, to will and to do right, for not only is Satan to be bound, but a highway (a public thoroughfare) is to be cast up, and all the stumbling stones are to be gathered out, and no ravenous beasts of prey (no fierce temptations) shall go up thereon, but the ransomed of the Lord shall walk there with none to molest or make them afraid. They shall go forth with joy and be led forth with peace, with every influence toward righteousness in their favor (Rev. 20:2; Isa. 35:8; 62:10).

There are various reasons why the number drawn in this age is comparatively few. Some indeed are willful sinners, "children of the devil," who love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. And then the god of this world has so blinded the minds of a better class with doctrinal errors that they do not recognize and cannot appreciate the Truth, and the deceptive aspect of the things of this present life deceive others, drawing and constraining them to such an extent as to offset the drawing power of the Truth. Even where the seeds of Truth fall into hopeful soil and begin to spring up they are often choked by weeds and thorns such as the absorbing cares of this life, the love of this world's approval, and the deceitfulness of riches, or the alluring hope of acquiring them.

While the whole world is in this condition of imperfection, weakness and sin, we cannot expect otherwise than that the vast majority would be influenced by their surroundings, their appetites, and the deep degradation into which they have fallen. What hope is

there then that the time will ever come when Christ will draw all mankind unto Him? If the Truth is unchangeable, and if it does not draw the masses of men now, what prospect is there that it will ever draw them? None whatever from a human standpoint. We have no such assurance except in God's Word. Our Lord has promised not only that He would draw a "little flock" as he terms it in comparison with the masses of men (John 6:37, 44; Luke 13:32), but that in due time He will draw all men; and that the power of the adverse influences of the present time shall be broken. The chains that now bind men, as slaves to sin, shall be snapped asunder, and all will then have power (liberty) to become sons of God.

Sin is represented in the Scriptures as a great tyrant compelling mankind to do His bidding; and the fallen race is so fettered by inherited weaknesses that none can do otherwise than obey Him except such as hear the Truth and appeal to Christ to have their shackles broken, to obtain liberty from Him. Such are freed from further service of the tyrant, Sin, and may become sons of God, servants of righteousness, and have everlasting life.

This matter of returning to harmony with God through Christ, being moved or drawn by the Truth whose centre is the cross is therefore a liberty, a privilege, granted to believers in Christ—a privilege that men are incapable of appreciating or using so long as they are bound in ignorance, under the power of evil and their own inherited weaknesses. We sometimes say that men are free moral agents, free to choose good or evil, yet evidently this is the case only to a very limited extent. The first man indeed was created a free moral agent, but since the fall all have been measurably under bondage to sin, and are held in this slavery by their own inherited as well as cultivated weaknesses, under circumstances which none is able to control, until, under God's arrangement, Christ shall take the power into His hand. The Redeemer of all is to take the kingdom and dominion of earth, and is to break off the shackles that are now fettering the world, and hindering even those who desire to love and serve the Lord from being drawn thereto.

It was needful that our Lord should die to redeem men, but more is necessary to the complete success of God's great plan. According to that plan the Ransomer must also be the Deliverer to free those purchased with His own precious blood from the shackles of sin—ignorance, prejudice, perverted tastes and inherited weaknesses, and many from the tomb itself. He could not deliver one, until He had redeemed them, but the object of redeeming them was that He might set them free from the bondage of sin

and its penalty, death. The Prophet Isaiah foretold the ultimate object of our Lord's great work which began with His sacrifice for our sins, when, speaking for Christ, he said, "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me, because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61:1). Those who have learned of God's great plan of the ages can see much more than others in this reference to the opening of the prison to them that are bound. We see that all the living generations of men are prisoners of Satan, fettered and bound for the tomb, the same great prison in which he has confined all the generations past, and that the great Deliverer who redeemed them must set them free, before even the willing can be drawn to Him.

For this great work of giving liberty to the captives of sin and death, God has appointed the Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ. He not only had a due time for sending His only begotten Son into the world, and a due time in which He was to give His life a ransom for us, but He has also a due time for this liberating of sin's prisoners. That age of deliverance will be earth's great jubilee year, the antitype of that jubilee which Israel observed every fiftieth year. In that type, the setting free of every debtor, and the return of every one to his home and possessions and privileges, foreshadowed the return of all mankind to liberty—to freedom from sin and its tyranny, to liberty such as Adam had to decide for righteousness or sin knowingly. The great Deliverer has the emancipation proclamation all ready: it is written in His own precious blood, and the hour for its special announcement is the dawn of the morning of the Millennial day.

ALL DRAWN, NONE COMPELLED

When our Heavenly Father has revealed His plan it becomes us to submit all our reasonings to what He has laid before us of that plan. Human reason must not array itself in opposition to divine wisdom, but should always be guided by the divine revelation. When, therefore, our Lord declares that He will draw all men unto Him, we should avoid reasoning on this statement out of harmony with the various other scriptures which touch the same subject.

Some err in this matter, and reason this:—Our Lord Jesus is exalted to glory and He Himself has said, "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." Therefore, if He who has all power shall draw them, every one will come, for none can resist His "all power."

Not so! This would be fatalism, it would be casting aside the true significance of the word "*draw*," and substituting another idea which the Master did not express, viz., *force*. We have no more right to change the significance of His words than we have to change the words themselves. What our Lord meant by the term draw, is illustrated in the experience of each of us, for He used the same Greek word when telling us that, in this present age, none could come to Him except the Father draw him (John 6:44). The Father draws the Hagios now, the dedicated, the consecrated children of God, as the Son will draw all men in the Millennial Age. The Father draws us by the Truth and by His providences, but He does not force or compel one. Even when drawn, by the opening of our mental eyes to the Truth, under the unfavorable conditions of the present time, we are not compelled to follow, we may "go away" (John 6:66,67), we may "do despite to the spirit of favor" which enlightened us and drew us, we may sin *willfully* after that we have come to a clear understanding of the Truth, and been made partakers of the grace of God in Christ (Heb. 10:26-29), we may abide not in him, and be cast forth as rejected branches (John 15:6), "twice dead, plucked up by the root" (Jude 12). So likewise, our Lord's drawing of all men in the Millennial Age, implies that all will be shown the Truth and the advantages of righteousness and the evil and disadvantage of sin, and such as choose, [*i.e.* will follow after righteousness,] will be enabled to come into complete harmony with the Divine plan, and will obtain, as the reward of their choice, the gift of life which they may retain forever.

The drawing is one thing and the coming another. It is God's prerogative to invite, and man's privilege to come. God did not make man a mere machine to be operated and drawn about hither and thither, with no will of his own. He made him in his own noble likeness, possessed of the God-like faculty of will. Such only of God's creatures as have this quality of free will, in His likeness, does He recognize as sons, whether they be on the earthly or heavenly plane—human, angelic, or divine sons. All of God's sons have a will of their own and may decide in matters concerning themselves, and this will be as true in the next as in the present age, though it will be more noticeable then.

This privilege of free agency, ultimately to be restored to all men, will not interfere at all with the divine plan, nor can it in any degree interfere with the final harmony of God's kingdom, for, though leaving all free to choose life by conformity to the spirit and plan of God, God

foretells His intention to cut off from life all who do not *willingly* conform.

What is it that draws us to Christ? It is the Truth. What was it that drew the early disciples, when they said, “Lord to whom shall we go?” They confessed it was the Truth when they added—“Thou hast the words of eternal life.” It was the Truth, “the words of eternal life,” that both drew and held them to the Lord, and so it is with us also. Not only are we *drawn* by the Truth, which as a cord wraps about us to hold, and steady, and keep us, but we have two cords binding us—first, the Truth coming out from God and fastening upon honest hearts; and secondly, the faith and trust of our consecrated hearts reaching back unto God again. So it will be with all mankind in the Millennial Age. He who taught and drew us, by giving us the knowledge of the Truth, shall so teach the whole world. Not one will be left in ignorance of the goodness of God, or without a clear knowledge of His wondrous plan. Not one will be left without being drawn, just as we are being drawn, by the Truth. Yet not one will be forced then, any more than we are forced now. God seeketh such to worship Him, not only in the present time, but everlastingly, as worship Him in spirit and in Truth, not needing to be lashed, or forced, or barred, but such as will be glad to be in harmony with God and delight in His favor.

Some have supposed that the only thing that gives us any appreciation of good, is our experience with evil, but it is not so, those angels which kept their first estate and never sinned, are none the less able to appreciate righteousness. Though by reason of inherited weaknesses we are inclined to sin and find it difficult to do right, yet we do not find it difficult to love righteousness. All present human weaknesses (results of the fall) will be entirely taken away in the Millennial Age, so that men will have none of that gravitation towards evil now experienced by all.

But does the assurance of the Scriptures that there shall

be a restitution of all things prove that if all were put into a perfect condition, all would therefore willingly serve the Lord and conform to His regulations? No, we answer, we have illustrations of some who were in the perfect state who did not do so. One illustration is Adam. But says one, ignorance in part contributed to Adam’s fall, with fuller knowledge he may act differently. But what shall we say of Satan’s case? Was it ignorance on his part that led to sin? Is it ignorance that still holds him in the attitude of a sinner? And will it be ignorance on his part all through the Millennial Age down to its close that will keep him in rank rebellion against God? No, Satan was not, is not, and will not be ignorant of sin and its wages, and yet through it all, with unimpaired powers and clear knowledge, Satan chooses and wills to do evil. We here cite this remarkable case to show that perfect men—all the race—when the work of restitution (restoration to perfection) is complete—will still need to be tested to prove whether their wills are set to do right, or to do wrong.

God is not attempting to deal with the world now as he is dealing with the one true church. This is our time of trial, but in the next age when men will have their disabilities removed their trial or testing will begin, and in each individual case the course chosen under that trial, will decide his worthiness or unworthiness to pass beyond the Millennial Age, into the ages of glory to follow. “There shall in no wise enter into [that glorious city, the everlasting kingdom] anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life;” “and there shall be no more curse;” “and they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.” “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates [through the testing process] into the city”—the city for which Abraham looked—the city that hath foundations [of justice and Truth] whose designer and builder is God.”

THE AVOIDANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND SERVICE

“The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them, and they said unto the olive tree, reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign

over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon” Judges 9:8-15.

LOUIS XII of France was a man of ordinary gifts

and an indifferent sense of responsibility. Happily, his prime minister, George D'Amboise, was a wise and capable statesman. So, when important issues needed to be resolved or problems met, Louis habitually retreated from responsibility with the remark, "Let George do it." In due time this casual phrase became a palace joke and the motto of those intent on shifting responsibility, or any unpleasant or difficult task, to someone else.

It should be noted, of course, that Louis XII was neither the first nor the last of the "Let George do it" kind. One of the most striking of all Old Testament parables is built around the "Let George do it" theme. It is found in Judges 9:8-15. According to this parable, the trees wanted to select a king to reign over them. Their first choice was the olive tree—a wise choice, because it stood preeminent in the Middle East, honored for its good fruit, its abundant shade and its other resources. The invitation was given, "Reign thou over us." But the olive tree, "fat" and comfortable, had no wish to be disturbed, for the sake of serving the others. It was pleasant to be "at ease in Zion" (Amos 6:1), honored and unburdened by greater responsibilities.

The trees next called on the fig tree, not as distinguished as the olive, but nevertheless a tree of much value and importance. However, the fig tree also demurred, saying, "Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?" It felt quite satisfied in producing its good sweet fruit and was not interested in any greater service for the others.

The trees then invited the vine to reign over them, but it likewise declined, saying, "Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?" It in effect drew its righteous robes around itself and turned down the offer, remarking with casual indifference, "Let George do it."

Finally, in desperation, the trees turned to the bramble. It wasn't much of a tree, hardly worthy of being called one. Certainly it possessed none of the kingly qualities of the olive, or the fig, or even the vine, but someone had to be king, someone had to take the responsibility of ruling the trees with whatever wisdom and ability could be mustered. The bramble had some doubts about the good faith of those who had come asking it to be king over them. Quite possibly it suspected it had fallen heir to the throne by default. But, urged by the trees, the bramble proudly accepted the great responsibility, for which it was so ill fitted. It bound the trees to "come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon" (even the greatest of all trees).

Obviously, the parable of the trees bears the stamp of satire. But it also rings with realism because it is so true to life. Some people are gifted with many talents, having what is needed for special service—excellent education, good powers of speech, fine ability to organize, pleasant personality, *etc.* But instead of using their choice powers for the Lord and His people, many of them are given over to lives of self-interest or family prestige and, if they do profess to serve God, it is often with God-dishonoring doctrines, such as the creeds of the Dark Ages, that teach eternal life in torment, instead of death, as being God's punishment for the wicked, with no hope for any except the comparatively few who have heard of Jesus and accepted Him as their Savior. Many of the great leaders of Christendom even deny Jesus' death as essential for salvation, His virgin birth as the Son of God, His resurrection from the dead and the inspiration of God's Word in general.

The lesson for all of us is that whatever we have in our hand (Ex. 4:2), in our power, in our grasp, whether it be abilities and opportunities corresponding to those of the olive tree, the fig tree or the vine, whether we have five talents, two talents, or only one talent (Matt. 25:14-30), let us render unto God all our love, devotion and service, and find our chief delight in so doing. Let us not bury our talents or occupy them for self and the world.

ANOTHER REMARKABLE EXAMPLE

Another remarkable example of the spirit of "Let George do it," is found in Judges 5. Here the Prophetess Deborah sings with Barak of the glorious victory that God had given to Israel over King Jabin of Canaan and his captain Sisera. She praises those people who had valiantly taken part in the battle, and condemns those who had found excuses for not going up to the battle. Reuben declined the service, there were divisions of thought in the midst of this tribe, and as a result, instead of going to battle, they continued to abide "among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks" (vs. 15, 16), a warmer and safer place than the army camp. "Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea shore and abode in his breaches" (v. 17). Dan and Asher lay on the Mediterranean seacoast. Dan wished to be excused, probably pretending that it would not be wise to leave their ships unprotected or to discontinue their sea trade. Asher shifted responsibility and declined to go up to the battle with their brethren, probably claiming that they must stay at home to repair the breaches which the sea had in some places made upon their land. Such excuses remind us of our Lord's parable (Luke 14:15-24), in

which “they all with one consent began to make excuse” as to why they should not attend the feast; also of the Apostle’s words (Phil. 2:21), “For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.”

But above all Deborah and Barak condemned Meroz, and a curse was pronounced upon its inhabitants: “Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty” (Judges 5:23). Meroz may have been a city near the scene of battle (the exact location of the city is not known); its inhabitants evidently had good opportunity of rendering special service to the common cause, but basely declined it, for fear of Jabin’s 900 iron chariots, preferring to sleep in whole skins and to let others face the battle in their interests. God needed not their help; He could win the battle without them, but they spurned His offer to let them assist Him and their brethren in bringing victory to Israel and on their own behalf—they were cowardly, indifferent, indolent and selfish, and cared little about serving and fighting for the Lord and their brethren. Theirs was the spirit of “Let George do it.” God and Christ look upon those as against Them who are not with Them (Matt. 12:30). Meroz fully deserved God’s curse for spurning His favor and not engaging in His service.

WHERE WERE YOU?

Indifference, indolence and the avoidance of responsibility and service are enemies of achievement. During the second phase of the World War Mussolini remarked that one of his top commanders in the Italian army would have to be removed because he was unwilling to move. Then he added, “Never give a man a job unless he wants at least one promotion.” When in 1956 Khrushchev delivered his famous attack on Stalin he wept as he recounted how Stalin had killed off loyal Bolsheviks in his “purge.” The dead Russian dictator, said Khrushchev, massacred the flower of the Red Army leadership. It is reported that a crucial point during his address, there was a voice from the floor asking pointedly, “Where were you?”

This is indeed the question that every soldier of the cross should ask himself. Where were you when the Captain of your Salvation called for volunteers and others marshalled themselves to the battle? Where were you when a fellow soldier fell, overcome or wounded in the fight? Were you there to give him the needed help? Where were you when a comrade grew faint and weary in the journey? Were you there to lift up his hands and strengthen his feeble knees (Heb. 12:12)? Where were

you when the battle was raging and every resource was needed? Were you occupied mainly with personal, family and non-essential matters, or were you strenuously engaging in “the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12)?

The “battle of the great day of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14) is waged in this great “time of trouble,” which broke out in 1914 (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21; see *The Time Is At Hand*, pp. 101, 104); just where do you stand—on the side of sin and error, or on the side of righteousness and Truth? Are you fighting intelligently and diligently for the Truth, redeeming the time and making each blow count, or are you fighting “as one that beateth the air” (Eph. 5:16, 17; 1 Cor. 9:26)? Are you entangled with worldly cares and allurements, or are you “enduring hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2 Tim. 2:3, 4)? Are you possibly growing weary of well-doing, forgetting that we shall reap in due season, if we faint not (Gal. 6:9)? Just where will you be when the victorious soldiers of the cross gather joyfully in their home-coming, singing their triumphant songs? Will you be there?

We do not print these stories, Biblical and Worldly, with the purpose of harassing or making mockery of the choice of someone as to how they live each day, rather we use these examples as a means of making the sleeping ones to awaken. God has two commandments in regard to this thought: (1) “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). (2) “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates” (2 Cor. 13:5)?

The thought is study to show what God would approve, do not mind what men might think, but seek the approval of God. Yes, a workman which suggest the thought of being engaged in service. The word of Truth rightly divided and fairly presented commands the respect even of its opponents. It is our privilege and duty to try our own selves—look at our present condition as compared with the past. Whether I am something or nothing in God’s estimation is to be measured by my love for Him, His brethren, His cause, the world in general, and even my enemies, rather than my knowledge. Doing these things in the faith, trust and confidence of the word can bring great rewards, “Christ in you!”

**THE CAPACITY TO LEARN IS A GIFT;
THE ABILITY TO LEARN IS A SKILL;
THE WILLINGNESS TO LEARN IS A CHOICE.**



HAVE YOU MOVED OR
ARE YOU GOING TO BE MOVING?
RENEW TODAY!

TO:

OBITUARIES

Bro. Piotr Woznicki born March 22, 1921; died Aug. 15, 2019 following an extended illness. Bro. Piotr was very dedicated to Jehovah, the Truth as understood by Bible Standard Ministries [LHMM] and the Brethren. He was very spirited in his desire to serve the Lord and was used by the Lord for many years. We can say that the main purpose of his life was to serve the Lord, Jesus Christ and the brethren. He will be remembered for his dedication to the Epiphany Movement and his service visits throughout Poland, Europe, and the United States. He served the US Brethren in 1973 (when his wife Sr. Theresa accompanied him) and 1987 when he served at several conventions and classes in the US and Canada. Bro. Woznicki was appointed as an Evangelist in 1948 by Bro. Johnson; an Auxiliary Pilgrim in 1957 and a Pilgrim in 1973 by Bro. Jolly. Bro. Hedman appointed him as the Movement's Representative for Poland in 1990. Added to his responsibilities were the countries of Lithuania, Moldavia, Russia and Ukraine in 1994. His funeral was held in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki with Bro. Henryk Olekszy officiating. Four brothers spoke for a few minutes each at the grave site; Bros. H. Olekszy, K. Kielbowicz, P. Ozimek, E. Grodzinski. "Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." Ps 112:6

Sr. Mary Hall of Jamaica born February 25, 1923 died August 29, 2019. She was the last of seven, three truth brethren. She was the wife of our past representative for 46 yrs. This union produced no children. They were privileged to have Bro. Victor Liscombe share living expenses with them for many years. May their memories bring joy to our hearts.

Bro. Gods Will Onyeuko, Evangelist in Nigeria has finished his course of service at age 81. He is survived by wife, Sr. Catherine and son Gift. Funeral services conducted by our Representative, Bro. Friday Udom.

BIBLE STANDARD MINISTRIES 2020 CONVENTION

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA FEBRUARY 28, 29 & March 1, 2020

The Jacksonville, FL. Convention will be held at the Double Tree Hotel by Hilton at the Jacksonville Airport, 2101 Dixie Clipper Rd. Jacksonville, FL 32218. Phone 904-741-1997. Rates and Reservations: \$99.00 plus 13% tax, for 1-4 guests. A lunch will be provided on Friday and Saturday. **Make Reservations directly with the hotel by February 1, 2020. State that you are attending the Bible Standard Ministries Convention to secure the special rate and for a confirmation number.** The Hotel provides shuttle service from the airport to the hotel. For other inquiries contact, Derek Witko 732-520-9735 or Allyson Tonnone, 561-762-4852.

MUSKEGON MICHIGAN CONVENTION MAY 15, 16, 17, 2020

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