

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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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
BIBLE QUESTION**

ETERNAL LIFE—THE SOURCE OF

“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 6:23

This text should prove very helpful and encouraging to God’s loyal, consecrated, Truth-enlightened people, who by patient continuance in well-doing are seeking to lay hold on eternal life. Many scriptures indicate that the penalty for sin is death. Adam’s sin of disobedience brought death upon himself and the race that was in his loins; we have all come under the curse of death because of sin. God in His infinite love, and in harmony with His justice, has provided for eventual deliverance from this curse for all mankind; for He gave His only-begotten Son, who in turn “gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:6).

into union with Christ Jesus, under His headship. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9). Only those who come into harmony with God under Christ, and in whom *love* instead of *selfishness* becomes the ruling sentiment, will receive life everlasting on any plane of being.

GOD THE SOURCE OF ETERNAL LIFE

God is the source of eternal life. Satan has given life to some creatures, as we can see from his using the Egyptian sorcerers to make serpents from rods, to create so very many animalcules as to turn water into blood (red), and to bring frogs into existence; also he is doubtless responsible, as the executioner of the death penalty on the race (Heb. 2:14), for the creation of disease germs; but Satan cannot give anything, let alone human and spirit beings, eternal life. This God alone can do, and has in part already done, and will do in full in due time to those fit for it (Deut. 8:3; 30:20; 1 Sam. 2:6; Psa. 21:4; Matt. 4:4; Titus 1:2; 1 John 2:25; 5:1). Let us never forget that our bounteous God is the Source and sole Giver of eternal life, even though He gives it through the agency of His Son, Jesus Christ.

God is not only the planning Source of eternal life, but is also its fountain, its originating and its giving Source; for He planned it, provided the substances whose union makes soul as the presupposition and implication of life, and gave it; also, He planned the way and means of making it eternal, *i.e.*, He arranged for Jesus to be His Agent in giving life originally, and gave Him to be the meritorious cause of offering it to the fallen race, as well as the ministering cause of giving it through enlightenment, justification, sanctification and deliverance, now for the elect, and later for the non-elect, in the next Age, as well as for the penitent fallen angels. And at the highest cost to Himself He did this, even giving up His only begotten and well-beloved Son therefor unto all the experiences of His life in the flesh. Let us worship, praise, adore and serve God for His unspeakable gift!

JESUS’ RELATION TO GIVING LIFE

But while the Father is the planning, fountain, originating and giving Source of eternal life, Jesus is its

Do not worry about your life. . .

**look at the birds
of the air; they
neither sow nor reap
nor gather into barns,
and yet your heavenly
Father feeds them. Are
you not of more value than
they?**

Matthew 6:25-26



God’s plan provided for the ransom from the grave: “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction . . .” (Hosea 13:14).

But the benefits of the ransom are applicable only *to those who fully believe this*; and so far such believers have been only a few compared with the mass of mankind. Only the consecrated, Spirit-begotten believers have escaped from the Adamic condemnation, so long upon all. The Apostle Paul says in Rom. 8:1: “There is therefore now no condemnation to *them which are in Christ Jesus*, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” And in v. 2 he states: “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” With this, he calls attention to two laws in operation. We were under the second of these, which sentenced us, as sinners, to death. We, *who are in Christ Jesus*, got out from under it entirely and came instead under the first when we came

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Agent, the one through whom God gives it. As God's Agent He was used by God to bestow life upon all God's creatures in heaven and earth in creation, as the following passages prove: Gen. 1:26; John 1:3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16, 17.

But not only in the original creation was He God's Agent in bestowing life; also in redemption He is God's Agent in meriting the privilege of re-bestowing it upon humanity (Matt. 20:28; John 3:14-16; 1 Cor. 7:23; Gal. 1:4; Col. 1:14; 1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:14). And having merited it, He was made by God its imparting or ministering Agent, now to the elect, later to the non-elect, through the work of teaching, justifying, sanctifying and delivering them, as the following Scriptures prove: Isa. 25:8; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 John 5:11; Jude 21. Also, He will be such an Agent to minister life to the penitent fallen angels (Rom. 14:9; Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20; 2 Tim. 4:1).

It is by the combined goodness of God and Christ that eternal life is made possible to the elect, the non-elect and the penitent fallen angels. Here may we cry out, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12)! And we may well anticipate the universal hallelujah chorus in singing, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (v. 13)!

THE PROCESS OF GIVING ETERNAL LIFE

Eternal life is produced through a long-drawn-out process. It is first offered tentatively in the original creation of God's free moral agents, *i.e.*, spirit and human beings. God offered it tentatively to the Logos in His creation; and it would become fixedly His as He proved loyal. Doubtless it had become fixedly His before His carnation; for before then it probably had been given fixedly to the angels who faithfully stood the tests that came before the flood. At any rate, it evidently was fixedly theirs by the beginning of the Gospel Age (Luke 20:35, 36). So, too, in their creation it was tentatively given to the angels.

Eternal life is effected by God through Christ by a creative process. This is true of tentative eternal life, as well as of fixed eternal life; for God tentatively gave eternal life to all directly created free moral agents—spirit and human, *i.e.*, He gave them the ability to live eternally as a present, not unconditionally, but contingent upon their obeying the law under which they were put. The angels were put under the law of duty love and disinterested love and were told that they would continue to enjoy

eternal life, if they obeyed this law; but if not, they would ultimately lose it. The human family in Adam and Eve were given eternal life tentatively under the law of duty love, and would continue to have it, if they obeyed; but if not, they would lose it. Again, in producing New Creatures, God tentatively gave these the right to live eternally as spirit beings on condition of obedience to the law of duty and disinterested love; but if they would not obey, they would lose it. In the Millennium God will tentatively give the Ancient and Youthful Worthies the right to eternal life as humans, on condition of obedience; but if they do not obey, they will lose it; whereas if they do obey, that right will become fixedly theirs.

In vitalizing the justification of those who became New Creatures, God fixedly gave their humanity the right to eternal human life, like that of the post-Millennial Ancient and Youthful Worthies. But at their Spirit-begetting at the sacrifice of their humanity, the tentative right to spirit life was given them, as will be the case with the Ancient and Youthful Worthies in the Little Season. During the Millennial Age Christ will gradually give the race life-rights as they will obey, and at its end will give them the completion of these rights and the right to eternal human life tentatively, which will become fixedly theirs, if they obey faithfully amid the trials of the Little Season, while the unfaithful will forfeit their tentative right to eternal life and its life-rights. We see that the tentative right to eternal life on the various planes of being is given as a gracious gift by God; and the fixed right to eternal life on any plane will be given to fulfillers of its conditions.

ETERNAL JOY GIVEN WITH ETERNAL LIFE

It is physically possible for God to prolong life eternally in sinful beings, even as it would have occurred, had He permitted Adam and Eve after their sin to eat of the life-continuing trees of the original Paradise (Gen. 3:22-24), and as we see from the facts that, while the characters of the fallen angels have become depraved, their faculties have not so become, and that it will require a special act of God by Christ to destroy them; nevertheless, it is *morally impossible* for God to prolong life eternally in the wicked; for in a moral order of affairs the law of life and death must prevail—life for the obedient and death for the disobedient.

So, too, it would be physically possible for God to give eternal life amid conditions in which unalloyed joy would not be perfectly present, as is partly illustrated by the preservation of fallen angels without diminishing their life forces; nevertheless, it would not be morally possible

for Him so to do, *i.e.*, in harmony with His character of perfect wisdom, power, justice and love. Those who get the fixed right to eternal life will enjoy that right in perfect happiness amid conditions adorned with life-rights, *i.e.*, perfect powers and surroundings pertinent to their planes of existence; *e.g.*, the fixed life-rights of the restitution class will eternally be to have in joy perfect bodies, earth, climate, atmosphere, health, food, drink, shelter, dominion over the earth, its contents and its pertinent laws of nature, social arrangements, education, companionship, worship, *etc.*

The necessity for eternal life is not a compulsion of God by an alleged blind fate that He cannot resist or by a mistake on His part. Nor is it due to an inherent life in spirit and human beings by virtue of which they must continue to live regardless of their virtue or sin; for neither Scripture nor reason nor facts substantiate such a view, whose author is likewise Satan.

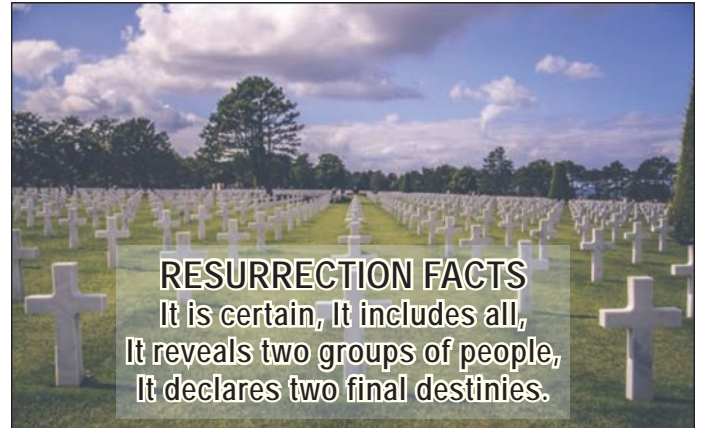
Apart from God [necessity of eternal life, because of His inherent nature], and apart from those who attain His nature [since, attaining such, there is for them also a physical necessity of eternal life] the necessity for eternal life, for all others who will attain eternal life, is *not* a physical one, but a moral one; *i.e.*, in God's order where moral law controls as to life and death, it is His law that prompts Him to give eternal life fixedly to all who under fitting tests prove to His satisfaction that their harmony with His law is such as will maintain loyalty to that law under every condition in which He will be pleased to place them.

And it was because of this Divine order in the moral universe that God required the utmost crucial tests of loyalty to Him and to His Spirit, Word and providences to be endured successfully by Jesus and the Little Flock class, who attained immortality, as a demonstration that no circumstance nor combination of circumstances could induce them to be unfaithful to Him and His Spirit, Word and providences, but that He could depend fully upon their loyalty to Him and to His Spirit, Word and providences under any circumstance or combination of circumstances. Other classes, not developing so faithful characters as these, will, if successful to God's satisfaction under trials, be given everlasting life, but not of a death-proof, immortal, kind.

JOYS OF VARIOUS SAVED CLASSES

The highest joys of heaven will by God through Christ be bestowed upon Christ's Bride. Among these the highest are their sight of, association with, and service of

God and Christ. Then, too, there are the joys that they derive from the possession of the Divine nature, heirship of God and joint-heirship with Christ. As heirs of God they, unitedly with Christ as His joint-heirs, own all the universes of God, with all their wealth and possibilities, and that as an undivided inheritance. As Christ's joint-heirs they share with Him in His offices, powers, honors and work. The joys of eternal life are not idleness and self-indulgence.



Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:28-29).

I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust (Acts 24:15).

It will be the privilege of the Christ class to lead all other ranks of spirit beings, including the Ancient and Youthful Worthies, Great Company, in God's future creative works, whatever they will be. Millennially they will have the joy of restoring the obedient of the race to perfection and eternal life. Their eternal work thereafter will be to develop their universal inheritance in planet after planet unto perfection, and to bring into existence the new orders of beings that God will plan and then give them to develop perfectly unto fitness for everlasting life; for as God did not form the earth in vain, but to be inhabited, so has He not formed in vain, but created to be inhabited by perfect beings, the other planets of our solar system, and the planets of all other solar systems, not only in our universe, but in all others of God's universes.

This we know to be the case from the Christ class's heirship of God [who will not give them an inheritance that is to remain undeveloped] and from the teaching that Christ's kingdom and dominion will be an eternally increasing one. The following are some of the

Scriptures treating of these thoughts, Psa. 16:11; Isa. 33:17; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 5:3, 8, 12; Luke 12:32; John 12:26; Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 5:1; Eph. 1:18; Col. 1:5; 1 Thes. 2:12; 2 Thes. 2:14; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 2:7; 3:21; 14:1; 21:1. Accordingly, the eternal rest (Heb. 4:9) for the Christ class is not one of idleness; rather, it is one of eternal activity, but without the toil, labor and accompanying weariness which marked their earthly service (Rev. 14:13).

The foregoing refers to those forms of joy of eternal life belonging to those who will have immortality—the Divine nature. But joy will be the portion also of all who attain eternal life on planes of being lower than that of the Divine nature. The seven orders of spirit beings that we call angels (in the wider sense of the word): cherubim, seraphim, principalities, thrones, powers, dominions and angels (in the narrow sense of the word), are now joyous in the presence of God and the Lamb and have served them along creative and providential lines, especially in ministering the Divine Revelation and in ministering otherwise to the saints and the rest of God's people (Gen. 16:7; Num. 20:16; Psa. 103:20, 21; Zech. 1:12-14; Luke 15:10; Acts 5:19, 20; 7:35; Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16; 2:10; Heb. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:12). The penitent fallen, but restored angels will eternally share in the privileges that the unfallen ones will have as their perpetual portion.

The three subordinate elect classes, Great Company, Ancient and Youthful Worthies, who will attain spirit existence as a reward for their service of God in this life, will also have many joys in eternal life, though not attaining immortality. These joys include sight of, and association with God, Christ and His Bride. They will be privileged to serve God forever in co-operation with, and subordination to the Christ, first in the Millennium, the Great Company in the Kingdom's spiritual phase, and the Ancient and Youthful Worthies in its earthly phase. And thereafter they will serve with and under the Christ, in carrying forward to completion God's future plans in developing all planets to perfection, and creating new orders of beings and bringing them up to the perfection of eternal life (Gen. 22:16-18; Num. 3:40-51; Psa. 45:14-16; 72:3; 107:32; Isa. 1:26; 32:1; 60:13; 62:1; Dan. 12:13; Joel 2:28; Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28; 1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Tim. 2:20; Rev. 7:9-17).

The restitution class, consisting of the *quasi*-elect Consecrated Epiphany Campers, and the non-elect, in its earthly form of eternal life will have many joys in Paradise. They will be in perfect harmony with God and

the Christ and with one another. Neither sin nor error nor the curse will ever blight their paradisiac bliss. Theirs will be a perfect dominion over the earth, its animal life and its natural laws. They will go on eternally expanding their stock of knowledge along all lines, bringing out new inventions and developing the arts in perfection. They will achieve in the use of nature's laws far greater wonders than most miracles of the Bible. Their supreme love for God and Christ and their equal love for one another with all implied therein amid a perfect paradise will make a heaven out of earth for them. They will be as happy as is possible for perfect humans to be, and that with no cloud to darken the sky of their joy (Psa. 85:9; 89:36; 113:3; 145:10; Isa. 4:2, 3; 11:6-10; 25:8; 29:18, 19; 32:15-17; 35:1, 2, 10; 45:8, 23, 24; 49:8; 55:12, 13; 65:17-25; Jer. 4:2; 31:34; Micah 4:4; Zeph. 3:9; Zech. 2:11; 9:10; Mal. 1:11; Luke 2:10; John 10:16; Eph. 1:10; Phil. 2:10, 11; Rev. 15:4; 22:3).

Certainly, the above statements and the corroborative Scriptures cited give us a heart-satisfying prospect of the joys of eternal life for all classes that will obtain it.

THE PURPOSES OF ETERNAL LIFE

The purposes of everlasting life are varifold. One purpose is that all enjoying it may ever grow in appreciation of the Heavenly Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:3). A second is that the worthy may taste its joys everlastingly, each one of those joys pertinent to his class (Psa. 13:5; 16:11; 36:8; 45:15; Isa. 25:9; 35:10; 61:10). A third is that they may have the privilege of fellowship with God and Christ forever (Isa. 51:11; 66:10; Zech. 2:10). A fourth is that they may serve God and Christ eternally, each according to his place (Rev. 21:3). A fifth is that each in his place may reign over his Divinely given dominion forever (Rev. 22:5). A sixth is that they may enjoy its blessings eternally (Rev. 14:13; Jude 24; Psa. 13:5; 17:15). And a seventh is that they may be everlastingly in good fellowship (Isa. 12:1-6; 65:17-25).

SOME WILL FAIL TO GAIN ETERNAL LIFE

Those who in this Age fail to gain it are those who were once enlightened by the Word, who tasted the gift of justification that God from heaven gave them, who received the begetting of the Spirit, who appreciated the good things of God's Word, and who appreciated the privileges of the next Age; but after receiving all these favors they turned back into sin, error, selfishness and worldliness in such love of them as to become completely hardened therein, and so destroy the holy Spirit out of their hearts. Some have crucified afresh the Son of God,

by a denial of His ransom-sacrifice, casting off the precious wedding garment; and they repudiated their share in the Sin-offering (but all do not necessarily do all of these three things). They committed the sin unto death, from which there will be no rescue for them (Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-29; 2 Pet. 2:1, 12, 20, 21; 1 John 5:16).

The Scriptures also assure us that some will lose eternal life as humans in the next Age. These will be of two classes. First, those who after being for 100 years favored with the blessed and easy conditions of the Millennial Highway of Holiness (Isa. 35:8) will refuse to reform even externally, which will result in their being destroyed in the Second Death. These are those referred to as the lad and infant of days in Isa. 65:20. But this passage refers to another class also—the old men who will not fill their Millennial days with good. It is true that they will during the Millennium externally reform, else they would not be allowed more than 100 years for external reformation. They will outwardly abstain from wrongdoing; but they will not do good. The “sheep” class will Millennially feed the bread of life to those who hunger for it, give the water of life to those who thirst for it, bring those who are strangers to the New Covenant into their hospitality in it, clothe those destitute of righteousness with it as a garment, help cure the sin-sick of their sin-maladies and visit with their prayer for recovery.

“Say to those who are fearful-hearted, “Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you.”

Isaiah 35:4

In comparison the “old men,” the “goat” class, while selfishly appropriating to themselves the Millennial good things, will not minister to such hungry, thirsty, alien, naked, sick and imprisoned ones (Matt. 25:31-46). So when the Little Season at the Millennium’s end [with its tests of character that will search out and reveal their innermost motives and dispositions] will overtake them, they will stand revealed in their true hearts’ attitude, as not loving God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, but as willing to wrong even their benefactors, the Ancient and Youthful Worthies, which will result in their being irretrievably destroyed in the Second Death (Acts 3:23; Isa. 65:20; Rev. 20:15;

21:8). Accordingly, some during the Gospel Age, and some during and at the end of the Millennial Age, will lose eternal life.

THE INESTIMABLE VALUE OF ETERNAL LIFE

Valuable, indeed, is eternal life, both in its immortality and mortality forms. Certainly, the spirit nature or natures that the Great Company and Ancient and Youthful Worthies will obtain [we do not know whether these three will obtain the same or different natures on the spirit plane] will be more valuable than the human; for if they will obtain the nature of angels, it will still be higher and more valuable than human nature (Heb. 2:5-9).

Nevertheless, human nature in its perfection of body, mind, heart and will, enjoyed amid paradisiac conditions, is also a thing of great value, so valuable, indeed, that its possessors will be eternally happy and blissful in the great blessings that it inseparably implies. Life is one of God’s most valuable gifts. Even on the human plane in imperfection, even temporal human life is the most valued individual possession, as Jesus implies when He asks, what will a man give in exchange for his soul, or life (Matt. 16:26)? Aspirants for eternal life on any of its varied planes should endeavor with every power of being to obtain this inestimable gift as their everlasting possession. The Apostle exhorts us to “fight the good fight of faith,” and to “lay hold on eternal life” (1 Tim. 6:12).

Laying hold on eternal life implies several things: (a) As to our intellects it implies a proper knowledge, understanding and belief in it. (b) As to our affections it implies a confidence in, an appropriation of, and a hearty response to its promises. (c) A desire, expectation, a self-rule, and cheerful perseverance as to obtaining it. (d) A duty and disinterested love toward God, Christ, the brethren, the world and enemies as connected with it. (e) A self and world abasement for it, peace as to getting it, and detaching our affections from things hindersome, and longing for the Word, Spirit and providences helpful to obtaining it, and loving it for its intrinsic value. (f) As to the will, laying hold on eternal life implies its fixing on the things that make for obtaining it and setting the will against the things hindersome to getting it. (g) As to effort, it implies that the activities of one’s whole being, mind, heart, and strength be exercised in favor of the things that make for its attainment and against the things that oppose attaining it. This is *laying hold* on eternal life.

INDUCEMENTS TO SEEKING ETERNAL LIFE

Oh, multitudinous are the reasons that should induce us to lay hold on God's gift-reward of eternal life. We should seek eternal life because God most lovingly, as our Father, desires us to do so; He has invited us; He has made every arrangement helpful toward our gaining it. This includes His providing, at great cost to Himself, the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord Jesus to make it meritoriously possible for us to obtain it, His giving the Word with its enlightening, energizing, restraining, encouraging, justifying, sanctifying and delivering power to enable us to gain it, His bestowing upon us the Spirit, with its abilities of mind, heart and will, as a sufficient internal power to enable us to attain it, His providing the ministry of Jesus to supply all the external support that we need to get it, His bestowing sonship on us, wherein He gives us (tentatively) the right to it, and His giving us all the providences needed to assist and support us while we are endeavoring to obtain it.

We should lay hold on eternal life because of its intrinsic value, the privileges that it gives its possessors, the opportunities that it gives for usefulness toward God and His creatures, the rewards that it bestows upon its obtainers, present and future. It confers joy and peace on those who gain it and the purposes that it serves toward God and others.

We should lay hold on it because we are invited to attain it, because we have accepted this invitation, because we have made public confession of its acceptance, because of past efforts expended to get it, because it gives us the glorious present privileges belonging to its hope, because of the encouragement that its prospect gives us to press on to gain it and the uplift in character that such effort give us.

Yes, the invitation given in Rev. 18:4, Come out of Babylon my people, continues to the non-spirit-begotten Epiphany consecrated ones to this very day. God sets forth the attainment of a glorious perfect earthly existence in the Mediatorial Kingdom, and eternal life as of the antitypical Miriam class (Ex. 15:20, 21), the highest of the Post-Millennial classes on earth. To all of God's consecrated people, according to their places in His Plan, we give the loving exhortation to be faithful unto the end, for it will bring eternal life in His Kingdom as a gift-reward.

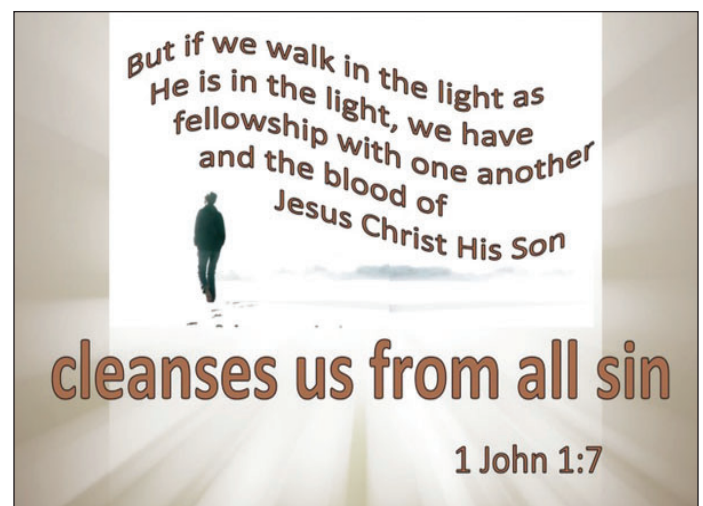
We should lay hold on it because this will help us to please and glorify God and Christ, will lighten the efforts that Jesus and our brethren make to help us gain

it, will stimulate others by our example to press on to get it, will now give us better fruitfulness through our teaching on it to others in the way of helping them to achieve it, and will fit us to help the world to gain it in the next Age.

HOW TO LAY HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE

Multitudinous are the ways of our laying hold on God's gift-reward of eternal life. The spirit that should mark our efforts to gain it is (a) one of humble gratitude to God for making us the offer and making our attaining it possible, and to Jesus for His ministerial acts of making this possible (His acts of enlightening, energizing, encouraging, correcting, justifying, sanctifying and delivering us unto our gaining it), (b) one of large appreciation of God's and Christ's Spirit marking all their pertinent acts, (c) one of entire consecration to God and Christ, and (d) one of faithfulness in our efforts to gain it. If these and other accordant qualities mark our spirit as we seek to lay hold on eternal life, without any doubt we will make by Divine grace a success of it. How grateful we are to have the enlightenment, heart-warming and energizing of the holy Spirit of understanding as our guide.

To have life everlasting on the perfected earth there are certain things that must be done. The natural body will be preserved through proper food, drink, air, rest, care, exercise, fellowship with God, Christ, the Brethren, and by partaking of the Word of God as our spiritual food and drink. We will maintain such fellowship with God and Christ by prayer, meditation, and participation with them in the privileges and obligations of our consecration (1 John 1:3-7). Finally, all our affections must cleave unbreakable to eternal life and its attainment. Doing this, we will lay hold and retain hold on eternal life.



THE REASONABLENESS OF GOD'S PLAN REQUIRES A TIME OF TROUBLE

"The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers" (1 Pet. 3:12).

Everything pertaining to Jehovah's great Plan of Salvation outlined in the Word of God is reasonable. For example, the crucial testing of the elect Church was necessary in order that as faithful and merciful priests of God and of Christ, associated with Him in His kingly glory, they may be God's instrumentality in succoring mankind. They will lift man from the fallen conditions which have resulted from more than six thousand years of sin, and from the malignant influence of the prince of darkness. This "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21), will be accomplished during the "thousand years" which the Bible sets forth as the period of Messiah's reign (Rev. 20:1-15)—a period neither too long nor too short in which to accomplish the great work of the world's salvation.

But someone might ask if it has required nineteen centuries for the development of the Church, a smaller company, how much more time will be necessary for the uplifting of the whole world? We answer that it is not the Divine Purpose to uplift the world to the station of *spirit* nature and glory, but rather to *earthly* restitution blessings and conditions. It is because of the higher exaltation that was offered to the Church that such crucial testings of sacrificial obedience even unto death were required of them.

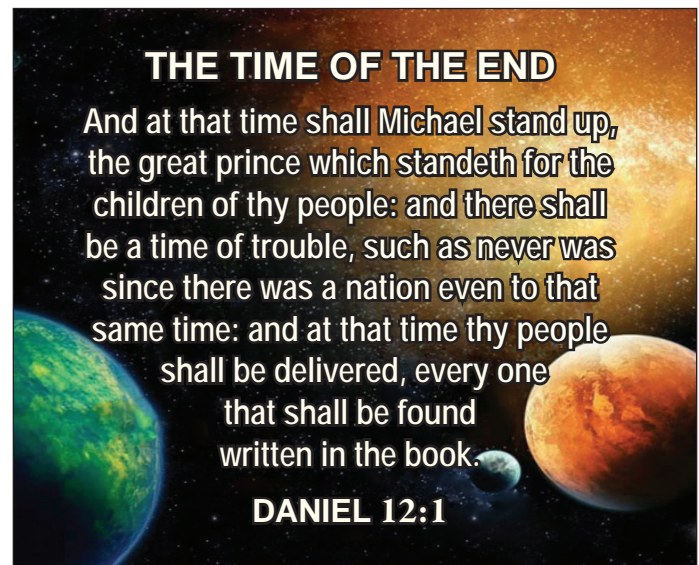
THE PRESENT EVIL WORLD

The Present Evil World is a result of Satan's work and influence through mankind's selfish weaknesses, that has resulted in a thorough corruption of religion, governments, institutions, education, unions, etc., so much so that make it impossible for our Lord to reform it. It requires a total dismantling and destruction of these evil organizations and systems so that after every vestige of the Present Evil World is destroyed. The Great Time of Trouble is the method the Bible says will be a necessary feature of God's Plan to prepare for the Kingdom.

THE GREAT TIME OF TROUBLE

The great "time of trouble" (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21), which began in 1914, including the time in which we are now living, the transition time between the Gospel Age and the Millennial Age, the Kingdom period (Rev. 18:15-18), is when the great symbolic city, Babylon (the great religion-political combination is

Christendom), is to go down as a millstone cast into the sea, to rise no more; and when this takes place, many will be found "weeping and wailing" (v. 19) for "that great city"—that ruled in Christendom; but certain ones, the resurrected saints, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ in His glory, honor, and immortality, are in v. 20 exhorted to then rejoice over her destruction. We quote from the A.R.V. which renders more correctly the Greek text: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and prophets: for God hath judged your judgment on her."



The "new heaven" that will take control and rule in the "new earth" is "the holy city, new Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:1, 2; 2 Pet. 3:13). This "new heaven" will rejoice greatly in the final overthrow of Satan's empire, with its evil heaven (the spiritual powers, false religious systems, of Satan and his demons) and its evil earth (the present evil order of affairs—social, political, financial, etc.—2 Pet. 3:7). All of the 144,000 saints (Rev. 14:1-5) in the New Jerusalem, with its "twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. 21:14), and its prophets, (those who served in the secondary office in the Church, 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11)—the whole Body of Christ, with Jesus the Head, will then rejoice that the old Satanic order, "the heavens and the earth, which are now," "this present evil world," will have completely passed away (Isa. 65:17; 2 Pet. 3:7; Gal. 1:4; Rev. 6:14; 20:11). Thus, of the Christ class (the New Heaven) the three groups, Apostles, Prophets and Saints in general, are specified.

Hence the twelve Apostles, the only ones ever to hold the Apostolic office in the Church, are obviously referred to in Rev. 18:20 (BS '63, p. 32).

The intimation of the Scriptures is that if these troublous days should not be shortened, no flesh would be delivered. Whether this implies some limited form of nuclear war, we do not know. But for the elect's sake—by virtue of the Kingdom of God's Elect being established—the days will be shortened (Matt. 24:22)—that is, curtailed before complete destruction overtakes the entire human race.

Then will come the reign of the Prince of Peace, and, as the prophets declare, He shall be like unto Solomon, who had no wars, but to whom every knee bowed and every tongue confessed (Isa. 9:6, 7; Luke 11:31). Christ's Kingdom of righteousness will be a Kingdom of peace, built above the rubble left by the effects of this time of trouble.

PEACE VERSUS THE SWORD

We base our thoughts for this article on two scriptures: Matt. 10:34 “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword,” and Luke 12:51 “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.”

We know that our Lord does not contradict Himself but these two Scriptures, on the surface, seem to. This thought begs of further remarks! Just what did the Great Teacher mean when He declared, “I am come not to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Matt. 10:34). Ah! He referred prophetically to the *effect* which His gracious message of love and favor would produce *in the world during the reign of sin*. He well knew that Satan, the prince of darkness, would oppose not only Him but also His followers. He foretold that whosoever would live godly would suffer persecution (Matt. 24:9, 10; 2 Tim. 3:12)—and so it has been. Nineteen centuries have proven it! He sent forth His followers, like Himself, unarmed, to be peacemakers, to be helpers, to “follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). He counseled His followers, “all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matt. 26:52).

But the message of peace and love and the good news of the coming Kingdom—that Kingdom which is to bless

You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.

Matthew 24:6

the whole world and fulfill the angelic prophecy—these things, ironically, seem to anger the world—not merely the unbelievers, the ungodly, but, sad to say, many professing Christians who have schemes and plans and theories of their own to work out—many of which are contrary to the Gospel message. The darkness, more or less mixed with selfishness, hates the light, the Truth, and the love of God. Nor will it come to the light, lest its deeds of darkness, selfishness, ambition, and hypocrisy should be made manifest.

The Master knew what the effects of His Gospel message would be. Only by compromise with the world can His followers live completely at peace with this world. Conversely, all who have been loyal and faithful to Him have been traduced, slandered, persecuted, “beheaded,” either literally or figuratively. His words, therefore, were a prophecy respecting the tribulations which all His footstep followers could expect.

But more than this, His words were a prophecy respecting the *nations*. What is it that has brought us to our present degree of “civilized savagery”? What is it, for example, that makes so many multinational corporations “buccaneers,” as it were, aggressively seeking the takeover of their competitors? What is it that has sharpened the wits of humanity to such an extent that so many find it difficult to be honest, exploiting any opportunity for profit through dishonesty? It is impossible for legislators to make new laws of sufficient scope and with sufficient rapidity to keep peace with the intelligent—and innovative—methods of circumvention, especially in this age of the worldwide internet and multiple forms of instant electronic communication.

ENLIGHTENMENT FOSTERS DISHONESTY

In an odd way, the laws, doctrines of Christ, are in a certain sense responsible for all this. How? The *liberty* wherewith Christ makes free His followers, and the light which He and they let shine upon a darkened world, when received *in part* into unsanctified hearts and minds, can produce a wisdom that, misapplied, becomes *cunning* or *craftiness*—a selfish kind of cleverness. In proportion as the nations of Christendom have abandoned what Scriptural Truths they had, in that proportion they have been losing their influence for good. Now we see other, non-Christian nations, once in the background, emerging as world powers. Anglo-American business methods once

considered—erroneously—as an exemplification of “Christian” intelligence, have to a large extent enabled these nations to become competitors with the (once) so-called Christendom.

PEACE DESIRED, WAR NECESSARY

We are averse to war, on general principles. We are extreme in our sentiment for peace. Yet we cannot close our eyes to the facts of history—practically every blessing has come to the world through war, at the cost of cruel bloodshed. Where would America be today had there been no War of Independence? Where would the nations of Europe be today if they had not fought to maintain their national liberties? What would happen to every nation if they would refuse to fight to protect their borders? There is no conflict between this particular commonsense view of the matter and the teachings of our Savior.

In speaking of the nations of the world our Lord declared, “Nation shall rise against nation,” and there shall be wars (Matt. 24:6, 7). This statement begs an explanation: war is not the disease, but merely a symptom of the disease in society and in the affairs of earth. So long as the disease [sin] continues, its outward manifestation, war, is bound to continue. Sin and war are inseparable. There would be only two ways of inhibiting war: (1) By the conversion of the nations from a condition of the hardness of heart, selfishness, and sin, to a condition of righteousness, tenderness of heart, and generosity; (2) by the establishment of a government or power not swayed by sin, to supervise, overrule, and control human affairs by superior strength. God’s Plan will do this in due time!

The leading minds of the world clearly recognize conditions in world society as we have presented it. Many of the reforms of our day have come of necessity, not of goodwill, and they will not satisfy the appetite of the growing discontent. Each concession of the favored classes to the masses is like throwing food to a pursuing pack of hungry wolves. They stop to devour the advantage but have their appetites thereby whetted for more. The world of mankind is filled with discontent. As



Signs of The End

Matthew 24 / Luke 21

False Christ's,
Wars, Rumors of Wars,
Nation vs Nation,
Kingdom vs Kingdom,
Famines, Pestilence,
Earthquakes,
Abomination of Desolation,
Christian Persecution,
Close Betrayals,
Christian Martyrdom,
False Prophets, Lawlessness,
Israel Regathered

the political and financial powers begin to crumble in influence, the warfare will merge toward terrorism and anarchy, which the Scriptures describe as “every man’s hand against his neighbor.”

The Higher Critics have done their work well, destroying faith in the only Book for which Divine inspiration can be claimed. Education has done its part and commercialism its part until the world is on fire with selfish ambition—an

insatiable desire for riches and luxuries.

What does it mean to be a true Christian? We refer to our 2019 Motto Text: “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple”; and “whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:27, 33). Jesus explains very clearly what the cross implies—that whoever would be His disciple would have to endure hardships, be evil spoken of, suffer persecution, and in many cases find foes in his own household. We include v. 33, “whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”

Many of the Lord’s most faithful children live in a matrimonial furnace of affliction. None should expect that the present life will be a smooth and pleasant dream of earthly felicity. No one should be surprised if he is called upon to endure much for the Truth’s sake and to evidence to God his faithfulness to Him and to His Word, and his willingness to endure all the fiery trials that God sees best for him to have for developing the graces of the Spirit in his character.

Opportunities for cross-bearing will be found in one’s daily experiences. If, for instance, the opposition of husband or wife is engendered by the spouse’s faithfulness to the Lord, in doing His will, the bearing of this opposition by the spouse would be cross-bearing, because of his enduring it for Christ’s sake, for the cause of truth and righteousness. The same principle applies in connection with opposition from other members of the household, also opposition encountered in our relationships with the brethren, business associates,

friends, neighbors, *etc.* Our perseverance in withstanding anything that would cross us in our faithfulness to Christ our Head and Master would be a part of our cross-bearing.

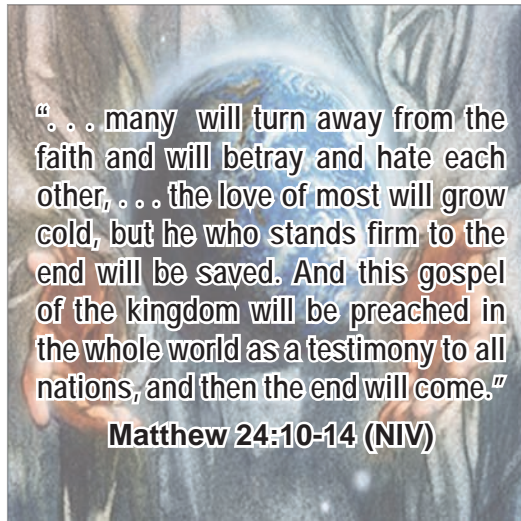
We will be faithful in our stewardship and discipleship only as we put God first in all our thoughts, words, and doings. This means, in many instances, the uprooting of earthly friendships and the sundering of many tender ties, even as Jesus said concerning His disciples:

“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law” (Matt. 10:32-35). The *Truth* will do the separating. Our Lord’s prophecy has proven true throughout the Gospel Age, and especially during the Harvests of the Jewish and Gospel Ages.

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH

Paradoxical as it may seem, God’s faithful consecrated people are the greatest warriors the world has ever known. Yet, on the other hand, the followers of Christ are instructed to be peacemakers, to “follow peace with all men,” to “live peaceably with all,” so far as in them lies, and to “follow after the things which make for peace” (Matt. 5:9; Heb. 12:14; Rom. 12:18; 14:19). This, however, is based on loyalty to and full compliance with the Truth and its Spirit.

The paradox of the “peacemakers,” those whom God has called to peace (1 Cor. 7:15) and who are fighting the good fight of faith as “good soldiers of Jesus Christ,” “the Captain of their salvation” (2 Tim. 2:3; Heb. 2:10), is similar to the paradox of the One called “the Prince of Peace”, of whom it is said, “The Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means” (Isa. 9:6; 2 Thes. 3:16), in His statement, “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division” (Luke 12:51). “The wisdom that is from above is *first pure, then peaceable*” (James 3:17). The peace *with* God and the peace *of* God (Rom. 5:1; Phil. 4:7) can be established and maintained only on the basis of the



“ . . . many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, . . . the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

Matthew 24:10-14 (NIV)

Truth of God’s Word and its Spirit.

Fighting the good fight of faith is not applicable to the world in general, rather only to God’s consecrated people, the loyal soldiers of the cross. It would have been wholly out of order for St. Paul, as an officer and mouthpiece of the great Captain of our salvation, to give instructions to those who have never joined His army; so it is evident that the world is not addressed here. From the world’s standpoint, Christ’s army of faithful followers is comparatively very

small, unimportant, and insignificant. But its excellence consists in its quality rather than in its quantity. To these the instructions come that the fight is on and that our great Commander-in-Chief expects each soldier to do his duty, to stand bravely by the colors of truth and righteousness and perseveringly to bear them up against all attacks.

A CONSTANT WARFARE

In our consecrated life the new heart, mind, and will are to wage a constant warfare against the fleshly desires. From the start, we are to remember that we “*have* put off the old man with his deeds, and *have* put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Col. 3:9, 10). But throughout our earthly sojourn to our promised inheritance we must “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12); we must “keep the body under, and bring it into subjection,” (1 Cor. 9:27); we must continually, day by day, “put off, according to the former course of life, that old man, corrupted by deceitful desires; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and be you clothed with that new man, who [which], according to God, has been formed in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Eph. 4:22-24—Diaglott). There is constant conflict between the Spirit and the flesh (Gal. 5:16, 17). Indeed, we must “walk circumspectly” if we would “abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (Eph. 5:15; 1 Pet. 2:11). Walk “as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance” (1 Pet. 1:14).

Even Jesus had to be tested in all points like as we are (yet without sin—Heb. 4:15) before He received God’s final “well done.” When Jesus was on the mount of temptation, Satan strongly appealed to Him through the desires of His flesh (PT ‘65, pp. 29, 30), but He rebuked

and overcame Satan, saying, among other things: “It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10). And we must be similarly tested, for “as he is, so are we in this world”; this love (our full devotion to God) must be made perfect in us (developed, tested and approved), if we are to have confidence in the day of judgment (1 John 4:17). “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ” (Rom. 14:10); His final decisions as the Father’s Representative are given here in the end of the Gospel Age as to who of His disciples have held His headship faithfully and who have not, and they are rewarded accordingly.

The Truth message that we follow is based on the teachings of Pastors, Russell, Johnson, and Jolly. We must reject all false teachings: “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me” (Matt. 15:8). Of their religious observances, Jesus said: “You make clean the outside—like whited walls and sepulchers clean and beautiful outside, but full of decay and corruption within.” As a consecrated child of God, we often hear the thought given that this movement is too small to serve Jehovah’s needs! We have been and are told by the nominal church systems that we should get out of their way. When this same charge was made against Jesus, our head—that he was opposing and hindering the God-appointed leaders and teachers, the Chief Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, he said: “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword [Truth is a sword]. For I came to set . . . at variance . . . and a man’s foes shall be they of his own household . . . and he that does not take his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me” (Matt. 10:34-38).

Truth never has led the majority during this time when evil is permitted to reign. A large part of its work has always been, and always will be, to reprove darkness. Reproof is never pleasant but is especially unpleasant to those who most need it. Of the saints, it is written: “Great peace have they that love your law, and nothing shall offend them.” It was because he reproved sin and error that Elijah was hated and was accused of causing Israel’s trouble; for the same reason Jesus was denounced, and for the same reason all who will live Godly are similarly offensive (R235).

We counsel, in all sympathy and kindness, those who are tending toward Socialism (and their number is ever increasing) and other similar theories. Socialism under present conditions is absolutely impossible because the rich and famous will not give up their advantages

without a struggle to the death; and as soon as Socialism shall have gained the power that it is seeking and *that it will gain*, this will spell anarchy for the world, because those now starting in with Socialistic hopes, finding those hopes vain, will be so angered, so disappointed, that they will be soured, embittered, and mad with the deceptions of their theories and the impossibility of carrying them out as they intended along the lines of benevolence, that they will be drawn to the desperate methods of the anarchists.

We would never advocate revolution or anarchy of any kind. On the contrary, we are heeding the Master’s voice that all who are His true followers should seek peace and pursue it, and so far as possible, live peaceably with all men. We, like the Lord, are not to resist evil with evil, force with force, but should rather commit our way to the Lord and seek to walk in His paths and rely upon Him for the results that would be to our profit and His glory. So far from counseling anarchy, we hold and teach that even the meanest and poorest of all the kinds of government known to the world are superior to anarchy.

For our example we look at how the disciples had learned to be obedient in respect to whatever the Master would propose; that is why there was no objection offered to the Lord’s instruction to have the assembled people sit down in a hundred companies of fifty each, to prepare for a feast when apparently no food was available for them. They were beginning to learn that He who could fill their nets with fish, who could awaken from the sleep of death, who could restore withered hands and heal without a touch by a word, was so different from themselves as to be beyond the power of their judgment or criticism. They obeyed—the Lord did the rest. As disciples of the Lord, at this time, let us be obedient to the privileges of today. May the words of our ardent prayer for strength in time of need include: “Equip me for the war, and teach me how to fight: My mind and heart, O Lord prepare, and guide my words aright.”



“STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED”

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth” 2 Tim. 2:15.

This text does not say, “Study the Scriptures,” but “Study to *show thyself approved*”—study to know what God would approve. And yet it means, first of all, to study *the Revelation He has made*. Then, after having come to some knowledge of the Scriptures, we must *meditate* upon them and consider how the Word is applicable to all of life’s affairs. Thus, we would study the nature of everything that we come in contact with, as to whether it is good or evil. The word “*study*” here is used with very much the same thought as when the Apostle says, “*Study to be quiet*” (1 Thes. 4:11).

Evidently the central thought of this expression is the approving of ourselves to God, not to men. It is proper enough that we should have the approval of all good men and good women. But our study, primarily, should not be along this line. First, we should study to please God—to be approved of God. We notice that there is a contemplative study, such as David speaks of when he says, I meditate upon thy law day and night (Psa. 1:2)—to see how that law would work out its height and depth, its length and breadth of influence upon himself. And so, the Apostle’s thought here is that it should be our chief aim to please God.

“Rightly dividing the Word of Truth” would signify the proper application of the Word of Truth; the understanding of how and when and where it should be applied and what was the purpose and thought and Plan of the Divine Mind in the giving of this Word of Truth, the Word of God’s Message. Up to the advent of our Lord, God’s Message had been given chiefly through the Old Testament Scriptures. Then God’s Message was attested by Him who came from heaven. Additionally, our Lord left twelve chosen Apostles to be His special mouthpieces, to increase the Word of Truth, to increase the Word of knowledge, to increase the Word of explanation of the Divine Plan. Everything, therefore, that Timothy could recognize as being the Lord’s Message he was to give heed to. For instance, one part of God’s Message applies to the past, a part applies only to the Jews, still another part applies to Christians in the present life, and yet another part to their future hopes.

WE SHOULD HAVE CLEARER LIGHT THAN HAD OUR FOREFATHERS

And so, as we get the matter rightly divided before our minds, we get the true understanding, the special enlightenment needed in our day, and we are enabled to rightly divide the Word better than did our fathers, so that today we can see, as our fathers did not see, the teaching of God’s Word respecting the “high calling” and “restitution”—the spiritual portion of blessing for the Church and the human portion of blessing for the world. We also see something about the times and seasons—which apply to the Church and which apply to the blessing of the world.

Thus, in our Day, to rightly divide the Word of Truth necessitates the taking cognizance of everything that seems to be of the Lord and that throws any light upon the Word, and so we may be able to “rightly divide” it. We must always bear in mind that in the Scriptures of the Old Testament “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21), and that the Lord also said of the Apostles, “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 18:18).

We are not to forget that the Lord promised that He would guide His people in the way of the Truth and show them things to come (John 16:13). We are to “study” to show ourselves approved—study the doctrine and endeavor to have our course of conduct harmonize with it—study to perform faithfully the duties of a loyal soldier of the cross of Christ. “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:16).

The Christian soldier must study to perform even the smallest duty in a manner creditable to his calling; he must not permit himself to become entangled with other things which do not relate to his duties as a soldier and be side-tracked. The Christian soldier who turns aside to seek some personal, temporal advantage to the detriment of his duties as a soldier is to that extent an unfaithful soldier and likely to be drawn out of the ranks entirely.

“*Study to show thyself approved.*” Study the *Word*; study *yourself*, that you may become well acquainted *with yourself*; that you may know your talents for

service—in what direction they lie, and what are your weak points and how they may be guarded against—that you may know both your abilities and your shortcomings. Then *study* to avoid error and to shun all foolish questions and profane and vain babblings. Remember that only “the foundation of *God standeth sure*,” that all other foundations are worthless and that all other theories must come to naught. But “The foundation of *God standeth sure*, having this seal,” The Lord knoweth them that are *His*. “And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Tim. 2:19).

WE SHOULD STUDY TO MAKE OUR IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS MORE AND MORE ACTUAL

There is much significance in the word “*study*” and it is important to note that this Divine injunction is given to the *Church*, to those who are believers in Christ and who have consecrated their lives to His service. Having been reckonedly cleansed from sin, we are to give all diligence to the work of *studying* to make this reckoned cleansing, this *imputed* righteousness, an *actual* thing, to the extent of our ability. It is purely of Divine grace that we are *reckoned* righteous before we are *actually* so. Looking at our hearts and seeing in them, not only our good and honest intentions, but also our desire for righteousness and our efforts to become righteous in the way He would approve, God accepts the will for the deed. Accordingly, He *counts* us as righteous *now* and treats us as His children, since we have been redeemed from the curse and have accepted His gracious provision for reconciliation.

LET US STUDY TO SEE THAT OUR LIVES ARE AN HONOR TO THE CAUSE WE ESPOUSE

Let us, then, *study* our hearts to see that we are striving daily to *cast out* all the old leaven of sin; to be sure that we are not content to allow it to *remain* in us and *work* in us; otherwise, we prove by our course that our love for righteousness is growing weaker. Happy are those who find that they are not merely working down the leavened mass occasionally and allowing it again and again to ferment, but are *casting it out*, by constantly resisting sin, by cleansing their thoughts, words and deeds with the Truth and cultivating the blessed “fruits of the Spirit”—love, joy, peace, etc. (Gal. 5:22, 23).

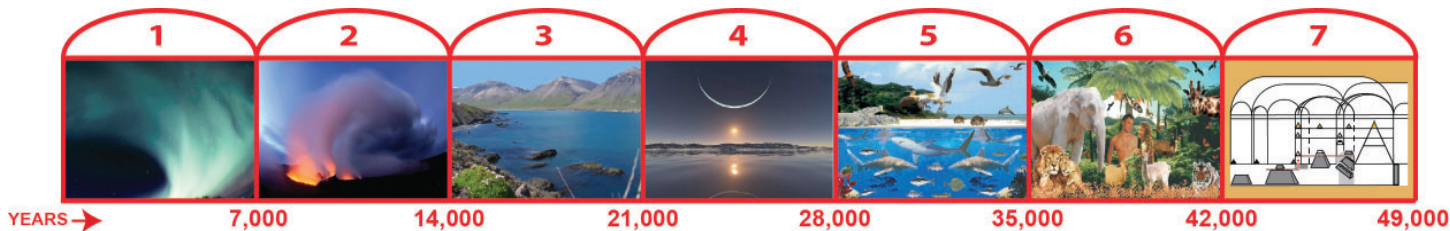
Only the *studious* find the way to Divine approval and acceptance. Let us *study* to see that our lives are an honor to the cause we have espoused; that we abstain from even the appearance of evil; that we are circumspect in all our conversation, in our conduct—watching our thoughts, our lips, our lives. Let us *study* to be diligent in every duty, performing it with a ready mind and with joy and gladness of heart. Let us never lose sight of the fact that we are *soldiers*, and that as true soldiers we are to learn to “endure hardness” (2 Tim. 2:3).

A soldier has many trivial duties to perform and he is as really doing his duty as a soldier when he is polishing his armor, foraging, cooking his meals, cleaning camp, or building bridges for the army to pass over, as when he is fighting the enemy. Such things are incidental work but are necessary and entirely consistent with his commission as a soldier and should not be regarded as entanglements and hindrances. These duties cannot be disregarded nor carelessly done without a measure of unfaithfulness.

WHATEVER OUR CAPTAIN HAS RECOGNIZED AND APPROVED IS PROPER FOR US

So, with the Christian soldier. The routine of life—housework, shop work, daily toil, anything, everything, incidental to a proper and honest provision of “*things needful*” for ourselves and those dependent upon us for support, as well as for provision for the prosecution and care of the Lord’s work—all this is a proper part of our engagement as soldiers of the Lord.

The Apostle Peter was as truly serving the Lord when catching the fish from whose mouth he got the coin with which to pay his Master’s taxes and his own (Matt. 17:27), as when proclaiming, on the day of Pentecost, the “raising up” and ascension of the Lord. The Apostle Paul was as truly a soldier of the cross and doing his proper work as such when making tents (rather than be chargeable to any) as when at Mars Hill he preached Jesus and the resurrection. *Whatever* is done with a view to the glory and honor of our Lord, the Captain of our salvation, or for the benefit of any of our fellow-soldiers, or for our own *preparation* for this warfare, or in the discharge of obligations which our Captain has recognized and approved, is proper work for us as soldiers and is not *entanglement* in the affairs of this life (P-6, p. 650, 651).



OUR MODERN TEMPLES

Great Temples, or Cathedrals, have been erected throughout the civilized world. Their founders doubtless were inspired more or less to emulate Solomon and Herod in their great Temples of the past. No fault need be found with these from some standpoints. All the circumstances being equal, it would be a shame for Christians to meet for Divine worship under conditions inferior to those of their homes. In many instances, however, the people who have donated the money for the erection and upkeep of these buildings have been extremely poor, and have been cajoled into the expenses by misleading sophistries.

In the days of Jesus and the Apostles, it was not considered "Christian work" to raise money for Church purposes. Today money-raising is the ideal "work for Jesus." The Apostles taught that the real work of the Church of Christ is not to build up costly edifices beyond their means, involving them in debt, but to build themselves up in the most holy faith. "The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are," "if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you." God's people are the living stones under Divine supervision, being shaped and polished for places in the Glorious Spiritual Temple. Through that antitypical Temple, God will send His blessings. The removal of the curse, and the wiping away of all tears, will follow.

While using these modern Temples, let us not forget that they are not the real Temple, or Church. It is composed of the saints of God, who day by day are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, in the service of the Truth, "doing good to all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith." If inclined to criticize our forefathers for building costly Cathedrals while neglecting the Bible, let us remember that coming generations may make similar or worse comments on us for building scores of costly Dreadnaughts for injury to our fellows. With what shame we will look back upon our own faults! The thought should make us humble.

LESSON 87

- 1* What has been erected throughout the civilized world? Par. 1
- 2* Who built great Temples in the past?
- 3* Should we find fault with these great Temples or Cathedrals?
- 4* All circumstances being equal under what conditions should Christians meet?
- 5* Could the people who donated money for these buildings afford to do that?
- 6* What was done in the days of Jesus and the Apostles? Par. 2
- 7 Today how is money-raising considered?
- 8* What did the Apostles teach regarding the work of the Church of Christ and the building of costly edifices?
- 9* What do the Scriptures say about the Temple of God? 1 Cor. 3:16, 17
- 10* During the Gospel Age God's people as living stones were being shaped and polished for places in what?
- 11* What will God send through that antitypical Temple?
- 12* What will follow His blessings?
- 13* The modern Temples are not what? Par. 3
- 14 The real Temple or Church was composed of whom?
- 15* What did these saints of God do day by day? Gal. 6:10
- 16* Should we criticize our forefathers for building costly Cathedrals while neglecting the Bible?
- 17* Will coming generations make similar or worse comments about us for building costly weapons and armaments to injure others?
- 18 When we look back on our own faults what should that make us?

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



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TO:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR FROM KENYA

Laymen's Home Missionary Movement,
(AKA Bible Standard Ministries)

God is good! The seminar has just ended and we feel renewed in our spirits! The 33 member team from Tanzania will be traveling back tomorrow as it is now late because the bus they booked failed to turn up in time after developing a minor mechanical problem. But they are all happy and have testimonies! Thank you layman's home missionary movement! We thank the Lord that connected our ministry to yours! We receive great teachings that we could have gotten nowhere else!

Sister J. K.

Our members have arrived home from the meeting in Muhoroni. One member who has been a staunch follower of [other] teachings has just lighten us up with his testimony. That he been lost for a long time but glad that he has seen the light at last after attending this meeting!!

Sister M. A.

This is just to let you know that my team arrived well at the seminar. Thanks because you allowed 13 people from our church. We count ourselves lucky as some were sent back this morning after showing some indiscipline traits. I have just talked with them and they are being blessed.

I want to ask that we should all pray for this man of God Pastor Edwin. What he is doing is beyond our understanding. I can't remember any servant of God who Minister's these long hours and still has the energy to minister whenever he is called upon! He has challenged us and we pray for him every time.

We will have a convention in my church from next week. The church board is proposing that I invite Pastor Edwin to be the only guest speaker.

BIBLE QUESTION

DUE TRUTH COMING AFTER 1916

Question: How would you answer the objection, supposedly based upon the truth that the entire storehouse was put into "that Servant's" charge, to the claim that Truth has become due since he passed beyond the veil?

Answer: We are in entire harmony with the thought that the entire storehouse, as well as the household itself, was put into "that Servant's" charge, but do not think that it was placed there for any longer time than his office of steward lasted. Just as is the case with every stewardship, he had charge of all the entrusted things as long as his stewardship lasted. Hence when his stewardship ceased, he ceased having the storehouse and the household in his charge (Ezek. 9:11).

It is very evident that those who deny that any seasonal Truth can come since his death, or who deny that any has come since that time, basing their denial upon their view of his having had charge of the whole storehouse, do so contrary to the self-evident principle above stated with regard to the duration of a stewardship. Furthermore, their view is in direct contradiction to the Lord's explicit promise that the light shall continue to increase for the just until the perfect day, which is, of course, yet future (Prov. 4:18).

There is evidently something wrong with those who claim that no seasonal Truth has come since 1916; for the perfect day's not yet being here, and their not getting any advancing Truth for these many years, proves that they are either not in the path of the just, or that they have their eyes blindfolded. It behooves such brethren diligently to examine themselves with a view of seeing whether there is not a necessity for them to cast out some leaven that may be preventing the Lord from favoring them with the advancing light; for all those who are wide awake in the path of the just will have increasing light, as they are ready for it.