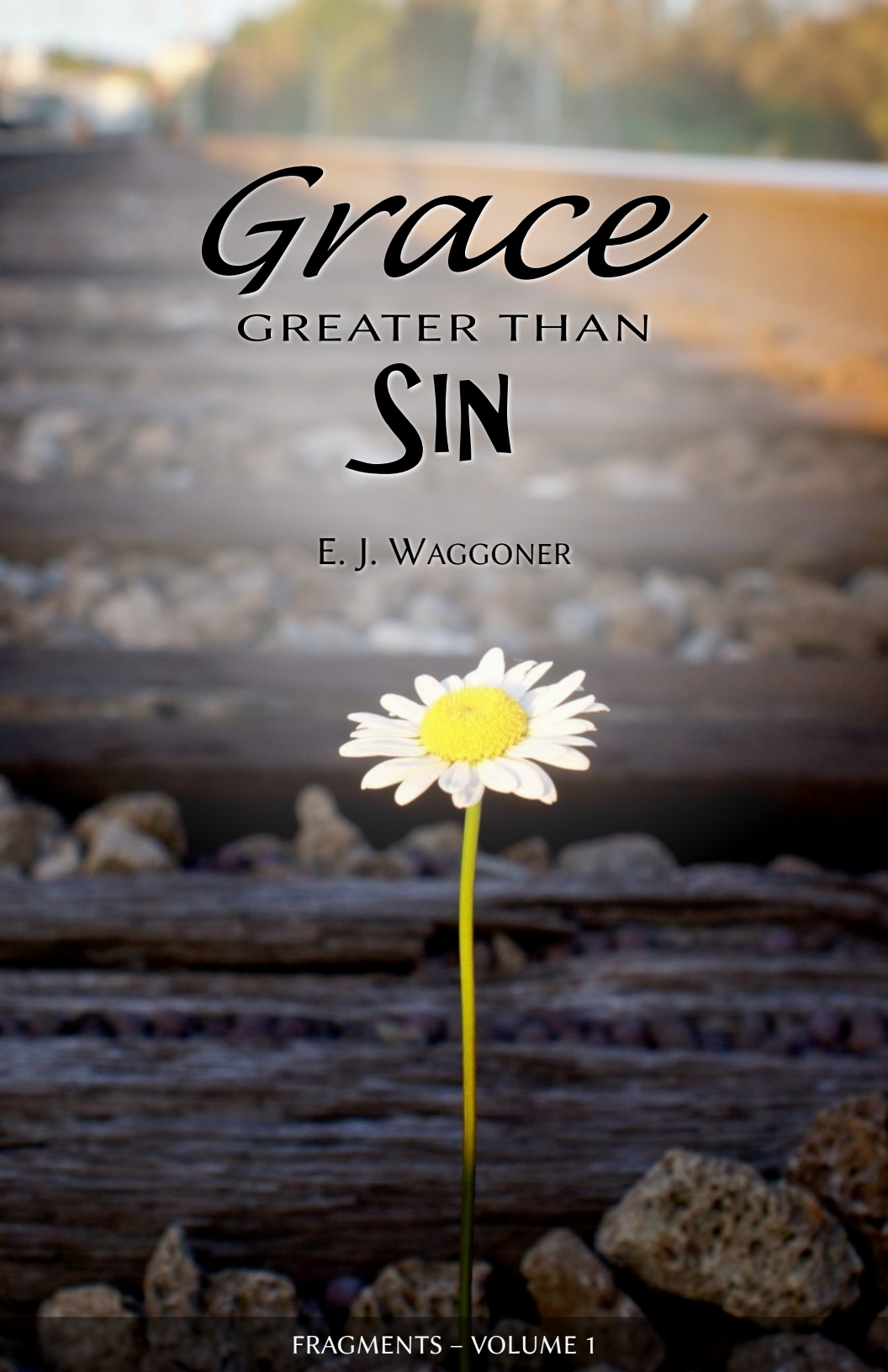
Grace
GREATER THAN
Sin

E. J. Waggoner



FRAGMENTS – VOLUME 1

Sources:

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December 2025
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About the "Fragments" Series

THE *Fragments* series is composed of 12 books of articles, gathered from the various Periodicals which E. J. Waggoner contributed to during his lifetime. There is a separate and parallel series devoted to the writings of Waggoner's companion in the gospel, A. T. Jones.

In order to bring some cohesion to these articles, the books are topical: that is, articles are organized according to their topic, and there is a separate book for each topic, as follows:

1. Grace Greater Than Sin [The Gospel]
2. Healing and Temperance
3. Life, Death, and Spiritualism [Conditional Immortality]
4. Money and Work
5. Religious Liberty
6. The Bible
7. The Church
8. The Holy Spirit
9. The Law and the Sabbath
10. The Name [Character] of God
11. The Prophetic Word
12. Thoughts on Education

Most often, the articles within each volume are grouped by the year of publication, or if one year had few articles, sometimes the group includes a range of years. In other cases, the articles are grouped by topic. In still other cases, there was sometimes a mini-series that continued through a few periodical issues, and those were grouped accordingly.

While trying to make this as complete a collection as possible, at times I have not included some smaller articles that carried only local news or material that would not be relevant to our time. Even at that, the amount of included material is quite vast.

In most cases, I have left out articles that already appear in other books. For example, often Waggoner would write articles, and then later publish them as a book. Since these books are available separately on our website, I did not see the need to duplicate this material.

Also, some articles crossed over many topics. For example, an article on the Sabbath could fit into the "Law and Sabbath" book, but it might also cover "Religious Liberty," "The Gospel," and even "The Prophetic Word." I tried to fit these kinds of articles into the book that most matched its topic, or where there were a series of articles to which it belonged. Occasionally an article is included in more than one volume.

Due to the great amount of material that came from the pen of Waggoner, I've also added a few more volumes for his writings:

- All About Jesus, volume 1 & 2
- Paul and the Early Church
- Christ Our Life
- Gleanings from the Psalms
- Leaves from the Tree of Life
- Reflections on Proverbs
- The Call of Abraham
- The Law and the Gospel
- The Lord's Prayer
- The Miracles of Jesus
- Questions and Answers on the Bible
- Gospel Lessons in the Old Testament (Waggoner & Jones)

There are also two companion volumes, one each from Jones and Waggoner, on the topic of the Papacy:

- The Light Shines in Darkness (Jones)
- The Great Falling Away (Waggoner)

What these books demonstrate is that E. J. Waggoner produced a lot of precious material, much of which was never organized or reprinted after his death. Jesus taught us to…

John 6
[12] Gather the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.
[13] Therefore they gathered them together, and filled *twelve baskets with the fragments.*



Since much depends on how we receive and appreciate the light that God gives through His chosen messengers, I felt a burden to put these forgotten treasures into an orderly and easily accessible format.

May the Spirit that gave them, bless you as you read His words!

Frank Zimmerman
practicaprophetica.com

"If human beings would open the windows of the soul heavenward,
in appreciation of the divine gifts,
a flood of healing virtue would pour in."

Ellen White, Ministry of Healing, p. 116

About This Volume

THIS volume, the first in the collection of "Fragments," is devoted to articles dealing with the Gospel, which is the power of God to deliver from sin. This is the heart and center of God's great plan of redemption, and it is from the Gospel that every other doctrine and teaching gathers strength and purpose.

Although E. J. Waggoner, and his co-laborer A. T. Jones, started their ministries before 1888, it was at the 1888 General Conference session (and leading up to it), that the Gospel-centered teachings of these men ran head-on into the traditional (and legalistic) views prevalent in Adventism at that time. Thus it became known as "the 1888 message" because that session put it into the spotlight.

The initial point of controversy was over the "law in *Galatians*." Traditional Adventists believed this to be the ceremonial law; Jones, and especially Waggoner, taught that it was particularly the moral law, although ceremonial laws could certainly be included. To be more precise, they actually believed the issue in the book of *Galatians* was a false gospel, caused by putting the law (any law) where Christ should be. Since Adventist leaders had defended their adherence to the Sabbath on the grounds that the moral law was still applicable to Christians, those leaders thought that this aspect of the 1888 message was sweeping away the foundation, and removing the strength from their arguments in defense of the law.

The 1888 messengers clearly saw that the problem was not the law, but the wrong use of the law. They saw that many Adventists had been relying on a superficial understanding of the Gospel, and had substituted their own righteousness in place of the righteousness of Christ. The book of *Galatians* particularly addressed this kind of false gospel.

The moral law has a place to lead to Christ, but it is Christ's life in the believer that brings peace and true heartfelt obedience, *not* man's attempt to "set his will" and try to fulfill the obligations of

the law while still encumbered with an old stony heart. Paul's expression applies here:

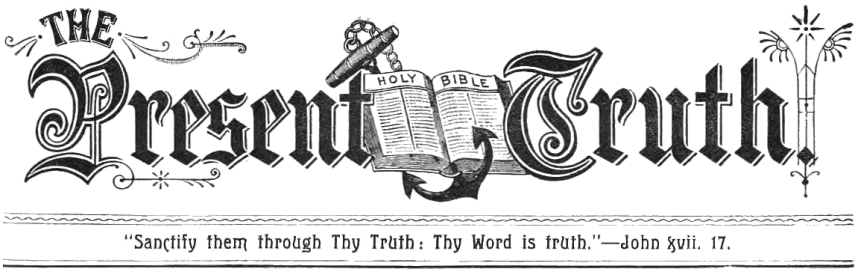
Romans 3
[31] Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea we establish the law.

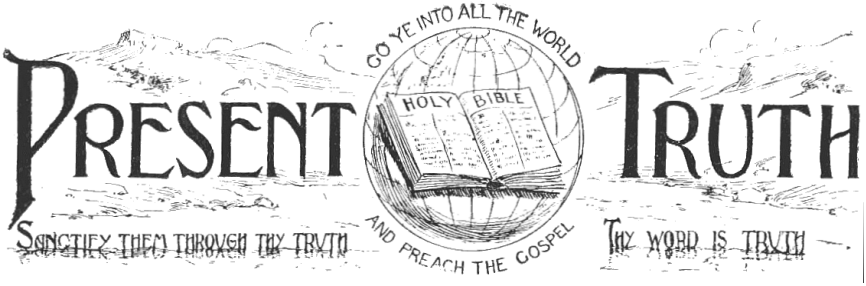
It is only through an intelligent faith, that the law can really be established within people, and they can be prepared for heaven.

Ellen White threw her testimony and support behind Waggoner and Jones' message, calling it a "most precious message," identifying it as the Laodicean message, and the beginning of the loud cry (of the fourth angel of *Revelation* 18). The message grew and expanded for the next 15 years.

This volume gathers together the periodical articles that dwell upon the faith of Jesus, Christ's identification with humanity, the Gospel plan, the law and grace, freedom from sin, and sanctification.

Frank Zimmerman
practicaprophetica.com





I. Introduction

1. What Is the Gospel?

Present Truth, January 28, 1892

WHAT is the Gospel? This question is answered in a few words by the apostle Paul, in:

> **Romans 1**
> [16] For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes...
> [17] For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

But, although the question is answered in so few words, the answer comprehends so much that it will take all eternity to unfold the depth of its meaning. The above text sets forth two points for our consideration:

1. Salvation from sin; and
2. The power of God exerted to accomplish that salvation.

We will briefly consider them in order.

Salvation from Sin

The apostle says that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, because therein the righteousness of God is revealed. This shows that it is the revelation of the righteousness of God, that brings salvation. That salvation has reference solely to sin, is shown in the fact that it is the revelation of the righteousness of God that saves. Now, since unrighteousness is sin:

> **1 John 5**
> [17] All unrighteousness is sin,

–and sin is the transgression of a law:

> **1 John 3**
> [4] Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law,

–it is evident that righteousness is obedience to the law of God. The following texts also show it:

Matthew 1
[21] You shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.

1 Timothy 1
[15] This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Since sin is the transgression of a law, it is evident that to save one from sin, or from the transgression of a law, is the same thing as making and keeping him obedient to law. Therefore the gospel is the revelation of the power of God to work righteousness in man—to manifest righteousness in their lives. The gospel, therefore, proclaims God's perfect law, and contemplates nothing less than perfect obedience to it.

Let it not be overlooked that it requires no less a power than the power of God, to exhibit righteous acts in the lives of men. Man's power is wholly inadequate. This is easily seen when we recognize what the righteousness is, that is to be revealed in the life. The text says that it is…

Romans 1
[17] …the righteousness of God.

The righteousness of God is set forth in His law.

Isaiah 51
[6] Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.
[7] Hearken unto me, you that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings.

Now who can do the righteousness of God? That is, who can do acts that are righteous as those that God does? Evidently only God himself. The law of God sets forth God's way.

Psalm 119
[1] Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.
[2] Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart.

But the Lord says,

Isaiah 55
[9] As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Therefore man's effort to keep the commandments of God must fall as far short as the earth is lower than the heavens.

Man is fallen; the work of the gospel is to raise him to a place at the right hand of God. But can man lift himself from earth to heaven? A man can as easily raise himself from the ground to the sun, by placing his hands under the soles of his feet and lifting, as he can raise himself by his own actions to the height of the requirement of God's commandments.

Everyone knows that when a man tries to lift himself by placing his hands under his feet, he is only holding himself down, and that the harder he lifts, the more he presses downward. So with all of a man's efforts to make himself what God's law demands. He is only adding to his guilt, for:

Isaiah 64
[6] ...all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

That which man does himself is from self; that is, it is selfishness; and selfishness has no place in the plan of salvation. That which is of self is of Satan; it is wholly evil.

Mark 7
[21] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,
[22] Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:
[23] All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

The gospel proposes to save man from himself; therefore the man who proposes to do either wholly or in part by himself the work that God requires, proposes to do the best he can to thwart God's plan. Many do this ignorantly, but the result is the same. It was because the Jews were ignorant of God's righteousness that they went about to establish their own righteousness.

Romans 10
[1] Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.
[2] For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.
[3] For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Whoever realizes the infinite depth and height and breadth of the character of God, which is summed up in His law, will readily see that nothing short of the power of God can produce that character in man. Only God himself can do the works of God. For a man to assume that he himself is able to do God's righteous works, is to make himself equal with God; and that is the very "mystery of iniquity" itself.

2 Thessalonians 2
[4] Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God…showing himself that he is God.

The work of the gospel, then, is:

- To put God's righteous works in the place of man's unrighteousness;
- To work in man the works of God, and to cause him to think the thoughts of God;
- To save him from all unrighteousness, to deliver him from "this present evil world," to redeem him from all iniquity.

That is the result; by what means is it to be accomplished? By the power of God. We must know, then, what that power is, and how it is applied.

What the Power Is

Immediately following the statement that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, the apostle tells us how we may know the power.

> **Romans 1**
> [20] For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.

That is, God's power is seen in the things that He has made. Creation reveals the power of God, for His power is creative power. The fact that God creates is that which distinguishes Him as the one true God. The psalmist says:

> **Psalm 96**
> [4] For the Lord Jehovah is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods.
> [5] For all the gods of the nations are idols [nothing]: but the Lord made the heavens.

Again we read,

> **Jeremiah 10**
> [10] But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting king; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation.
> [11] Thus shall you say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.
> [12] He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion.
> [13] When He utters his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of

the earth; He makes lightnings with rain, and brings forth the wind out of His treasures.

Psalm 33:6, 9, tells us how the Lord made the heavens and the earth:

Psalm 33
6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.
9 For He spoke, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast.

It was made *by His word*. When God speaks, the very thing itself exists in the words which describe or name the thing. Thus it is that:

Romans 4
17 [He] calls those things which be not as though they were.

If man should call a thing that is not as though it were, it would be a lie; but not so when God so speaks, for His very word causes it to be. When He speaks the word, there the thing is.

Psalm 33
9 He spoke, and it was.

The same word that creates also upholds. In *Hebrews* 1 we read that Christ, who created all things, upholds all things…

Hebrews 1
3 …by the word of His power.

Also the apostle Peter tells us that:

2 Peter 3 [RV]
5 There were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted of water and amidst [*through*, margin,] water, by the word of God;
6 By which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished;
7 But the heavens that now are, and the earth, *by the same word* have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

The creative power of the word of God is seen in the preservation of the earth and the heavenly bodies, and in the growth of all plants. To the same effect are the words of the Lord by the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 40
25 To whom then will you liken me, or shall I be equal? says the Holy One.
26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who has created these things, that brings out their host by number; He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one fails.

The reason why this is so is found in the fact that the word of God is living; being the breath of God, it has the incorruptible nature of God, so that its power never diminishes. The 40th chapter of *Isaiah* is wholly devoted to showing the power of God, a sample of which we have just quoted. The word by which all these things are upheld is those spoken of:

7 The grass withers, the flower fades; because the spirit of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass.
8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but *the word of our God shall stand for ever.*

How the Power Works

The apostle Peter quotes these words, and adds:

1 Peter 1
25 *This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

Thus we are brought around again to the statement that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. But the power of God is shown in creating and upholding the earth; therefore the gospel is the creative power of God exercise for the salvation of man from sin. So the apostle says:

2 Corinthians 5
17 If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

[18] And all things are of God.

Ephesians 2
[10] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

The work of redemption is the work of producing a new creation—new men, new heavens, and new earth—by the same word that created all things in the beginning. What greater encouragement can God give us than this, namely, that the power that works in us that which is well-pleasing in the sight of the Lord, is the power that made the heavens and the earth, and which upholds them! Need there be any discouragement?

To carry out this thought, as set forth in the Scriptures, would require a volume; but we will read a few texts that will set us on the track of contemplating God's power in creation, and rejoicing in it. The psalmist says:

Psalm 62
[11] God has spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God.
[12] Also unto You, O Lord, belongs mercy.

Here we see the mercy of God coupled with His power. Now read through the whole of the 40th chapter of *Isaiah*, and as you read the description of God's wonderful power, bear in mind the first verse:

Isaiah 40
[1] Comfort you, comfort you my people, says your God.

And then at the close read:

[29] He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength.
[30] Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall;

[31] But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

By what power? By the power that created the earth from nothing, and which preserves it. What is the comfort of God's people? It is the knowledge that their God is mighty in power, even to creating and upholding the universe.

Colossians 1

[9] For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
[10] That you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;
[11] Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;
[12] Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:
[13] Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son:
[14] In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins:
[15] Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:
[16] For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him:
[17] And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.
[18] And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.

Note how redemption and the creation of all the universe are linked together. We have redemption through the blood of Christ, because:

[16] By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him;
[17] And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.
[18] And He is the head of the body, the church.

Surely the church ought to be strong, when it is connected with so powerful a head. It is only as men through unbelief become disconnected with the head, that they are weak. Verse 11, of the passage referred to, reads thus:

Colossians 1
[11] Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.

In the revision this is more literally rendered thus:

[11] Strengthened [margin, *made powerful*] with all power, according to the might of His glory.

Now read:

Psalm 19
[1] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.

That is, the heavens declare the power of the glory of God, by which we are strengthened in the conflict with sin and Satan. Now turn to:

Psalm 111
[2] The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
[3] His work is honorable and glorious; and His righteousness endures for ever.
[4] He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

Yes, the Lord is gracious and compassionate according to the power exhibited in the works of His hands.

Psalm 32
[10] He that trusts in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

And that mercy is equal to the power that made the heavens and the earth. Yea, it *is* that power; for God himself, the mighty God, is love.

But what shall we say more? Time would fail us to recount the power and the mercy of God. When we meditate on the law of God, as we are exhorted to do day and night,[1] and find therein such wondrous things[2] that our soul faints at the thought that all that righteousness must be exhibited in our lives, let us also lift up our eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, and then with rejoicing say,

Psalm 124
[8] Our help is in the name of Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Yea, let all who suffer according to the will of God,

1 Peter 4
[19] ...commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Remember that He who upholds all things by the word of His power, is...

Jude
[24] ...able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy.

Beneath His watchful eye
His saints securely dwell;
That hand which bears all nature up
Shall guard His children well.[3]

[1] *Psalm* 1:2.
[2] *Psalm* 119:18.
[3] Philip Doddridge, Hymn: *How Gentle God's Commands*, 1755.

Ephesians 3
[20] Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,
[21] Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Surely,

Psalm 144
[15] Happy is that people, whose God is Jehovah.

2. You Must Be Born Again

Present Truth, August 17, 1893
Note: This article and the next, sum up the Gospel for children.

A Ruler once came to Jesus by night,
To ask Him the way of salvation and light;
The Master made answer in words true and plain,
"You must be born again."

You children of men, attend to the word
So solemnly uttered by Jesus, the Lord,
And let not this message to you be in vain,
"You must be born again."[4]

FOR some times you have been learning of your brothers and sisters in India[5]. Your heart has ached as you have heard of their sad hopeless condition, and you have doubtless formed plans in your own mind of how you were going to save up pennies to send them Bibles and preachers that would tell them of the living God and His great love. Perhaps you have already begun this good work.

But there is another work which we long to see you begin, which is just as important as helping your brothers and sisters in India. We long to see you seeking help for yourself. Would it not be a sad thing if after you have sent money to save the Indians, you yourself should be lost? You need to be saved from sin as much as they. Jesus says,

John 3
[7] *You* must be born again,

–and,

[3] Except a man be born again [margin, *from above*], he cannot see the kingdom of God.

[4] W. T. Sleeper, *Born Again.*
[5] See *The Everlasting Gospel for Children: India.*

Then it is not enough to have a Bible of your own, and to know *about* the only true God. Jesus says if you are ever saved, *you* must be *"born again."*

> "Well," you say, "I do not see how I can become a little baby again."

No, you do not need to, that is not what the Lord means. He does not say that your body must become small again and that you must again come into the world as a little baby. From the above text in *John* 3:3 we see that He does not say that a man must have another earthly birth, but what He does say, is that he must have a heavenly birth as well as an earthly birth. He must be born "from above." It is not enough for you to have an earthly father, you must also have a heavenly Father who is real to you and who lives with you every day as truly as your earthly father does. You must become changed inside and begin all over again. You must put away your naughty thoughts and feelings and partake of the sinless and Divine nature of your heavenly Father, as truly as at your first birth you partook of the weak sinful nature of your earthly father.

It is not enough to call God your heavenly Father, you might do that all your life and yet never be born of God at all. You must allow Him to come right into your heart by His Holy Spirit. He can then take away every sin and make your heart all over new so that you will want to do good instead of evil. Then you will feel just like a new creature, indeed you will *be* a new creature, as truly as though you had become little and been born again, for do you not see? You will feel so differently and act so differently that you will not be like the same person at all.

- Where you used to disobey your parents you will now obey them;
- Where you used to get angry you will be patient;
- Where you used to say cross words you will say kind words.

You will even look different in some ways, for instead of looking solemn and cross and worried, you will look happy and kind and peaceful, for the loveliness and gentleness of Jesus will be shining through your eyes. You will now be the child of God as well as the child of men, for the Lord says that those who receive Jesus are born again and thus become the "sons of God":

1 John 5
[1] Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loves Him that begat loves him also that is begotten of Him.

John 1
[12] But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name:
[13] Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Now if we only can learn how to receive Jesus into our hearts, we shall know how to be born from above, shall we not?

Ephesians 3
[17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...

1 Peter 1
[23] Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever.

Here we read that we can receive Christ into our hearts and be born again by believing and taking into our hearts the word of God. We can see how this is by reading the 6th chapter of *John* and *John* 1:1, for there it says that the Spirit and life of Jesus are in the word.

John 1
[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 6
[63] It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Then if you will read God's words in your Bible and believe that they are God's words to *you*, that they are *living* words filled with the Spirit and life and power of Jesus, and will love them and let them stay in your mind and heart, they will, like a wonderful seed, spring up in your heart and make it all over new and fill it with all the fruits of the gentle Spirit of Jesus,—even with the righteousness of God. In other words, the word of God, if received and loved, will cause you to be born again.

You will not be able to *see* the life of the word come into your heart anymore than you can see the wind coming into the house, but you will soon be able to see the wonderful change which it has wrought. You will not be able to see *how* it takes away the bad thoughts and fills you with heavenly thoughts and actions, but God says that it will, and that is enough. All you must do about it is to read and believe and think on His words, and He has promised to cause them to work in you that which is good.

Now do not think that this being born from above is done once and then that is the end of it. Oh, no. It is enough to be born as a baby *once*, but we must be born from above *every day*. So you see, you shall need to read and believe and think on God's words very often, for it is God's word that is the living seed that causes you to be born from above.

3. Growing

Present Truth, August 17, 1893[6]

IF YOU would become a good strong man or woman of God, it is just as necessary for you to grow as it is for you to be born again.

If a little baby never grows after it is born, it never can become a strong man or woman. It will always remain a poor, weak, helpless little babe, or else lose the life it already has. Now what causes the babe to grow?

"With plenty of good milk," you say.

That's true. Nothing can make it grow like pure milk. If the milk is mixed with other things that are not good, the baby will soon become ill, and will die. Well, suppose your baby brother has all the good milk he can eat for once, and then you should not give him any more, what would happen?

"He would cry," you say.

Yes, undoubtedly. But should he not be satisfied if he has had all that he needs?

"He has had all that he needs for one time, but that will not last him always."

Why not?

"Because in a little while it is used up by the body, to make it grow, and then it is just as hungry as ever."

Yes, and when the body has used up all its growing material and needs more, it makes him feel hungry, and he calls for it. And even after he has stopped growing and has become a big man, he will still need food, and will get hungry, for the body needs it to keep up repairs.

[6] PP Editor's note: This article belongs with the previous one, and explains the Gospel for children.

So you see a person must have food, and must have it every day if he would grow and keep well. And he must not only have food, but he must have *good* food.

Now the Lord says in *1 Peter* 2:2 that after you are born from above, after you have received Jesus in your hearts, you will need heavenly milk to make you grow in the heavenly life, just as much as the little babe needs earthly milk to make it grow strong in the earthly life.

What is the heavenly milk?

The Lord says,

1 Peter 2
[2] As newborn babes, desire the sincere [pure, unadulterated] *milk of the word*, that you may grow thereby.

We see, therefore, that the heavenly milk is the pure, unmixed word of God.

"How can that make me grow more and more like Jesus, and strong to do right?"

By eating it,[7] by studying it, and thinking upon it, and just drinking it in with your mind, and desiring it more than your necessary food.

You wonder how it *can* become a part of you, and make you grow better, just by letting your mind think upon it and love it? It does seem wonderful.

But the little baby does not understand how the milk can make its body grow. It just eats and eats and grows, as a little plant,—it knows not how, and we know not how.

Thus the Lord wants you to take His living words into your heart every day, as trustfully and as faithfully as the little baby takes its milk, and His promise is, you *shall* grow thereby. Men's words will not do, God's words alone can make you grow.

[7] *John* 6:51, 63.

But above all things, remember that one meal, or even one meal a week, is not enough. You must take time to feed on the milk of God's word *every day*. Just as surely as you forget for one day to feed on God's word, you will be too weak that day to overcome the temptations of Satan.

By feeding upon the word you feed upon Jesus, and He is the only One who has power to overcome Satan. So if you forget to feed upon the word you forget to have Jesus in your heart, and thus having nothing but your own weakness with which to resist Satan, you surely will be overcome.

Then let us not be content with being born again. There will be no dwarfs in the kingdom of God. We must also feed on heavenly milk that we may *grow*.

4. Beginning of Sin and Redemption

Present Truth, July 4, 1901

THERE was a time when the man who dared say openly that he did not believe the whole Bible was called an infidel; in these days it is a rare thing to find a minister of the Gospel who dares say that he believes the Bible account of the creation and the fall of man. Even the most "orthodox," men who vigorously combat the "higher criticism," do not hesitate to declare the Mosaic record "a beautiful allegory." So far have those who are set to be leaders in the church departed from the old paths, that if a man professes to believe even a little of the Bible he is not classed among the infidels.

But a man does not have to tell falsehoods continually in order to be a liar; if he occasionally lies, so that you are not always sure whether he is telling the truth or not, he cannot be considered a truthful man. In like manner, if certain portions of the Bible are untrustworthy, it could no more stand as "the Scriptures of truth." Therefore whoever impeaches any of its testimony brings a charge against the whole of it; and he who disbelieves a portion of it is most certainly an infidel, no matter what his profession.

The Beginning of the Word Is True

The first three chapters of *Genesis* are the basis upon which the entire Bible is built. With that portion torn away, there would be no foundation for the Gospel,—no proof that the Gospel is needed, no evidence of its power to save. If the first chapters of *Genesis* were an allegory, all the rest of the Bible would be only a myth.

All the Scripture writers accepted the first part of the Bible as the literal Word of God. Their references to it show this. The Apostle Paul speaks thus of the event which forms our lesson this week:

2 Corinthians 11
[3] I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ.

The Gospel which Paul preached was based upon the story of the fall and the redemption then made known; therefore that account is as true the writings of the Apostle Paul.

In *Psalm* 119:160, we read:

Psalm 119
[160] Your Word is true from the beginning.

An exact word-for-word rendering of the Hebrew of that verse, however, is this:

"The beginning of your Word is truth."

Thus the Holy Spirit has anticipated the attacks that have been made on the beginning of the Bible, and has linked all together. Of some things it is said,

"It all stands or falls together."

But of the Bible we say,

"It all stands together;"

–for,

2 Timothy 2
[19] ...the foundation of God stands sure.

Psalm 119
[160] Every one of your righteous judgments endures for ever.

The Subtlety of Satan

Genesis 3
[1] Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast in the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, Yea, has God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

The extreme subtlety of "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan" is not in this text made as apparent by our version as it might be. The words of the serpent contain a sneer, a covert insinuation against the justice of God, which was made all the more effective in that the thought that God had dealt arbitrarily was suggested to Eve by a question which feigned a doubt that it was possible that He had done so monstrous a thing. It is difficult to translate into English all that is conveyed by the Hebrew word here rendered "Yes." It is a sniff of scorn or incredulity. Gesenius, in his *Hebrew Lexicon*, cites this very verse, in illustrating the meaning of the word, and renders the passage thus:

> "Is it even so, that God has said, You shall not eat?" etc.

Read this with that forcible breathing through the nose,—*humph*,—which indicates surprise, incredulity, or contempt, or all combined, and you will see how subtly doubt of God was insinuated into the mind of Eve.

Lifted Up

Habakkuk 2

[4] Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.

The beginning of sin was the lifting up of self. Before the foundation of the world, Lucifer, the light-bearer in heaven, who, because of his pride, fell so low as to become only a crawling serpent, said in his heart:

Isaiah 14

[13] I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north [literally, *the uttermost north*]; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.

Now it is perfectly right to be like the Lord, if one sets about it in the right way; for He says,

1 Peter 1

[16] Be holy, for I am holy,

–and Christ says,

Matthew 5
[48] Be therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

But perfection is not found in self-exaltation. Although God dwells in…

Isaiah 57
[15] …the high and holy place,

–and is himself,

[15] …the lofty One,

He dwells…

[15] …with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

Christ, who is the revelation of God, says:

Matthew 11
[29] I am meek and lowly in heart.

It is evident, therefore, that whoever thinks to become like God by lifting himself up, deceives himself, and is drawing himself away from God.

Micah 6 [margin]
[8] He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, love mercy, and to humble yourself to walk with God?

Isaiah 2
[12] The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.

It was by instilling his spirit—the same spirit that caused his fall from heaven—into man, that Satan compassed his fall. When Eve, in reply to the serpent's insinuation, repeated the prohibition against eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the penalty for disobedience, the Deceiver said:

Genesis 3 [RV]
[4] You shall not surely die;
[5] For God knows that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as God, knowing good and evil.

It was not with an indefinite promise of being "like gods," that the serpent seduced Eve, but with the assurance that she should be like God himself. Alas! her ambition was not to be like Him in goodness, but to equal Him in knowledge and power; and this is impossible.

The Spirit That Now Works

The same spirit works in the children of disobedience today. Satan still makes thousands believe that God is unkind, and arbitrary, sitting in solitary grandeur, unmindful of the needs of man. The spirit that caused the fall of Eve is in the words so often uttered,

> "If God is just and all-powerful, why does He not put an end to all the misery on the earth?"

–or in these words,

> "God doesn't care anything about me."

And so, in their impatient and unbelieving pride, they set about righting things themselves, and succeed only in making everything worse.

In the lie that the serpent uttered there was the germ of all wickedness and every form of unbelief. In accepting it, Eve turned away from God, repudiating Him utterly. Casting off all allegiance to Him, she put herself in His place. For the lie which she believed was to the intent that she was already equal to God, and needed only to assert her right, and take of the prohibited fruit, to assume her real position. Heathenism in all its forms was in that falsehood, and there is not a phase of error that cannot be traced to it. The fall was complete, and but for the mercy of God

there never again would have been in the heart of man the slightest desire for God and His goodness.

What the Woman Saw

Genesis 3
[6] And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

But she saw what was not so. She saw through the glass that the serpent held before her eyes. The fruit of that forbidden tree was not good for food.

> [Its] mortal taste
> Brought death into our world, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden.[8]

But the same deception that made Eve "see" that the fruit of the tree was good for food still blinds the judgment of men. Although…

1 Timothy 6
[16] [God] gives us richly all things to enjoy…

–showing no partiality, but…

Acts 17
[25] …[giving] to all life, and breath, and all things,

–men count it all as nothing, compared with something that is forbidden on account of its harmful nature. A table may be loaded with the bounties of the earth, yet a tea-toper will consider that she has nothing if there is no tea; or the one who eats to tickle his palate will complain of "starvation diet" if his particular dainty is not present. To many the world is all out of joint unless they have had their dram, or their pipe; their whole happiness depends upon something which makes slaves of them, and gives them only wretchedness.

[8] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book I.

A Too Hasty Decision

One thing that people ever since the days of Eve have overlooked is that one can never get the complete taste of anything the moment it is placed in one's mouth. The Bible tells of things that are sweet in the mouth and bitter in the belly. A person takes a cup of tea or a glass of spirits, and fancies that it is exceedingly pleasant to the taste, and to be desired to make one wise. Some hours afterwards that same person has a headache, and wonders what is the cause, not knowing that the headache is part of the taste of the drink. One partakes of rich viands, and thinks that he has had a delicious dinner. Later on he is terribly sick, and suffering from griping pains; he does not know that all that is part of the taste of big dinner. If all the effects of the things that are so pleasing to the perverted appetite, but which lay a heavy tax on the system, were concentrated into the moment of putting the things into the mouth, so that the eater could not fail to recognize the connection, there would be very little intemperance in eating and drinking. But:

> **Ecclesiastes 8**
> [11] Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

There are thousands of people suffering from cancer, consumption, gout, and many other common diseases, which are yearly becoming more common, who will never know until the Judgment day that their diseases were simply the "mortal taste" of their delicate meat. Yet they might know. God has given the warning; let all who know the danger labor by word and example to sound the warning to others.

The Things That Enslave Men

Another thing that should be understood is that what is wrong always enslaves its devotees, and what is good always leaves a man free. No person ever becomes a slave to anything that is really good to eat or drink. For example: A person who is accustomed to

drinking tea or spirits, or to using tobacco in any form, is utterly lost and in a maze without it. Such ones become nervous and even very irritable, and sometimes are unable to go on with any work that is in hand, if they are deprived of their favorite beverage or weed beyond the usual time. How many there are who admit that they are "good for nothing" in the morning until they have had their accustomed stimulant, ranging from coffee to whiskey. The writer has heard dozens of people say that they "couldn't live without eating meat!" Their food and drink was their master, not their servant.

Now it is not so with the man who lives of the simple, yet delicious and nourishing food that the Creator gave to man in Eden. It is good for a man to have regular hours for big meals; but if a truly healthful liver is compelled to delay a meal for some hours, or is deprived of it altogether, or when he gets it does not find the food that he expected, but some other equally good, he is not discommoded in the least. One thing, provided it is really good, suits him just as well as another. He is never the slave of any article of food or drink, so that he cannot eat if he does not have it; but everybody knows, most of us from experience, that this *is* the case with all who eat to gratify their appetite, rather than simply to live.

The Life Is More Than Meat

People often say,

> "One might as well not live at all, as to deprive oneself of all the good things of life."

That is what Eve thought. What was the use of living, if she could not have the forbidden fruit? There are not many of us that can throw stones at our common mother. But those same persons are often heard saying,

> "What is the use of living in this misery?"

And too often they put a summary end to their lives.

Matthew 6
[25] Is not the life more than meat?

Would it not be far better to deny the appetite, and even to eat food not quite so pleasing to the palate, and always be full of life and vigor, able to enjoy everything to the full, than to have pleasure at the table, and misery everywhere else? But this is an extreme statement of the case. The fact is that the man who is content with the things that God gave to man in Eden, as his bill of fare, gets more positive enjoyment out of the hours that he spends at the table than anybody else in the world possibly can. He alone knows the meaning of the word "delicious." Every morsel of food is a delight to him, for he alone has the "good things" of life. As he eats he thanks God,

Psalm 68
[19] ...who daily loads us with benefits.

And not by any means the least of the enjoyments of the clean table is the knowledge that there will be no bad taste afterwards.

What They Learned

Genesis 3
[7] And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.

It is most significant that the words "subtle" and "naked" are only two forms of the same word in the Hebrew. "Subtlety" is not at all a bad thing, if obtained from the right source. The *Proverbs* of Solomon are...

Proverbs 1
[4] ...to give subtlety to the simple; to the young man knowledge and discretion.

And the word "subtlety" in this place is the same as the word used of the serpent;[9] but the subtlety that the Word of God gives is something entirely different from that which comes from lis-

[9] *Genesis* 3:1.

tening to the serpent. The wisdom of the serpent is a desirable thing, if it be combined with the harmlessness of the dove. God is wise, and…

Proverbs 2
[6] [He] gives wisdom;

–the Serpent is wise, but whoever learns of him gains only the knowledge that he is naked. It is a poor school; Christ's is far better. He says,

Matthew 11
[29] Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls.

It is better to know a few things that are so, than to learn much that is only emptiness and nakedness.

The Knowledge of Good and Evil

God never designed that man should know anything but good. Why should anybody wish to know anything else? Is one better off for knowing how a nauseous thing tastes? How many people are there who think that there is a lack in their lives because they do not know how it feels to be bitten by a mad dog? Who is pining to know what it is to have small-pox or the plague? It is far better to know only that which is good; and in spite of what some "moralists" teach, it is not necessary to know evil in order to attain to real virtue. The strongest character ever known on earth,

2 Corinthians 5
[21] …knew no sin.

But He knew everything good, and there is enough of that to keep us all well employed throughout eternity.

Many who are set to be teachers of the Gospel imagine that they have to be acquainted with every form of heresy, in order to guard the flock against error. But the shepherd that leads the flock only in the green pastures that the Chief Shepherd provides,

has no need to study noxious weeds. He who obeys the injunction to…

2 Timothy 4
[2] Preach the Word,

–will never feel the lack of the knowledge of unbelief. The missionary to heathen lands has no need to study the so-called "sacred books" of those who know not God. To be well acquainted with…

1 Corinthians 2
[2] Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,

–is a whole university education.

Vice No Aid to Virtue

Neither is it necessary that a man should have become acquainted by experience, with all sorts of vice, in order to be able to deal effectively with souls. It is true that God, who makes the wrath of man to praise Him, can turn even a man's lost life to account, but be sure that good never comes from evil.

Job 14
[4] No one can bring a clean thing out of unclean.

John 7
[46] Never man spoke like this Man,

–it was said of Christ; and it was because His life had always been the perfection of purity.

Losing the Knowledge of Evil

Galatians 3
[13] Christ has redeemed us from the curse.

Romans 3
[24] Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

–we are delivered from every vestige of the fall. Therefore in Christ there is deliverance from the mixed knowledge of good

and evil. The sin is "put away,"[10] and only the good remains, and that is multiplied. Who has not wished that he had never heard some things, and had never learned some forms of evil? And who has not longed to be able to forget at least some of his past life? Well, the Gospel makes provision for that. God says of the people who enter into His covenant,

Hebrews 8
[12] Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Now God cannot forget anything that exists, and when He forgets our iniquities it is because there is no trace of them in the universe, least of all in us. Just as the haters of God at the last day…

Obadiah
[16] …shall be as though they had not been,

–so will it be with the sins of those who have become the friends of God. Even so is it now; for God casts their sins behind His back:

Isaiah 38
[17] You have cast all my sins behind your back;

–and He buries them in the depths of the sea.

Micah 7
[19] He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Christ is the tree of life, and if we feed continually on Him, and drink from the fountain of His life, the evil that comes from the forbidden tree will cease to be. The worshipers once purged shall have no more consciousness of sin.[11] Like their Master, they will "know no sin."[12] This is the crowning blessedness of the Gospel.

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[10] *Hebrews* 9:26.

[11] **Hebrews 10** [2] For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshipers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

Bear in mind that we are not speaking merely of the specific sorts of sin committed, but of sin as a whole. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, so that no trace of it will remain. The carnal mind,—the mind that thinks evil,—is to be exchanged for the mind of the Spirit, and it has no trace of evil in it. Is it not glorious to know that the hardened sinner, whose mind has been filled with evil, is not obliged to be tortured after conversion with temptations from his own mind, but may have the innocence of a child, combined with the prudence of a man?

Man Hides—God Seeks

Luke 19
[10] The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

This was first demonstrated when…

Genesis 3
[9] The Lord God called to Adam, and said unto him, Where are you?

Sin produces fear.

Proverbs 28
[1] The wicked flee when no man pursues.

So as soon as a man becomes conscious of sin he seeks to hide from the Lord. But that is a useless proceeding, for…

Proverbs 15
[3] The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Jeremiah 23
[23] Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

So the Lord is sure to find every soul; and if that soul be not saved, it is only because he loves death rather than life.

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[12] **2 Corinthians 5** [21] For He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Jonah thought to hide from the Lord, and he chose as his hiding-place the depths of the sea; but the Lord found him there. Yea, the Lord was there before him, and had a place all prepared for him, and from the pit of destruction He brought the runaway back to safety.

Psalm 139
9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
10 Even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.
11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.
12 Yea, the darkness hides not from You.

Then let no one despair because some loved one who has been the subject of many prayers has run away to escape the restraints of piety. No matter where he runs to, he will run into the arms of the Lord, which are always outstretched even to a disobedient and gainsaying people.

> Oh, the height of Jesus' love!
> Higher than the heaven above,
> Deeper than the deepest sea,
> Lasting as eternity;
> Love that found me,—wondrous thought!
> Found me when I sought Him not.[13]

This being the case, who can measure the hope of the one who turns to seek the Lord?

The Enmity

Genesis 3
15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed.

Blessed enmity! But for that enmity which God by His grace implanted into the heart of mankind, no human being, provided

[13] William McComb, Hymn: *Chief of Sinners Though I Be* (Christ All in All).

the race had continued, would ever have had any more desire for righteousness than the devil himself has; for the fall of man was complete; he had sold himself wholly to Satan, and "for nought." But we have been…

Isaiah 52
[3] …redeemed without money,

–even with the incorruptible life,

1 Peter 1
[19] …the precious blood of Christ.

It is because of this enmity against sin, which the life of Christ places in every man, that we are able to "feel after"[14] God when He seeks us in the dark. It is…

John 1
[9] …the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

No matter how tainted an inheritance a child may have, no matter how vicious and depraved its parents are, it has as its birthright from God a spark of the light of life, which may be fanned by the breathing of the Spirit into everlasting glory in the kingdom of God.

The Bruising

Genesis 3
[15] It shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

We get some sore wounds from the serpent, and the wound on our heel makes us often stumble; but we can always say,

Micah 7
[8] Rejoice not against me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall arise.

Victory is ours, for the promise is that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, and that means its utter destruc-

[14] *Acts* 17:27.

tion. Christ has been tempted on every point to the utmost of Satan's power; and:

2 Peter 1
[3] His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

He took part in our flesh and blood, in equal measure with us,

Hebrews 2
[13] ...that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
[14] And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Everyone involuntarily names Christ as the seed of the woman, who is spoken of in:

Genesis 3
[15] And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

But many overlook the obvious fact that *we* are the seed of the woman, as well as He. Think of the wonder of it! The ordinary idea is reversed: instead of saying that Christ is Man, as well as we are, we learn from this verse to say that we are men, as well as He is; and therefore all the promises to the Son of man belong to us. So we have the promise renewed in these words,

Romans 16
[20] The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

1 Corinthians 15
[57] Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. The Riches of Christ

1. Creation and Redemption

Present Truth, December 15, 1892

Genesis 1
[1] In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

IN THIS brief sentence we have the whole of the truth of the Gospel summed up. He who reads aright, may derive a world of comfort from it. In the first place, let us consider who it was that created the heaven and earth.

[1] ...God created...

But Christ is God,

Hebrews 1
[3] ...the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of His person.

He himself said,

John 10
[30] I and my Father are one.

He it was who, representing the Father, created the heaven and the earth.

John 1
[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
[2] The same was in the beginning with God.
[3] All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

And again we read of Christ,

Colossians 1
[16] By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him;
[17] And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

The Father himself addresses the Son as God, and as Creator. The 1st chapter of *Hebrews* says that God has not at any time said to any of the angels,

Hebrews 1
[5] You are my Son, this day have I begotten You;
[8] But unto the Son He says, Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.

And He has also said to the Son,

[10] You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of your hands:
[2] ...by whom also He made the worlds.

So we are well assured that when we read in the 1st chapter of *Genesis*, that:

Genesis 1
[1] In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,

–it refers to God in Christ. Creative power is the distinguishing mark of Divinity. The Spirit of the Lord through the prophet Jeremiah describes the vanity of idols, and then continues:

Jeremiah 10
[10] But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King: at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation.
[11] Thus shall you say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.
[12] He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion.

The earth was made by His power, and established by His wisdom. But,

1 Corinthians 1
[24] Christ [is] the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

So here again we find Christ inseparably connected with creation as the Creator. Only as we acknowledge and worship Christ as the Creator, do we acknowledge His Divinity. Christ is Redeemer by virtue of His power as Creator. We read that:

Colossians 1
[14] We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins,

–because that,

[16] By Him were all things created.

If He were not Creator, He could not be Redeemer. This means simply that redemptive power and creative power are the same. To redeem is to create. This is shown in the statement of the apostle that:

Romans 1
[16] The Gospel…is the power of God unto salvation,

–which statement is immediately followed by another to the effect that the power of God is seen by means of the things that have been made.

[20] For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.

When we consider the works of creation, and think of the power manifested in them, we are contemplating the power of redemption.

There has been a great deal of idle speculation as to which is greater: redemption or creation. Many have thought that redemption is a greater work than creation. Such speculation is idle, because only infinite power could perform either work, and infinite power cannot be measured by human minds.

But while we cannot measure the power, we can easily settle the question about which is greater, because the Scriptures give us the information. Neither is greater than the other, for both are

the same. Redemption *is* creation. Redemption is the same power that was put forth in the beginning to create the world and all that is in it, now put forth to save man and the earth from the curse of sin. The Scriptures are very clear on this point. The psalmist prayed,

Psalm 51
[10] Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me.

The apostle says that:

2 Corinthians 5
[17] If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,

–or a new creation. And again we read:

Ephesians 2
[8] For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
[9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.
[10] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

Compared with God,

Isaiah 40
[17] Man is less than nothing, and vanity.

In him…

Romans 7
[18] …dwells no good thing.

But the same power that in the beginning made the earth from nothing, can take everyone who is willing, and make of him that which is…

Ephesians 1
[6] …to the praise of the glory of His grace.

2. Only a Mirage vs. A Blessed Reality

Present Truth, May 18, 1893

The Mirage

WE DO not refer to the delusive pictures of houses and green trees and streams of water that we have seen floating o'er the shady plains, but we refer to the false visions of life and freedom and beauty and pleasure that we all have been seen floating o'er the deserts of sin. They are only a mirage; they are only a delusion of the devil. There is no life, there is no freedom, there is no beauty or pleasure in sin.

Have we not again and again clawed after these phantoms, like a boy after a butterfly, only to find them at last,—just beyond our grasp? Have we ever yet been able to seize it and hold it fast, and prove it true? Never!

We have found the very opposite true. Instead of life, we have found ourselves…

Ephesians 2
[1] …dead in trespasses and sins.

Instead of freedom, we have found ourselves in the…

Acts 8
[23] …bond of iniquity,

–and so,

Proverbs 5
[22] …held with the cords of our sins,

–that we could not so much as raise ourselves up. Instead of beauty we have found…

Isaiah 61
[3] …ashes,

–and instead of pleasures, the…

[3] …spirit of heaviness,

–and…

Acts 8
[23] …the gall of bitterness.

The Blessed Reality

How different is the religion of Jesus Christ! What a blessed reality! No false visions, no rosy-hued paths that end in captivity and death! It binds up the broken-hearted, proclaims…

Isaiah 61
[1] …liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound [in sin].

It comforts all that mourn,

Matthew 5
[4] Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted,

–and gives unto them…

Isaiah 61
[3] …beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

It clothes us with the garments of salvation, and covers us with the robe of righteousness:

[10] I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

It opens to us the path of life, where there is…

Psalm 16
[11] …fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

It lays up our treasures…

Matthew 6
[20] …where neither moth nor rust corrupts, and where thieves do not break through and steal.

It gives us a crown that fades not away, and a mansion in the city…

Hebrews 11
[10] …whose builder and maker is God.

The religion of Jesus Christ has bread for the hungry, water for the thirsty, garments for the naked, homes for the homeless, and riches for the poor.

- It brings a Friend to the friendless, a Father to the fatherless, and a Husband to the widow.
- It sheds light on those in darkness, furnishes a guide to the blind, and opens a fountain for the unclean and a place of refuge for those in danger.
- It gives rest to the weary, strength to the weak, wisdom to the ignorant, comfort to the mourner, freedom to the captives, and life to the dying.

O reader, taste and see that the Lord is good.

3. Wanted: A Saviour

Present Truth, November 16, 1893

IN THE *Review of the Churches* for October there is an account of a conversation between a young Brahmin and a missionary. Said the Brahmin,

> "Many things which Christianity contains I find in Hinduism, but there is one thing which Christianity has and Hinduism has not."
>
> "And what is that?" asked the missionary.
>
> "A Saviour," was the reply.

This is a point which is overlooked by people who extol the other systems of religion. It is true that there are excellent precepts in Hinduism, Mohammedanism, and among all pagans, from the most ancient times; but none of these religions give the man any help in carrying out those precepts, and in forsaking evil. With them it is each one for himself. And so they can never give satisfaction and perfect peace. They do not satisfy the desire of the heart. But Jesus,

Haggai 2

7 ...the Desire of all nations,

–saves from sin, and lives in the soul the righteousness which He requires. Let Him then be lifted up before all the world.

4. Two Ways of Looking

Present Truth, December 21, 1893
Original title: Front Page

ALL the sin and misery that have ever blighted this earth, are the result of a look; and all the righteousness and peace that will glorify the earth made new will also be the result of a look. Thus consider the two ways of looking, that produce such widely different results.

Pain and death are the result of sin, and sin is from the devil.[15] Satan was once Lucifer, the light-bearer, the son of the morning.[16] He was one of the cherubim above the throne of God,

> **Ezekiel 28**
> [12] ...full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

He was perfect in his ways from the day that he was created, until iniquity was found in him.[17] He sinned, and was cast down to the earth, where he succeeded in instilling his wicked spirit into the hearts and minds of men.

In the Scripture last referred to we read:

> [17] Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty, you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness.

The lifting up of his heart was shown thus:

> **Isaiah 14**
> [13] You have said in your heart, *I* will ascend into heaven; *I* will exalt my throne above the stars of God: *I* will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
> [14] *I* will ascend above the heights of the clouds; *I* will be like the Most High.

The fall of Satan was the result of his pride, and his pride was on account of his beauty and brightness. Why did his beauty

[15] See *Romans* 5:12, and *1 John* 3:8.
[16] *Isaiah* 14:12.
[17] *Ezekiel* 28:12-17.

cause him to be proud? Because he looked at it. He began to look at himself, to consider his own beauty and accomplishments, all of which were lent him by the Lord, and the result was a rebellion that contemplated nothing less than the dethronement of Jehovah.

1 John 3
[8] For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

All evil springs from love of self.[18] Men love themselves because they look at themselves so much. Thus the spirit of Satan is manifest in men. Now if Christ destroys the works of the devil and men, it must be by getting them to cease looking at self. And this He does by offering them something better to look at, namely, himself.

John 3
[14] As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and even so must the Son of man be lifted up.

The serpent was lifted up in order that people might, by looking, be healed of their wounds; Christ is lifted up in order that, by looking at Him, men may be healed of sin.

Men always become like those with whom they constantly associate. Reading bad books, looking at evil sights, tends inevitably to corruption. So he who looks at his own sinful self will become only more sinful. "Looking unto Jesus"[19] takes one away from self. There is nothing of self in Him, because, although He was perfect, He emptied himself, that the Father alone might appear. So we read,

1 Corinthians 3 [RV]
[18] But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.

[18] *2 Timothy* 3:1-5.
[19] *Hebrews* 12:2.

2 Corinthians 4
[6] For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Let us then be among those who will heed the general invitation:

Isaiah 45
[22] Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth.

5. Sacrifices

Present Truth, February 15, 1894

THERE is only one sacrifice in the Christian religion, and that was made by Christ. We have never made a sacrifice. God does not call us to make sacrifices, but to accept the sacrifice that has been made. True, we have to give up all things that pertain to self, but giving up self is simply taking Christ.

Suppose a poor beggar comes to us, with ragged clothing, and a few coppers in his pocket, and we say to him, "Take off these rags, and we will give you a new suit; and give up the coppers, and we will fill your pockets with sovereigns." Would he begin to mourn, or talk about the great sacrifice he was called upon to make in giving up his rags and the coppers he had in them?

Of course we give up something, but what sacrifice is it, when we get ten thousand times as much, and infinitely more? God wants us to give up:

- our miserable ways, and take *His* ways;
- our narrow, circumscribed thoughts, and take *His* thoughts;
- our poverty, and get *His* robes;
- our gross ignorance, and get *His* wisdom;
- our wickedness, and get *His* righteousness.

6. God's Glory His Gospel

Present Truth, March 1, 1894

WHEN Isaiah saw the Lord on the throne, high and lifted up, surrounded by the seraphim, he heard those beings crying one to another,

> **Isaiah 6**
> [3] Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.

These words were spoken hundreds of years ago. Are they true now, and is the earth now full of the glory of the Lord? Most certainly; all the while the word has been,

> **Isaiah 60**
> [1] Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

The whole earth is full of the glory of God. He has revealed it in every blade of grass, and every flower, and everything that He has made.

> **Habakkuk 3**
> [3] His glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of His praise.

The plant springing up and yielding its fruit, is showing forth the glory of God; for when in Cana of Galilee Christ accelerated the process, and, instead of waiting six months for the rain to come down and be taken up into the vine and converted into the juice of the grape, changed the water into wine by the power of the same word which sends the rain and is the life of the plant, it was written that this beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee,

> **John 2**
> [11] ...and manifested forth His glory.

Power and Glory

The power of God is the glory of God. He showed His mighty

power in the resurrection of Christ from the dead; but…

Romans 6
[4] Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.

The power of God is also shown in the things that He has made, and the Gospel, which is this power manifested unto salvation, is…

1 Timothy 1
[11] …the glorious Gospel of God.

The Gospel is glory; it is also power.

And the whole earth is full of it. The earth preaches no set sermons. It does not begin with firstly, secondly, thirdly, and deliver an artistic address. What does the earth do? It receives the light from God, and manifests it forth. It simply receives the gifts that God sends upon it, and glorifies God in returning the fruits of the life. That is the Gospel.

Romans 1
[16] The Gospel…is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believes,
[17] For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.

Why All Do Not Glorify God

Someone may ask,

> "Then why am I not as much to the praise of God as the heavens?"

Simply because you do not desire to be. We are all exactly what we wish to be. It is a fact that…

Psalm 145
[16] [God] satisfies the desire of every living thing.

The trouble with some is that they do not want to be satisfied.

If you really want to know the Lord, nothing in the world can hinder; because the Lord wants you to know Him. There is no use in standing off, and saying,

> "We want to know the Lord, and want to serve Him,"

–when for many years He has been seeking for us, and knocking for us to open the door and let Him in, and has been speaking to us in every way He could. He has spoken to eyes, and ears, into every sense we have; for there is not a thing in heaven or earth that does not proclaim the power and the glory of God.

Therefore as soon as we are willing to believe that the Lord is better than we are, that He is more at peace and rest than we are, we shall have Him; for we shall then be willing to give up our ways, and our poverty, and our unrest and disquietude, and have the peace and rest of God, and the riches and righteousness which He has given to us. But this is a giving up of all there is of self. To give up our ways means to confess that we do not know as much as we thought we did, and that is hard. It is a difficult thing to say that we are mistaken, and that we have no wisdom, or might, or anything that is good and worth having. This hurts; but it is only saying that the Lord is greater than we are, and that we are willing that His life in us shall manifest forth His glory, that we also may be…

Ephesians 1
[6] To the praise of the glory of His grace.

7. Unspeakable

Present Truth, March 8, 1894

MANY who have recognized the goodness and preciousness of the Lord feel a diffidence about testifying to others, because they cannot express in words what they see and know. But if it could be fully expressed, it would not be a true Christian experience. The apostle says,

2 Corinthians 9
[15] ...be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

If it were not more than can be expressed in human language, it would not be more than we could think. But the Lord gives us more than we can ask or think.[20] And the Spirit of the Lord reveals it to us. And just so the Spirit of the Lord takes the feeble expressions of one in whom that Spirit dwells, and conveys to the hearer all that is in the heart of the speaker, but which his words are inadequate to express. Christ spoke the language of the common people; His words were very simple; but the power of the life behind His words, clothed them with authority, so that those who heard Him said,

John 7
[46] Never man spoke like this man.

[20] *Ephesians* 3:20.

8. Satisfaction

Present Truth, March 15, 1894

Isaiah 48
[22] There is no peace, says the Lord, unto the wicked.

Isaiah 57
[20] The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

Isaiah 8
[21] It shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God.

James 4
[1] From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?
[2] You lust, and have not: you kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not, because you ask not.
[3] You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts.

THIS is a description of men by nature. Everywhere we find unrest and dissatisfaction. The poor have no cause to envy the rich, for discontent is found in the mansion as in the hovel. Those in any station in life who are perfectly contented, are in a very small minority. Everywhere we see people seeking for happiness in various ways, and vainly confident that they will find it if they pursue the object of their desires far enough.

Although these longings are so often for things forbidden, and for that which only increases the dissatisfaction, it is God himself who has implanted them in the human heart. It is not that God has caused men to desire unlawful things, but that the desire for unlawful things is only the perversion of a desire which God himself has placed in man.

God is a bounteous Provider. He scatters His benefits with a lavish hand. He desires that men should enjoy the abundance which His love has prepared, and that they should be satisfied. He

is no niggard, neither is He a tyrant. He knows what will perfectly satisfy every soul, and yet He never attempts to compel anyone to find satisfaction in His way. He knows that no one can be satisfied under compulsion, and that even that which is good will not satisfy unless it is the individual's own choice. So He gives everyone full liberty to choose whatever he will.

Jesus Christ is…

Haggai 2
[7] …the Desire of all nations.

There are comparatively few of the people in the world who know Him, and who recognize Him as the object of their desire; but it is a fact that all the very longings of the human heart can be satisfied in Christ, and in Him alone. God has implanted desires in every soul, which can be satisfied only by the possession of Christ, in order that when He is lifted up before them, they may see in Him the object of their desires, and be drawn to Him. The devil's work is to deceive people with the thought that their desires may be satisfied in some other way than by the possession of Christ.

David was a man of like passions with other men, his flesh was sinful, and as full of evil desires as any other human flesh. Yet when the Spirit enlightened his understanding, he said,

Psalm 63
[1] O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.

And again:

Psalm 84
[2] My heart and my flesh cries out for the living God.

How can it be made to appear that the appetites and lusts of the flesh are really the crying out of the flesh after God? Simply by the fact that no man was ever yet satisfied by the indulgence of fleshly appetites and lusts. The drunkard drinks to satisfy a crav-

ing that is never satisfied. The vicious and licentious man, in common with the miser, finds no satisfaction in the gratification of his passion. The reason why he follows the lusts of the flesh so eagerly, is that they make him their slave, deluding him with the idea that the next time he will find that complete satisfaction which evades him this time. The Lord, knowing that He alone can give the soul perfect and complete satisfaction, calls to us, saying,

Isaiah 55
[2] Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfies not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

What a wonderful God is ours! How tender and loving and thoughtful! What wonderful provision He has made for the salvation of every soul! He has so constituted man that he cannot find peace and rest outside of himself; for the reason that everything outside of Him is death, and in Him alone is life and safety. These unsatisfied longings of weary hearts are but a proof of the tender, loving care of the Father above, and that He will not leave any of His children without continually reminding them of the fullness that He has to bestow; for every want felt by mankind is but the announcement, if they would recognize it so, of the fact that God has something which He wishes to give us,—something which will satisfy the want. Only at His hand can…

Psalm 145
[16] …the desire of every living thing" be satisfied.

Thus God has provided comfort for us, even from our very weaknesses and lusts. Here is help for the tempted. No matter how much the flesh cries out for sinful pleasures, we may be assured that those things are "deceitful lusts," that will not give the satisfaction they promise; and then the comfort comes in the knowledge of the fact that the longing is in reality for Christ, and that by accepting Him for all that He is, the desire will be satisfied. There is life and victory in that. Knowing that, we may count

it all joy when we fall into divers temptations; because with every temptation He provides the way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. Then we shall sing:

O Christ, in Thee my soul has found,
And found in Thee alone,
The peace, the joy, I sought so long,
The bliss till now unknown.

Now none but Christ can satisfy;
None other name for me;
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in Thee.[21]

9. What to Forget

Present Truth, March 29, 1894

FORGET self. No person ever gratified self when self was forgotten. And we may forget self by losing self in Christ. He has been lifted up from the earth, in order that we may see Him, and beholding the wondrous sight, forget all else.

[21] Emma Frances Bevan, *None But Christ Can Satisfy*, ca. 1860.

10. Things Given Us

Present Truth, January 3, 1895

WE HAVE whatever has been given to us, unless we refuse to receive it, or throw it away, or lose it. This being the case, let us note some of the things that have been given us, that we may know how well off we are.

The Word of God

Jesus said to the Father,

> **John 17**
> [8] I have given unto them the words which You gave me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send me.

All that the Father has said to Jesus, His only begotten Son, He has passed on to us, so that we may know that we are sons of God just as surely as we know that He is the Son of God. What a rich gift this is!

Peace

Jesus said,

> **John 14**
> [27] Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you.

The world gives only where an equivalent can be returned; Christ gives to those who have nothing, and does not recall His gifts. If there is any man, therefore, who doesn't have peace, it is because he doesn't care for it, or doesn't believe the Lord's word. If we believe the word that He has given to us, then we have the same peace that Jesus had.

Faith

> **Romans 10**
> [17] Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

With the word of God comes the power to grasp and appreciate it.

Romans 12
[3] For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith.

The faith that is given is "the faith of Jesus,"[22] so that by it we may live the same just life that Jesus lived, for…

Romans 1
[17] …the just shall live by faith.

Grace

Ephesians 4
[7] But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
[8] Wherefore He said, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

If we have not received the grace of God in vain, we have salvation,

Ephesians 2
[8] For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

And,

Titus 2
[11] The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared unto all men.

Glory

Psalm 84
[11] For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory.

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[22] *Romans* 3:22.

He has given grace to every man, and the glory is ours also; for Jesus said to the Father:

John 17
[22] The glory which You gave me, I have given them.

Christ Himself

John 3
[16] For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Titus 2
[14] [He] gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity.

But we have more than a share in Him; we each one have the whole of Him, if we but believe that…

Galatians 2
[20] [He] loved me, and gave himself for me.

Everything

The riches of Christ are unsearchable.

Ephesians 3
[8] Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

In Him are all things. Therefore,

Romans 8
[32] He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

2 Corinthians 9
[15] Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

Having all things, there is no possible chance for complaining or discouragement.

Don't Forget

Let every one therefore continually say to himself:

Psalm 103

[1] Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name.
[2] Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits;
[3] Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases;
[4] Who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies;
[5] Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

11. The Light of Life

Present Truth, June 27, 1895

CHRIST—who is one with His Father—is the…

Malachi 4
[2] …Sun of Righteousness.

What the visible sign is to the physical world, Christ is to the spiritual world. The sun gives light to the physical world, and the Sun of Righteousness gives righteousness to the spiritual world. As we cannot see the sun without having its light upon us, so we cannot see Christ without having His light upon us, which is righteousness. Looking unto Him, we are covered with His righteousness which shines upon us, and thus are made righteous. As the sun is a powerful disinfectant and destroyer of disease-giving germs, so the Sun of Righteousness destroys with His beams all that which brings disease to the soul.

[2] Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings.

Sin cannot live in the sight of God, as mold cannot live in the bright sunshine. In the light of God's countenance is life, and that light comes to us through Jesus, the propitiation for our sins. Thus we can look upon it and live, which no man could do were he to behold God's face. That light destroys sin, but not the sinful flesh in which it works. So then we are to…

Hebrews 12
[1] …run with patience the race that is set before us,
[2] Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

And how can we see Him, and thus stand in the light of the Sun of Righteousness? Simply by faith, believing His word. Faith exercised to its full extent always brings Jesus into view. By faith we may ever "look and live."[23]

[23] *Numbers* 21:9.

12. All We Like Sheep

Present Truth, April 2, 1896
Original title: Front Page

Isaiah 13
[6] All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

WE HAVE turned every one to his own way, because we regarded our way as better than the Lord's way. The fact shows that we have regarded our own judgment as better than the Lord's judgment.

Thus we find it to be a fact that every man naturally thinks himself above and better than the Lord. So…

2 Thessalonians 2
[3] …that man of sin,…the son of perdition;
[4] Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped,

–is simply the full development of human nature.

Our turning to our own way is therefore a direct insult to the Lord.

Isaiah 53
[3] He is despised and rejected of men.

By what men is He despised? By all men—by us; for…

[3] …we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.

We ourselves have done this. The insults that were heaped on Christ in Herod's judgment hall; the crown of thorns; the spitting and the blows in the face; and the cross itself, are all chargeable to us.

[6] The Lord has laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.

When we remember this, we may begin to appreciate the wonderful goodness and forbearance and love of the Lord in giving himself for us. Forgetting all the insults that we have heaped upon Him, His hand is stretched out still, and His gentle voice pleads,

Matthew 11
[28] Come unto me, all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

But how shall we come to Him? We all like sheep have gone astray; we have wandered far away from the fold;[24] how shall we know how and where to find Him? Well, in the first place, we must settle it that we cannot, except as lost sheep. Christ came to save the lost, and He accepts us in our lost condition.

Just as I am, without one plea
But that your blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidds't me come to Thee,—
O, Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe;
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.[25]

Yet still the despairing cry is uttered,

"Oh that I knew where I might find Him!"

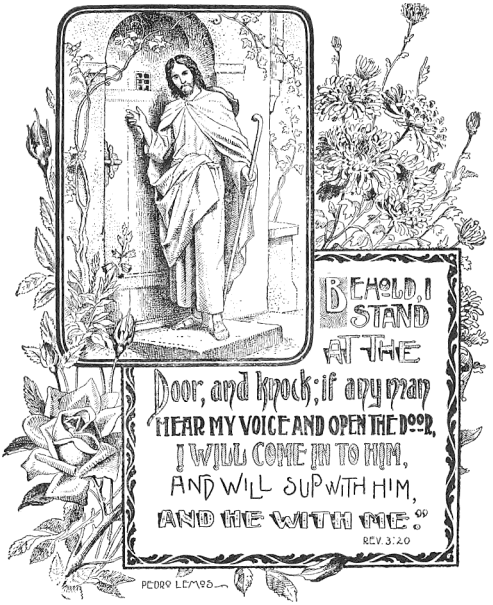
Our minds may at once be set at rest concerning that.

Acts 17
[27] He is not far from every one of us.

He does not stand in His comfortable home, and call us, but He seeks us until He finds us.

Revelation 3
[20] Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.

[24] *Isaiah* 53:6.
[25] Charlotte Elliott, *Just as I Am, Without One Plea*, 1836.



We have not to hunt for Him; He comes to us, and we have only to accept the salvation that He brings us. For let it never be forgotten that in Him is all fullness. He is not only the Shepherd seeking the lost sheep,[26] but He is the door into the fold,[27] and the fold itself. So, no matter how far away we have wandered, the very moment we yield to the call which He utters close beside us, we are at home. The Shepherd and the fold come to find the sheep; and from lost wanderers, we find ourselves at once in our Father's house. What a blessed encouragement that Jesus has brought heaven itself down to earth for us.

Ephesians 2

[4] God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,

[5] Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ (by you are saved),

[6] And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

[26] *Luke* 15:4; *John* 10:11.

[27] *John* 10:7, 9.

13. The Mind of the Natural Man

Present Truth, August 13, 1896

DANIEL tells how, just before Nebuchadnezzar was stricken and humbled, the proud king walked up the terraces of his palace, saying,

> **Daniel 4**
> [30] Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?

Memorials of Vanity

He not only spoke it, but engraved like sentiments in his inscriptions upon the royal tablets, now dug up and read. One of them says:

> For the astonishment of men I built this house; all of the power of my majesty encompasses its walls. . . . In Babylon alone I raise the seat of my dominion.

This vanity is the common frailty of the human mind.

The Mind of Christ

Contrast with this Christ's attitude as he came into the world to show men how to live for man. He had not built a pile of bricks and mortar, but the very earth and all living things upon it and the heavens were the work of His hands. Yet He said,

> **John 5**
> [30] I can of my own self do nothing.

> **John 6**
> [38] I came...not to do my own will.

> **John 17**
> [4] I have glorified You on the earth.

Nebuchadnezzar glorified himself as the builder of a great city now buried in the sands. Jesus, in whom all things consist, glorified God.

Philippians 2 [RV]
[5] Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus:
[6] Who...emptied himself.

14. A View of God's Power

Present Truth, June 3, 1897

MOSES saw the power of God manifested in Egypt and at the Red Sea, at Sinai, and for forty years in the wilderness. No man ever saw more. But the more he saw, the more he realized how little he had seen. Just before his death he prayed,

Deuteronomy 3
[24] O Lord God, You have begun to show your servant your greatness, and your mighty hand.

There is a good lesson in this prayer for those who are inclined to limit God's power and distrust it, or to think by the little they have learned that they know most that is to be known. Moses knew enough to know that he had only begun to see the power and goodness of the Lord. And all...

Ephesians 1
[19] ...the exceeding greatness of His power [is] toward us who believe.

15. The Great Sacrifice

Signs of the Times, September 30, 1897
Original title: Editorial. The Great Sacrifice

THE great Sacrifice of divine love was not an after thought, coming in after man sinned. It was not a new device to meet an exigency. There are no surprises to Him who is infinite in knowledge and wisdom. Jesus Christ was…

Revelation 13
[8] …the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Character a Matter of Choice

In the very plan of God the possibility (not the necessity) of sin was involved. That creature enjoying the greatest bliss must obtain it by choice; he must be free because he chooses freedom. That which man is *compelled* to do brings him little joy. The chafing chain of compulsion destroys all the pleasures of what if of choice would be a delightful occupation. The only pleasure sin ever brings, evanescent as it is, comes because men choose it; and the pleasure which comes from choosing good and doing good is as much greater and higher as eternity is more than time. God therefore gave to man free choice, with the possibility of sin. But God set before man the end of the evil way, and the eternal fruitage of good, desiring him to choose the good way and making it possible for every one so to do.

Man's Choice

Man's choice was evil. He walked by sight not by faith. God's way was in his Word. He warned man,

Genesis 2
[17] In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.

Faith is based on God's Word.[28] But when man…

[28] *Romans* 10:17.

Genesis 3
[6] ...saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes,

–he chose the way of sight, and sinned, and died. Choosing by sight was the way of temporary pleasure and selfishness, the very way in which millions barter eternal life and bliss. Choosing by faith in God's Word, it would have forever led man out toward God, like whom he would have continued to grow. Infinite Love gave to man the way of faith, that it might be the way of infinite blessing.

Love's Infinite Gift

Yet, knowing that man would sin, God provided (not for the sin) but salvation from the sin. He gave His only-begotten Son. Not eighteen centuries ago did He give Him, but He...

1 Peter 1
[20] ...verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

The gift was made—God gave His Son,[29] that Son "gave himself"[30]—in the beginning, the gift of God's infinite love. As that gift involved the very Godhead, the person of Him who with the Father made the worlds, all the purposes of God are found in Him. With respect to that great center of love and power has all the plan of God through all the ages been wrought out. Every sacrifice ordained of God was efficacious only as it expressed faith in God's great sacrifice of His Son. Every kid, every lamb, every offering of first-fruits, every one of the first-born, pointed to...

John 1
[29] ...the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Manifest in These Last Times

The Sacrifice was eternal; its greatest manifestation was when Jesus Christ was given into the hands of the powers of darkness,

[29] *John* 3:16.
[30] *Titus* 2:14.

condemned without a trial, mocked and scourged, and crowned with thorns, made to bear the instrument of His own suffering till bodily strength failed from sheer exhaustion, and then nailed to the cruel tree. During all this time mindful only of others, admonishing the women of Jerusalem that were weeping for Him, gently reproving Peter with a look, placing His mother in the care of a loved disciple, praying for those who tortured Him, and comforting the repentant criminal at His side—was there ever sacrifice and love like this? The cross was the climax of the manifestation of His suffering; but He suffers still. He was a present Saviour to Abel, to John who stood beside the cross, to us who live in the nineteenth century. For as truly as to the Gauls of old, so to us, before our eyes,

Galatians 3
[1] ...Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified *among you.*

His death is for us today. Our sins are today laid upon Him that we may sin no more.

An Eternal Sacrifice

His is not a sacrifice of a day, or for three and one-half years, or for thirty-four years; it is an eternal sacrifice. When He left heaven's glory, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, He became one of us, a "brother in adversity;"[31] and when He ascended, we triumphed with Him; but He is one with us still; and forever is He one with us—God, yet man—a brother to all men, for all eternity. And the pain is not over yet.

Hebrews 4
[15] [He is] touched with the feeling of all our infirmities,

–suffers with His body, the church, a crucified yet risen Saviour. What love is this? As He has made the eternal sacrifice for you, O soul, will you not yield yourself, your all, to Him,

[31] *Proverbs* 17:17.

Romans 12
[1] ...a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

There is cleansing, there is blessing, there is power and life and salvation in Jesus Christ, even "to the uttermost."[32]

Taste and See

One of my friends offers me some food which he says is very good and nourishing, and asks me to adopt it as an article of diet. But I am skeptical, and do not believe that it is good, and so I say,

> "Prove to me that it is good, and I will take it."
>
> "That I cannot do," he replies: "I know it is good, and can assure you of the fact; but you must prove it for yourself; taste it, and you will know it too."

Well, that is certainly reasonable; for I can't expect to know that a thing is good, unless I taste for myself. Even so, when my friend does not believe me when I tell him that the Lord is good, and asks me to prove it to him, I cannot; I know that He is good, for I have tried Him; I can assure others of His goodness, but I cannot prove it to them. I can only say,

Psalm 34
[8] O taste and see that the Lord is good.

Why will not people be as reasonable in regard to spiritual food as with the mere physical? Taste, and you have the proof.

[32] *Hebrews* 7:25.

16. Sons of God

Present Truth, May 26, 1898

GOD is love. It is therefore His nature to love. Being love himself, when He bestows love He bestows himself; therefore the love of God is the imparting of what He is. By this test we may know whether that which claims to be love deserves the name. True love gives itself in full, holding nothing back. If it seeks anything for itself, it is not love.

Since God is love, He must needs impart himself. The fullest extent to which this could be done was to beget a Son. So Jesus shared the life of the Father, one with Him in all things. God's love held nothing back from Him,

Colossians 1
[9] For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.

Colossians 2
[9] In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

God's love was not diminished in Christ and it revealed itself just as before. It still desired to give itself. So it was agreed by the Father and the Son,

Genesis 1
[26] Let us make man.

True love cannot be satisfied with partially bestowing itself. It must give freely the best it has. So man was to be made,

[26] ...in our image, after our likeness.

Colossians 1
[16] In Him were all things created.
[18] And in Him all things consist.

The fact that man held his life in Christ made Jesus the security not merely for its continuance but also that man should receive in the life the fullness of the love of God, in the same measure that it was bestowed upon Christ. It also secured that the love which

was revealed in Christ should be the law of man's life, since the life of Christ is made our life.

Acts 17
[28] In Him we live and move and have our being.

This is true of the angels also.

Colossians 1 [RV]
[16] In Him were all things created in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible.

In heaven, God's plan did not meet with universal acceptance. Some thought that to hold everything in Christ was to narrow the possibilities of life, and to exalt Christ at the expense of His creatures. Lucifer, son of the morning, desired a more free and independent existence, and proposed to exalt himself, saying,

Isaiah 14
[14] I will be like the Most High.

The plan of love was that he should be, in a wider, higher sense than he ever dreamed, but refusing to become so in Christ, in love, he became altogether unlike the Most High.

Man was induced to join Satan in his rebellion, and it seemed as though God's plan was overthrown, and His love wasted. But the rebellion only served to demonstrate how entirely God had given himself to men in Jesus Christ, when He created them. All that He had was then freely bestowed, and now it was made manifest.

1 John 3
[16] Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us.

Romans 5
[8] God commends His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

Romans 8
[32] He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.

John 1
[12] As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.

Not only was God's purpose established, that men should be His sons in Christ, but it was seen that only as they were in Christ was their position, as sons, secured. Moreover, so far from sharing their possibilities, in Christ men are highly exalted, sharing to the full the glory and kingdom which He has won.

Romans 8
[17] If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

Thus we are…

Ephesians 3
[17] …able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height:
[18] And to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge,

–and find that in this love we too are…

[19] …filled with all the fullness of God.

So, in spite of man's rebellion, and nonetheless on account of it, will God's love fulfill its loving purpose to…

Ephesians 1
[10] …gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.

The infinite development of this purpose in the ages to come will…

Ephesians 2
[7] …show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

1 John 3
[1] Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.
[2] It does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.

17. Power unto Salvation

Present Truth, July 14, 1898

Romans 1
[16] I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

THERE is no reason why any man should be ashamed of the Gospel, nevertheless many men have been and are ashamed of it. Many people are so ashamed of it that they could not think of lowering themselves so much as to make a profession of it; and many who do make a profession of it are ashamed to let it be known. What is the cause of all this shame? It is that they do not know what the Gospel is. No man who really knows what the Gospel is, will be ashamed of it, or of any part of it.

Desire for Power

There is nothing that men need and desire so much as power. It is a desire that God himself has planted in man. Unfortunately the devil has deceived the most of mankind, so that they seek for power in the wrong way. They think that it can be found in the possession of wealth or political position, and so they rush to secure those things. But these do not supply the power for which God has created the desire. This is shown by the fact that they do not satisfy. No man was ever yet satisfied with the power that he obtained by wealth or position. However much they have, they desire more. No man finds in them just what he thought he would; and so he grasps after more, thinking that he will find his heart's desire farther on; but all in vain. Christ is…

Haggai 2
[7] …the Desire of all nations,

–the only Source of complete satisfaction, because He is the embodiment of all the real power there is in the universe—the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1
[34] Christ, the power of God.

Power and Knowledge

It is commonly said that knowledge is power. That depends. If we take the statement of the poet, that…

> The proper study of mankind is man,[33]

–then certainly knowledge is anything but power. Man is nothing but weakness and sin. All men know that they are sinners, that they do things that are not right, but that knowledge gives them no power to change their course. You may tell a man all his faults, and if you tell him nothing more, you have weakened rather than strengthened him. But he who, with the Apostle Paul, determines to know nothing…

> **1 Corinthians 2**
> [2] …save Jesus Christ and Him crucified,

–has knowledge that is power.

> **John 17**
> [3] For this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

To know Christ is to know the power of His endless life.[34] It is for lack of this knowledge that men are destroyed.[35] But since Christ is the power of God, it is quite correct to say that power is the one thing that men need; and the only real power, the power of God, is revealed in the Gospel.

The Glory of Power

All men honor power. Wherever power is manifested, there will always be found men to admire. There is no one who does not admire and applaud power in some form.

- Powerful muscles are admired and boasted of, whether they be those of man or of beast.

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[33] Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*, 1733.
[34] *Hebrews* 7:16.
[35] *Hosea* 4:6.

- A mighty engine that moves vast weights with ease always attracts attention, and men honor the one who constructed it.
- The man of wealth, whose money can command the service of thousands, always has admirers, no matter how his money is obtained.
- The man of noble birth and position, or the monarch of a great nation, has multitudes of followers who applaud his power.

Men desire to be connected with such ones, because they derive a certain dignity from the connection, although the power is not transferable. But all the power of earth is frail and but for a moment, while the power of God is eternal. The Gospel is this power, and if men would but recognize it for what it is, there would be none who would be ashamed of it. Paul said,

Galatians 6
[14] God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The reason for this was that the cross is the power of God.[36] The power of God, in whatever form manifested, is glory, and therefore it is a thing for glory, and not for shame.

Christ Not Ashamed

Concerning Christ we read,

Hebrews 2
[11] For both He that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of One; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

Hebrews 11
[16] God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared for them a city.

[36] *1 Corinthians* 1:18.

Surely if the Lord is not ashamed to be called the brother of poor, weak, sinful mortals, man has no reason to be ashamed of Him.

1 John 3
[1] Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!

Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ? Could there possibly be a worse case of the exaltation of self above God? For to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God, is an evidence that the man who feels thus ashamed really thinks himself superior to God, and that it is a lowering of his dignity to be associated with the Lord.

> Ashamed of Jesus? just as soon
> Let midnight be ashamed of noon;
> 'Twas midnight with my soul till He,
> Bright Morning Star, bade darkness flee.[37]

Saved by Faith

Romans 1
[16] The Gospel…is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

Ephesians 2
[8] By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.

Mark 16
[16] He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

John 1
[12] As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

Romans 10
[10] With the heart man believes unto righteousness.

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[37] Joseph Grigg, Hymn: *Jesus! And Shall It Ever Be,* 1765.

John 6
[39] This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

Faith works. Time would fail to tell of those…

Hebrews 11
[33] …who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises.
[34] …out of weakness were made strong.

Men may say,

> "I cannot see how it is possible for one to be made righteous simply by believing."

It makes no difference what you can see; you are not saved by sight, but by faith. You do not need to see how it is done, because it is the Lord who does the work of saving. Christ dwells in the heart by faith,[38] and because He is our righteousness,

Isaiah 12
[2] He also is become my salvation.

[38] *Ephesians* 3:17.

18. The Recompense of the Reward

Present Truth, August 18, 1898

A Future Reward?

THE reward of the Christian is something that is much talked about, yet little understood. This misunderstanding on the part of so many who profess Christianity is the cause of much scoffing on the part of infidels, who look at the professors as cowardly people who are afraid to meet the consequences of their own actions, and who therefore invest in a sort of life insurance, the policy to be paid at the end of life.

"They are looking out for what they will get by and by,"

–say they. As for themselves, they do not think it worthwhile to give up something that they at present possess, for the prospect, which to them seems altogether uncertain, of getting something better by and by.

It is a fact also that this view of the case affects not a few professed Christians, and is one great cause, if not the solo cause, of their low living. Regarding the Christian's reward as something wholly future, and the Christian life as simply one of "giving up" something that they cherish, they very naturally lose courage, and are unable to "hold out." It is not in human nature to labor long in uncertainty, or continually to keep in mind a reward that lies only "at the end of the race."

Now it is true that there is a reward for the well-doer, and that the coming of the Lord will put every Christian in eternal possession of that reward; but why? Simply because the coming of the Lord destroys all the curse, and takes both dead and living to be forever with the Lord, who is the reward.

The Lord says:

Revelation 22

[12] Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Isaiah 40
[10] Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.

What is this reward that is "with Him"? It is himself—His own presence.

A Present Reward

To Abraham, the father of all the faithful, God said:

Genesis 15
[1] I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward.

And the psalmist wrote:

Psalm 16
[5] The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup; You maintain my lot.
[6] The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

God gives His Holy Spirit, His own personal representative, to be with His people for ever, so that Jesus says:

Matthew 28
[20] Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

By the Spirit we are made…

Romans 8
[17] …heirs of God.

It is not that we are heirs of His property, but that we are heirs of himself. He is our portion; He is our reward. Jesus brings His reward with Him, because His coming assures His eternal presence with His people, and it is…

[32] …with Him that God freely gives us all things.

When the heavens and the earth shall shake, and be removed,

Joel 3
[16] The Lord will be the hope of His people.

We are exhorted to…

Hebrews 12
[1] …run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith.

Yes, but we are not told to look far away or to some distant time; no,

Acts 17
[27] He is not far from every one of us.

Look to Jesus, not simply as One who "is to come," but as One "who is." Our only hope in the coming of the Lord is our personal acquaintance with Him now. If we know Him, and love His presence with us, then we shall…

2 Timothy 4
[8] …love His appearing.

When Jesus comes, all those to whom His coming is indeed a reward, will say,

Isaiah 25
[9] Lo, this is our God.

The Lord can never be the eternal reward of any of whom He is not the present reward. And the Lord, the…

Psalm 46
[1] …very present help in trouble,

–is the reward. No one can have anything worth having outside of Him.

The Example of Moses

Take the case of Moses.

Hebrews 11
[24] By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
[25] Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

[26] Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.
[27] By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Take that word "respect" in its primitive significance, namely, to look toward, and you have the exact idea of the text. Moses looked continually at the reward. How often have we read this passage, and thought that Moses was sustained in his arduous labors by the thought that by and by he would get something that would recompense him for it all. What a mistaken idea! We have tried to revive our flagging zeal, and that of others, by appeals to think of the reward that will come by and by, but we have not by any means always been successful. That which is distant is uncertain; only that which we have are we sure of. And so our Christian life has been a mixed career, success and failure, and possibly more failure than success, because we had not a steady spring as its source. In the business of the present, we naturally forgot the future, and so lost our only incentive.

Not so with Moses. He looked constantly at the reward, which was present; that is, he looked to Jesus, whose presence went with Him.

Hebrews 11
[27] ...he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

No matter how pressing the cares of the present time, no matter how numerous were the daily duties, nothing could distract his attention from "the recompense of the reward," because like the Psalmist when he said,

Psalm 16
[5] The Lord is the portion of my inheritance,

He could say,

Psalm 16
[8] I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

He saw the invisible God, his reward, and therefore there was no uncertainty in his actions. The reality and the fullness of this present reward is seen by the fact that Moses, who had had ample experience, esteemed…

Hebrews 11
[26] …the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

The Reproach of Christ

This word "reproach" is the same that occurs in *Matthew* 27:44,[39] where it is rendered "cast in the teeth." That is the meaning of the word. How expressive! It conveys to us the idea of bitter taunts, and especially of taunts over our helplessness or our seeming failures. Yet Moses found that this very reproach contained more of reward than all the riches of Egypt, because it was the reproach of Christ.

Ephesians 3
[8] The unsearchable riches of Christ,

–which are Christ's own personal presence, His own life, are so great that even though accompanied by reproach and suffering, they outweigh all the riches of earth.

2 Corinthians 12
[9] Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
[10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Let us then bear in mind that the Lord himself is our reward, and that He is always present. Then we get our reward as we go

[39] **Matthew 27** [44] The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth.

along, and that which comes at the last is so much extra. So shall we always be satisfied, and to the end that our zeal and courage may not abate, but that we may ever have before us the recompense of the reward as an incentive to action, let us heed the message,

Isaiah 40
[9] Behold your God!

Isaiah 45
[22] Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.

19. A Wonderful Sacrifice

Present Truth, June 1, 1899

IT IS stated that at a meeting held in behalf of mission work in the West Indies, when it was made known how impossible it was to reach the slave population on account of the widespread separation between them and the ruling classes, two Moravian missionaries offered themselves and said:

> "These poor people must know of Jesus. We will go and work on the plantations as slaves, and toil under the lash, that we may get right beside them."

So they left their homes, and went to the West Indies as slaves, lived in the company of slaves, fared as they fared, that they might get close to the hearts of the poor oppressed people. And the slaves heard them, and rejoiced in the knowledge of the Saviour, because the missionaries had humbled themselves to the condition of those they would help.

We look at such self-sacrifice and say that it demands the highest praise; and so it does. But infinitely greater is the self-sacrifice of Christ. While we were yet rebels, He left the courts of heaven, laid aside His glory, came to this earth, and was…

Hebrews 2

17 …made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

But for all this only the basest ingratitude was shown, for after being…

Acts 2

22 …approved of God…by miracles, and wonders and signs,

–He suffered the ignominious death of the cross at the hands of the very ones He came to save. When we think of it, and try to comprehend in a slight degree what a sacrifice it was, do we not from our inmost soul cry out,—

Just as I am without one plea,
But that your blood was shed for me,
And that You bid me come to You,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.[40]

20. Disagreeable Wrapping

Present Truth, June 7, 1900
Original title: Back Page

WHOEVER refuses to perform any task that God sets before him, or declines any service, no matter how disagreeable, no matter whether his refusal is based upon the consciousness of his own helplessness, or comes from love of ease, thereby rejects a gift of strength and wisdom, which God has offered. There are thousands of rich blessings from the hand of God, which we deliberately throw away because we do not like the covering in which they come to us.

[40] Charlotte Elliott, Hymn: *Just As I Am.*

21. A Royal Visitor (June 1900)

Present Truth, June 7, 1900

JESUS says:

> **Revelation 3**
> [20] Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.

And He will not come merely as a transient guest, for He says also:

> **John 14**
> [23] If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.

Moreover the Lord himself proposes to do all the furnishing of the house in which He takes up His abode, for He says:

> **Isaiah 9**
> [7] I will glorify (or beautify) the house of my glory.

So the poor man has not to try to prepare his house for the reception of Royalty,—what a sorry job he would make of it if he tried,—but has only to consent for the Lord to have full control, and He will henceforth provide everything. How strange it sounds, to speak of man's *consenting* to have God dwell in him as absolute ruler. One would think that everybody would be most anxious to know how He employs himself day by day continually; but if we think that He has ceased working, because He has again hidden himself from human sight, the revelation has been all in vain for us. From the record of the life of Jesus we should learn not only to recognize His workmanship, but to see Him actually at work all round us every day.

22. A Royal Visitor (Oct 1900)

Present Truth, October 11, 1900

Revelation 3
[20] Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.

WHO says this? Is it some beggar seeking shelter and food and rest? Ah, no; it is the King of kings, who has…

Ephesians 3
[8] …unsearchable riches.

It is the One who is…

John 6
[35] …the Bread of life,

–and whose birthplace is the house of bread;[41] the One who is…

Psalm 90
[1] …our dwelling place in all generations;

–who is…

Isaiah 25
[4] …a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat;

–and who gives rest to the weary and heavy laden:

Matthew 11
[28] Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

It is not as a suppliant, asking favors for himself, but as the dispenser of priceless gifts, that He seeks admission.

And to whom does He appeal for admission? Is it to the noble, the wealthy, the esteemed? No; it is to the…

[41] Bethlehem means "house of bread".

Revelation 3
[17] ...wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

To the wretched He comes offering ease; to the miserable, joy and gladness; to the poor, everlasting inheritance; to the blind; the light of heaven and clear vision; and to the naked, the pure, white robe of righteousness and the garment of salvation. He comes to every need according to His riches in glory. He comes to satisfy every longing of the human heart, and to fill the hungry soul with goodness. In Him all fullness dwells, and He freely gives it to all who will receive.

> "But how can I let Him in? How can I get the door open? I am helpless and ignorant; I do not know what to do."

Who has not had that feeling of helpless despondency? Let us see if we cannot remove it, and make the way clear. The answer is at hand:

John 1
[12] As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

Unbelief is the only thing that shuts Him out; whoever believes Him.

You are doubtless of what well-meaning friends have told you, that you must get the pile of rubbish away from the door of your heart, in order that it may open to the royal visitor; and your heart sinks, because you have tried to remove it, but in spite of all your efforts it still remains. You say that there is not possibly room for Him and the sin both together, and that you cannot get rid of the sin, so you cannot do what you would, namely, welcome Jesus as an abiding presence. Well, others have had the same difficulty, until they found out that this door swings outward, so that no amount of rubbish of sin piled up inside can keep it from opening. They let go the latch of unbelief that held it, and, lo, it swung wide, open, and there was nothing to hinder the Saviour from entering.

Christ is the light of the world, and when the true Light shines the darkness must flee away. So as soon as the veil of unbelief falls from the windows of the soul, the bright shining of the Sun of righteousness must necessarily dispel all the darkness of sin. You do not have to drive it out; it goes because the light scatters it. In that light of life the blindest cannot help seeing.

But you say that you are bound, and cannot move hand or foot. Your iniquities have taken you, and you are held with the cords of your sins, so that you cannot rise to open the door and let the Saviour in. This difficulty is provided for also. Suppose you were ill in bed, unable to rise, and your attendant was away, and a visitor should call on you; you hear his knock, but you cannot go to the door. What can you do? You can say,

> "Come in,"

–and your friend will walk in. Even so with Christ. Nothing but unbelief can bar the door of the heart; believe that He means what He says, when He knocks for admission, and say,

> "Come in, Lord; the door is unlocked; there is nothing to hinder your entrance; come, and welcome."

Do not fear that He will not hear your invitation, no matter how feeble your voice, He who bends down from the highest heaven,

Psalm 102
[20] To hear the groaning of the prisoner,

–and who hears the groaning of the speechless, inanimate creation, will certainly hear your cry, when He stands at the door. He understands your thought afar off, even before you do, and He responds to it.

Once more you ask,

> "How may I know that He is knocking at the door of my heart?"

Have you never felt your heart beat? Have you never felt the thrill of life in your body? Do you not know that He is the life, and that in Him we live, and move, and have our being? Your life-blood, and the life-breath that purifies it and keeps it coursing through your arteries and veins, is the revelation of His presence. Every second since you were born He has been knocking, knocking, knocking, knocking, while you, perhaps, have been denying His existence. Oh, what infinite patience and longsuffering! What blessed assurance there is in this! Even though it be the last hour, so long as He continues knocking there is the certainty that He will come in if given permission. Do not fear that after He has so long and patiently sought for admission He will turn away when at last your dull ear is roused to hear His voice.

> "While there's life, there's hope,"[42]

–because the life that we have is His, and He is the hope of His people.

Yes; our existence is the proof of the presence of the Lord; and since…

Acts 17
[25] [He] gives to all life, and breath, and all things,

–that is the proof of His right to have complete possession and full control. That is what He is knocking for. Every pulse beat, every heaving of the chest, is a knock, reminding you of His right to rule in your heart and life. He is the Prince of peace, yes, the King of righteousness and peace, and your sole duty is to…

Colossians 3
[15] Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

If you receive Him with thanksgiving,

Philippians 4
[7] The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

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[42] Cicero.

Christ is the rightful King of the universe. Our part, therefore, is to say to Him,

Matthew 6
[10] Your kingdom come, your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

We are to say,

> "Lord, I belong to You; I recognize your right to reign in me, and I give You full liberty to have your own way, to live your perfect life in me; live this earthly temple just as You do in your sanctuary in the heavens."

The prayer given by Him is not a vain one; He can live as sinless a life in sinful flesh as in the paradise of God.

> "In what am I to yield to Him? How shall I know?"

Romans 3
[20] ...by the law is the knowledge of sin;

–and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, uses it to send conviction, that we may know in what places we are still harboring rebellion in the realm of our lives.

Isaiah 55
[3] Hear, and your soul shall live.

He says:

Exodus 20
[3] You shall not have any others gods before me,

–and, hearing it, we respond,

> "Lord, I thank You for the commandment and the promise; take away everything that usurps your place."

He says:

Exodus 20
[7] You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain,

–and we say,

"Lord, I confess that I have profaned your name; and I thank You that You will write it upon me, so that it will be my life."

Again He says:

Exodus 20
[8] Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;

–and we reply,

"Let your presence, dear Lord, abide with me, that I may have rest indeed from all sin, and as I triumph in the works of your hands I will ever delight in your holy memorial."

When He says:

Exodus 20
[13] You shall not kill,

–and…

1 John 3
[15] Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer,

–we can only say,

"Lord, let your love be shed abroad in my heart continually by your Spirit, so that all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, may be put away from me, with all malice, and that I may be kind and tender-hearted, forgiving all even as You have forgiven me."[43]

He says:

Exodus 20
[14] You shall not commit adultery,

–and again we respond,

"Dear Lord, my Master, live in me your own pure life, that I may be faithful to You in every thought; let me ever be joined to

[43] *Ephesians* 4:31-32.

You, a member of your body, of your flesh, and of your bones; let us be no more twain, but one new man."

If we are perfectly joined to Christ, we cannot be unlawfully joined to anybody else.

And so we might go through the list. Whenever we become convicted of a sin, we simply say,

"Lord, it belongs to You; do with it according to your will."

When a hitherto unknown duty is presented to us, we say,

"Lord, I have taken You, not for worse, but for better, even for all that You are, and I pray You live this new phase of your life also in me."

If we thus heartily receive the Lord, no longer holding Him in the inner sanctuary, living face to face with Him, we shall find day by day that even though supping with Him involves drinking deeply of the cup of suffering, nevertheless in His presence is fullness of joy.[44] When He abides in us, we abide in Him, and we can say:

Psalm 23
5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies:
You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

[44] *Psalm* 16:11.

23. Above Our Mind

Present Truth, November 22, 1900
Original title: Back Page

WE ARE often told that we cannot now be doing all the will of God, because we do not yet know it all. This implies that if we only knew it all we could do it all, and that knowing is equivalent to doing.

But the fact is that few people do all the righteousness that they know; and it is also certain that no one can of himself do all of God's law, even though that knowledge be the least possible amount. Only the grace of God working mightily in us can enable us to do that which we know. But if we never have any more righteousness than our minds can comprehend, we shall always come far short, for God's goodness is as infinite as He himself. Therefore it is that He in His kindness does…

Ephesians 3
[20] …exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

It is not our doing, but God working in us…

Philippians 2
[13] …both to will and to do.

He knows everything, and has all power, and so He can fill us with all fullness of righteousness.

24. What Is Truth?

Present Truth, October 10, 1901
Original title: Back Page

SOME grammarian's have classed "truth" as an abstract noun, saying that there is really no such thing as truth, but only a conception of it. But this is by no means the case. The primary meaning of the word "truth" is "that which is." It is that which always exists; it is self-existent, and is the source of everything else that is lasting. In fact, truth is the only thing of which it can be said absolutely that *it is*. The most real, tangible thing in the universe is truth. He who doesn't know it, and who cannot instantly recognize it whenever he sees it, lacks the elementary principles of true education. He who knows the truth, has the key to all mysteries and all knowledge.

III. Forgiveness & The New Birth

1. A Question Concerning the Sanctuary

Signs of the Times, March 11, 1886

A BROTHER sends a letter of inquiries, in which we find the following:

> In reference to the priests taking the blood of the victim into the sanctuary, it seems to me that in case it was for the sin of a priest or of the whole congregation, then the blood was taken into the first room [the holy place]; but if it was for a ruler or one of the common people, the work was all done in the court, by the altar of burnt offering. And if this is true, how were the sins of *these* lodged in the sanctuary? From *Leviticus* 10:17, I gather that the priests, by eating of this sin offerings whose blood was not taken into the sanctuary, *bore the iniquity* of the people.

The brother is partly right and partly wrong in his conclusions. It is true that the blood of some sin offerings was taken into the holy place, and that the blood of others was not.

- When the blood was taken into the sanctuary, the body of the victim was burnt without the camp.[45]
- But when the blood of the offering was not taken into the sanctuary, its flesh was taken by the priests into the holy place, and was there eaten by them.[46]

Thus the sin was figuratively taken within the sanctuary,—in one case by the blood, and in the other by the flesh.

The wrong part of the conclusion was in supposing that in the latter case the priests themselves bore the iniquity of the people. *Leviticus* 10:16-18 reads as follows:

[45] See *Leviticus* 4:1-26; 6:30.
[46] See *Leviticus* 6:24-25.

Leviticus 10

[16] And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and, behold, it was burnt; and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron which were left alive, saying,
[17] Wherefore have you not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God has given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord?
[18] Behold, the blood of it was not brought in within the holy place; you should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, as I commanded.

A careful reading of the above, especially verse 17, plainly shows that *the flesh* of the sin offering, and *not* the priests, was to bear the iniquity of the congregation. What did Moses say God had given to the priests? The flesh. For what purpose had He given it? To bear the iniquity of the congregation. The construction of the sentence absolutely forbids the conclusion that the priests bore the iniquity.

The victim represented Christ.

1 Peter 2

[24] [He] bore our sins in His own body on the tree.

Isaiah 53

[6] The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

In His own person He took them into the true sanctuary in Heaven. And as the lamb or goat typified Christ, the sins that were confessed over it were laid upon it as a whole, so that they might be conveyed into the sanctuary either by the flesh or by the blood. The animal was innocent, and might therefore be a type of Christ; but the priest was a sinful, mortal man, and could not therefore himself represent Christ in the act of bearing our sins. We design erelong to give this subject a more extended consideration in the *Signs*.

2. Forgiveness; Real, Not Figurative

Signs of the Times, March 18, 1886

THERE is probably no one who gives the matter any consideration, who doubts that the offerings for sin, under the Levitical law, represented the real sacrifice made by Christ; although there are very many who fail to notice that the service performed by the priests was only a type of the real service which is conducted by Christ, our great High Priest, in the true sanctuary in Heaven. The Scriptures, however, give abundant evidence of the fact that the tabernacle built in the wilderness was but a pattern of...

Hebrews 8

[2] ...the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man;

–that the high priest was a type of Christ; and that, in short, the whole service was typical, or figurative.

But here some are liable to make a mistake. Many suppose that because the service of the sanctuary was only figurative, therefore the forgiveness which the sinner is said to have received was also only figurative. The fallacy of this supposition will be apparent if a comprehensive view is taken of the whole subject. It will be remembered that the figurative sanctuary service continued until Christ made the real sacrifice on the cross. Then if the supposition noted were true, it would appear that before the time of Christ no sinner had really been forgiven. But Elijah went to Heaven, and therefore his sins must certainly have been forgiven. David says:

Psalm 32

[5] I acknowledged my sin unto You, and my iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

That is positive proof of sins actually pardoned. Therefore we must conclude that sins were pardoned *in fact*, before the time of Christ.

"But," asks one in astonishment, "do you think that there was any virtue in the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin?"

Not at all; neither do we believe that there is any virtue in the mechanical act of baptism; yet we are commanded to be baptized as a condition of securing remission of sins. What is it that secures our forgiveness? It is the death and resurrection of Christ:

Romans 4
[25] Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.

It is not by the mere act of baptism, but by the faith which is thereby indicated, that we secure pardon for transgressions. So in the case of the man in the Levitical age. He was forgiven, not through any virtue in the blood of the goat or bullock which he offered, but by virtue of his faith in Christ's sacrifice, which he manifested by offering an animal that typified Christ.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the plan of salvation has not varied in the least since the days of Adam. When man first sinned; then Christ was given as a ransom. It was then that:

- Christ voluntarily offered to die in man's stead;
- God's love to the world led Him to consent to deliver up His only begotten son;
- The promise of life through Christ was made to the human race.

Now a *promise* on the part of God is just as sure as a thing that is actually performed; for He cannot lie. And for this reason it is that Christ is said to have been…

Revelation 13
[8] …slain from the foundation of the world.

It made no difference that the death was not accomplished until four thousand years after the fall; from the time the promise was made, forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ was just as certain to the man who repented as it is today.

Notice the exact parallel between the case of men in the days before Christ and that of those after Christ:

- They had ceremonies by which they manifested their faith in Christ; and because of this faith they were forgiven.
- We have ceremonies (as baptism and the Lord's Supper) by which we manifest our faith in Christ; and because of our faith we obtain the forgiveness of our sins.
- They looked forward by faith to the time when Christ, according to the promise, should be offered.
- We look backward to the cross and we see the promise actually fulfilled.

But while their sins were forgiven in fact, they were blotted out only in figure. Even in this the parallel holds good; for the sins of men now living, although forgiven, have not yet been blotted out. The exhortation to us is,

> **Acts 3**
> [19] Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

And because the way of salvation is uniform throughout, and God deals with men in the same way in all ages of the world, we do not like the terms "old dispensation" and "new dispensation;" or "Jewish dispensation" and "gospel dispensation." Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, lived in the "gospel age" as well as we.

> **Galatians 3**
> [8] And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed.[47]

The gospel is the good news of salvation through Christ, and the patriarchs understood that as well as we do. Forgiveness of sins has always been granted immediately upon repentance; and

[47] See also *Hebrews* 4:2.

Christ's blood was of just as much efficacy four thousand years ago as it is today.

Acts 4
[12] Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

3. Prisoners and Freemen

Signs of the Times, January 13, 1887

BEING unable to furnish the current Sabbath-school lesson for the Commentary Department this week, we occupy a portion of the space answering the following questions which we have received:

> "Who is addressed in *Isaiah* 49:8-9? Who are the prisoners, and when and from what are they to be freed?" -P. B.

The verses referred to read thus:

Isaiah 49
[8] Thus says the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard you, and in a day of salvation have I helped you; and I will preserve you, and give you for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;
[9] That you may say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

By reading the preceding verses in connection with these, we readily learn who is addressed.

[5] And now, says the Lord that formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him.

[6] And He said, It is a light thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, that you may be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

These passages show unmistakably that Christ is the one addressed. Compare verse 6 with:

Luke 2
[29] Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word:
[30] For my eyes have seen your salvation,
[31] Which You have prepared before the face of all people;
[32] A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.

The eighth verse itself shows that Christ is addressed, in the words,

Isaiah 49
[8] I will preserve You, and give You for a covenant of the people.

Compare this with *Isaiah* 55:4-5:

Isaiah 55
[4] Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.
[5] Behold, you shall call a nation that you know not, and nations that knew you not shall run unto you because of the Lord your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you.

The "day of salvation" is the entire time during which God's mercy to man is manifest in the gospel. In this day—this acceptable time—Christ is heard in behalf of the people, and is given for the objects mentioned in verses 8 and 9.

Opening the Prison

One of these objects is the opening of the prison, and saying to the prisoners, "Go forth." It might appear to some, from the words that immediately follow (verse 10), that this has reference to the opening of the graves at the last day; but from almost identical

language used elsewhere in prophecy, and applied by our Lord himself, we are obliged to place the opening of the prison within the "day of salvation."

Isaiah 61
[1] The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
[2] To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

When our Lord went into the synagogue at Nazareth and read this much of the prophecy, He closed the book, and said to the people:

Luke 4
[21] This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

The fact that He said this, and that He refrained from reading the next clause,

Isaiah 61
[2] ...and the day of vengeance of our God,

–shows that all that He read is fulfilled in the day of grace. But the dead are not raised until the day of mercy is past. Therefore the "opening of the prison to them that are bound" must be during the "day of salvation."

What Is the Bondage?

Then we have to inquire, Who are bound, and what is their bondage? The following verses will set us in the way of the correction answer:

John 8
[33] They [the wicked Jews] answered Him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how say you, You shall be made free?
[34] Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin.

[35] And the servant abides not in the house forever; but the Son abides ever.
[36] If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

From these words we learn that sin is a bondage, and that it is from this bondage that Christ sets men free. To further show that sin is a bondage we need only to refer to *Romans* 7:14 and *2 Peter* 2:19, out of a multitude that might be quoted:

Romans 7
[14] For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

2 Peter 2
[19] While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

Again, we know that Christ's special work is to save people from sin:

Matthew 1
[21] And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.

1 Timothy 1
[15] This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Titus 2
[13] Looking for...our Saviour Jesus Christ;
[14] Who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Both these points, namely, that sin brings men into bondage, and that Christ releases them from this prison, are brought out in the following passage:

1 Peter 3

[18] For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:
[19] By which [*i.e.*, by the Spirit] also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison;
[20] Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.

Christ, by the Spirit, went and preached unto the spirits in prison; this was in the days of Noah, while the long-suffering of God waited. God's long-suffering waited one hundred and twenty years, and during this time His Spirit was striving with the wicked antediluvians.

Genesis 6

[3] And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.

Those wicked men were in the bondage of sin; Christ was ready and anxious to give them freedom,—the same freedom that Noah had, namely, the righteousness which is by faith,—but they refused to be made free, and were therefore destroyed.

The Condemnation of the Law

Still further: We have seen that men are bound in prison because of sin. Said Paul,

Romans 7

[14] The law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Now...

1 John 3

[4] ...sin is the transgression of the law.

And therefore it is the transgressed law that shuts men up in prison. David said,

Psalm 119
[45] I will walk at liberty; for I seek your precepts.

But when he turned aside from the commandments he was at once bound as a criminal.

This bondage in which the transgressed law holds its victims until they accept freedom in Christ, is most forcibly indicated by Paul in the following words:

Galatians 3
[22] But the scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.
[23] But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

It is well known that human law casts its violators into prison. The sheriff who arrests the criminal, the judge who sentences him, and the jailer who locks him up, are only the agents of the law. The massive bolts and prison walls simply represent the outraged law. Now notice the parallel in the case of a transgressor of divine law. Having willfully sinned, he is justly accounted guilty of a violation of the whole law:

James 2
[10] For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

For a time he is unconscious of his bondage. Said Paul,

Romans 7
[9] I was alive without the law once.

The office of the Spirit is to make men conscious of this bondage:

John 16
[8] And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

It does this by bringing the word home to their hearts, for the Bible is the Spirit's sword. Some, it is true, resist the influence of

the Spirit, and never become conscious of their need until it is too late. But we will consider the case of one upon whom the Spirit works effectually. As the truth is impressed upon his heart, his prison walls seem to contract about him. Whereas before he thought he had unlimited freedom, he now finds that he is in a narrow cell, the walls of which are the ten commandments. He resolves that he will be free, and starts out in one direction. But he has taken the name of the Lord in vain, and the third commandment says,

> "You can't get out here."

He turns in another direction, but he has borne false witness, and the ninth commandment presents an effectual barrier to his escape in that direction. Whichever way he turns, a commandment, stronger than any earthly prison wall, drives him back. He is shut in on every side.

Freedom Through Christ

But Christ is the door that ever stands open. Toward this door the enclosing walls seem to drive him, and he is shut up to it as the only avenue of escape. At last he escapes through this door, and becomes in Christ a free man. In Christ he is as though he had never sinned, and in Him he is…

2 Corinthians 5
[21] …made the righteousness of God.

That is, he becomes a commandment-keeper, and therefore continually walks at liberty. He has now only to…

Galatians 5
[1] Stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has made him free.

One more point. Christ is the…

Micah 4
[8] …tower of the flock, the *stronghold* of the daughter of Zion.

Now turn to the exhortation of the prophet:

Zechariah 9
[12] Turn to the *stronghold*, you prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto you.

The blood of the covenant (verse 11) is still offered before the throne of God, and is powerful enough to set every prisoner free. Therefore we are all prisoners of hope. We may all be free if we will. No matter how high our sins may seem to be piled up against us, backed by the law of God, we need not despair, for…

1 John 1
[7] …the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin;

–and,

Romans 5
[20] Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound.

4. The Unpardonable Sin

Signs of the Times, April 14 & 21, 1887

Signs of the Times, April 14, 1887

Matthew 12

[31] Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

[32] And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

PROBABLY no other text in the Bible has been the subject of more speculation, or has been more misunderstood, than this one. Many honest, conscientious people have gone well-nigh into despair over the thought that they were guilty of the sin here mentioned, and that simply because they had received erroneous ideas as to what that sin is. Although there is so much misunderstanding in regard to it, we think that an understanding of it may be gained quite readily by a consideration of the connection and of parallel texts. Every word which our Saviour uttered was timely, and applied to the circumstances then present; it is this feature which makes them practical in all ages. Therefore if we would get a full understanding of any of His words, we must consider the occasion which called them out.

The Context

If we notice the context, we shall find that the words which we have quoted were called out by the position which the Pharisees took concerning a notable miracle which Jesus had performed. He had healed a demoniac who was both blind and dumb, so that the man was not only in his right mind, but…

Matthew 12

[22] …both spoke and saw.

The people were amazed, but the Pharisees contemptuously and blasphemously said,

Matthew 12
[24] This fellow does not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

Instead of glorifying God, by whose Spirit this wonderful thing was done, they accused Christ of having a devil, by whose aid He performed miracles.

That this accusation constituted, in that instance, the unpardonable sin, is evident from the parallel text in *Mark*. This evangelist gives our Saviour's words concerning the unpardonable nature of the sin against the Holy Spirit, and adds,

Mark 3
[30] Because they said, He has an unclean spirit.

Thus we find, without any further investigation, that this sin consists in attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil.

By Word or Thought

But it is not by words alone that men may commit this, any more than any other sin. Paul speaks of some who…

Titus 1
[16] …profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

A reprobate is one who is rejected, who has sinned beyond recovery; one who has rejected the Spirit of God by sinning until he is so corrupt that there is no good thing in him for the Spirit to work upon. This is indicated in the preceding verse, which says of those who are…

[16] …unto every good work reprobate,
[15] …[that] even their mind and conscience is defiled.

So Paul writes to Timothy concerning men in the last days, who are…

2 Timothy 3
[8] …men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

This was the condition of the antediluvian world. The record says:

Genesis 6
[3] And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.
[5] And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

There was a time when the antediluvians were not wholly bad; there was some trace of the law in their hearts,[48] and therefore there was something in them upon which the Spirit could work to convince them of sin; for the Spirit's sword is the word of God, and it can produce an impression upon men only when they possess some knowledge of truth and right. But the antediluvians resisted the strivings of the Spirit. The tendency of sin is to multiply itself and to choke out any sense of good; and so by repeated stiflings of every good impulse, those people become so corrupt that they had not a single good thought. They were cumberers of the ground; there was no possibility of their reformation, and so they were cut off.

Judgments Follow

In every case where the judgments of God have been brought upon people, it was because there was no possibility of their reformation; they had, in short, committed the unpardonable sin. This was the case with the antediluvians, the Sodomites, the wicked inhabitants of Canaan,[49] who were destroyed to make

[48] *Romans* 2:15.
[49] See *Genesis* 15:16.

room for the Israelites, and finally with many of the people of Israel. Says the sacred historian:

2 Chronicles 36
[14] Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which He had hallowed in Jerusalem.
[15] And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place;
[16] But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till *there was no remedy*.

"There was no remedy;" that is, their sin was unpardonable. Now since God's object in giving men this existence is solely that they may prepare for a better, and an eternal existence, it follows that when they utterly refuse to accept of God's plan for them, and devote themselves wholly to evil, there is no use to continue their existence longer. They are of no use to themselves or to anybody else. Like trees that bear only thorns instead of fruit, they are cut off as cumberers of the ground. Their continued existence would be only detrimental to the soil which might be yielding something useful. Here then is another way in which men may commit the unpardonable sin.

Falling Away From Faith

Still another way is brought to view by Paul to the Hebrews. This pertains especially to those who have once made a profession. Says the apostle:

Hebrews 6
[4] For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,
[5] And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

[6] If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.

We have not space to enter into details, and to specify just how men crucify Christ afresh; but it is sufficient to know that the unpardonable sin is here brought to view, for it is a sin which cannot be repented of. We say "*the* unpardonable sin," for we understand that there is but one such, although there may be many different ways of committing it. John says:

1 John 5
[16] If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and God shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it.

All sin, if not repented of, brings death; but there is one sin which cannot be repented of, and therefore there is no necessity to pray about it as about other sins.

Now we may understand what the apostle means when he says to the Hebrews that it is impossible if certain ones fall away, to renew them unto repentance. What does he mean by,

Hebrews 6
[6] If they fall away?

Does he mean that if a Christian shall fall into sin he cannot be forgiven? No; for the verse just quoted from John teaches us that if a brother sins a sin not unto death we must pray for him. *1 John* 2:1-2; *Galatians* 6:1; *Revelation* 2:5, and scores of other texts, show that men are not necessarily beyond hope, even though they be overtaken in faults after they have accepted Christ and have been pardoned. We must understand, then, that the "falling away" here brought to view means not simply the commission of a wrong act, or even a backslidden state, but a turning away from the gospel of Christ,—a rejection of Christ. Since the name of Christ is the only one under Heaven whereby men may be saved, it follows that if a man deliberately rejects that, there is no hope

for him. It was this fact which led Paul to use such vehement language in his epistle to the Galatians.

Galatians 1
[8] But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, *let him be accursed.*
[9] As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, *let him be accursed.*

Any man who should preach a gospel which led the hearers to trust in something else besides Christ, would be deliberately leading them to eternal ruin, and so would be worthy of a curse. There is but one way of salvation; if a man deliberately rejects that, he cannot by any possibility be saved.

Signs of the Times, April 21, 1887

Presumptuous Sin

The same thing is brought to view in *Hebrews* 10:26-29:

Hebrews 10
[26] For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins,
[27] But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.
[28] He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses;
[29] Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Here we have presumptuous sin. The case recorded in *Numbers* 15 is in point. The Lord had said that the soul which should do aught presumptuously, should be cut off, because he had...

Numbers 15
31 ...despised the word of the Lord, and has broken His commandment.

Then follows an instance of such a sin. A man went out to gather sticks on the Sabbath-day. He was not driven to do this by want, but he did it in willful violation of the commandment of the Lord, which had said that everyone should abide in his place. He presumed on the mercy of the Lord. He knew the commandment, yet he deliberately tried the Lord, to see if He meant what He said. He found out to his cost that the Lord meant just what He said. He found out that the Lord cannot be trifled with. That was a case of willful sin, after having received the knowledge of the truth. It was not simply the fact that the man violated a commandment, for every error is a violation of some commandment, but the man violated the commandment deliberately and intentionally, knowing that his act was a violation of the commandment. In other words, he...

31 ...despised the word of the Lord.

Now, says Paul, if a man who deliberately violated a commandment had to die without mercy, and could have no atonement made for his sin, how much worse off must the man be who not only violates the commandments (for all have sinned), but who deliberately rejects the only means by which an atonement for sins can be made. Certainly his case is doubly hopeless.

Turning from the Light

Sinning against light always brings darkness. This is a self-evident truth. If a man rejects light, nothing but darkness remains. So our Saviour says to us, as he said to the Jews,

John 12
35 Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes.

And in like manner Paul says that Satan will, just before the coming of the Lord, work...

2 Thessalonians 2
9 ...with all power and signs and lying wonders,
10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie;
12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

It will be just as it was with the heathen. Because when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, therefore God gave them up to uncleanness:

Romans 1 [margin]
28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and God gave them over to a mind void of judgment.

Thus when one knows what is right, and deliberately chooses error, he soon loses the knowledge of what is right; it soon becomes impossible for sacred things to make any impression upon him; and if he does not know the right way, of course he cannot follow it.

The same idea that we have found in the two passages quoted from the book of *Hebrews*, is carried out in the following:

Hebrews 12
15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;
16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.
17 For you know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

In *Genesis* 25:29-34 we find an account of the transaction to which the apostle refers. Esau bartered away his birthright for a mess of pottage. It was a deliberate transaction, and when the bargain was concluded it could not be altered. If a man makes a

deliberate bargain, and sells a piece of property, he cannot back out. Esau sold his birthright for a paltry meal of victuals, thus showing that he despised, or did not appreciate, his birthright. Afterward he would have inherited a blessing, but he had sold it, and could not.

Thousands of men have repeated Esau's course. Paul says of one of his co-laborers:

2 Timothy 4
[10] Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world.

Here we have the case of Esau repeated. Esau sold his birthright, to satisfy a present need; Demas sold his interest in the cause of God and in eternal life, for this present world.

God's Claim in the Sabbath

Thousands of people acknowledge their duty to keep the Sabbath of the Lord, yet say,

> "If I should keep the Sabbath I couldn't make a living,"

–and so for a mess of pottage,—a few meals of victuals,—they sell their heavenly inheritance. We have known people who felt that they couldn't make a living if they kept the Sabbath, and who made up their minds that when they had secured a competency they would obey. But they never obeyed; they never afterwards could find a convenient time, and although they gained a competency, they never again could feel any special interest in the Sabbath. They had disbelieved God, and showed that they thought more of present enjoyment than of the enduring riches, and God gave them that which they prized most.

A Summary

It is not necessary to pursue this subject further. Let the reader note that we have found at least four ways in which men may commit the unpardonable sin:

1. By deliberately attributing the work of the Spirit of God to the devil.
2. By refusing to yield to the strivings of the Spirit, until by continual sinning the heart becomes so hard that the Spirit can make no impression upon it, and a sense of sin is lost. Then it is said, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone."[50]
3. By falling from the grace of God, and deliberately rejecting Christ's sacrifice.
4. By presuming upon God's mercy, and deliberately transgressing His commandments, with our eyes open to the consequences, and a determination to see if God will bring them upon us.

Many people who have thought themselves guilty of the unpardonable sin, were not. For the encouragement of such we write. The man whose heart is broken at the thought of his sin against God, and who is tender and repentant, may find pardon, for:

> **Psalm 51**
> [17] The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart the Lord will not despise.

Although a man's sense of his sins may be so great that they seem to him unpardonable, he may rest assured that where sin abounds (that is, *a sense of sin*), grace does much more abound.[51]

The Danger of Carnal Security

But it is also true that thousands are in danger of the unpardonable sin, who think themselves secure, and for the warning of such we also write. The man who thinks that he may indulge *just once more* in some known sin which is very dear to him, may find that it was just once too often for pardon. No one can tell how weary the Spirit may be of striving with him, or how near he may be to the close of probation. Many men who were "going to reform," never did reform, because death came before they had got-

[50] *Hosea* 4:17.
[51] *Romans* 5:20.

ten ready to reform. So there will doubtless be many well-intentioned persons lost, because they will weary the Spirit with their lukewarm dilatoriness, and probation will close before they have made up their minds to be wholly on the Lord's side. When it is too late, they will arouse, and will seek for the word of the Lord, but will not able to find it.

Amos 8
[11] Behold, the days come, says the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord:
[12] And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

It is dangerous to sin at all. Our only hope of safety from falling into the unpardonable sin is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to…

Colossians 1
[10] …walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Hebrews 4
[7] Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.

Isaiah 55
[6] Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near;
[7] Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

5. Salvation: Present and Future

Signs of the Times, May 25, 1888

THERE are some scriptural expressions that have been so misused by ignorant and fanatical persons that they have almost fallen into disrepute among sober-minded people. One of these terms is the word "saved," as applied to an individual in this present life. In a certain class of revivals it is very common to hear persons who have been wrought up to the proper pitch of excitement, testify that they are saved. The more that can be induced to rise and say with greater or less vehemence,

> "I am saved,"

–or who, in response to the question, will hold up their hands to that effect, the greater the list of "converts" the revivalist has to report. Now we earnestly deprecate any such methods as this; yet simply because the term "saved" is abused, we ought not to reject it, any more than we would refuse to believe in present conversion, because the term is used by many people who have not the slightest idea of its meaning.

Present Salvation

The word "saved" is frequently used in the Bible in a sense similar to that of "conversion." Paul says:

> **1 Corinthians 1**
> [18] For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

Here it is used in the present tense, and has no reference to future salvation. Again he says:

> **2 Timothy 1**
> [8] Be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;
> [9] Who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

To the same intent the word is used in *Titus* 3:4-6:

Titus 3
[4] But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared,
[5] Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;
[6] Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Other texts might be quoted, but these are sufficient. They show that when one has been forgiven for all his past transgressions,—when the burden of sin that clung to him as a body of death, has been removed,—and a new heart has been given him,—a heart loving righteousness and hating iniquity,—it is proper to say that he is saved.

Future Salvation

The trouble arises from confounding that salvation with eternal salvation. There is a salvation which is wholly future, as is evident from the following texts:

Matthew 24
[12] And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.
[13] But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Here we learn that those who are converted—saved—must endure to the end if they would be saved.

1 Peter 1
[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
[4] To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you,
[5] Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Here again we learn that at "the last time" a salvation is to be brought to those who, having a hope in God through the resurrection of Jesus, endure, through the grace of God, to the end. There is a possibility that this present salvation may not be lasting, that those who have…

Hebrews 6
[5] …tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,
[6] …[may] fall away.

But the salvation "to be revealed in the last time" cannot be lost, as is seen by the following text:

Isaiah 45
[17] But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with *an everlasting* salvation; you shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

From this we learn of a salvation that is to be everlasting, that will be shared by Israel—all who overcome. This is the salvation that is to be revealed at the last time.

The Connection

Now, what connection have the two? Simply this, the first is a preparation for the second. One is salvation in the kingdom of grace, and the other is salvation in the kingdom of glory. Paul, in writing to the Colossians, prays that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing:

Colossians 1
[12] Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;
[13] Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son,
[14] In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Here is present salvation, and translation into a kingdom. Yet it is not until Christ comes…

Hebrews 9
[28] ...the second time without sin unto salvation,

–sitting upon the throne of His glory, accompanied by all His holy angels, that He says to the righteous:

Matthew 25
[34] Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Now, of those who have been delivered from the powers of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's grace,

Romans 3
[24] ...through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

–only those will have an entrance ministered unto them...

2 Peter 1
[11] ...abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

–who heed the exhortation,

[10] Give diligence to make your calling and election sure,

–so that they do not fall.

The kingdom of grace receives subjects to be fitted for the kingdom of glory. It saves men from the guilt and the love of sin, clothing them with the divine nature, so that when the Lord shall come in His glory, they may be clothed upon with immortality, which will then be the only thing lacking. But none will share this glory who indulge in vain boasting, or who imagine that a work just begun for them is already done.

1 Corinthians 10
[12] Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

6. Christ, the Sinless One

Signs of the Times, June 9, 1890

IN THE last number but one of the last volume of the *Signs of the Times*, we published a short editorial note in reply to a question that was raised in a certain Sabbath-school, as to Christ's power to sin when He was here on earth. The statement was there made that He could not. We quote a portion of the note:

> "Our whole hope of eternal life through Christ rests upon this; for if there had been any temptation that could have induced Christ to sin, that would show that there is temptation that is stronger than divine power, which, in turn, would show that He is not "able to save to the uttermost."

The question is simply another form of asking:

> "Can God sin?"

For,

2 Corinthians 5
[19] God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.

John 1
[1] The word was God,

–just as truly when it was…

[14] …made flesh and dwelt among us,

–as it was in the beginning,

John 17
[5] …before the world was.

The object of that mysterious union of divinity with humanity was to demonstrate the power of God over sin.

We have received several letters in regard to this note, one brother claiming that it is in direct conflict with the following statement made by Mrs. E. G. White:

> If it were not possible for Him [Christ] to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper.[52]

We are sure that it does not conflict with that statement. The misunderstanding is an instance of the impossibility of giving all sides of a subject in one item. Perhaps we can relieve the minds of our questioners if we say that while holding to the statement previously made, we just as firmly believe the following:

2 Corinthians 5
21 [Christ was made] to be sin for us.

Romans 8
3 [He was made] in the likeness of sinful flesh.

Galatians 4
4 [He was] made of a woman, made under the law.

He took on Him the nature of Abraham,[53] and was…

Hebrews 2
17 *In all things*…made like unto His brethren,

–and,

18 He himself has suffered being tempted.

Hebrews 4
15 [He was] in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

These scriptures convey no other meaning to our mind than that Christ voluntarily took upon himself the feeble nature of man, to be subject to all the tendencies of the flesh, and the temptations of the devil. In short, He deliberately put himself into exactly the same position that fallen man occupies, to feel in His own being the full force of the power of Satan working upon

[52] *Review and Herald*, February 18, 1890.
[53] *Hebrews* 2:16.

fallen humanity. The temptations to which He was subject were real, not fanciful, and the strength of them equaled the strength of all the temptations that all the men in the world have to endure. The human nature that He took was a sinful nature, one subject to sin. If it were not, He would not be a perfect Saviour. We could not then go to Him as one who is…

Hebrews 4
[15] …touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

We do not think this side of the case can be stated any more strongly; and yet we see no reason to recall the statement before made. If Joseph could say, in the face of strong temptations,

Genesis 39
[9] How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

–if the beloved disciple could write by inspiration of the Spirit,

1 John 3
[9] Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God;

–surely it may be said of the only-begotten Son of God, in whom dwelt "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,"[54] that He could not sin.

Take another point of view. Temptation comes through the working of Satan upon the frailty of human flesh, of which Christ himself was a partaker. We know that Satan in person put forth all his power on Jesus, not only in the wilderness, but through His whole earthly ministry, knowing that the fate of all men depended on Him. If it had been possible for Satan to induce Christ to sin, he would have done it. The fact that Christ "did no sin"[55]—that he "knew no sin,"[56] although subjected to the severest assaults of Satan, is sufficient to show that He could not be induced to sin.

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[54] *Colossians* 2:9.
[55] *1 Peter* 2:22.
[56] *2 Corinthians* 5:21.

This is the idea intended to be conveyed in the note referred to. In one sense, it was possible for Christ to sin, provided He had wished to, for the nature which He took was a nature subject to sin. Yet it was impossible for Him to sin, because…

2 Corinthians 5
[19] God was in Christ,

–and that in perfect fullness. Not simply did He have the power of God with Him, but He was God, for even when He lay a babe in the manger at Bethlehem, the decree went forth,

Hebrews 1
[6] Let all the angels of God worship Him.

He never ceased to be God, and therefore He did not sin. He demonstrated in His own person the power of divinity to prevail against the power of Satan working through human weakness.

But someone will say,

"I cannot understand this."

Neither can we. When we can understand how Christ could humble himself to the position of a servant, and become a man, and still retain His divinity; when we can understand how He could be at the same time God and man; when we can understand how the Mighty One who made the heavens and the earth could be born a helpless infant in Bethlehem; in short, when we can understand the mind of God, and can comprehend infinity, then we will explain…

Ephesians 6
[19] …the mystery of the gospel.

We advise our friends not to try to explain these things. The fact that we cannot understand how a thing can be, argues nothing against it. Finite minds cannot comprehend the workings of Infinity. We can only accept as true the statements which that same divine power makes concerning itself. But we can take comfort in every revelation of divinity. We take the highest comfort in

thinking that Christ voluntarily subjected himself to every condition and every weakness that it is possible for men to be subject to; and our comfort in this arises not less from the fact that there is thus a bond of sympathy established between us, than from the knowledge that…

2 Peter 1
[3] His divine power,…

–which was such that Satan could not by any possibility overthrow it, is that by which are…

[3] …given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

7. Reasoning Together

Present Truth, January 12, 1893

Isaiah 1
[18] Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

WHAT a wonderful promise! It seems too much to be true, but it is truth. Think of it! A man that is thoroughly defiled by sin, made as pure as the snow fresh from heaven. That is the wonder of the universe.

How is it accomplished? Well, it is in a way that no man would ever have thought of.

1 Timothy 1
[15] This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

1 John 3
[4] Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.
[5] And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.

1 John 1
[7] If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
[9] If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 3
[23] For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
[24] Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
[25] Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

Romans 4
[5] But to him that works not, but believes on Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

The sum of all this is that the sinner is saved from sin by receiving the righteousness of God in Christ. He is redeemed, cleansed by the blood of Christ. But the blood of Christ is the life of Christ.

Leviticus 17
[11] For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.

When Christ shed His blood for man, He poured out His life for sinful man. Whoever acknowledges that he has sinned, and takes Christ by faith, receives His life into his soul. Then…

2 Corinthians 5
[17] …he is a new creature,

Galatians 2
[20] …and the life that he lives, he lives by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him and gave himself for him.

That man has simply exchanged lives with the Son of God. Being crucified with Christ, he gives his old life to Christ, and thus it, with its sins, is nailed to the cross. But since he is crucified with Christ, he must also be made alive with Christ, for…

Romans 6
[5] If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.

But only Christ has the power to live after giving up His life; therefore the new life that the redeemed ones live is the life of Christ. Thus he has exchanged lives with Christ.

All this is contrary to human reason.

1 Corinthians 1
[18] The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness…

[23] We preach Christ crucified, and to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness;
[24] But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Man would say,

"Do right, and then you will be right."

That seems to the human mind to be the only reasonable way. But God says,

"Let me make you right, and then you will do right."

John 3
[14] And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
[15] That whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

The children of Israel had sinned in the wilderness,

Numbers 21
[6] And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

Then the people confessed their sins and begged that the serpents might be removed from them.

[8] And the Lord said unto Moses, Make a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looks upon it, shall live.
[9] And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

It would be strange if there were not some among the people who refused to look. They would "reason" in this way:

"It is all nonsense to think that looking at that brazen serpent can heal a snake bite. If we would climb the pole, and rub the wounded against a serpent, there might be some virtue in that;

but just looking can never be of any use, and I am not going to make a fool of myself."

That is just the way that men reason about the Lord. It seems to them foolishness that a man can be made perfectly righteous by simply looking at Christ. No; if they are ever to be made righteous they are confident that it must be by some more promising means than that. They will not risk their salvation upon a look. They can trust their own efforts, but to lie passively and look seems to them too presumptuous.

The truth is that the facts of the Gospel cannot be reasoned out by man. They are altogether above and beyond the reach of human reason. Man left to his own reason will reason himself into hedonism every time.[57]

"But doesn't God tell us to reason together?" some will ask.

Yes; and here is where so many pervert the text with which we started. They use their reason as a basis for faith, forgetting that faith must be the instructor of reason. God does not tell us to apply our reason to the task of figuring out a way of salvation but says,

Isaiah 1
[18] Come now, and let *us* reason *together.*

Who does the "us" include? Why, ourselves and the Lord, of course. The trouble is that so many read that call, and then they proceed forthwith to begin to reason alone, leaving the Lord out altogether. Then they come to fatal conclusions.

We are to reason together with the Lord. Well, it is only reasonable that in reasoning with the Lord we should defer to Him, and let His reason direct.

Isaiah 55
[8] For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

[57] See *Romans* 1:20-25.

[9] For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

1 Corinthians 1
[25] [Even] the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

So it is not with our mind that we are to reason about the things of God, but with the mind of the Lord. First we are to submit to the Lord,[58] that He may put in us the mind that was in Christ,[59] and then we shall see clearly, for we shall be walking in the light as He is in the light.[60] Then it is that…

1 John 1
[7] …the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

That which seems foolishness when looked at from a human point of view, is very reasonable when seen with the mind of God; for as…

1 John 4
[16] God is love,

–and as…

Micah 7
[18] [He] delights in mercy,

–it is the most natural thing for God to save sinners. But it is nonetheless wonderful, for the smallest of God's ways affords matter for the never-ending wonder of man.

[58] *James* 4:7.
[59] *1 Corinthians* 2:16.
[60] *1 John* 1:7.

8. Promises

Present Truth, February 9, 1893

THE annual making of resolutions and promises of good conduct is now several weeks in the past, and we may venture to call attention to them. It is perhaps safe to say that without doubt all those who took New Year's day for a time of making new resolutions have broken them by this time. But that is not at all strange, for it is the peculiar characteristic of human resolutions, that they break very easily.

> "You wouldn't have people stop making resolutions, would you?" someone asks.

Certainly. The Lord does not ask us to make them. He has provided a better way. We do not say that promises are not good, but it makes a vast difference who makes them. If a man owes a certain sum of money, it is a good thing for him to promise to pay it, provided he has any means wherewith to pay; but if he is bankrupt his promise to pay is not worth much.

But the man who promises to live a better life is a great deal worse off than the man who promises to pay a certain sum of money, when he is bankrupt. In this case the man may earn money, and so discharge his obligation. But in man there "dwells no good thing."[61] He has nothing wherewith to pay, and no power to perform the good that he has promised. So all human promises to lead a different life are worthless. They are worse than worthless, for they lead people to rest satisfied with their promises, whereas if those promises were not made they might the more readily see the necessity of taking the better thing that is offered.

It is impossible for a man to live a different life with the old life that he has been living. In order to live a different life, he must have a different life.

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[61] *Romans* 7:18.

Luke 6

45 An evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, brings forth that which is evil.

So when a man promises to do good out of the evil that is within him.

What promises, then, are of any value? The promises of God, and those only. The apostle Peter says of Jesus our Lord, that…

2 Peter 1

3 His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be made partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Here are promises that amount to something. They are the promises of God, confirmed by an oath pledging His existence to their fulfillment.

Notice that it is the power of the Lord Jesus Christ that gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Then it is certain that men can add nothing to the sum. By His promises all these things become ours. When we have these promises, what is the need of making others of our own, when we have no power to make them good? Not only are our promises unnecessary, but they are harmful, because they shut out the promises of God. They imply that His promises are not sufficient. Surely no one who has any just sense of the exceeding value of the promises of God, will think of supplementing them by worthless promises of his own.

Human promises can be seen in their true light only when we think of them as made to the Lord. Think of a man making a promise to the Lord, and then coming to Him and asking for favors on the strength of the good promises that he has made! Now if a promise is good for anything, this is what he ought to be able to do. If a man makes a promise to pay another man a sum of

money, that is, if he gives a note, something can be raised on that note if it is good for anything. But no man would dare to come to the Lord and plead any promise that he has made. We do not ask the Lord to bless us because we have made good promises, but because He has made promises. The Lord says,

> **Isaiah 43**
> [25] I, even I, am He that blots out your transgressions for my own sake.

The Christian life is indeed a life. And life means growth.

> **Hosea 14**
> [5] He shall grow as the lily…

–is the Lord's statement concerning the one who is His. Lilies do not grow by resolution, but by absorbing the elements which God gives for their growth. A resolution pertains to the future, but growth is not a thing of the future, but of the present. The Lord does not want us to tell Him what we are going to do in the future, about which we know nothing, but simply to take the growing power contained in His promises, and live by them day by day and hour by hour. The promises of God are the only hope of mankind. Why not depend on them, then, and not weaken their force by putting our own in their place?

9. The Christian Life

Present Truth, March 9, 1893

SOMEONE says:

> "The little boy or girl, at school, looks at the copy in the writing-book, and imitates it, trying to write each following line better. That is the Christian life, and that is all of it."

Not by any means. If it were all of it, there would be no hope for anybody; for the pattern is Jesus Christ, in whom dwells…

> **Colossians 2**
> [9] …all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

–and no human being could ever successfully copy that life.

> **Isaiah 55**
> [8] For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.
> [9] For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

He who would copy the life of Christ as the schoolboy copies his lesson, and do it successfully, must have power equal to that of God.

If the boy whose hand the master holds and guides in imitating the copy, were used as an illustration of the Christian life, it would be a step nearer the truth; but even that would not be the truth.

That is mechanical. The boy may yield his hand willingly to the master, that it may be guided, but the writing is after all not his own. God does not use men as dead instruments to be operated upon, although men are to yield themselves as instruments of righteousness unto Him.

The Christian life is simply the life of Christ. If the master who sets the copy for the schoolboy, could put all his own skill and power into that boy, so that what he writes will not be merely an

imitation of the master's copy, but the master's own writing, and still the free act of the boy, we should have an illustration of the Christian life.

Philippians 2
[12] Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.
[13] For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Galatians 2
[20] I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

1 John 2
[6] He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.

And how was it that He walked? Christ himself said,

John 14
[10] The Father that dwells in me, He does the works.

Christ has set us the copy, but instead of standing off and watching us try to imitate Him, He gladly comes in to our hearts, becoming one with us, so that His life is our life, and His act is ours. This is life—the Christian life.

10. The Necessity of a New Heart

Present Truth, August 24, 1893

WHEN the Lord would cleanse His people,—those who professed to be serving Him,—from all their idols and their filthiness,[62] He said to them,

> **Ezekiel 36**
> [26] A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.
> [27] And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them.
> [28] And you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

This is the only way that any person can be brought into a condition where he can walk in the statutes of God, and keep His judgments. He must experience a change of heart. The same thing is declared in the 31st chapter of *Jeremiah*.

> **Jeremiah 31**
> [31] Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:
> [32] Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt...
> [33] But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The Israelites had the law of God written upon tables of stone and preserved in the sacred ark. They had heard the law spoken from the summit of Mt. Sinai by the voice of God, and had heard it repeated by Moses; but they did not have it written upon their hearts, and the result was they did not keep it. The record of their lives is a record of transgression, of worshiping idols, and other

[62] *Ezekiel* 36:25.

iniquitous practices by which they violated the Divine statutes and judgments. They intended to keep them, and professed to be keeping them; perhaps even persuaded themselves that they were keeping them; but they were not. The conditions under which they tried to serve God made the keeping of His law an impossibility to them. Not that these conditions were imposed upon them; they were simply the conditions of every man in his natural state. The law of God was not written in their hearts. They were hardened through unbelief, so that their hearts would not receive the impress of the principles of God's great moral code.

A change of heart is the great requisite felt by the repentant sinner as he turns to God.

> **Psalm 51**
> [10] Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Thus David prayed after he had gone in the way of the carnal heart and grievously sinned against God; and his prayer is echoed by every repentant soul. The clean heart for which he prayed is one upon which is written the principles of righteousness.

All who are truly converted have these principles upon their hearts, the agency by which they are written being the Spirit of God. Thus Paul writes to the church at Corinth:

> **2 Corinthians 3**
> [3] You are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

As the heart is, so is the life; for…

> **Matthew 12**
> [34] Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

It was the apostle's trust that the Corinthian brethren would in their lives be an epistle unto their fellow-men, wherein would be read the virtues of Christ and the power of God unto the salva-

tion of believers. All persons who have the Divine law written in their hearts will be the epistles of Christ.

The Jews among whom Christ walked when upon the earth had the law of God everywhere about them, but in the one place where its living principles were most needed it was absent. It was held up before them in their synagogues; they wore it in letters upon their garments; they had it in their minds, so that they could repeat it from memory; but they were constant and flagrant violators of its requirements.

Matthew 23
[25] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

This was the stern denunciation upon them from the lips of Jesus.

[25] ...you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

No one ever made a greater outward show of piety and reverence for God than did the Pharisees, yet all that did not save them from the most terrible condemnation. Neither will it avail anymore for the most respectable professor of Christianity today, who has not experienced the needed change of heart.

All along from their day to ours, the devil has led men to try to be servants of God without undergoing this change; and it has been one of his most successful devices. He has led men to think that if they kept the law of God often before their eyes and upon their lips, they would be living about as God would have them. So they have surrounded themselves with pictures of the Saviour and the names connected with His ministry, and with images of himself and His mother and the apostles and "saints," wore crucifixes upon their breast—as the Pharisees wore the law upon their phylacteries—and in every way by their surroundings and outward practices endeavoured to convince themselves and others that they were the true servants of God. But however well they succeeded in deceiving themselves and their fellow-men, they did

not in the least deceive God. His eye read their hearts, and He knew who were His and who were mere pious hypocrites, like the scribes and Pharisees. He knew whether they were His subjects at heart, or whether forms and ceremonies and imposing houses of worship and pictures and images served only to hide the secret iniquity of hearts that were still carnal.

Jesus said,

Luke 17
[21] The kingdom of God is within you.

It is Christ dwelling in the heart by faith;[63] it is God dwelling with the spirit that is humble and contrite.[64] We may have the precepts of God upon the walls of our churches and our homes, and upon the tablets of our memories, and sounding often in our ears—and all this is proper and well; but if they be not written upon our hearts we are but subjects of the kingdom of darkness.

John 3
[3] Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

[63] *Ephesians* 3:17.
[64] *Isaiah* 57:15.

11. Successful Seeking

Present Truth, September 7, 1893

THE life of man is a continual seeking. There is implanted in his very nature a longing for something better, a reaching out for something more than He has yet attained. But the result is always more or less disappointing; he is never satisfied. If he gains that which he sought,—wealth, fame, position,—it is only to discover that he wanted twice as much of it as he got. One drink from the intoxicating cup of worldly success only increases the thirst for more. And as a conviction of this fact forces itself upon the minds of men, they settle down to the belief that life is only a continual striving after the unattainable, and that lasting peace and satisfaction are things to be contemplated and longed for, but never realized.

All this is the result of sin. With Adam, in his innocence, it was not so. He had the same longing and reaching out for higher things that his descendants have always had, but it was not a longing that brought restlessness and discontent. It was one that could find satisfaction. In the garden of Eden Adam walked and talked with God, and the desires of his heart were only the means by which he was led constantly upward to the attainment of clearer and broader views of infinite majesty, goodness, and truth, which filled his soul with the peace a perfect satisfaction.

But with man's fall, there came a change. The longing for something beyond him still remained, but, separated from God, and with a mind darkened by sin, he no longer understood how to satisfy it. He began to devise ways of his own, and to reach out after the illusions of a perverted imagination.

> **Ecclesiastes 7**
> [29] Lo, this have I found, [says the wise man,] that God has made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.

Their inventions have not added to their peace and happiness, but only plunged them deeper into the mire of restlessness and

want. They have brought man down from his uprightness, without which happiness and peace cannot be felt. And so we see men today seeking, in a hundred selfish and sinful ways, to the wicked inventions that have been sought out to gratify carnal desires, for that which will satisfy their longings; and we see them becoming tired of the search, and seriously questioning whether life be worth living, and in many sad cases are arriving at a negative conclusion. They do not know what they want. True wisdom is hid from their eyes, and their minds are bent on realizing the foolish ambitions of a perverted heart. It is a vain task, and brings only sorrow and vexation of spirit.

True wisdom is the fear of the Lord. It is to turn from the ways and devices of men, and seek the ways of God. It is to pray with the psalmist,

Psalm 51
[10] Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

The desires of a perverted heart can never be satisfied, any more than can the appetite of the drunkard; but the clean heart can even now find that which it seeks, as it did when man was perfect. The renewed heart can commune with God, as did Adam in the garden of Eden. The longing which it feels is for the courts and the presence of God.

Psalm 42
[1] As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after You, O God.
[2] My soul thirsts for God, the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Psalm 84
[2] My soul longs, yea, even faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cries out for the living God.

Nor does it thirst and cry out in vain; for…

Psalm 84
[11] The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

And the Saviour said,

Matthew 5
[6] Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Communion with God brings rest and peace. Yes,

Isaiah 26
[3] You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You.

The psalmist understood well the requisites of a peaceful and satisfied existence here below, and His words are full of this knowledge.

Psalm 90
[14] O satisfy us early with your mercy, that we may be glad and rejoice all our days.

Psalm 37
[3] Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shall you dwell in the land, and verily you shall be fed.
[4] Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Psalm 34
[8] O taste, and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusts in Him.

12. Right and Wrong Worship

Present Truth, November 2, 1893

THE fall, it has been rightly said, was the transferring of man's worship from God to self.

God claims man's worship as due alone to Him. He claims all worship, as being the only rightful Object of worship. To worship is to ascribe power and glory and honor to the object adored. This may be done either by words or actions. Indeed, as "actions speak louder than words" obedience is in reality the truest worship.

As God is the only Being who has power and honor and glory in himself, He is the only proper Object of worship. All other things derive their power and glory from Him. Hence to ascribe such attributes to them, when they belong only to Him, is a falsehood. It matters not how glorious or exalted one may be; they have nothing except that which the Creator gave them. Whether they be angels, or principalities, or things in the heavens or things in earth, none have any power and honor and glory in and of themselves. All was bestowed by God, and to Him only can they be properly ascribed.

The devil fell from his exalted place in heaven because he became lifted up in his heart on account of his beauty and brightness.[65] He saw—or thought he saw—something to admire in himself, and straightway he set out to work to establish a kingdom of his own, and make himself an object of worship. But though he was, as the prophet tells us,

> **Ezekiel 28**
> [12] ...full of wisdom and perfect in beauty,

–and perfect in all his ways from the day of his creation till he began to be lifted up with pride, as soon as he saw *self* to be perfect, and full of wisdom and beauty and brightness, he began to fall. The Lord took from him His Spirit, and let him see, and let all

[65] *Ezekiel* 28:17.

the universe see, what he possessed of himself. But he immediately ceased to be an object worthy of admiration, and has been sinking lower and lower from that day to this.

No one will ever become so good and bright and beautiful, or get so near to God, as to be in himself an object of admiration and worship. Should he even be, as Lucifer was, the anointed cherub overshadowing the throne of God, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, and sinless in all his ways, just as soon as he would begin to admire *himself* and see in *self* that which is inherent only in God, he would make as great a mistake as Lucifer did, and the result, if persisted in, would be just as bad.

The same principle was revealed in the fall of our first parents. The tempter made Eve think there were some godlike attributes in herself, that only wanted the magic influence of the fruit of the tree of knowledge to cause them to spring into life and elevate her to her proper place. The result was her fall and the fall of the human family. And the evil principle of self admiration and self worship has been handed down in her descendants, and rules the world today.

The gospel turns men's worship back again from self to God. It shows men that self is nothing, and God is everything. It puts in man the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of truth, and can never witness to a falsehood. The Spirit expels the thought that there is anything good in self, and testifies of Jesus Christ as the One through whom all goodness comes. It causes death to self, but life unto God. It brings life and immortality to light through the everlasting righteousness of Christ. In the worship of God it brings to man more than he ever dreamed of attaining through the worship of self.

13. In Six Hundredweight of Chains

Present Truth, November 23, 1893

A FEW weeks ago a Mohammedan fakir came to Bombay, who had voluntarily loaded himself with 24 maunds (six hundredweight) of chains. We visited him at that convenient, free rest-house for native travelers, the Falkland Road Dharanisala. He was reclining on his mat and hard pillow, and was dependent upon an attendant for food. The bulk and weight of the chains welded around his neck, arms, and legs, rendered walking impossible. It was said that when he traveled by train (he came from North India), he was charged partly as a passenger and partly as freight. He desired to go as a pilgrim to Mecca, and an ordinary ticket by steamship was purchased for him, but when he arrived at the ship, the astonished officer declined his company.

Some large iron pegs and a heavy iron mallet were attached to his chains. These were used in fixing him firmly down, at his desire, in any particular spot.

This iron bondage was no new one. For twenty-four years he had submitted to it. What caused him voluntarily to endure a burden of chains which, if inflicted by any official authority as a punishment, would bring down upon the government that permitted it the execration of mankind? He said it was his inclination to evil. As a young man he was very wicked, and he caused chains to be fastened upon him to keep him from sin. As time went on he added more chains, until the present weight was reached.

The man's face was not a dishonest one. The manner of his conversation was also open. There is no reason to doubt that for twenty-four years he had been engaged in a desperate struggle with sinful inclinations. But his admission that as time passed by he added more chains, was a confession of defeat.

> This Mohammedan fakir in his ignorance had been dealing with the effect instead of the cause. Better then chaining the

limbs is to seek a change of heart. The psalmist understood this when he cried,

Psalm 51

[10] Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Create? Yes; that is the word; and no hand but God's can do it. The same truth appears in the words of Jesus Christ to Nicodemus:

John 3

[3] Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.[66]

The chains upon the limbs of the fakir, which were increased as he grew older, were significant of the chains of sin which bound him. The strength of an evil habit increases with age, instead of diminishing, thus showing that there is no inherent goodness in men, which will ultimately overpower and destroy the evil. The increase of the weight of the chains is in keeping with the fact that the strongest human efforts to overcome sin, only serve to increase it. Every form of religion, except the pure religion of Jesus Christ, only increases the bondage of men: but Christ removes the heavy chains, and lets the oppressed go free.

[66] *Bombay Guardian.*

14. No Difference

Present Truth, January 4, 1894

THE very great differences that we see among men, in the matter of education, refinement, and all those things that give men standing in the world, are by many thought to be so great that nothing can ever effect any change. Persons at the two extremes are almost thought to belong to different orders of beings; and to many it seems almost impossible that even the Gospel can ever lift men up from the lowest depths, to a level with favored mortals.

But what after all makes this difference? Only the circumstances of birth, and a few years of training. The difference in birth does not count for much; for the son of the most cultured nobleman, if brought up from earliest infancy with the children of the slums, would differ from them in no respect. So that the only difference is that which arises from a difference in advantages.

As to the matter of birth, that may easily be settled; for all must be born again, before they can into the kingdom of heaven. The noblest as well as the most despised, must alike be born from above; and when they have experienced this new birth, from the Lord, they will be of one family. All will be of equally "high birth."

Galatians 3
[26] You are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.
[28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Then their association and fellowship is alike…

1 John 1
[3] …with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Everybody knows that a man from the lowest ranks of society, even from barbarism would, by a few years of proper education, and association with educated and truly refined people, become

educated, and transformed in his manners. What, then, may not be accomplished by association on terms of equality with Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?

The children of savages have been taken and educated under Christian influences, so that in the course of a few years no one could possibly detect by their language nor their manners that they had not had advantages of birth equal to the children of the most highly civilized. Suppose that we should see those same ones after they have been in glory for a few thousand years, associating with Christ and the angels, how much effect would be seen of these distinctions which are made so much of by men of this world? If there should be any difference, it would doubtless be that the one with the fewest earthly advantages might occupy the highest place.

God looks at men from the side of eternity, and not with man's narrow view. Knowing that their hearts are all fashioned alike;[67] that there is no difference, because…

Romans 3
[23] …all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,

–God puts no difference between men in the matter of salvation, purifying the hearts all alike by faith.[68]

Romans 3
[27] Where is boasting? It is excluded.

1 Corinthians 1
[26] For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:
[27] But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

[67] *Psalm* 33:13-15.
[68] *Acts* 15:8-9.

[28] And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:
[29] That no flesh should glory in His presence.

The Gospel brings hope to the poor and despised.

Psalm 40
[17] I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinks upon me.

Psalm 116
[6] I was brought low, and He helped me.

Luke 1
[51] He has showed strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
[52] He has put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

Jeremiah 9
[23] Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:
[24] But let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight.

15. Turning Over a New Leaf

Present Truth, January 4, 1894

IT IS well to turn over a new leaf, as we are in the habit of essaying to do at this time of the year. But let it be remembered that this is something that must be done in wisdom. The important thing about turning over a new leaf is not the time of the year, but the manner in which it is done.

Sensible men of all classes have long recognized the folly of attempting to produce a perpetual motion,—or a machine which will create its own power. But the same men are constantly trying to make this idea practical in the moral life. They are constantly trying to get some power of themselves to make themselves do better; and that is nothing else than an attempt to create the power that they lack. But this is just as impossible as it is to create power for a perpetual motion. The principle is the same. And when one can be done, then we may expect to see the other.

God alone has power to create. If man could create power, he could make himself equal with God by simply creating enough power. But no man can furnish himself with any more moral strength than he already has. This is what he tries to do, but he cannot do it. He finds that he has not power enough in himself to live right, so he thinks the matter over and makes a resolve that he will live right,—as if that could create the power that he lacks. He does not stop to reflect that if he has not strength to do right, he has not strength to keep a resolve to do right; since the same strength is necessary for one as for the other. He fails; but still the *ignis fatuus*[69] of some new strength that he can almost reach floats before him and lures him on through repeated failures, till he is ready to give up in despair.

This is the trouble very often with turning over a new leaf. We turn it over, but do not get anything more than we had before. It was human nature before; it is human nature now. It was human

[69] Ignis fatuus = "foolish fire"; a misleading goal or idea.

strength and wisdom before; it is nothing more than that now. And therefore we can only reasonably expect the same result.

We must have more strength; and the only way to get it is to have it put into us. For strength we must look to God. He has an abundance for all our needs, and is willing and more than willing to give it freely. He will give it if we will let Him. And the first step toward this is to lose all confidence in self. This is always a characteristic of the children of faith.

Philippians 3
[3] We are the circumcision, [says Paul,] which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

When we failed, we trusted in the flesh,—in our own strength. But as soon as we cease to have confidence in it, we cease to trust in it. Then we look to God and trust alone in Him. We turn over a new leaf, not from self to self, but from self to Christ. And that leaf must always remain pure and spotless.

We must look to Christ until we cease to know self. We must reckon ourselves to…

Romans 6
[11] …be dead indeed unto sin,

–which means to be dead to self,—the carnal nature, the "old man," and then in the hour of temptation look to God, being yielded unto Him, and believe that He will strengthen us to continue dead unto self, but alive unto Him. Thus the channel is open through which God can fill us with His power, and thus supply the strength that we have not.

16. In the Image of God

Present Truth, January 25, 1894

Genesis 1
[26] And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.
[27] So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him.

IN THIS respect man was different from all the other creatures that God had made to live upon the earth. To him alone was given the exalted privilege of being the son of God, made in His own likeness, and partaking of His Divine nature, and of His wisdom and glory.

We read that he was made but...

Psalm 8
[5] ...a little lower than the angels, and [was] crowned with glory and honor;

1 Corinthians 11
[7] ...[in] the image and glory of God;

James 3
[9] ...after the similitude of God, [or "likeness of God" RV];

–and that he was...

Ecclesiastes 7
[29] ...made upright,

–thus partaking also of the character of God. Oh, to have seen him then, as he came fresh from the hand of his Maker! His looks, his actions, his words, all proclaimed that he was the very image of God. No trouble then to tell to whom he belonged or who was his Father, for His image was plainly seen.

But look at the ravages of sin! What is man now? He is dwarfed and weak and filled with the seeds of pain and death. His glory is gone, his wisdom is corrupted, and his nature is sinful. He is no

longer the free son of God, but is the bond-slave of Satan. The image of God is well-nigh effaced. He who was once a fit companion for God and angels has sunk too low to be able to bear even the sight of their purity and glory.

Isaiah 1
[6] From the soul of his feet even unto his head there is no soundness in him; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.

But,

1 John 3
[1] Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us!

He who has denied his sonship, and sold himself for nought, and allowed his Maker's image to be defaced until scarcely a trace of the likeness of God remains,—he may again become the son of God, and partake of His Divine nature and be stamped with His image!

John 1
[12] But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

2 Peter 1
[4] Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

He may have his knowledge renewed...

Colossians 3
[10] ...after the image of Him that created him,

Romans 12
[2] And...be transformed by the renewing of his mind.

He may have a new heart given him;[70] and a right spirit renewed within him;[71] and be cleansed from all unrighteousness;[72]

[70] *Ezekiel* 36:26.
[71] *Psalm* 51:10.
[72] *1 John* 1:9.

and clothed in the righteousness of God.

Isaiah 61
[10] I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

He may be created anew,[73] and become an entirely new creature[74] now, all but his vile body, and when Jesus comes even that vile body will be changed and…

Philippians 3
[21] …fashioned like unto His glorious body.

Then he can again shine forth in the glory of the Father,[75] and as the stars for ever and ever.

Daniel 12
[3] And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

How can this wondrous transformation be wrought? And how many can have a share in it?

Revelation 22
[17] Whosoever will,

–is the answer sent forth from God, and…

John 1
[12] To as many as received Him [Jesus] to them He gave power to become the sons of God.

Christ's life in human flesh and death upon the cross redeemed us and made it possible for Him to live in our hearts by faith.[76] Je-

[73] *Ephesians* 2:10; 4:24.
[74] *2 Corinthians* 5:17.
[75] *Matthew* 13:43.
[76] *Ephesians* 3:17.

sus Christ is the perfect…

Colossians 1
[15] …image of the invisible God.

Therefore when we receive Jesus into our hearts we receive the image of God. The more we yield ourselves to Him, the deeper and deeper grows His image. The more we think upon Him and view His loveliness and glory, the more we…

2 Corinthians 3
[18] …are changed *into the same image* from glory to glory.

Is this glorious transformation taking place in you and me?

17. Joy in Creation

Present Truth, February 1, 1894

WHEN the Lord laid the foundations of the earth,

Job 38
[7] The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

What was their joy? There was creation. Whenever a sinner is converted…

Luke 15
[10] …there is joy in the presence of the angels of God.

It is a creation. The marvel of the new creation causes all heaven to shout for joy.

18. Christ's Identity with the Sinner

Present Truth, February 1, 1894

IT IS the sinner who can say,

Galatians 2
[20] ...Christ lives in me.

If a man could not say it while yet a sinner he never could say it. Christ comes to him and says,

> "I identify Myself with you, as having committed that sin. We are sinners together. I go with you to the depths of sin."

He does not ask us to come up a little way; but He comes right down to identify himself with our sin.

But He took it that He might destroy it.

Romans 6
[6] [We are] crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.

We simply have to decide whether we will have the sin destroyed. If I am willing to have the sin destroyed, and believe Christ, then I am crucified with Christ, because He is the sin destroyer. He takes all the sin upon himself, and swallows it up by the power of an endless life. He swallows up death in victory, and sin in His righteousness.

So He comes to me in the sin, and says,

> "I am with you in that."

Just as soon as I am willing to say I want this sin destroyed, as soon as I cry out as Paul did in:

Romans 7
[24] O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

–I can say as he did in the next verse,

Romans 7
[25] I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The sinless One is willing to be counted a sinner.

Luke 22
[37] He was reckoned among the transgressors.

When we know more of that grace of Christ, who, although He knew that He was holy and righteous, and knew that He came from God and went to God;[77] knew there was no guile in Him,[78] and that He always did the will of His Father in heaven,[79] and yet was willing to be made of no reputation,[80] and was willing to suffer the shame[81] and be counted as a sinner,[82] and have laid upon Him the iniquity of us all,[83] it will be easier for us to suffer reproach wrongfully and take it patiently. In fact, that is the only way we can be able to…

1 Peter 2
[19] …endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

[77] *John* 13:3.
[78] *1 Peter* 2:22.
[79] *John* 6:38.
[80] *Philippians* 2:7.
[81] *Isaiah* 50:6.
[82] *Isaiah* 53:12.
[83] *Isaiah* 53:6.

19. An Unideal World

Present Truth, March 1, 1894

IN BUILDING a house not only a plan but materials are necessary. The best kind of a plan would be unworkable with useless and unsatisfactory material. This is the reason why, after all the centuries of time, and the patient and impatient labor of philosophers, the ideal society or commonwealth has never been seen except on paper. Mr. Herbert Spencer confesses in the last *Fortnightly Review* that the theories which he and his school had originally conceived cannot be worked out except by people of a certain type, and this type cannot be found in actual society. Before the French Revolution the philosophers had beautiful theories of fraternity and peace, but when it came to actually putting these things into operation it was a massacre rather than a millennium that followed.

When God is left out of the plan there must be failure, the matter how correct it may be in form; and the only way to get the Lord into it is to take His own plan. He makes no plan that is not perfect, and, as a perfect plan requires perfect material, He first of all sends the Gospel of power to transform and perfect those who are willing to be delivered from their own evil ways. This Gospel knows nothing of reforms in masses and communities, but takes hold of individuals. This Gospel of salvation from sin and self may look very barren to those who stand aside from it, and are impatient to see wrongs righted in social and political matters; but as it was sin that brought every evil, so in the Gospel is the only remedy for wrong of every kind. Men will not believe this; for the natural man has always thought himself wiser than God. But the 1st chapter of *Romans*, taught to a man by the Spirit of God, contains more wisdom on social economy than all that the world knows outside of the Lord.

20. Hollow Conventionalities

Present Truth, March 8, 1894

EVERYBODY knows that there is much insincerity and gilt-edged hypocrisy hidden under many of the conventionalities of social life. Greetings are exchanged when face to face, and hard things are often said when parted.

> "I am glad to see you,"

–is often spoken when but a moment before, as the visitor entered the gate, the word had been,

> "There is Mrs. Tiresome; how I do dislike her."

But someone asked,

> "Would you have people to be discourteous, and give offense to those whom they dislike, and still are obliged to meet?"

Not at all. The Gospel lays down no rule for the guidance of people with dislike, hatred, envy, or jealousy in the heart. They must deport themselves as may be most expedient. They have deceit and dissimulation in the heart, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak;[84] so dissembling and insincerity must come out.

But the one who would follow Christ, and be a Christian indeed, need have no fear about being discourteous by being sincere. The Christian has no business to dislike people. It is not the Christ in him that dislikes his fellow, but the remnants of the old man. The problem is not how to keep the old animosities and get on passably, but how to get rid of the wicked feelings, root and branch.

> **Colossians 3**
> [8] But now you also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

[84] *Matthew* 12:34.

[9] Lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds;
[10] And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.
[12] Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;
[13] Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you.

With this spirit there will be no hollow conventionalities; and this is what the love of God sheds abroad in the hearts of those who are willing to receive it.

Of course some people may be tiresome and disagreeable. But the Lord did not set His love upon us because we were such pleasing company; we wearied Him with our wickedness and heaped reproach upon Him. His kindness was shown to sinners, and as partakers together in sin, and as objects together of love, we all are brethren, and He is not ashamed to call us such.

Conventional phrases may sometimes hide malice from others; but they fail to do so more frequently than it is conventional to notice. Those who will not submit to God's way must struggle along with hollow words as best they can. But the love of God suppresses the symptoms by curing the disease, that the Christian may be…

Philippians 2
[15] …sincere and without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

John says of those whom he saw in mount Sion, that…

Revelation 14
[5] …in their mouth was found no guile.

It is because their hearts are freed from guile and insincerity.

21. Complete in Him

Present Truth, May 10, 1894

THE only way for any man to attain completeness—that for which all men seek—is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2

[9] In Him, [writes the apostle,] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

[10] And you are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power.

The mission of Christ is to set men free; and the freedom that He gives is complete. The Gospel is the only power in the world that takes hold of body, mind, and soul, and restores each to a condition of holiness, or wholeness. That this is the mission of Christ appears from the words in which He announced it in the synagogue at Nazareth, and from the works which He performed during His ministry. It is set forth in these words of the prophet Isaiah, which He quoted:

Luke 4

[18] The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised.

Looking at the work of Christ, we find that this is exactly what He did. He touched men, and restored their bodies to health and strength; He restored the insane to their right mind, and He gave power to as many as believed on Him to become the sons of God, free from the bondage of sin. And this is the work to which He commissioned His disciples; for when He sent them forth He said,

Matthew 10

[7] As you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[8] Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely you have received, freely give.

This is the work done by the Gospel, wherever it has gone. This is what the Gospel does today; and therefore it is the one thing which all men need. Man at his best estate, without the Gospel, is a slave. Men count liberty as a most valuable thing, even when it means no more than freedom to come and go, to think and act, without arbitrary restriction from their fellows,—liberty merely in that which concerns the temporal things of this life. But how much more valuable is that liberty through which we lay hold on things eternal,—which unfetters the soul and gives man access to the highest sphere of existence. This liberty comes through the Gospel alone; and without the Gospel, all liberty of every kind must eventually be lost. But with the Gospel we are sure of all,—that which is highest and most valuable now, and the rest after we have for God's glory suffered awhile, and been made perfect.

22. The Geography of the Kingdom

Present Truth, May 24, 1894

THE citizenship of the believer is in the spiritual kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. That kingdom is…

Romans 14
[17] …righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost,

–a blessed kingdom in which to live.

Surely, did men only believe that there is such a kingdom they would go far to find it, to escape from the turmoil and strife and trouble in the kingdoms of this world.

The exiled apostle, John, found the kingdom on the…

Revelation 1
[9] …isle that is called Patmos,

–to which he was banished…

[9] …for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

In his letter to the church he speaks of himself as their…

[9] …companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

The brethren scattered abroad shared with the apostle the kingdom of joy and peace, and no tribulation could take it from them. Wherever the believers went they were to preach the Gospel and say,

Luke 10
[9] The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

Christ said this to the wicked Pharisees; and to the scribe who answered discreetly He said,

Mark 12
[34] You are not far from the kingdom.

It lies so near to all men that it is but one step into it. The most wicked man who turns to Jesus, who but looks unto Him, shall live; and that life is the life of the kingdom—the righteousness, the peace, and the joy of the Holy Ghost.

Only a step to Jesus!
  Believe, and you shall live;
Lovingly now He's waiting,
  And ready to forgive.

Only a step to Jesus!
  A step from sin to grace;
What has your heart decided?
  The moments fly apace![85]

Men do not realize how near God is, with His kingdom of grace. A foot-weary and heart-sore wanderer from home and from truth once laid down in the wilderness to sleep, with a stone for his pillow. When he awoke he said,

Genesis 28
[16] Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.
[17] ...How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

The gate of heaven is at the feet of every sinner, and yet men hesitate, and go on in the mad rush of business and pleasure knowing nothing of the rest and joy of Christ, thinking of it—if they give it a thought—as being something afar off, a kingdom fanciful and unreal, because it is a spiritual kingdom.

But the believer knows the geography of the kingdom. He breathes its invigorating atmosphere every day, and knows that neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature can separate him from it.[86] The citizen of this kingdom of righteousness must submit himself to the right-

[85] Fanny Crosby, *Only a Step.*
[86] *Romans* 8:39.

eousness of its rule, but loyalty to the law of the kingdom is liberty and life, and joy and peace.

23. Death Abolished

Present Truth, May 24, 1894

THE greatest act of abolition ever accomplished was that performed by the Lord Jesus Christ when He abolished death. We read of this in Paul's second letter to Timothy, where the apostle exhorts his fellow-worker to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel,

> **2 Timothy**
> [8] ...according to the power of God;
> [9] Who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,
> [10] But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

The purpose and grace of God toward us were given us in Christ before the world began, He being the...

> **Revelation 13**
> [8] ...Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;

–and therefore men have shared in all ages all the provisions of the Gospel, and by the Gospel death has in all ages been virtually abolished, although the fact was not brought plainly and vividly "to light" until the day of Christ's resurrection.[87]

That death was abolished was the import of Christ's language to the Sadducees, where He cited the words of God,

[87] *2 Timothy* 1:10.

Matthew 22
[32] I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, [and added,] God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Though Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were dead, God counted them as alive, because they were to come up at the resurrection of the just. With God, the eternal One, to whom a thousand years are as a day and as a watch in the night,[88] time is counted as nothing; for it is nothing in relation to eternity. Those things therefore which exist in the purpose of God, though they now be not, He counts as though they were.[89]

The abolition of death means the abolition of the law by which it works; and so we find the Christian's testimony to be that…

Romans 8
[2] The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from of law of sin and death.

This baleful law has been repealed by a stronger Power than the power for which it came, and all men are at liberty to avail themselves of this freedom. And so to all who do so, death, though "the last enemy that shall be destroyed,"[90] is even now virtually abolished.

[88] *Psalm* 90:4.
[89] *Romans* 4:17.
[90] *1 Corinthians* 15:26.

24. What the Gospel Includes

Present Truth, May 31, 1894

THE Gospel of God is not a narrow, circumscribed thing which can be bound off by creeds, as many people seem to think. The Gospel includes everything that pertains to the life of man. By its provisions a man is born again,—created new in Christ. Consequently his life as a Christian knows nothing that is not in touch with that creative power. For this reason the Apostle Paul wrote to his brethren in the church,

> **1 Corinthians 10**
> [31] Whether therefore you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.

And to the Colossian brethren he wrote,

> **Colossians 3**
> [17] And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.
> [23] And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

The Gospel, therefore, touches our eating and drinking, and every occupation and act of life, be it business or pleasure. It makes every act a spiritual act, done with a view to the glory of God. The Christian life is a spiritual life. It is the life of Christ in human flesh,—in the individual who has put on Christ. And this does not make life a restricted thing, separated from the greater part of the life of the world around us; for all things were created by God, and intended to be used for the benefit and pleasure of man. It separates only from sin.

- It shows man how to use aright all things that creation affords.
- It reveals the spiritual aspect of all things, so that in everything God has made or ordained the individual can find Him, and that life and strength and peace which He has to bestow.

- It obliterates the distinction that men have set up between religion and business, making the service of God the proper business of man, by showing man how to serve God in all his business, and how to find in it all a higher pleasure than any the world has to bestow.

25. Full Surrender?

Present Truth, June 7, 1894

MANY are found who are willing to follow the Lord a little way; perhaps as far as the multitude goes; many are willing to give up some of their old ways if they may but hold to some; but the first and only thing to be settled in the service of Christ is whether you are willing to take His way and follow His word or not. To meet the desire of human nature for some halfway round of service, the standard of Christian living is too often lowered. The *Christian* well said in a recent number:

> Our Lord and Master never yielded to any accommodation, or to any minimizing of His claims. We must adjust ourselves to Him, not Him to us. To obtain adherents by lowering the Divine standard would be to fill the Church with doubtful professors, who would soon destroy every particle of life she possesses. At the very threshold the question must be settled as to who is to rule—the Master or the disciples, the servant or the Lord. "Leave all and follow me," is His unvarying demand made on every soul man.
>
> A missionary to the Hindus noticed that in every case where a convert returned home "to bid farewell" to father and mother before confessing Christ, he either failed to confess Him, or, having confessed Him, sometime afterward proved unfaithful. We are making the service of Christ hard by not insisting upon complete surrender to Him, for it is hard only to such as do not give Him all.

Are you willing to follow Christ and His life of obedience to His Father, although it means giving up all? Many sing and talk about giving up all to the Lord; but when He takes them at their word, and reveals to them their duty in His word, they often find it a hard struggle to believe that the Lord really means what He says. Decide for the Lord, once for all, and cleave to Him, whether the world or a worldly church smiles or frowns.

26. Discerning the Righteous and the Wicked

Present Truth, August 30, 1894

THE righteous man is the man in whose heart abides the word of God. And this fact is not apparent through his outward circumstances. If we could look upon the heart as God does, and see with the clearness of His vision, we should be able to discern there either the presence or the absence of faith, and by that and that only we should know to which of the two great classes any particular individual belonged.

Faith being the source of righteousness, its absence, and that alone, is the cause of wickedness. For all men are by nature wicked, having carnal hearts that are…

Romans 8

7 …not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

And the same human nature that manifests itself in murders, and drunkenness, and the lowest forms of vice and crime, is the common nature of all men. Only the accident of circumstances prevents its being manifested in all men alike.

The highly respectable member of society, who yet knows not God, has nothing to boast of over the man whom society brands as an outcast, for the difference between them is not a difference in nature, but merely in fortune, for which he can take no credit to himself.

When Adam sinned, he acquired a fallen and carnal nature, and only that nature could he bequeath to his children. All his descendants thus acquired his nature, it being transmitted by each parent in turn. And thus all men have received the fallen nature which Adam had, and only variations in the process of transmission, and in the circumstances with which men have been surrounded, have, outside of the grace of God, produced the differences in their life records.

But with those who have received the grace of God, there has been a change in nature; and to this, and not to any variations of fortune, has the success of their lives been due. Even the Apostle Paul testified of itself,

1 Corinthians 15
[10] By the grace of God I am what I am,

–and said,

Galatians 6
[14] God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And therefore it is true that the man who is farthest away from God is he who least feels his need of Divine grace and of a different nature from the one which He has. This is illustrated by the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, who went to the temple to pray. The Pharisee thought that he had a better nature than other men, so he thanked the Lord that He was not as they were; but the publican, feeling his need, exclaimed,

Luke 18
[13] Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner,

–and went down to his house justified. No men are so hopelessly wicked as those who feel satisfied with themselves; and those who are most nearly self-satisfied are not the ones who manifest the greatest weaknesses and are guilty of the most crimes, but those who are able to make their lives conform to the world's standard of morality and respectability.

We may know how we ourselves stand before God, for that is a simple matter of knowing whether or not we believe His word. That word tells us to have all confidence in God and none in ourselves, or in the flesh. If we say "Amen" to this, God by His creative power makes us righteous, and we stand justified in His sight.



We cannot know the standing of others, because we cannot, as God does, look upon their hearts. We could only look upon the outward appearance, which is not an index to the nature of the life within. Therefore the exhortation is given us,

1 Corinthians 4

[5] Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both

will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart.

So in *Malachi* we read of the time when the Lord will make up His jewels, and…

Malachi 3
[17] …will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him.

This indicates a time when those who do not serve Him will not be spared.

[18] *Then*, [says He,] shall you return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serves God and him that serves Him not.

That will be the time when judgment is given to the saints of the Most High, and the saints possess the kingdom[91] at the first resurrection.[92]

It is not our business now to know the hidden thoughts and motives of men's hearts. Such knowledge would do us much more harm than good. All that concerns us here is to believe God's word for ourselves and sow the seed of His truth beside all waters, passing no place by because it seems to be unfavorable, but having hope for all, through the mercy and grace so abundantly given to all in the Gospel.

[91] *Daniel* 7:22.
[92] See *Revelation* 20:4-6.

27. Reasoning with God

Present Truth, October 4, 1894

IT IS a very common thing for men to reason with God. Though He does not stand personally and visibly before them and talk with them, they have His spoken word, to which many feel free to make objections, or excuse themselves from performing its requirements. It is just the same as if they stood face to face with the Creator and presumed to enter into an argument with Him.

This is not the kind of reasoning that the Lord desires. He has said,

Isaiah 1
[18] Come now, and let us reason together,

–but He does not ask us to tell Him anything that He does not know, or attempt to prove Him to be in the wrong. To do that would be to unseat Him from His throne. But He says,

Isaiah 43
[26] Put me in remembrance, let us plead together.

He wishes men to remind Him of His promises; not because He has forgotten them, but because He longs for an opportunity to fulfill them. He pleads with men to comply with the conditions upon which His promises are made, in order that by fulfilling them He may demonstrate to men His power and love toward them. If they will do this, He will remember instantly the things that He has sworn to perform. He holds out to them the greatest of inducements by saying,

Isaiah 1
[18] Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

To reason properly with the Lord is simply to give Him an opportunity of doing for us this wonderful work. The result will be most convincing, as regards all the points that can possibly be at issue.

28. Paganism or Christianity

Present Truth, October 4, 1894
Original title: Front Page (third paragraph)

THE rule of Paganism is:

Do good, in order that you may be good.

The rule of Christianity is:

Be good, in order that you may do good.

Here are two principles, and between them there is a world of difference.

The first means, righteousness attained by works; a good stream flowing from a corrupt fountain—the natural heart.

The second means, good works attained by righteousness; a good stream flowing from a pure fountain—the heart regenerated by faith.

Every religion that operates by the former principle is pagan, whether professedly so or not.

29. God's Garden

Present Truth, October 4, 1894

IN THE beginning, when the work of creation had been finished,

Genesis 2
[8] The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.
[9] And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.

The Lord still has a garden upon the earth, though Eden has long since been removed. Not the trees nor the shrubs nor the flowers were the most essential things in the garden, but the man and woman whom He created. The purpose of God was centered in these, and not in the beautiful things which surrounded them.

That purpose He has been steadily carrying out since time began. He has had a spiritual garden, in which Adam and Eve were the first plants, and which has spread out over the whole world, as the physical garden which was removed was doubtless designed to do. In this garden grow both wheat and tares; for the devil has sowed tares which have sprung up and developed more abundantly than the wheat. But the Saviour has said,

Matthew 15
[13] Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up.

And when that rooting up has taken place, the physical garden will be restored and cover the whole earth, and thus the full purpose of God will be carried out. But while in this present state the tares grow largely in excess of the wheat, there is still abundant opportunity for the latter to attain a luxurious growth. It is…

Ephesians 3
[17] …rooted and grounded in love,

–and so has an abundance of the richest soil; for the Psalmist says,

Psalm 33
[5] The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord,

–and,

Psalm 119
[64] The earth, O Lord, is full of your mercy.

And he also testifies that…

Psalm 92
[12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Psalm 1
[3] [He is] like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he does shall prosper.

This garden is also full of most beautiful flowers, which are the promises of God. Not all the tares that are growing around us can hide these from our view, or shut us out from their fragrance. God has poured out His Spirit upon all flesh, and its work is…

Isaiah 61
[3] To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

If we will but let the Lord plant us in His garden, we shall find this world still a beautiful place in which to live.

30. Drawing Near to God

Present Truth, November 29, 1894

IT IS SIN that separates an individual from God.[93] But the Lord exhorts sinners to draw near to Him, and says that when they do this, He also will draw near to them.

> **James 4**
> [8] Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded.

Men were not created to live apart from God. It is His purpose that they shall dwell with Him, and He will sooner or later draw near to all. He can draw near to us whatever our condition; but we can draw near to Him only by the removal of the sin that separates us from Him.

So it makes all the difference in the world to us whether the drawing near is on our part, or on His alone. If we are separated from Him by sin, it will be a drawing near to judgment,[94] in which our sins will be consumed and our life with them; for sin is the life of the sinner. But if we have confessed and forsaken our sins, so that they do not stand between us and God, we are like Him, and can see Him as He is and live.

[93] *Isaiah* 59:2.
[94] *Malachi* 3:5.

31. Desperately Wicked

Present Truth, December 27, 1894

QUITE likely we should be offended and shocked if any of our friends were to tell us that we were desperately wicked persons, or if someone should represent us as such to the public. We know some people who are wicked,—perhaps some of whom we consider desperately wicked; and we have read of such persons in history and in the accounts of crime which fill the columns of the newspapers; and we would not wish to be classed with them. We belong to the "respectable" class of people,—that class who are not just as good as they might be, but who do not do anything very bad. It would certainly be a gross libel to point us out as desperately wicked.

Would it? Let us look up this matter a little. The Lord has said something on the point, and He does not libel people, but tells every one the exact truth. We turn to the book of *Jeremiah* and read,

Jeremiah 17

[9] The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

Whose heart is it? Ah, there are no particular persons specified in the statement; its application is general; it means your heart and mine. Neither does it say the heart may become deceitful and desperately wicked, but *is* so. There is no getting around it; the Lord says our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. No matter about our respectability and standing in society; if the human heart rules within us, we are desperately wicked. And it is only because our hearts are so deceitful that we do not realize the fact. Yes; there is murder there; there is adultery, there is theft, there is blasphemy, there is that dreadful crime which shocked us as we read it in the paper, and which sent a man to the gallows; there is everything of which lawless men are guilty, and which is contrary to the ten commandments. The Lord says so; for He says,

Romans 8
[7] The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

To how much of the law of God is the carnal mind not subject? Can it be subject to part of that law, and not subject to the remaining part? Certainly that could not be. The heart must either be subject to the law in its entirety, or not subject to it; and the carnal heart, as the text declares,

[7] ...is not subject to the law of God.

This carnal nature is the nature we get by birth, and this nature we must retain, no matter what our station and occupation among men, until we allow the Lord to transform our hearts by the power of His word. And therefore every person in whom this natural, or carnal, heart exists is at enmity with every precept of the Divine law. He is not only at enmity with the command which says,

Exodus 20
[17] You shall not covet,

–as very respectable persons can be—but he is also not in harmony with those commands which say,

[13] You shall not kill,

–and,

[14] You shall not commit adultery.

He may not feel the enmity stirring him up to commit some shocking deed; but nevertheless, *it is there.*

Do we know, even the best of us, what is in our hearts? How often do circumstances discover there evils of which we do not dream! Let our natures become suddenly ruffled, and words and deeds spring forth which cause us surprise and shame. Men do not start out in life to become murderers or adulterers or embezzlers. Such ones would be horrified if told at the outset to what

the developments of later years would bring them. Their nature was the same as ours: yet the evil deeds were there.

There is no use denying what the Lord tells us. If mere "respectability" could decide the question the devil would have the advantage of us, for…

> **2 Corinthians 11**
> [14] [He] is transformed into an angel of light,

–which power we do not possess. None of us can compete with the devil in point of a good appearance. The Lord sees us just as we are, and the sooner we see ourselves as He sees us, the better. When we become convinced that we are really desperately wicked, we shall see the necessity of getting rid of our inherited natures altogether, instead of trying to make them presentable to God by some efforts at patching up. We shall be ready to accept the new heart and new nature which God gives us on condition of perfect submission to Him, even the nature of Jesus Christ, who dwells in the heart by faith.

We shall see also that the apostle told the truth when he said,

> **Romans 2**
> [1] Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whosoever you are that judge; for wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you that judge do the same things.

The germs which developed (and so suddenly) into the evil deeds which we condemn in others, are in our own natural hearts, in the enmity which such hearts have to the law of God. When we have the nature of Christ, we shall be on this point as Michael the Archangel, who against Satan himself would not bring a railing accusation.[95] It is for us to choose between a nature that is desperately wicked, and one that is infinitely good.

[95] *Jude* 9.

32. Slavery and Freedom

Present Truth, May 2, 1895

GOD has no slaves. He has anointed Jesus Christ for the special work of blotting slavery out of His universe. Jesus said,

> **Isaiah 61** [Luke 4:18]
> [1] The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

This is the world's proclamation of emancipation, written with the finger of God. Its signature and seal are both Divine.

Some of the leading governments of earth have sought to abolish slavery, and have largely done so within the sphere of power of the civil arm. It is a cherished sentiment and a fundamental principle of British constitutional law that…

> "Britons never shall be slaves;"

–and any slave who sets foot upon British soil becomes by that very act a free man. Yet Britain contains a multitude of slaves,—many thousands who are oppressed by the selfish avarice of their fellowmen in more fortunate stations, and a far greater number who are slaves to some more merciless demon of sin within them. The world is full of such slaves, from whose souls no human arm can strike the shackles.

But God's proclamation of the emancipation is to all, proclaiming liberty to every captive on the earth. The thing most greatly needed is that it be made known to all; for but few know that the glorious proclamation has been made. There is no more important or honorable work for any person than to be the bearer of such a message; and God has a place for all who will engage in the work.

33. Christ Not Discouraged

Present Truth, August 29, 1895

Isaiah 42

[1] Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my elect, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

[2] He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.

[3] A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench; He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

[4] He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth.

THIS is the work of Christ. What a world of comfort and encouragement there is in the statement of it, especially in the last verse. His work is to set judgment, or righteousness, in the earth. Righteousness can be set in the earth only by putting it into the hearts of men.

Christ's work is to take poor, weak, sinful men, and make righteous beings of them; to clothe them with the righteousness of God. Very poor material He has to work with, and no one knows this better than He. But He shall not fail or be discouraged in this work. He knows how difficult the task is; but knowing man's sinfulness and hardness of heart, He is not discouraged. Then what occasion is there for being discouraged? If He is not discouraged with His task, need we be? Shall not we gather courage from His courage? We may be of good courage, for He has overcome the world, and in Him we shall do valiantly.

34. Easy to Be Intreated

Present Truth, January 9, 1896
Original title: Front Page

James 3
[17] The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated.

THIS is the wisdom which God gives, therefore it is characteristic of God. What a comfort it is to know that He is "easy to be entreated." We do not have to work hard to induce Him to be gracious to us, for…

Micah 7
[18] He delights in mercy.

Even when we have been foolish, disobedient, and hateful, breaking all His commandments, He is still "easy to be entreated."

For a man to be stern and unrelenting, standing stiffly for his "rights," and exacting from debtors or transgressors all that the law will possibly allow him, is evidence of a deplorable lack of wisdom. It shows that his wisdom is only of this world, which is foolishness with God, who is the source of all true wisdom. He who knows God and His ways, how that…

Psalm 103
[10] He has not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities,

–will, like Him, be "easy to be entreated," and…

2 Timothy 2
[24] …gentle to all men.

35. A Matter of Creation

Present Truth, February 27, 1896

> "It is of no use; there is not enough in me for the Lord to make a Christian of me," says one.

MANY more think it than say it. They see duties which the Lord calls upon them to take up, but shrink from them, as they are so far beyond their strength. And then they get discouraged, and think it impossible for the Lord to make them Christians indeed.

Now this is not self-depreciation. It is sincerely thought to be such, but that is a mistake. It comes from the idea that the Lord must have something to work upon in order to make Christians; and they haven't, they think, enough material to give any hope for good results.

This is to estimate oneself too highly altogether. There is not merely nothing for the Lord to work upon, but man is…

> **Isaiah 40**
> [17] …less than nothing, and vanity.

Making Christians is a work of creation, and creation signifies the making of things which had no existence before.

> **Ephesians 2**
> [10] We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

No one has any material to offer the Lord for the process. That is the basis of the hope. God creates all that is. No one can say he has not enough strength to do the good works. God makes the machine or instrument to do the works, and for man to say that he cannot do them is to say that God cannot create an instrument to do His will.

To begin right is to know that we have less than nothing for the Lord to begin with. To end right is to hold fast to that, and to know that God can create what He pleases.

36. Just As I Am

Present Truth, May 7, 1896

IT IS but a step into the kingdom. The decision may be made by any man and the step be taken within a moment—the step from the kingdom of darkness and unrest into that of light and peace. The following incident is an illustration of this:

At a mission service held at a seaside place by an earnest servant of God, this familiar hymn was given out to be sung. Before it was begun, the gentleman who was conducting the meeting urged very solemnly that none should join in singing the words without really meaning them.

Thus cautioned, an officer who was sitting in one of the rows cast his eye down the verses, and thinking them over, he came to the determination that he could not stand up and sing,

"O Lamb of God, I come."

He had never really meant anything by it when he had sung it before, and decided not to sing a lie again. A moment more, and the sudden blessed thought came,

"I must come now!"

He did not hesitate because his life had been careless before, or because his life might in future be one of difficulty or temptation. He just closed with the loving Saviour's free offer of salvation, and trusted Him for the rest. He sprang to his feet and sang, meaning it,

"O Lamb of God, I come!"

37. I Have Redeemed You

Present Truth, March 25, 1897

Isaiah 43

[1] But now thus says the Lord that created you, O Jacob, and He that formed you, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed you, I have called you by your name; you are mine.

Isaiah 44

[22] I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed you.

REDEEMED! A slave set free. It requires no great stretch of imagination to see how a slave, scourged, and bound, would feel with his fetters removed, and his freedom given to him. He would not receive the news of freedom stoically, and with a long face—not if he believed the message. His heart would be so full that he would leap for joy.

The Lord wants us to rejoice, not because we think we ought to rejoice, but because we have so vivid a sense of His redemption that we know it to be a fact. We have been captives of a cruel master, and now we are redeemed. We know it because the Lord says so. He has bought us, and given us His own life.

38. Getting Rid of the Burden

Present Truth, September 2, 1897

Job 14
[4] Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

–asked Job; and he replied to his own question:

[4] ...Not one.

All who have ever lived have known themselves sinners, for the law of God speaks that...

Romans 3
[19] ...all the world may become guilty before God.

Even the unevangelized heathen, without the written revelation of God, have sufficient trace of the law of God written in their hearts by nature so that they know better than they do, and their consciences bear witness to their guilt.[96]

How to get rid of the burden has been the problem. Paul's difficulty has been that of all who have tried to loose the burden themselves:

Romans 7
[14] The law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.
[15] For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate that I do.
[18] How to perform that which is good I find not.

He was trying to bring a clean thing out of an unclean. But when he found Jesus Christ, he found power that was able to destroy the carnal mind and work the righteousness of God in the life. And the awful burden was gone. Out of the heart renewed came the cleansed life.

Luther, toiling on his knees up the so-called holy stairs in Rome, was trying to punish sin out of his flesh; but when he heard the voice speaking,

[96] *Romans* 2:11, 15.

"The just shall live by faith,"[97]

–he began to learn of a power able to set him free. All that system of penance and punishing of the flesh that has come into Christendom with monkery is based on the idea that there is good in man, and if only he is punished sufficiently the evil will be suppressed and the good remain. True, Jesus said,

Mark 9
[43] If your hand offend you, cut it off,

–but it was only a striking way of emphasizing His teaching that…

Mark 7
[21] From within, out of the heart of men…

–proceeds the evil. The trouble is not with hand, or foot, or tongue, but with the heart, and only the Lord Jesus who can give a new heart can deal with the trouble. The new heart and the new life come with the free forgiveness of sin, and if any weary, heavy-laden one will but confess his helplessness, and choose the life of obedience, the gift is his by the power of God. Professing Christians who still want to be saved *in sin* and not *from sin* need this message of life and righteousness by the gift of God, and the myriad souls in darkness who know nothing of a burden-bearing, loving Saviour, need it.

Rome has no monopoly of penance and self-salvation. It is the religion of human nature. The Hindu, on his pilgrimage to a distant shrine may make his way on hands and knees or rolling over and over along the rough way; but his burden rolls with him. He may hold an arm in one position until shrunken and fixed; but the guilt is in the heart still. A veteran Indian missionary recently told a story of a seeker after liberty that is typical. Many years ago, after a days' work among the villages, he returned to his tent. Near by it a venerable gray-haired Brahmin was engaged in

[97] *Habakkuk* 2:4; *Romans* 1:17; *Galatians* 3:11; *Hebrews* 10:38.

counting his beads and performing a wearisome service before a shrine. He says:

> Much struck by his reverent demeanor and evident earnestness, we watched him through the corded meshes of our tent window; and when he had finished his devotions, and had sat down to rest, we went out and, courteously addressing him, asked him what he sought by these prayers and circumambulations.
>
> "Oh, sirs," said he, in a tone that struck us as one of intense earnestness, "I am seeking to get rid of the burden of sin. All my life I have been seeking it; but each effort that I make is as unsuccessful as the one before, and still the burden is here. My pilgrimages and prayers and penances for sixty years have all been in vain. Alas I know not how my desire can be accomplished."
>
> Then, in answer to our inquiries, he gave us the story of his life. He told us how, in early life, he had been sorely troubled by the thought of his unexpiated sins; that his parents had both died when he was seventeen years of age, leaving him an only child, sole heir of their wealth; that the priests whom he consulted told him that if he would give all his property to endow a temple the burden of sin would be removed.
>
> He gave his property, all of it. He endowed a temple; but the burden of sin was no lighter. His mind was not at peace. Obedient to further advice from the priests, his counselors, he made the pilgrimage on foot all the long way to Benares,[98] the holy city. He spent two years in the precincts of the temples in worship. He spent two years in bathing in the holy Ganges.
>
> "But," said he, "the Ganges water washed the foulness from my skin, not the foulness from my soul, and still the old burden was there, uneased."
>
> He told us how he had gone from thence, on foot, all the way to Rameswaram; begging his food all the two thousand miles; for he had given all his money to the temple, and thence again to Srirangam, and thence to other holy places. He told us how he had spent his whole life in these pilgrimages, and in penances, and in desert wanderings, apart from his kind, living on roots and nuts

[98] PP Editor's note: Today this city is called Varanasi.

and jungle fruits, remaining for years at a time in the forest jungles, in the vain search for relief from the burden of sin.

"And now, sirs," said he, "My life is almost gone: my hair is thin and white; my eyes are dim; my teeth are gone; my cheeks are sunken; my body is wasted; I am an old, old man; and yet, sirs, the burden of sin is just as heavy as when, a young man, I started in pursuit of deliverance. Oh, sirs, does your Veda tell how I can get rid of this burden and be at peace? Our Vedas have not shown me how."

How gladly did we tell him of our gracious "Burden-bearer," and of His loving call,

Matthew 11

[28] Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

How eagerly did he listen as we told him of Jesus Christ, the God-man, the Saviour of the world, and told him what He had done for our salvation. How gladly did he pore over the Gospels we gave him, and what earnest questions did he ask during the day as to points in their teachings which he did not quite understand. During that night he left and went upon his way, taking the Gospels with him, and we never again saw him.

Though so many years have intervened, his earnest, reverent countenance remains photographed on my memory, and I shall look for him up there among the redeemed; for I believe that he was in earnest in seeking deliverance from the burden of sin; in vain, indeed, as he said, through Hinduism; I trust not in vain through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

39. A Message of Comfort

Present Truth, December 9, 1897

Isaiah 40
[1] Comfort you, comfort you my people, says your God.
[2] Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

She Has Received Double

HERE is a message of comfort; it is a message sent direct from...

2 Corinthians 1
[3] ...the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,

–and therefore it contains true comfort; yet so perverse is human nature, that with scarcely an exception everybody finds a cause for discouragement and doubt in the passage rather than comfort. We are suspicious even of God, so that whenever He holds out to us a good morsel, we examine it cautiously before tasting it, lest peradventure it contain poison. So in the case of the text before us, many people get no comfort out of it, because they are afraid of that word "double."

The assumption is that God promises His people double punishment, that is, twice as much punishment as they deserve, and of course they cannot see any comfort in that prospect; and no wonder. But here is where our suspicious nature deceives us, for the text does not say what our fears imagine it to say.

It is true that in some places in the Bible double punishment is spoken of, as for example,

Jeremiah 16
[18] I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double.

Jeremiah 17
[18] Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed:

bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction.

Also concerning Babylon in *Revelation* 18:

Revelation 18
[5] Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.
[6] Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she has filled fill to her double.
[7] How much she has glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.

The last text is the strongest of all, and at the same time gives us a clear insight into what is meant by double recompense. The wicked eat of the fruit of their own way, and are filled with their own devices.[99]

Psalm 7
[15] He made a pit, and dug it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.
[16] His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

That is, the wickedness of the wicked recoils or doubles back upon them.

Revelation 18
[6] In the cup which she has filled, fill to her double.

That is, fill it again to her for her own portion, even as she filled it for others. That to…

[6] …double unto her double according to her works,

–does not mean to give her twice as much as she deserves, but exactly what her wicked works merit, is seen from the expression itself, and from the next clause:

[99] *Proverbs* 1:31.

[7] How much she has glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.

The only thing which God gives to people more than they deserve is mercy.

But note that these references concerning rendering double have no likeness whatever to *Isaiah* 45:1-2. For those speak of destruction, while this one speaks of comfort; and there is no comfort either in or after destruction. Those are to the obstinate and determined persecutors of God, while this is to the people of God. Speak comfortably, or, literally, as indicated in the margin, to the heart of Jerusalem,

Isaiah 40
[2] ...and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

Note that the comfort lies in the fact that she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins; and note further that this receiving of double is identical with the pardoning of iniquity.

Note further that the double has been received; it is past, not future. Therefore even though we call it double punishment, it is punishment that has been suffered, and is now over. Well, there is comfort in that, certainly. It is not destruction, then, that is sure. Instead of trembling over the prospect of judgments to come, we may, by the authority of God's Word, rejoice in the assurance that all the penalty for sins has been borne. How?

Isaiah 53
[4] Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
[5] But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.
[6] All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

By himself He has purged our sins.[100] This is the comfort which God proclaims to all mankind, for:

1 John 2
[2] He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

The comfort of sins atoned for is ours, if we do not reject it. The assurance that all our sins are upon Him is the cause of everlasting joy to its, provided we do not insist on bearing them all ourselves. In Christ the victory over sin is already ours. This is also our comfort, for He says,

John 16
[33] These things have I spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Cry unto the people that their warfare is already accomplished,[101] that it is an assured fact, and that they may now and for over delight themselves in peace;

Ephesians 2
[14] For He is our peace.

If we but meet the enemy in the faith of Christ, we have only to deal with one that is already defeated, so that we may always be singing the song of victory.

1 Corinthians 15
[57] Thanks be unto God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank God that this message of comfort, this good tidings of great joy, is "for all people."[102] Take it yourself, and then make known far and wide the message of free, full, and complete salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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[100] *Hebrews* 1:3.
[101] *Isaiah* 40:2.
[102] *Luke* 2:10.

40. Why Be a Captive?

Present Truth, January 13, 1898

WHY be a captive when Jesus has come to…

> **Isaiah 42**
> [7] …bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house?

On Jesus was laid "the iniquity of us all,"[103] and He overcame it all. Therefore He has broken the power of every evil habit that enslaves man. Let any man confess his own helplessness and put his will on the side of the Lord, and he can thank the Lord for liberty in Him, and the evil habit cannot rule him without his consent.

When one accepts the Lord's salvation and deliverance from evil and is free, it is not that he is now strong in himself. He is free only as he confesses utter helplessness, and trusts in God. It is the one "without strength,"[104] and with the powers of evil all about, he who is willing to have the Lord save him may cry out from the depths:

> **Psalm 116**
> [16] O Lord, truly I am your servant; and the son of your handmaid: You have loosed my bonds.

[103] *Isaiah* 53:6.
[104] *Romans* 5:6.

41. The Power of the Resurrection

Present Truth, November 10, 1898

THE prophet Isaiah sang thus to God's people concerning the resurrection:

Isaiah 26
[19] Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

The power by which this will be accomplished, is the power by which men are now made alive, who are...

Ephesians 2
[1] ...dead in trespasses and sins.

Jesus set it forth in these words:

John 5
[25] Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

Compare with:

Isaiah 55
[3] Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live...

John 5
[26] For as the Father has life in himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in himself;
[27] And has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.
[28] Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,
[29] And shall come forth.

No one who believes in the resurrection of the dead, can have any doubt as to Christ's power to raise any man from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; and no one can doubt His power

to raise the dead, if he but reads the story of His life in the four Gospels.

Man is but dust, and unto dust he returns again. His breath is only in his nostrils, and therefore he is nothing to be accounted of,[105] for…

Psalm 146
[3] His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

But the same God who in the beginning made man of the dust of the ground, can of the dust bring him forth to life and glory; and that which makes us know this is the new creation which takes place with every one who is in Christ. Out of the dust of repentance God takes man, and makes him over entirely new, so that although he is still in mortal, sinful flesh, the perfect life of Jesus is manifested in him.

God turns man to dust, and says,

Psalm 90
[3] Return, you children of men.

All have gone astray like lost sheep,[106] but God calls them back, and is very patient and long-suffering with them, waiting long for them to hear His voice,

"Return!"

But when they hear, their return is as certain as is the resurrection of the dead. God will say to His people who are in the graves,

"Come!"

–and they will…

Jeremiah 31
[16] …come again from the land of the enemy.

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[105] *Isaiah* 2:33.
[106] *Psalm* 119:176; *Isaiah* 53:6.

So it really makes no difference whether we consider *Psalm* 90:3 as referring to conversion or the resurrection, for both are identical. Conversion is resurrection from the dead, and has in it the assurance of the final resurrection at the coming of Christ. Christ says,

Revelation 3
[21] To him that overcomes will I give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.

So John, speaking of the resurrection, says,

Revelation 20
[4] And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.

These are they who have been raised from the dust of the grave. That will be a glorious time; but God has nothing for us in the future of which He does not now give us a taste; so He…

Ephesians 2
[5] …has quickened us together with Christ (by grace you are saved),
[6] And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.

Ephesians 1
[19] The working of His mighty power,
[20] Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,

–is that by which we are thus quickened now from our death in trespasses and sins.

1 Samuel 2
[8] He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

What a blessed thing it is, then, to remember that we are dust, for God remembers it too, and He has not forgotten how to make a man of the dust and crown him with glory and honor.[107]

42. Not a Plan, But a Power

Present Truth, December 15, 1898
Original title: Back Page

WE HEAR a great deal about "the plan of salvation," from men who know nothing about salvation itself.

If people knew more about real salvation, we should hear very little talk about "the plan," for salvation is not a *plan*, but a *power*.

People will sermonize and theorize and discuss by the hour about the wonderful plan of redemption. Some feel free to criticize it,—and if it were only *a plan*, why should they not? And others are wholly charmed with its beauty; yes, they fully approve of the plan; it has their cordial approbation; they think that the Lord devised a thoroughly good scheme, and feel as though He ought to be very much pleased with them for their endorsement of His plan, and so they are contented with themselves, and with *the plan*.

> "Well, didn't the Lord devise it? and isn't salvation according to a plan?"

What's that to you? Who would enter into a discussion on rope-making when he has fallen overboard, and the rope is flung to him? Suppose salvation is according to a plan; who are you that you should presume to be competent to express any opinion about it? A plan is good for nothing unless it will work. Salvation means the saving of somebody—the saving of you. You cannot

[107] *Genesis* 2:7; *Psalm* 8:5.

know anything about the value of "the plan of salvation," except by being saved. That is the test. If you are not saved, you can't know anything about it; and when you are saved, you will be too full of the fact, to be theorizing about the plan.

No; God didn't devise the plan of salvation; it *was* and it *is*.

John 1
[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Jesus Christ is the power of God, and He is salvation, and He was not devised and planned. He *is*. His name is "I AM."

Acts 4
[12] Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

That's it; in His name we must be saved. There is no other way; there could be no other way. He alone is the way; and He is the perfect way. He is the living way—ever living. He that comes to God must believe that *He is*, not that He was devised. The remedy existed before the disease. Sin is finite; salvation is infinite; sin is temporal; salvation is eternal; because salvation is God.

Isaiah 12
[2] Behold God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.

Galatians 2
[20] [Christ] loved me, and gave himself for me.

That's the whole of the matter. And He didn't stop to plan and calculate about it. The man who sees a poor fellow helplessly sinking beneath the waves, and stops to calculate the chances, loses his chance, and loses the man. The only thing to do is to throw himself in. That Jesus did without hesitation. It was the only thing that could be done, and so there didn't need to be any planning; there was no room for it. He was on the spot when the need arose, and He loved the needy, lost one. What more need be said?

If people wouldn't think and talk so much about God's plan of salvation, they wouldn't do so much planning and speculating about salvation for themselves. But the very talk about "the plan of salvation" seems to convey to people the idea that there were several possible ways under consideration, and that finally one was adopted; and so they feel like pursuing the investigation a little further, to see if God did really hit upon the best way; and it doesn't take much of this sort of speculation to make the ordinary man think that he can suggest a good many improvements. So he talks about schemes of salvation, and goes to perdition.

Salvation is a thing done, and to be accepted. God has done it, and He has done it simply by *being*. He is and therefore there is salvation. Our part is to be saved. There was and is no other God, no other Christ, and so there is no other way of salvation; there could not and cannot be any other. We are saved by His life, and His life is a *thing*, not a plan. Don't theorize about it, but accept it and be saved.

5. Purchasing Power

Present Truth, January 19, 1899
Original title: Back Page

THE Lord says,

> **Isaiah 52**
> [3] You have sold yourselves for naught.

When we have wasted the time and strength received from Him, getting in return only a burden of sin and disease, it would seem indeed as though we had sacrificed everything for sins and were without hope. For are not the sins worse than useless, securing only death to their possessor?

Yet, thank the Lord, even our sins have an enormous purchasing power. Whoever is willing to spend them can buy the Lord and all that is His.

> **Galatians 1**
> [4] [He] gave himself for our sins.

So that although they are worthless to us we may exchange them for all that we have lost by our sins. Does not God deal bountifully with us?

He does not say to the sinner,

> "You have had your chance and wasted it. Now you've got to bear the consequences."

But He says,

> "How much longer must you prove that the way of transgressors is hard, before you will drop it and take my way? Return unto me, for I have redeemed you."[108]

[108] *Isaiah* 44:22.

43. The Purpose of Sacrifices

Present Truth, January 26, 1899
Original title: Back Page

Isaiah 1
[11] To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? says the Lord.

GOD had a purpose in the sacrifices which He commanded Israel to offer. The sacrifices themselves were not the end desired. They were only a means.

Hebrews 10
[1] For the law having a shadow of good things to come,...can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.
[2] For then would they not have ceased to be offered; because that the worshipers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

The fault of Israel was that they did not proceed from the shadow to the substance. The reason of their rejection of Christ, when He came among them in the flesh, was that they had not recognized Him in the sacrifices, commanded by God, which prefigured His work. Had they learned what the sacrifices were designed to teach them, they would have received the Saviour gladly when He appeared.

Acts 13
[27] For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they know Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him.

The eyes of Israel were blinded in the reading of the Old Testament. They thought that they were God's people, because they were so much better than the surrounding heathen, and that in offering sacrifices they were rendering the worship which God desired.

But God did not wish them to stay for ever among the shadows. He wanted them to come to the substance and know by experience the fullness and power of the salvation from sin which was in Christ. Since the shadows in themselves were worthless, it did no good to multiply them. No number of shadows, however great will suffice to make one substance.

Hebrews 10
[4] For it is not possible that the blood of nulls and of goats should take away sin.

So the Lord asks,

Isaiah 1
[11] To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices?

The object at which the Lord aimed was the taking away of sin, and the bringing in of righteousness, not only to cleanse the sinner and make him whiter than snow, but to keep him so.

Psalm 11
[6] Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;...burnt offering and sin offering You have not required.

Amos 5
[22] Though you offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will, not accept them...
[24] But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

The same question is addressed to us,

"To what purpose is the multitude of your prayers and religions observances?"

Are these the end of our Christian experience? Are we, any more than was Israel, come to the substance of Christ's work for us, or do we, as they, have to offer continually, year after year, sacrifices that never take away sin? Are we delivered from the power of sin any more than were they?

Matthew 1
[21] You shall call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.

Hebrews 10
[5] Wherefore when He came into the world, He said, Sacrifice and offering You would not, but a body have You prepared me:
[7] Then said I, Lo, I come...to do your will, O God.
[10] By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

In proportion as Christ's sacrifice was more effectual than the blood of bulls and goats for the taking away of sin, so should the deliverance from sin of those who receive Christ differ from the experience of those who offered slain beasts.

[11] Every priest stands daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:
[12] But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;
[14] For by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

All that is needed to be done to keep men from falling and to present them faultless before the presence of God with exceeding joy,[109] has been already completed in the sacrifice of Christ. Those who receive Him for all that He is may prove now the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe.

This is the object of God in giving His Son to us. Until He is received as a perfect Saviour from sin, He is not known in His real character. His name is Jesus because He saves from sin,[110] and no one can know Jesus who does not know a Saviour from sin. Until we thus know Him, even if professing faith in Him, we are only among the shadows of good things to come.

In giving Christ to us, God gives us deliverance from all the power of evil, and if we neglect to receive so great salvation, all

[109] *Jude* 1:24.
[110] *Matthew* 1:21.

our prayers and religious observances will be to no purpose. They will be no more acceptable to God than were the sacrifices offered by ancient Israel.

But now that the reality of Christ's work for us is made known, we may leave the shadows of good things to come, and enjoy the good things themselves.

Hebrews 10
[19] Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
[20] By a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh;
[22] Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

44. Made New

Present Truth, August 10, 1899

Revelation 21
[5] Behold I make all things new.

NOW they are old, but they were not always so. In the beginning, at the close of creation, the freshness of youth was upon everything, and it would have remained so, but for sin. Sin is death, and when it entered the world, everything began to grow old and show the marks of decay. Ever since then there has been a steady decline till the earth has waxed old like a garment.[111] But a change will come. When that is removed which caused the earth and all that is in it to grow old, then everything will be new again. Then God will wipe away tears from all faces, sorrow and crying will be no more,[112] death will be swallowed up

[111] *Isaiah* 51:6.
[112] *Revelation* 21:4.

in victory,[113] the desert shall blossom as the rose,[114] and all the former things will be passed away.[115]

This is not only true of the earth, but it is also the experience that each individual may have within himself. Out of Christ, he is the "old man,"[116] and eternal death is his portion. But,

2 Corinthians 5
[17] If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.

The change is in him. The "old" has been supplanted by the new, and the righteousness of Christ rules in his life. The fruits of the new life within him are manifest:

Galatians 5
[22] ...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
[23] Meekness, temperance, against which there is no law.

The old things are forgotten, as he presses forward in the new life, and...

Romans 2
[7] ...by patient continuance in well doing, seeks for glory and honor and immortality.

[113] *1 Corinthians* 15:54.
[114] *Isaiah* 35:1.
[115] *Revelation* 21:4.
[116] *Romans* 6:6; *Ephesians* 4:22; *Colossians* 3:9.

45. Accepted in the Beloved

Present Truth, September 20, 1900

ARE you accepted by the Lord?

"I don't know; I wish I did."

Why do you not know?

"Oh, I am so unworthy, so insignificant, so sinful, that I can't believe that He really accepts me, although I try to think that He does."

Well, now, do not try to make yourself think anything of the kind. That which cannot be believed without an effort, is not worth believing. You cannot manufacture faith; it comes by hearing the Word of God; and that word is so straightforward, so true, that when we really hear it we cannot help believing.

"Tell me, then, how I may believe and know."

That's right, to begin with. I'm glad to hear you say, "believe and know," for faith must always precede knowledge, or, rather, faith is itself the perfection of knowledge. Now "read, and you'll know." God has already...

Ephesians 1

[3] ...blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;

[4] According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love;

[5] Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

[6] To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein *He has made us accepted* in the Beloved.

Isn't that plain enough?

"Yes; it seems all right, but what have I done, that I should receive such favor?"

Nothing whatever.

Titus 3 [RV]
[3] We also were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.
[4] But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love toward man appeared,
[5] Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost,
[6] Which He poured out on us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Ephesians 2
[8] By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God:
[9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.
[10] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

Do you need any better assurance than that?

"I really don't see what more could be said."

And yet the Bible is full of just such assurances. In fact, it was written for no other purpose than to show us the love of God to fallen humanity, and how freely He accepts us and our service.

"What! Do you mean to say that God will accept work that I do, as well as myself?"

Most certainly. Do you not see that one includes the other?

Romans 6
[14] Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

The Lord has bought you and your service, and has paid the price in full. Therefore as soon as you say,

Psalm 116
[16] O Lord, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, and the son of your handmaid; You have loosed my bonds,

–you are indeed the Lord's servant; and since the Lord accepts you as His servant, it follows as a matter of course that He accepts your service.

Let us have a little more testimony on this case. Here is one of the most encouraging things in God's Word:

Ecclesiastes 9 [RV]
[7] Go your way, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has already accepted your works.

It might with perfect literalness be rendered,

"God has already graciously accepted your works,"

–or,

"God has already taken pleasure in your works"

Wonderful, isn't it? Is does indeed seem almost too good to be true; but nothing can be too good for God. What did the voice from heaven say to Christ?

Matthew 3
[17] This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Now we are made…

Ephesians 1
[6] …accepted in the Beloved,

–and so, although we yield ourselves to Him with no higher thought than possibly to be accepted as a servant,

Galatians 4
[7] You are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.

We are not bondservants, but freeborn sons, who serve as sons in their own house. So, having accepted us in the beloved Son, the Father of all is pleased with us, even as with Him.

"It doesn't seem possible!"

Matthew 19
[26] All things are possible with God,

–even…

Ephesians 3
[19] …love…that passes knowledge.

I dare say you have often seen illustrations on a small scale of what we are talking about. You have seen a little child make awkward and clumsy attempts to do some work that it has seen the father or mother do. It wanted to "do something for mamma." And you have seen the fond parents exhibit that botched work with the utmost joy and pride; nothing could have pleased them more. Why? Because it was so well done? No, but because it was a labor of love. Even so the heart of God, who is love itself, delights in even the thought of service which His children devote to Him, and He accepts it in advance.

Christ is the…

1 Peter 2
[4] …Living Stone,…chosen of God, and precious,

–and coming to Him we also are made living stones, and…

[5] …are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Let us then rejoice, not in the contemplation of what we have done, but of what God has wrought for us and put into us His dearly beloved children.

46. Glorious Liberty

Present Truth, May 9, 1901

GOD'S kingdom is an absolute monarchy. There is one King, and there is none beside Him. He says,

Isaiah 46
[9] I am God and there is none else.

He is absolute ruler, and He gives absolute authority. But that one who, as a king under God, because a child of God, a child of a King, that one who has that absolute authority over the devil in him, that he can say to him,

Matthew 4
[10] Get you hence,

–and he will go,—is the one who is bound with the everlasting chains, not of darkness, but of light; a slave of Jesus Christ is a free man. Yielding, we rule and reign with Christ.

You have read that the creation itself…

Romans 8
[21] …shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glory of the liberty of the children of God.

Do you know what that means? You have read about the saints' inheritance, the world to come; you have read some of the glorious descriptions of the marvelous beauties of the new earth, when…

Isaiah 35
[1] …the wilderness shall rejoice and blossom as the rose,

Revelation 22
[3] [when] there will be no more curse,

–no more sin, because…

Revelation 21
[4] …the former things have passed away;

–there will be…

Isaiah 51
[3] …joy, giving, and the voice of melody.

What is that? That is simply the bringing of the creation to share the blessedness that the children of God have been enjoying. The creation itself…

Romans 8 [RV]
[21] …shall be delivered into the glory of the liberty of the children of God.

And that liberty is ours now, because…

2 Corinthians 3
[17] …where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and the Lord is the Spirit;

–but what is the liberty? It is freedom from sin, from that vile passion that held us with bonds that would not be broken. We would make stern resolutions, we would pray, and fast, and resolve, and we would think that we were freed from it, but lo! it was all there still. But when, in the fear of God, and knowing God, we find that there is a power in us that we never knew before, working in us and keeping that sinful thing in abeyance. O, what marvelous joy it is! O, what a blessed thing it is, to be free! What a glorious thing it is to be set free from bondage for ever. There is that absolute liberty, but it comes only by absolute subjection to God.

47. Forgiveness of Sin

Present Truth, May 30, 1901

THE most trustworthy person is the sinner who has confessed his sin, and has been forgiven. It is a great mistake to suppose that forgiveness of sin is complicity with it. God passes by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage, because He delights in mercy, yet He has not the slightest sympathy for sin. His righteousness is demonstrated by the fact that He forgives the sins of all who confess.

> **1 John 3**
> [5] [Christ] was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him is no sin.

Nor does the forgiveness of sins tend to make the one forgiven careless, so that he will regard it as a light thing to sin. It is the goodness of God that leads man to repentance, and that same goodness continuing to be manifest to them will hold them faithful to God, and keep them from falling again into sin. Therefore it follows that he who exhibits most of the kindness and love of God in his dealing with his fellow-men will in turn find the most good in those with whom he comes in contact.

48. The Victory Is Sure

Present Truth, August 8, 1901
Original title: Back Page (last two paragraphs)

IT IS impossible for one to be joyful when fighting a losing battle. Neither can one rejoice when engaged in a life and death conflict, of which the issue is doubtful. Now we have a contest on hand,—a battle with wicked spirits and our own evil selves,—yet we are commanded and expected to...

1 Thessalonians 5
[16] ...rejoice evermore.

How can this be? Only because the victory is sure, yea, is already ours; for...

1 John 5 [RV]
[4] ...this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Christ's life is a victorious life, and in order that we may continually have the victory, it is only necessary for us to let that life dwell in us and control us. In the possession of this life we cannot be otherwise than joyful.

49. Freedom from Sin

Present Truth, November 7, 1901
Original title: Back Page

THE liberty of the Gospel is not freedom *to* sin, but freedom *from* sin.

Man alone is the most helpless of all creatures. He can do nothing of himself; yet with God he can do all things.[117]

> **Ephesians 4**
> [7] Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

What then? Everything;

> **Romans 5**
> [17] For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

> **Mark 9**
> [23] All things are possible to him that believes.

That is because believing is receiving Christ, and all things are in Him. Oh, the marvelous depths and heights and breadths there are in Christ![118] Whoever has any just sense of "the unsearchable riches of Christ,"[119] can never complain about anything, or feel that anything is impossible to him.

Real self-control is Divine control. No man can ever be free if he throws off the restraint of the Spirit of God. God's rule is the only human liberty, because no man is complete without God. It takes a human body and the Spirit of God together to make a complete man; for God breathed His Spirit into man in the beginning, to making a living soul, a perfect creature. So instead of its being slavery to submit ourselves to God, it is the attainment of

[117] *Philippians* 4:13.
[118] *Ephesians* 3:18.
[119] *Ephesians* 3:8.

the highest and fullest freedom, and the only manifestation of true manhood.

Our greatest need is to have the eyes of our understanding enlightened, that we may know[120] what is our "high calling"[121] in Christ. One great reason why we make so little advancement spiritually is that we do not appreciate the possibilities. But it is not simply as "possibilities," that we are to think of what God calls us to; we are to remember that He has from the beginning designed us for a place at His own right hand of power. If we ever kept before us the high place which God has prepared for us, that, and the knowledge that what He has promised He is able to perform, would help us to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called.

Romans 8
[15] You have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Scriptures abound with exhortations of "Fear not." In time of danger God appeared to our father Abraham, saying,

Genesis 15
[1] Fear not, Abram; I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward,

–and many times we read the words to this effect:

Genesis 26
[24] Fear not; for I am with you.[122]

So we know that fear does not come from Him.

Proverbs 3
[25] Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it comes.

[120] *Ephesians* 1:18.
[121] *Philippians* 3:14.
[122] *Deuteronomy* 31:8; *1 Chronicles* 28:20; *Isaiah* 41:10, 43:5; *Jeremiah* 46:28.

[26] For the Lord shall be your confidence, and shall keep your foot from being taken.

This is not vain confidence, but that solid trust which comes from a knowledge of the fact that God is greater than all, and that He has conquered Satan. We are not to fear, but the exhortation is,

1 Peter 5
[8] Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour;
[9] Whom resist steadfast in the faith.

And the sure promise is,

James 4
[7] Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

It is by its roar that the lion frighten its prey and makes it incapable of resisting or flight. Now it is only our confidence in God that prevents our foot from being taken. The devil must first frighten us, causing us to lose our confidence in God's Word, before he can have any power over us. Be assured that the devil never makes a prey of any soul who he does not first frighten away from the sure retreat of God's Word.

1 John 4
[18] Fear has torment;...but perfect love casts out fear.

Isaiah 12
[2] The Lord Jehovah is our strength,

–and we are to be...

Ephesians 6
[10] ...strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

We are not to have any confidence in the flesh,—there is to be no vainglorious boasting,—but are to know that Christ has power over all flesh, and that...

2 Peter 1
[3] ...His Divine power which has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness,

–can accomplish as much through our mortal flesh as He can through His own.

Isaiah 28
[16] He that believes shall not make haste,

–shall not run at the sound of the devil's roaring,—but will stand still, confident in the power of the sword of truth and the shield of faith, and will...

Exodus 14
[13] ...see the salvation of God.

Psalm 49
[16] Be not you afraid when one is made rich, when the wealth of his house is increased;
[17] For when he dies he shall carry nothing away.

Though a man amass enormous wealth in his lifetime, the world on the whole will not be any poorer for it, because he cannot take any of it away with him when he dies. The wealth will remain behind, on the earth, and will usually be scattered again; for it is a rare thing for one's heirs to inherit his money-getting and money-saving faculty. So don't be alarmed, and think that a few men will have all the wealth of the world; there will be enough left for us.

Psalm 103
[19] The Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all.

The boundless universe forms His dominion; yet...

Luke 17
[21] ...the kingdom of God is within you.

Hence the promise,

Revelation 2
[26] He that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

Whoever can rule himself, has a power greater than that of all the kings of the earth together. Nothing is beyond the power of him who can govern his own spirit, and rule his own flesh. And, on the other hand, we have the assurance that all the power is God's and His domain is concentrated into the compass of our bodies, to enable us to overcome.

Here is the commandment that is as important as any in the Bible:

Psalm 96
[2] Sing unto the Lord, bless His name; show forth His salvation from day to day.

But we must not make the mistake of supposing that it is only in song that we are to "show forth His salvation." It would be wholly a vain thing to talk about God's salvation, if our lives did not show evidence of it. So the psalm is a commandment for us to be saved from day to day. But we cannot save ourselves, least of all can we accomplish God's salvation. God alone can exert His saving power. Therefore the commandment is the assurance that God will save us from day to day, our part is simply to offer no resistance to it. With this assurance we can afford to sing.

50. Wholesale Confession

Present Truth, May 1, 1902

A TRAVELER in Russia gives the following interesting account of a public "confession" which he attended in "Holy Week." It is a fair sample of wholesale confession which is not by any means confined to Russia, nor to members of a State church. It is so easy for people to admit in an off-hand way that they are "all miserable sinners," and to imagine that if they recognize that they are doing wrong, *that* is a confession of it.

> "I know I ought not to do this,"

–someone will apologetically say, while in the very act of doing it, and will comfort himself with the delusion that now he has cleared himself, when he has only condemned himself. Such confessions only harden the conscience, and confirm one in sin, because the persons do not really have any sense of sin, or any intention of forsaking the evil practices; and thus we see that they are really not confessions of sin at all:

> I did not attend all the services during the week, but I was fortunate enough to witness the novel way *Batushka* (little father, or literally, "Papa") managed to shorten his labors at the confessional.
>
> He had announced that every one must come at a certain hour and the church was full. Each peasant was in his sheepskin, with "the leather side out and the furry side in," with the wool hanging in a deep fringe round the bottom, and the scent of these coats was not refreshing. The only other visible articles of attire were immense top boots, replaced in the case of extra-wretched persons by long rags wound round the legs to a great thickness, while the feet were thrust into bark slippers.
>
> The crowd stood (there are no seats) with intent eyes fixed on the priest, and he, standing with his back to the altar, accused them during a good quarter of an hour of such sins as he knew to be most general. They answered in a chorus, every one acknowl-

edging to everything, there being no one so fussy as to want to deny or specify.

"You removed part of the bridge for fuel."

"Yes, yes, Batushka," replied the big voices.

"You drank too much vodka."

"Yes, yes, Batushka."

"You kicked some old and tiresome man."

"Yes, yes, Batushka."

"You gave me short measure in my tithes."

"Yes, yes, Batushka."

"You shifted your neighbor's landmark."

"Yes, yes, Batushka."

"Scorning the claims of others, you ate the whole pan of borscht yourself."

"Yes, yes, Batushka."

"You felled a tree in the forest."

"Yes, yes, Batushka," etc.

"Well, well, that will do. Now you're forgiven. You can go home," and he gabbled a benediction.

51. The Blotting Out of Sin

Advent Review, September 30, 1902

IT IS part of fallen human nature to make religion consist of forms and ceremonies, formulas and doctrines. Sacerdotalism is not peculiar to certain denominations; it is inherent in fallen human nature and just to the extent that one loses sight of God, that formalism will manifest itself even in those who are most sincere. There are just as sincere souls among those whose religion consists of forms as among any people on earth. I have seen among Roman Catholics as much devout sincerity as among any people. Our danger lies in thinking that the truth consists of certain statements—of losing sight of the distinction between *truth* and the *statement* of truth. There is just as much difference between these two as there is between the law and the writing out of the law. The real law is living; the writing of it in the book is only a shadow. We are in danger of making a creed, and thinking that that is the truth.

No human words can express the truth of God.

> **1 Corinthians 2**
> [9] Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for them that love Him.
> [10] But God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit.

The fullness of the truth of God cannot be stated in human language; otherwise it could be heard by the ear. It cannot be framed in human thought; otherwise it could enter into the heart of man. Truth can be revealed to man only by the gift of the Spirit of truth.

> **1 John 1**
> [5] This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
> [6] If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth;
> [7] But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellow-

ship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanses us from all sin.*

Just forget the division of this epistle into chapters, with which John had nothing to do. This was a letter, containing but few sentences, not so long as we ourselves have sometimes written. At the beginning of the letter he makes this statement of what his message is, and a little later he writes about the end of the world.

1 John 2
[16] For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
[17] And the world passes away, and the lust thereof; but he that does the will of God abides forever.

This then is just the message for the last days, that which will make people stand when the world passes away. Then the Apostle speaks:

[27] But the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in Him.

No man can teach you the truth; the things which God has prepared are revealed, only by the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

[28] And now, little children abide in Him, that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

So this is the message that will give people boldness at the coming of the Lord, so, that they will look up and say,

Isaiah 25
[9] Lo this is our God, we have waited for Him and He will save us.

This, then, is the message, that God is light, and if we walk in the light the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all,—blots out all iniquity. The proof of whether or not we have the truth is in the effect of that which we have, upon our lives. Does it cleanse

us from unrighteousness? If we walk in the light, then the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us. Light is the flowing forth of God's life, which cleanses, and blots out sin.

We need to be on our guard against the idea that the blotting out of sin is merely as the passing of a sponge over a slate, or an entry in a ledger, to balance the account. This is not the blotting out of sin. An ignorant man who saw a thermometer for the first time thought to lessen the heat by breaking it. But how much effect did this have upon the weather? Just as much as the wiping out of the record of his sin has upon the sinner. The tearing of a leaf out of a book, or even the burning of the book containing the record, does not blot out the sin. The sin is not blotted out by blotting out the account of it, any more than throwing my Bible into the fire abolishes the Word of God. There was a time when all the Bibles that could be found were destroyed; but the Word of God—the truth—remained just the same, because truth is God himself; it is His life.

Truth is implanted in the heavens and earth, it fills the stars, and keeps them in their spaces; it is that by which the plants grow, and the birds build their nests; it is that by which they know how to find their way across the sea. When Moses broke the tables of stone, the law was just as steadfast as it was before. Just so, though all the record of all our sin, even though written with the finger of God, were erased, the sin would remain, because the sin is in us. Though the record of our sin were graven in the rock, and the rock should be ground to powder—even this would not blot out our sin.

The blotting out of sin is the erasing of it from the nature, the being of man. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. Our bodies are but the channel, the border, the sand upon the shore, of the cover of life. Impressions have been made upon us by sin. At the seashore, when you see a smooth piece of sand, your first impulse is to make some mark on it, to write the characters upon it. Then the sea comes up, and each wave that passes over it helps to

obliterate the impression until it is entirely blotted out. Even so the stream of life from the throne of God will wash away and blot out the impressions of sin upon us.



The erasing of sin is the blotting of it from our natures, so that we shall know it no more.

Hebrews 10
[2] ...the worshipers once purged [actually purged by the blood of Christ, have]...no more conscience of sins,

...because the way of sin is gone from them. Their iniquity may be sought for, but it will not be found. It is for ever gone from them,—it is foreign to their new natures, and even though they may be able to recall the fact that they have committed certain sins, they have forgotten the sin itself—they do not think of doing it anymore. This is the work of Christ in the true sanctuary,

Hebrews 8
[2] ...which the Lord pitched, and not man,

–the sanctuary...

Hebrews 9
[11] ...not made with hands,

–but brought into existence by the thought of God.

52. Unselfishness Banishes Sin

Present Truth, April 30, 1903
Original title: Back Page (second paragraph)

SELFISHNESS is the beginning of all sin. As self-love was the cause of the first sin in the universe, and that of all that have followed, so unselfishness—love of others—is that by which sin will be banished.

Ephesians 5 [Galatians 2:20]
[25] Christ loved us, and gave himself for us.

To love God with all our being, and our neighbors as ourselves, is righteousness. This means the complete effacement of self, even as Christ…

Philippians 2 [RV]
[7] …emptied himself.

But no man can thus efface himself; it can be done only by the Spirit of God, with our consent. So the exhortation is,

[5] Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

IV. Baptism

1. Baptism: A Review

Signs of the Times, May 17, 1883

A CORRESPONDENT in the East sends us a copy of the *Christian Intelligencer* of April 11th, with the request that we notice an article which it contains, entitled, "The Mode of Baptism," as it has troubled some honest investigators. We accordingly quote the principal part of the article and notice its statements in detail.

The writer begins by expressing his regret that a certain writer of Sunday-school notes…

> …should seem to countenance the idea that Philip baptized the eunuch by immersion, as is done in his remarks on *Acts* 8:38, where "into the water" is emphasized by being printed in italics, and within quotation marks.

He then says:

> The Greek preposition *eis* signifies motion toward, and never indicates the actual going into a place unless it is repeated, once in composition with the verb, and *once* governing the noun. When Peter and John ran together to the sepulcher, after our Lord's resurrection, John outran Peter, and came first to the sepulcher, *eis to mnemeion*, yet went he not in, *ou mentoi eiselthen*. The phrase, if completed, would read *ou mentoi eiselthen eis to mnemeion*, as it does when Peter is described when arriving, and actually going into the sepulcher, *kai eiselthen eis to mnemeion*.
>
> The same remark applies to the preposition *ek*, which signifies motion from, and never indicates actual coming from within a place, unless it is repeated, as before noted, in composition with the verb, as well as governing the noun. Here also a single example may suffice. *Luke* 4:22, "the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth," *tois ekporeuomenois ek tou stomatos autou*. This form of expression is invariable.
>
> Now in the account of the baptism of the eunuch by Philip, if Luke had meant that they actually went into the water, still more that they went under the water, he would have twice used the

preposition *eis*. But he does not. The phrase is *katebesan eis to hudor*, the exact meaning of which is they went down to the water. So if it had been meant that they actually came out of the water, the phrase would have been *exebesan ek tou hudatos*. But it is not. It is *anebesan ek tou hudatos*, and means exactly they came up, or back, from the water. The *Revision*, with all its pretensions to scholarship, has failed to note this point.

There is but one fault that can be found with this criticism, and that is that it is not true. There is an old saying that:

"One swallow does not make a spring."

The author of the above should have remembered this and pushed his investigation is further, before he made such sweeping assertions. Because a thing occurs in a certain way once, we are not justified in saying that it will be so every time. That is the most foolish kind of reasoning. It is as if a man who had never before seen a horse, should see a span of white horses, and should then stoutly maintain that all horses are white. This is just the condition of the writer of this article: he has found that sometimes the preposition is repeated when motion *into* or *out of* a place is meant, and makes the rash assertion that:

"This form of expression is invariable."

We shall see. If it can be shown that *eis* unrepeated ever indicates "the actual going into a place," then his whole argument, or assumption, falls to the ground. Turning to the lexicons we find the following in reference to the preposition *eis:*

The radical signification is, direction toward, motion to, into, for all on; into; etc.[123]

1. Of Place. Which is the primary and most frequent use, *into*, *to*, *viz.*:

(a) After verbs implying motion of any kind, *into*, or also *to*, *towards*, *upon* any place or object.[124]

[123] Pickering.
[124] Robinson.

> Preposition. *On*, *into*, upon, etc.[125]
>
> Direction towards, motion to, on, or into.…In composition *eis* retains its chief signification, *into*.[126]

These definitions from standard authorities are alone sufficient to settle the matter; but to make assurance doubly sure, we will quote a few examples. In all the following instances the construction is precisely the same as in *Acts* 8:38; the preposition occurs but once, and is not compounded with the verb:

> *Matthew* 2:11: *Kai eithontes eis oikian*, "and when they were come *into the house*."
>
> *Matthew* 2:12: *Anechorecesan eis teen choran autou*, "they departed *into their own country*."
>
> *Matthew* 2:14: *Anechorecesan eis Aiguptou*, "they *departed into Egypt*." Our critic would have us read in this instance, "he went toward, or near to, Egypt."
>
> *Matthew* 2:22: *Anchorecesan eis ta meree tees Galilaias*, "he turned aside into the parts of Galilee."

In this last instance let us try our author's statement that *eis* unrepeated always means "toward," and never "into," and see how it will work. We would then have it,

> "he turned aside *toward* Galilee,"

–did not go into it. This is another point which…

> "…the *Revision*, with all its pretensions to scholarship has failed to note."

But, unfortunately for the *newest* version, the next verse says that…

> **Matthew 2** [RV]
> [23] He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth,

–which is a long distance inside the borders of Galilee.

---

[125] Greenfield.
[126] Liddel & Scott.

Passing by many similar instances, we come to *Matthew* 8:31-32, another good text on which to test the definition of our new lexicographer. In the sentence,

Matthew 8
[31] If you cast us out, suffer us to go away *into the herd of swine*,

–the preposition *eis* occurs but once. Perhaps, however, it will be claimed that the demons did not actually go *into* the swine, but went *toward* them, and drove them along toward the sea. Very well, we will try the next verse, and see how it fared with the swine. We read,

[32] ...and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down to a steep place *into the sea*.

The Greek is, *ormeesen eis teen thalassan*, the preposition occurring but once. Then according to the *newest* version, we must understand that the swine simply ran *toward* the sea, but did not go *into* it. The only trouble with this explanation is that the next clause says that:

[32] ...they perished in the waters.

Then they must have gone *into* the water, after all. We are strongly reminded of the proverb:

Proverbs 26 [first clause, only]
[7] The legs of the lame are not equal.

If the reader wishes to examine other texts where *eis* is used alone, he can try the following, and see if he thinks that "toward," or "near to," would improve the sense:

Matthew 4:1, 12; 5:25, 29-30; 9:1; 12:9; 13:36, 47, 54; 14:22;
Acts 22:4, 10, 11, 25, 24;
1 Peter 3:22, and many other passages.

Now for the other preposition. We have seen that Philip and the eunuch could go *into* the water, even though the narrative contains only one preposition. But having seen them in the water, we

shall be obliged to leave them there, if it is true that *ek* never means "out of" unless it also occurs twice. Again we refer to the lexicons to settle the matter. Of the preposition *ek* we read:

> 1. Of motion *out of, forth, from the forth or out of*. . . . with all verbs of motion such as express *taking away, separating*.[127]
>
> Its primary signification is from, and out of, away from, from among, etc.[128]
>
> A preposition governing the genitive, with the primary signification *out of, from, of*; spoken of such objects as before were *in* or *within* another, but are now separated from it. . . . .
>
> 1. Of PLACE, which is the primary and most frequent use, *out of, from, viz.*:
>
> (a) After verbs implying motion of any kind *out of*, or *from* any place or object.[129]

Following are a few instances of its use. We give only the English, simply stating that in every case the preposition occurs but once, as in *Acts* 8:38.

> **Matthew 2**
> [15] *Out of* Egypt have I called my Son.
>
> **Matthew 24**
> [17] Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing *out of* his house.
>
> **Mark 9**
> [7] And a voice came *out of* the cloud.
>
> **John 4**
> [54] When He was come *out of* Judea into Galilee.
>
> **John 13**
> [1] When Jesus knew that his our was come that he should depart *out of* this world.

[127] Liddel & Scott.
[128] Pickering.
[129] Robinson.

We quote again from the article:

> But if it be admitted that the criticism on the use of the preposition, as above, is correct, it is impossible that the inspired writers should have had at all in their minds the idea of going into, or going under the water.

But it is not admitted, for the good reason that the criticism is no criticism at all; and so we say that it is not only possible but certain that the inspired writers had in their minds the idea both of going *into*, and going under, the water. Even so zealous an advocate of sprinkling as Dr. Clarke, admits that the eunuch was plunged under the water.

But it may be asked,

> Since the preposition *eis* does sometimes mean "toward," as well as "into," is it not possible that it means "toward" in *Acts* 8:38?

We reply, no; and for reasons that we shall proceed to give. If we did not know the meaning of the word "baptize," or if this were the only place where baptism was mentioned, we might allow the claim; for, let it be distinctly understood that we do not base the argument for immersion on the preposition in the *Acts* 8:38, or in any other place. That is only corroborative evidence; our direct proof is more to the point. And let it also be distinctly noted that the so-called argument for sprinkling is all of this nature; it is all negative. Even if the article that we have noticed were true, and allowing that *Acts* 8:38 should read…

> "they went down to the water,"

–and…

> "came up from the water;"

–it would not prove that they did not also go in. The advocates of sprinkling, like our critic, labor hard to prove a point that would profit them nothing even if it were established.

In conclusion we offer a few points of direct evidence:

1. Our Saviour did not coin the word "baptize;" it was in use before the time of His first advent.

2. When He used the word *baptize*, to indicate an ordinance in the church, He must have used it in the sense in which it was generally used; for if He had not, no one would have known what He meant, unless He had given a new definition, which He did not do.

3. The authors of the lexicons do not make the meaning of words to suit themselves; they simply tell the meaning with which the word is used. If it be a word from a so-called "dead language," the lexicons give the meaning which it had when that language was spoken.

4. The Greek lexicons define *baptizo*, of which *baptize* is the English form, untranslated, "to dip, to plunge," etc. Liddell & Scott give it, *to dip repeatedly*, *to dip under*, and give as examples of its use, "over head and ears in debt," "*overwhelmed* with questions."

5. The idea of sprinkling does not attach to the word at all, except as it is forced upon it in support of a practice inherited from the Catholic Church. Whenever the idea of sprinkling is conveyed, a different word is employed. Here we can say of a truth, "this form of expression is invariable."

6. The signification of the ordinance shows plainly the meaning of the word. Paul says:

> **Romans 6**
> [3] Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ or baptized into His death?
> [4] Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism,...

That is, we show our faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, and our determination to be dead to sin, and to live in newness of life, by being "buried" in water as a symbol of Christ's burial in the earth. Christ was completely hidden from sight in

the tomb; so we must be completely submerged in the water, in order to have the symbol fit the reality.

7. This idea is established beyond cavil in the next verse:

Romans 6
[5] For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.

The text is too plain to need comment. A seed is not planted unless it is covered up. The disciples of Christ did not carelessly throw a few handfuls of earth on His body, but reverently laid it in the ground, completely covering it from view. Then unless we are likewise completely buried, planted, submerged in the watery grave, we are not in the likeness of Christ's death. Sprinkling has no likeness whatever to the burial and resurrection of Christ. And therefore it necessarily follows:

8. That baptism is immersion and nothing else, and one who has not been immersed has not obeyed the command of Christ to be baptized. We are sure that this conclusion cannot be honestly evaded. We shall have more to say about the importance of this matter hereafter.

2. Who Is Responsible?

Signs of the Times, December 11, 1884

THE first number of the *Western Churchman*, a neat, well-printed eight-page paper, published in Denver, Col., has just come to our table. As its name indicates, it is devoted to the interests of the Episcopal Church in the West. We wish it well, and have no doubt that it will succeed. That which the most attracted our attention, however, was something not peculiar to the journal, but an extract from the catechism. In the Sunday-school lesson occurs the following:

> *Question.* What did your Sponsors then for you?
>
> *Answer.* They did promise and vow three things in my name:
>
> *First*, That I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. *Secondly*, That I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith. And *thirdly*, That I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

This, our readers will understand, is the promise that is made at the baptism (sprinkling) of an infant. As we read it, the thought occurred to us that those who make it take a grave responsibility upon themselves. We do not believe that any realize how great it is. Let us see. The baptism of an individual indicates his death to sin, and his determination to walk, as the apostle says,

> **Romans 6**
> [4] ...in newness of life;

–or, as the catechism has it, to...

> ...renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh, [and] keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same,

–all the days of his life. Now it is evident that an infant a few days or weeks, or even months old, is not competent to make any such promise. It knows nothing of the sinful works of the flesh,

nor of God's holy will and commandments. This is well understood and therefore his parents, or some other persons of mature age, make a promise for him. These persons are then called that child's sponsors.

The question now arises, Suppose that the child, as he approaches manhood, does not manifest any disposition to fulfill the vow made for him by his sponsors, who is responsible? Such a case frequently happens. We have personally known many who have been baptized (?) in infancy, who courted "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," and revealed in "all the sinful lusts of the flesh." It is barely possible that they nominally believed the "articles of the Christian faith;" but their faith was not indicated by works, for they lived and died in open violation of "God's holy will and commandments." Now in such cases are not those who made the vow responsible for its non-fulfillment? The very name that is applied to them—"sponsors"—indicates that they are.

A sponsor, according to Webster, is...

> One who binds himself to answer for another, and is responsible for his default.

Then those who make the vow above recorded virtually say,

> "I bind myself as surety that this vow shall be fulfilled in the future life of this infant; if he shall fail to fulfill it, I will do it myself, or will suffer the consequences of such failure."

But this, as all can see, involves difficulties that cannot be overcome.

1. It becomes necessary, in case the child approves faithless, for the sponsor to do his duty for him, as well as his own. This, however, is an impossibility, for no man can do more than his own duty. It is upon the supposition that a man may do more than his own duty that the Catholics base the monstrous doctrine of indulgences. Christ says:

Luke 17

[10] When you shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.

2. "The wages of sin is death;"[130] and since the child lives and dies in sin, the one who has pledged himself to become responsible for his failure to live a Christian life, must die in his stead. But here more difficulties present themselves.

(a) What is to become of the one in whose stead the sponsor dies? He cannot be saved, for he has never accepted Christ, and

Acts 4

[12] There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Then two men must die for the offense of only one. This would be injustice, and therefore cannot be, for God is just.

(b) The sponsor has, no doubt, lived a life of humble obedience, and faith in Christ; then according to the promise,[131] he must be saved. And thus it happens that he must both live and die! His own reward is eternal life, but on account of the sins of the one for whom he became surety, he must suffer eternal death. Impossible.

3. While there can be no doubt that the sponsor really pledges himself to one or the other of the above-mentioned impossible things, the Bible settles the matter thus:

Ezekiel 18

[4] Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sins, it shall die.

[20] The soul that sins, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

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[130] *Romans* 6:23.

[131] *Romans* 10:9; *Revelation* 22:14.

Thus we see that in no way is it possible for sponsors to fulfill the vow that they make at the so-called baptism of an infant. Their action is nothing else than a solemn farce. But does this relieve them entirely from responsibility? By no means. It is not a light thing for one to promise that which he can by no possibility fulfill. If for…

Matthew 12
[36] Every idle word that man shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment,

–how much more shall they be held to answer if those idle words are in the form of solemn vows.

The conclusion which anyone can see should be drawn is that such promises are sinful. God never requires men to make promises that involves such contradictions, and that cannot be fulfilled.

> "But the child cannot promise for himself to forsake the ways of sin, and what shall be done?"

Wait until he is able to make his own choice. If the child is not old enough to make an intelligent choice for himself, he cannot know what sin is, and therefore needs no baptism.

> "But the Saviour says, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' and how dare we disobey that command?"

You need not. "*Suffer,*" that is, allow them to come. Do not throw any obstacle in their way, and you will be obeying it. You may invite them to come, you may urge them to come; but do not think that you can come in their stead. The most that you can do in that line is to set a godly example for them; if this is done, they will undoubtedly come.

These remarks apply to all who practice what is called infant baptism. The inconsistencies herein shown up, should convince them of the folly of such a practice. We have not begun to enumerate the evils that grow out of it; their name is legion. For all of

these, we ask, Who is responsible? With what words will those who practice infant baptism answer, when the Judge shall ask,

Isaiah 1
[12] Who has required this at your hands?

3. Baptism, According to Liddell and Scott

Signs of the Times, September 29, 1887

THE Greek Lexicon of Liddell and Scott, has always been recognized as a standard lexicon of the Greek language. The work has passed through several editions, and the seventh edition has lately been issued by the Harpers, of New York. The work has been enlarged, and has been carefully revised, not only by the authors, but by some of the best Greek scholars of America. It may therefore be considered as representing the best scholarship of the world. It has occurred to us, therefore, that it would be of interest to our readers to know the definition that is given to the word *baptism*, the Greek form of our English word *baptize*. Messrs. Liddell and Scott are both professors in Oxford University, England, and therefore cannot be accused of being biased in favor of immersion. We give not only the word *baptize* but also kindred words.

Baptize, "a dyer or dipper."

Baptize, "to dip in or under water." The following instances of its use are given (we omit the Greek terms, and give only the translation): "of ships, *to sink* or *disable* them;" "*to the drenched;"* "*soaked* in wine;" "*over head and ears* in debt;" "*being drowned* with questions, or *getting into deep water;"* "to *draw wine, by dipping* the cup in the bowl;" etc.

Baptisis, "*a dipping; baptism.*"

Baptisma, "*baptism*, the usual form in the New Testament."

Baptismos, "a dipping in water, ablution; *baptism*."

Baptistarion, "a bathing place, swimming bath; the baptistery in a church."

Baptistas, "one; a baptizer;" "*ho Baptists*, the Baptist."

Baptos, "dipped, dyed."

Bapto, "to dip in water, Latin immergere." The word is used by Homer, of a blacksmith who tempers steel by plunging it into water.

From this we can see that to talk about the "mode of baptism" is absurd, if reference is had to sprinkling or pouring. The term, "the mode of baptism," can only have reference to whether the individual shall be baptized forward or backward. It would be as proper to call sprinkling *diving* into the water, as it would be to call it baptism. We have seen little children run about in water two or three inches deep, and say that they were *swimming;* that was childish imagination, but it was no more absurd than for one man to sprinkle a few drops of water on another's head and then say that he has baptized him.

But strong as is the etymological argument for immersion, it is surpassed by the argument from the nature and object of baptism, as set forth in the Scriptures. When once the design of baptism is understood, the absurdity of calling sprinkling baptism is very apparent. In fact, sprinkling has no significance whatever, and there is not the slightest ground upon which it can be defended, except that it is the custom of the people. But…

Jeremiah 10
[3] The customs of the people are vain.

4. Baptism: Its Significance

Bible Student's Library, No. 79, March 1891
Signs of the Times, February 2, 1891
PP Editor's note: The original article appeared in *Signs of the Times*, and was then prepared for publication in the *Bible Student's Library*. There was a bit of added material in this last publication, so I have used it for this article.

Matthew 28
[19] Go therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Mark 16
[15] And He said unto them, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
[16] He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned.

IN THESE two texts we have the importance of baptism sufficiently set forth. Let us learn from the Scriptures what it signifies, and in so doing we shall show its nature and the necessity for it.

Joined to Christ and the Church

That baptism does not consist merely in an outward form is indicated in:

1 Corinthians 12
[13] For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

It is true here as elsewhere that "the body is of Christ;" and that this is the body into which we are baptized, is positively stated in:

Galatians 3
[27] For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Thus we are taught that baptism is that by which we become Christ's, and heirs according to the promise. It is that by which we get into Christ, who is the Door of salvation. Being baptized

into His body is being joined to His church, for the church is the body of Christ.

Ephesians 1
[22] And [He] has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church,
[23] Which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

Colossians 1
[18] And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.

And since it is by His Spirit that this union is effected, it is evident that baptism is something more than a mere form, and that only those are members of the true church of Christ who have the Spirit of Christ.

Romans 8
[9] But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

This must not by any means be understood as depreciating literal baptism or union with the visible church. We only wish to emphasize the fact that the simple *form* is not all.

When Should it be Done?

Since it is by baptism that we become united to Christ,—"put on Christ,"[132]—a very important question is:

"At what point do we come into contact with Christ?"

That is,

"At what stage in the ministry of Christ do we become united to Him?"

The answer to this gives the key to the entire subject of baptism. This question is answered in:

[132] *Galatians* 3:27.

Romans 6

[3] Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

[4] Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

The death of Christ, then, is that by which we become united to Him. It is, so to speak, the marriage ceremony, by which we declare our union with Christ. Paul says,

2 Corinthians 11

[2] I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Just as in ordinary marriage two persons are united, so that they are no longer two, but "one flesh," so in putting on Christ we become one with Him. Paul, after declaring that a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh, adds,

Ephesians 5

[32] This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

But in this union with Christ it is His personality that dominates; we yield ourselves to Him—become swallowed up in Him—so that the one person is, not us, but Christ.

Sharing His Death and Resurrection

Baptism signifies the death and resurrection of Christ; but it signifies more than a simple recognition of that fact; it signifies our acceptance of that sacrifice, and that we actually share His death and resurrection. If we ever are glorified with Christ, we must suffer with Him.

Romans 8

[17] And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

We must share the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death, and must also know the power of His resurrection.

Philippians 3
[10] That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.

The Steps in Conversion

Let us trace the course of this great transaction.

Romans 3
[23] All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Because all have sinned, judgment has come upon all men to condemnation. This condemnation is to death, for the wages of sin is death.

Romans 5
[12] Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
[18] Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Romans 6
[23] For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Every man that does not believe in Christ is condemned already:

John 3
[18] He that believes on Him is not condemned: but he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Sentence of death has already gone forth upon us, and our life is forfeited. In yielding to Satan, we have sold ourselves to him, and have received nothing in exchange. The Scripture says,

Isaiah 52
[3] You have sold yourselves for nought...

Therefore we really have no life. This life that men live does not belong to them; they have given it, with themselves, into the power of Satan. And because sinners are condemned to death,—have forfeited their life,—the Scripture says:

John 3
[36] He that believes not the Son shall not see life.

He never has any life of his own. But the same scripture that says, "You have sold yourselves for nought," says also,

Isaiah 52
[3] ...you shall be redeemed without money.

Christ is the Redeemer. And because...

Hebrews 2
[14] ...the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
[15] And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to give life to those who had forfeited their life to Satan. He, the stronger than the strong,[133] came and entered into the prison-house of Satan, that He might redeem His captives.

Isaiah 52
[3] You shall be redeemed without money.

1 Peter 1 [RV]
[18] Knowing that you were redeemed not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers;
[19] But with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.

[133] *Luke* 11:22.

Money could not purchase a single life. Life must be given for life; and the only life that could redeem a forfeited life is the life of Christ. He could buy us back only by giving His life for ours. That means that He gave His life to us, if we accept Him. He has life in himself:

John 5
[26] For as the Father has life in himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in himself.

He could lay down His life and take it again:

John 10
[18] No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

When He lay in the grave,

Acts 2
[24] ...it was not possible that He should be held of it.

Herein He differed from man. If man should give up his life in payment of the forfeit, he would have nothing left. But Christ, whose life is of greater worth than that of all created beings, can give up His life and still have as much life left. Having paid the forfeit, He can give life to us in place of ours. If we accept His life, we are sure of life, no matter what becomes of this life.

Trading the Old Life for the New

But in order to get His life, which is proof against the power of Satan, we must acknowledge that our life is lost, and that there is no righteousness in us, with which to give anything toward its redemption. Knowing that this life is not ours anyway, we must be willing to surrender it into the hands of Christ, in order that we may receive His life in exchange. This is most reasonable. It is a question of whether we will give our life to Satan, and get nothing in exchange, or to Christ, and get His life instead. It would seem as though everybody ought to decide without a moment's hesitation; yet it is a struggle for everyone to give up this for-

feited life for Christ's. It is not pleasant to die, and they would fain put it off as long as possible, or even persuade themselves that they will not have to give up life at all. The reason for this is that giving up this life means giving up all that pertains to it. All that is of self must go with the life. Says the apostle Paul:

> **Galatians 5** [RV]
> [24] They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.

This giving up of our life in order to get Christ's life instead, is variously spoken of as yielding ourselves to become His servants, submitting ourselves to God, etc.

How to Submit

The question arises,

> "How do we submit ourselves to God?"

It is simple. Look at your life: see what things pertain solely to the present, natural life, those things that you do by nature. Take a survey of the things that you are addicted to, which you know are not Christlike, but which cause you condemnation, even by your own heart. Now you have doubtless done this; you have also repeatedly tried to overcome them and put them away, but have not been able to do so. But you sincerely desire to be rid of them.

You would rather have Christ than your own ways. Therefore you say,

> "Here, Lord, take me as I am; I give myself into your hands, for You to do with me as You will; take all these evils from me by the power that rests in You alone."

> Just as I am, without one plea,
> But that your blood was shed for me,
> And that You bid me come to Thee,
> O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
>
> Just as I am, and waiting not
> To rid my soul of one dark blot,

To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.[134]

So at last the surrender is made. We give ourselves to the Lord, and take Him instead. How do we get Him? We cannot tell anything about the process; we only know that it is by faith.

Galatians 3
[26] You are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Christ dwells in the heart by faith.

Ephesians 3
[17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...rooted and grounded in love.

All that there is to do on our part is to give up, to yield ourselves fully to the Lord, desiring that His ways shall take the place of our ways, and believing that He will give himself to us, according to His promise. Then we are buried with Him by baptism into His death, thus signifying the putting off of the old life, the crucifying of the old man, and the taking of Christ's life, in whom we rise to walk in newness of life.

Colossians 3
[1] If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God.
[2] Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
[3] For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

1 Corinthians 15
[10] But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Romans 6
[6] Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

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[134] Charlotte Elliott, Hymn: *Just As I Am*, 1835.

Ephesians 4
[22] That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
[23] And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;
[24] And that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

2 Corinthians 5
[17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away;
[18] Behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God.

An Exchange of Life

Do not these scriptures state as plainly as can be that in becoming Christ's we take His life in exchange for ours? It is not simply that Christ gave His life to purchase us, but that He gives His life *to us;* our life has been forfeited, and we are virtually dead,—dead in trespasses and sins, and He gives His life to us that we may actually have life. Henceforth, then, it is to be the life of Christ that meets the temptations of Satan, and labors to do the Father's will. But,

Hebrews 13
[8] Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

Therefore the life which is given to us will present the same characteristics that the life of Christ presented when He was on the earth in person; His life in us must be as strong to do and to resist as it was when He lived in Judea.

Living by Faith

How can we live this life? Just as we received it—by faith. Read carefully and remember the following texts:

Colossians 3
[1] If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God.

Romans 6
[8] Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him;
[9] Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death has no more dominion over Him.
[10] For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He lives, He lives unto God.
[11] Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Colossians 2
[9] For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.
[10] And you are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power;
[11] In whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;
[12] Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead.

This is the order of the new life: Having accepted Christ's life, we remember that the future life is to be His, not ours. Then the same spirit of self-renunciation that led us to accept Christ must be ever present with us to lead us to hold Him. We must pray not only for a clean heart to be created in us, but also for a steadfast spirit to be renewed within us. And how do we hold Him? Just the same as we accepted Him and were raised with Him; through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. That is, with an intense longing that His life shall be manifest in ours, we lay hold of it through our faith in the power that raised Christ from the dead. We know that the same power that raised Jesus

from the dead can quicken us, for that is why Christ was raised from the dead.

Romans 4
[25] [He] was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.

This is that which Paul means when he expresses the desire,

Philippians 3
[10] ...that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection.

It is what he wishes for us when he prays,

Ephesians 1
[18] ...that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
[19] And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,
[20] Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead.

There can be no greater exhibition of power than that which is required to raise the dead. It is creative power. And this is the power which is given to us in Christ, the acceptance of which we acknowledge when we are buried with Him by baptism into His death, and are raised in Him. How true it is that...

2 Peter 1
[3] ...His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

And it is the manifestation of the power of Christ's life in our lives that gives us a sure hope of eternal life with Him. For says the apostle:

1 Peter 1
[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
[4] To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you,

[5] Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

The Age for Baptism

The statement is that:

Mark 16
[16] He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

Those only who believe, therefore, are proper subjects for baptism. This does not by any means imply that only grown persons may be baptized, for very young children may have sincere and intelligent faith in Christ. The gray-haired man must believe as a little child. But however old or however young, *belief* is the prerequisite of baptism.

The Mode of Baptism

Is it necessary to devote any space to the discussion of the subjects and the "mode of baptism"? Baptism is a burial. It is an expressive symbol of the complete hiding of self in Christ. The expression is,

Romans 6
[4] ...*buried* with Him by baptism into death.

This would mean nothing if sprinkling were baptism. When baptism is declared to be a *burial*, that is really all that need be said about it. That word describes it exactly, but it does not in any sense describe sprinkling. But there is certainly no need of discussing the "mode" of baptism with one who is not a fit subject for the ordinance. What he wants is to be shown his need of Christ; and when one has come to the point where he is wholly submissive to the will of Christ, when he fully surrenders to Him, then there is no necessity for any such discussion. He will gladly accept Christ in the divinely-appointed way. May God grant that all who read may know, not simply the fact, but the power of Christ's resurrection.

Jude 1

[24] Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

[25] To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

5. An Admission Concerning Baptism

Present Truth, December 23, 1897

THE Rev. Canon Gore is delivering the Advent lectures in Westminster Abbey, and in the one on "Baptism and Confirmation," as published in *The Church Times* of December 10, we find the following statement:

> Baptism, you know, was at first administered,—at least generally,—by immersion. . . . This going down into the water, this plunging under the water, and this rising again from the water, represented the burial of Christ: "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him." It was part of the symbol.
>
> It has been my privilege in India to baptize a good many people by immersion at one time: and certainly it has a power of symbolism which our modern methods of baptizing here in the West have not. Nor can we but desire that where circumstances admit of it this practice of baptism by immersion should continue, and should be practiced, so that people should not forget that this was the original and normal mode in which people were meant to be baptized, and which carried with it a perfect symbolism, such as the other has only in part.

This is simple truth, and there is no reason in the world why the expressive symbol should not be retained, for circumstances always admit of it. It was not the inclemency of the weather, but the spirit of apostasy from the Word, that led to its abandonment. Christ sent His disciples to preach the Gospel and to *baptize*,—not

sprinkle,—in all the world, and He understood the climate of the world. The writer of this note has himself administered baptism in the open air in zero weather, and has seen the ordinance administered when the ice had to be broken, but has never heard of an instance where the slightest illness of inconvenience resulted. Men *live*, not die, by the word of the Lord.

6. Suffer the Children to Come

Present Truth, August 15, 1901

THERE has been considerable discussion among the Methodists lately on the subject of baptism. In the *Methodist Times* of July 4, a "Layman" wrote:

> As a Methodist parent I sincerely hope that ere long we may have some definite Scriptural doctrine on baptism. You seem to wish that we may go on in the future as in the past, holding a variety of views on the subject, but I respectfully submit that this is not a matter that we may interpret according to our personal wishes and views, but calls for *definite Scriptural teaching*.

That is the right position to take, but it is at the same time a humiliating confession of the present uncertain, unscriptural position of the Methodist body on a subject that is at the very foundation of the Christian life.

Another writer, however, a man who writes "Rev." before his name, is not pleased with this confession, and wishes it to be understood that Methodists have clear, Scriptural authority for infant baptism, and he boldly quotes it and italicizes it thus:

> **Matthew 19**
> [14] Suffer the little *children*, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

How strange it is that none of those who use this text to support infant baptism, so-called, do not realize that it directly opposes such a practice, and that they interpret the command to *suffer* the children to come, and not to forbid them, into a command to bring them whether they will or not, and when they have no will whatever in the case. Certain it is that the Saviour's words imply that the children are to be left free to come of their own choice, and it is equally certain that if they have proper training, and are not *forbidden*—held back—by inconsistent lives of professed Christians, they will come soon enough. But a baby a few days or weeks or months old has no occasion to be either suffered or forbidden to come to Christ.

V. Sanctification: The Christian Life

1. Two Principles

Present Truth, February 9, 1893

ALL action is based on two fundamental principles. These principles are love and selfishness. Everyone good action is an expression of the principle of love; every evil action is an expression of some form of selfishness.

The principle of love leads the actor to forget self and labor for others. All the great work of creation is an expression of this principle. When God created the world, it was not for himself, but for man. Every step in this creation is an expression of the same principle.

The strength of the animal kingdom is devoted to nourish the vegetables; and, in turn, the vegetable kingdom does not toil for itself. The little seed cast into the earth expends all its energy to produce a beautiful foliage—covered tree, to be enjoyed by others; after years of patient toil, it is covered with blossoms of fragrance, which shed forth their sweet perfume to delight others; and finally its luscious fruit is produced, not for the tree itself to devour, but for the nourishment of others. In like manner, all the works of God in the earth are living illustrations of the principle of love. The apostle expressed a great truth when he said,

1 John 4
[8] God is love.

All His acts are acts of love.

The second principle is just the opposite of this. In the works of love another than the actor is always the object of the action; in the second principle, self is the great center and ultimate object of every act. God is the personification of the first; Satan of the second. While all the works of God are an expression of love, all the acts of Satan are acts of selfishness. The cause of his fall was the desire to have self exalted,—to become…

Isaiah 14
[14] …like the Most High.

In leading man into sin, Satan use the same principle,—a desire on the part of man to be elevated, and become as gods.

The kingdom of God is the kingdom of love; that of Satan is the kingdom of selfishness. Man is born in the kingdom of the latter. By nature his heart is sinful and selfish. Originally he was created pure, and had he lived according to the plan of God, his life would have been a continual expression of love, and the result would have been perfect bliss. But in the fall man lost his innocence; he received in exchange selfishness. There is scarce a trace of the original purity in his nature. We say of some people that by nature they are unselfish; but this is true only when we compare them with man; compared with the standard of perfect love which we have in God, all are selfish. Man may have what we term human love, but if he has the perfect love of God, it is only because it has been shed abroad in his heart by the Spirit of God.[135]

The plan of salvation was devised to redeem man from the state of selfishness. It has provisions for taking him wholly out of the kingdom of selfishness and transplanting him into the kingdom of love. This work is expressed in the term "conversion."[136] It is a turning about from following the natural, selfish tendencies of the heart, to follow the principle of love; from calling the principle that leads down to sorrow and death, to the principle that leads to happiness and life.

The nature of a being is expressed by his works. The principles of the heart work themselves out through actions.[137] When a man is converted, he adopts as his standard of action the principle of love. Before, he followed the impulses of the natural heart, which are only selfish. The adoption of this new standard simply as a resolution of the mind is not sufficient; that can only lead to failure; the principle of love must be planted in the heart; for nothing can come out in the actions but what is in the heart.[138]

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[135] *Romans* 5:5.
[136] *Acts* 15:3.
[137] *Proverbs* 20:11; *Luke* 6:44.
[138] *Proverbs* 4:23.

The love of God cannot be planted in the heart once for always. The doctrine of "once in grace, always in grace," is a fatal delusion. When God's love is received in the heart, it must be held there by faith; the moment faith lets go, it is gone; and without it, only the selfish, sinful elements of our nature can be manifested in our lives. We are now in the school of Christ. The great lesson to be learned is to keep in subjection the evil of our natures, and manifest only the Spirit of Christ.[139] This can be done only with the help of God. His strength delegated to us in the Gospel is sufficient to bring us to the point where our acts will be an unadulterated expression of the principle of love. This is the work of sanctification; it is the state of perfection which all should reach and occupy. Left to himself, man could never reach this condition; but through Christ strengthening him, it is possible; and being possible for all, everyone that has not reached this state will be inexcusable.

[139] *Romans* 6:16, 19.

2. Denying Self

Present Truth, August 24, 1893

WHAT is it to deny self? Most people, if not all, have in their minds a certain conception of the meaning of self-denial; but popular conceptions of things are not always true ones, especially in regard to Christian virtues. Self was never known to give the correct definition of self-denial. This can only be obtained from the Word of God.

The 2nd chapter of *Philippians* tells us very clearly in what true self-denial consists,

> **Philippians 2**
> 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
> 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;
> 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men;
> 8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

This was the example set by Christ in self-denial. He left all the riches and glory and honor that were His at the right hand of His Father, and came to this earth to live a life of toil and poverty and hardship and sorrow, in order that He might give to fallen man the riches and glory and honor that He had left in heaven. He "pleased not himself,"[140] and of His own self He did nothing for He said,

> **John 14**
> 10 The Father, that dwells in me, He does the works.

> **John 5**
> 19 The Son can do nothing of himself, but what He sees the Father do: for what things soever He does, these also does the Son likewise.

Self-denial means, to the Christian, to do as Christ did. As Christ did nothing of His own self, so the Christian must do noth-

[140] *Romans* 15:3.

ing of his own self. He must keep self repressed at every point, so that it will not be seen in anything. He must put it away altogether. But how often it is that self finds occasion to glory in some particular act that it can hold up to public view! This is the definition that self gives of self-denial. It is some particular act of self-denial on the part of an individual, held up and paraded as a virtue.

True self-denial is the total suppression of self, not at one point merely, but at all points; not for some particular occasion, but always, to the end of life. It is a process which self cannot survive. The Christian is never conscious of being a hero; he never counts his self-denial a virtue. In his life he sees all the imperfections and failures; for he has a view of the life and virtues of Him who was equal with God, but left all and came to earth and suffered and died for His enemies. He has no desire to serve himself in any way, but only to have Christ dwelling in him, working and doing whatever is in accordance with His Divine will.

3. War Declared

Present Truth, August 24, 1893

WAR is declared against us! not by the French, not by the Germans, not by the Russians, nor by the Chinese, but by enemies more powerful than all these nations together,—by our own fleshly lusts, our natural longings after sinful pleasures.

It is not war against our poor frail bodies, but what is infinitely worse, it is a war against our souls. It is a war before which men's faces may indeed turn pale and their hearts fail them for fear, if they have not an impenetrable armor, and an all-powerful Captain. If we gain the victory it means life and happiness that will run parallel with the life of God. If we are overcome, it means darkness and death that shall have no awakening. It is then a war the most momentous, the most fraught with grave consequences of any that has ever been declared on earth.

It is a war from which we cannot escape, because it follows us wherever we go.

It is a war which we cannot end, once for all, and then never more be troubled with it. It will continue as long as there is life in us.

But there have been men who by nature were no better nor stronger than we, who have fought in this battle and been faithful unto death and come off more than conquerors through Him that loved them.[141] And God himself gives us encouragement to believe that you and I also may do the same. Then let us not sink down in discouragement and say it cannot be done and we are as good as overcome already, but let us go straight to our Father in heaven and ask Him how this may be accomplished.

We turn to *1 Peter* 2:11 and He says,

[141] *Romans* 8:37.

1 Peter 2
[11] Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, *abstain* from fleshly lusts, which war against your souls.

In other words, refrain from them, don't give up to them. Perhaps you say,

> "That is just what I've tried to do again and again, but I can't put them away, they are more powerful than I, I cannot do the things that I would."

Be patient, perhaps the Lord has more to tell us about it. In *2 Timothy* 2:22 He says,

2 Timothy 2
[22] *Flee* also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Here He tells us that we are not only to abstain from these lusts by fleeing from them when we see them coming, but when we turn our backs upon *them* we are to follow after *righteousness, faith, charity, peace*. Perhaps we have tried to flee from the longings after sin without seeking something better in its place. If our hearts become filled and satisfied with good thoughts there is no room for longings for bad thoughts.

But we read again:

Titus 2
[11] For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,
[12] Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

Here we learn again that the grace of God teaches us to *deny* worldly lusts when they come begging for our favor. But notice further, the grace that teaches us that we must deny worldly lusts does not then leave us alone to fight it out the best we can, but the same grace that warns us of our danger, provides the remedy, —"The grace of God *that brings salvation*" teaches us, etc. Then

the same grace that teaches us to deny the lusts will give salvation from them if we will allow it to.

But let us listen again to His gracious words.

Romans 8
[13] For if you live after the flesh, you shall die; but if you *through the Spirit* do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Ah, have we not now arrived at the secret of our failures? We have been trying to mortify and put down our sinful desires in our own strength, and as they have been stronger than we, we have been defeated every time. But here we learn of a Spirit that is stronger than the spirit of evil, and the promise is if we will allow this Spirit of God to dwell in us it will mortify every evil desire that shows itself, and we shall live; we shall not be overcome.

But how are we to get this Spirit? He tells us in the 13th chapter and fourteenth verse:

Romans 13
[14] But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

We get the Spirit of Christ by putting on Christ, and when we do this we are to make no more provision or calculation to give up to the lusts of our flesh,

Galatians 5
[17] For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.

Where one is, the other cannot remain. When we put on Christ we therefore bid goodbye to our lusts for ever, and instead of our ways and our desires, we choose Christ's ways and His desires. And since He furnishes the power by which we can keep these lusts from coming and making their home in our heart again, we are stronger than they as long as we hold to Jesus.

But can we know how to put on Jesus? Yes, He tells us:

Galatians 3
[27] As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

But how can we get into Christ and Christ in us? We read again:

Ephesians 3
[17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

How can we get faith?

Romans 10
[17] Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Then if we hear God's word and receive it,

1 Thessalonians 2
[13] ...not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God,

–it will effectually work in us that believe, because it brings Jesus with His Holy Spirit of power into our hearts. Thus,

2 Corinthians 10
[3] Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:
[4] For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;
[5] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Then do we not need the Word, the bread of life, more than we need our necessary food? Can we hope to grow in the spiritual life and have strength to overcome and keep out these deadly foes without daily partaking of this heavenly bread? We are apt to think that when we once put on Christ we have nothing more to do, when we once take a full meal of this heavenly bread and a full draught of this living water, we shall for ever be satisfied and never more be weak or faint.

But we cannot eat enough of this in one day to last us all the rest of our lives, any more than we can eat enough physical food

to last us the remainder of our lives. We must continually, daily, feast upon His words of life, and then the promise is that we shall grow thereby, grow stronger and stronger. We need not worry about how it is done, or how we are going to meet these foes when they assail us. But if we lay hold of fresh supplies of strength every day, the victory will finally be ours, not because of our strength, but because of Christ the Mighty One who has lived in us. He is the "captain of our salvation,"[142] and He is our "armor of light"[143] that is able to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy.

With such a Captain and such an armor can we not with courage engage in this great war?

Go forward, Christian soldier,
Beneath His banner true;
The Lord himself, your Leader,
Shall all your foes subdue.
His love foretells your trials,
He knows your hourly need;
He can, with bread of heaven,
Your fainting spirit feed.

Go forward, Christian soldier,
Nor dream of peaceful rest,
Till Satan's host is vanquished,
And heaven at last possessed;
Till Christ himself shall call you
To lay your armor by,
And wear in endless glory,
The crown of victory.

[142] *Hebrews* 2:10.
[143] *Romans* 13:12.

4. Self-satisfied

Present Truth, September 7, 1893

THE world is full of people who are self-satisfied; people who, like the self-righteous Pharisee, thank God—or themselves—that they are not as other men are—the sinful publicans around them—who steal, and lie, and cheat, and do things that are vain and wicked. They are a respectable class of people—very much so. No one ever finds occasion to charge them with any breach of propriety. They are just "about right"; not quite so, for they are aware of some little failings—not very noticeable—that still cling to them from past weaknesses; but that is nothing, for they are going to do better directly, and then everything will be all right. There are some things about them that they wish were a little different, but on the whole they are fairly well satisfied.

But what does God say of this class? How much satisfaction does He feel over their lives? We learn from the words of Christ, spoken to the chief priests and elders—those who thought themselves to be righteous:

> **Matthew 21**
> [31] Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you.

Instead of being nearest, as they thought, to the kingdom, they were the farthest from it; and so it is with every soul that feels no need of Christ. Jesus said,

> **Matthew 9**
> [13] I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

They who consider themselves to be whole do not feel the need of a physician.[144] And until they feel their need, they cannot be reached by the great Physician, who alone is able to restore the soul.

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[144] *Matthew* 9:12.

The apostle Paul, in his letter to Timothy, has left us a testimony on this point. He says,

> **1 Timothy 1**
> [15] This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Did not Paul make some mistakes here? Did he not mean to say, "of whom I *was* chief"? having in mind the time when he was Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of the church? No; he meant just what he said:

> [15] Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I *am* chief.

And this was written by him thirty years after he had become the faithful apostle of Christ, and had labored for his Master with a zeal and devotedness that could hardly be surpassed. He spoke from no motive of false modesty; he felt that he was, then, the chief of sinners. That was the amount of self-satisfaction which he possessed. Where, then, has any man a warrant for possessing more?

Reader, has the above text always brought to your mind simply the Apostle Paul? If so, you have been giving to him what belongs to yourself. The pronoun "I" does not mean the Apostle Paul when you read it; but it means *you*. It is still "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation." Therefore accept it, confess its truth, and let all your self-satisfaction go. Then God will look upon you with satisfaction, and count you righteous through Him who knew no sin,[145] and by whose blood the chief of sinners may obtain an abundant pardon.

[145] *2 Corinthians* 5:21.

5. Move to Adjourn

Present Truth, September 14, 1893

"Resolved, that the Christian life is one of gloom."

PERHAPS you do not remember having heard this resolution read anywhere, but we dare say you notice something about it that sounds familiar. Some one has presented that resolution to you, and asked you to endorse it. Can you say that you have never assented to it? It has been presented a great many times, not only to you, but to all who have any thoughts of living a Christian life; and its author has had a wonderful success in pulling it off for truth.

This resolution is drawn up by the devil, the father of lies. He comes to you with a company of his imps, choosing some opportune time, and with a voice full of the semblance of a mournful reality; he repeats the words.

"I move," he says, "that the Christian life is a hard, toilsome, and gloomy one."

The motion is at once seconded by his imps, and you—you, it may be, give your assent. So it is moved, seconded, and carried unanimously that the Christian life is hard and cheerless and full of gloom. You are discouraged and tempted to give up, angels are made sad, and the devil and his imps rejoice.

You know the wicked falsity of the whole proceeding. Your whole Christian experience, if it has been genuine, tells you so. Genuine Christian experience is based on belief in the promises of God. You know, if you have taken God at His word, that He...

Psalm 84
[11] ...is a Sun and a shield;

–that Jesus Christ is the...

Malachi 4
[2] ...Sun of righteousness,

–and…

Revelation 22
[16] …the bright and morning Star,

–that rises upon you and dispels your night; that…

Proverbs 10
[22] The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and He adds no sorrow;

–that…

Galatians 5
[22] The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace;

–and that the psalmist spoke with no impropriety when he said,

Psalm 32
[11] Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you that are upright in heart.

You know the peace, and joy, and satisfaction that comes into the heart from believing and trusting God. You know the brightness of the hope that is set before you, that is always in sight to the eye of faith. Then do not allow Satan and his evil company to hold a meeting with you and pass a joint resolution on the gloominess of the Christian life. Keep these texts and others before your mind, and when the prince of darkness comes next time to discuss Christianity with you, and begins his old story of:

"I move that the Christian life is one of gloom,"

–you say,

"I move that we adjourn!"

Angels will second that motion, and the devil and all his imps will have no power to prevent its being executed.

6. Motives

Present Truth, September 21, 1893

THIS is a subject which cannot be too carefully considered in connection with our Christian experience. Upon the character of our motives depends the result of the efforts put forth in the Christian life. Motives lie back of all deeds, and are the true index of the condition of the heart. And they are often a source of deception, not only to the friends and neighbors of an individual, but also to the individual himself.

God reads the motives of every heart, and by them measures the standing of each individual. When the prophet Samuel came to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be king, and looked upon Eliab, the first-born, he said,

> **1 Samuel 16**
> [6] Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.
> [7] But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

Men may deceive those around them by their outward appearance and life, and may even thereby deceive himself; but no one can in the slightest degree deceive God. And upon many a one who presents himself, as did Eliab, a confident candidate for Divine honor, God looked as He did upon the firstborn son of Jesse, and unheard by man repeats the sentence of condemnation.

Eliab was doubtless self-deceived; but in this respect he does not stand apart from the generality of mankind, the victim of a strange misfortune, for it is the natural condition of every man to be ignorant of the evil that is within him.

> **Jeremiah 17**
> [9] The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

Man cannot in his own wisdom know his heart, and the hidden motives that lie within it. God only can read the heart of man, and only upon the revelation made to him by God can man depend for a correct knowledge of what he is.

Jeremiah 17
[10] I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Not all motives that prompt the performance of religious deeds are acceptable in the sight of God.

Hebrews 11
[6] Without faith it is impossible to please God.

–and,

Romans 14
[23] Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

But much that passes for faith is not true faith. We are told what is the characteristic of true faith:

Galatians 5
[6] For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works by love.

This is the motive which God approves, and which makes a deed acceptable to Him. Faith which works by love is that which avails in the service of God. All effort which proceeds from any other motive is thrown away. Without love it is equally…

Hebrews 11
[6] …impossible to please God,

–for love is greater than faith.

1 Corinthians 13
[13] Now abides faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

And charity and love by which faith works, are one and the same thing.

In the opening words of this 13th chapter of *1 Corinthians*, the effect of trying to serve God without charity (or love) and the possibility of deception upon this point, are strikingly set forth.

1 Corinthians 13

[1] Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

[2] And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

[3] And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing.

Can a man, then, bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and give his body to be burned, and yet not have charity? Evidently, he can; or Paul would not have stated it as he did. The misguided fanatic or the deluded enthusiastic may outwardly go to the very extreme of self-denying labor for God, and yet be without that motive of love which would render his service acceptable. That love is the love of God, the love that comes from and has its origin in Him, and contains no human element in its composition. It is a love in which self is entirely lost.

Matthew 7

[21] Not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven.

[22] Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out devils? and in your name done many wonderful works?

[23] And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, you that work iniquity.

These have not been wanting in zeal, and outwardly they have made a very good showing in all respects, having "many wonder-

ful works" to their credit, which have no doubt brought them great admiration and reverence from their fellow-men. But there was something wrong with their hearts. The right motive was not there,—the faith working by love, which takes no account of self. Their plea gave evidence of this fact.

Matthew 7
[22] Lord, have *we* not prophesied in your name? have *we* not cast out devils? have *we* not done many wonderful works?

"We" is not the password into the gates of heaven; and "our wonderful works" are not good currency at the bank of Heaven, but only the basest counterfeit.

In that day, the righteous will base no claim upon themselves or anything they have done, or upon the great things accomplished by the religious organizations with which they have been connected. One thing alone will avail the candidate for a position at the right hand of God,—Jesus Christ and His righteousness, received and held by the faith which works by love.

1 Corinthians 13
[8] Charity never fails.

It will continue as long as God continues; for God himself is love. When this love is in the heart God is in the heart, and eternal life can never be separated from Him. This is the one acceptable motive in all work that is done for His name.

7. Prejudice

Present Truth, September 21, 1893

PREJUDICE is a decision of a biased jury rendered before any evidence has been offered. Morally, there would be no difference between the witness who perjured himself, and the juryman who took oath to be governed by the law and the testimony, and then made up his mind as to the guilt of the prisoner before evidence was heard. We are all sworn to be impartial.

No man can allow himself to be ruled by his prejudices in matters of religion without laying himself liable to the charge of stultification.[146] The man who resists Christ and His claims on some vulgar prejudice which he has imbibed he scarcely knows how, is a juryman bound by every solemn obligation to be fair and impartial, yet who, taking his seat with a preconceived view of which he has not tried to dispossess himself, is a perjurer.

[146] Stultification: the act of making something dull, ineffective, or pointless, or the state of being so made.

8. Christian Growth

Present Truth, November 30, 1893

GROWTH is the process of development by which that which is immature advances toward a state of perfection. Growth is as much a possibility and a necessity of spiritual life as of physical life. The spiritual life begins with a birth,—the "new birth." The individual is then a babe in Christ. Were he always to remain a babe he could not become a soldier of the cross, enduring hardness in the service of his Master.[147] He could not partake of the strong meat which, with the more simple "milk of the word," is provided in the Gospel of Christ.[148] From the condition of a babe, he must pass to that of the full stature of manhood in Christ; and this can only be done by growth.

What are the essentials to growth? Almost anyone can tell what is necessary to the growth of a plant, but scarcely anyone seems to understand what is necessary to development as a Christian. Yet it needs no greater effort to know what is necessary in the one case than in the other. A Christian is but a plant in the garden of the Lord; and spiritual plants, like any other plants, need plenty of water, good soil, and sunlight.

All these the Lord has provided for His garden, and it only remains for His plants to assimilate what they find. But there is a strange perversity about these plants of the human kind, that is not seen in the physical world. The Lord to the prophet Jeremiah complains of His people of old that though He had planted them…

Jeremiah 2

21 …a noble vine, wholly a right seed,

–yet they had…

21 …turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine;

[147] *2 Timothy* 2:3.
[148] *Hebrews* 5:12-14.

–and thus it is with many now who have enjoyed like privileges. There is no fault in the provision that God has made; but there is an evil principle which finds its way into the plant and perverts its nature, causing degeneracy and ultimate loss of all that is noble and good.

It is the nature of a plant to turn towards the sun; but in God's spiritual garden are seen some plants that try to grow in another way. There are some that try to grow by something inherent in themselves. Of course, no growth can be attained in this way. Imagine a plant trying to make itself grow, exerting itself,—if it could be capable of exertion—to become higher and stronger and to strike its roots more deeply into the soil! The idea is absurd; yet this is what many people think they must do in order to grow as Christians. But Christ said,

> **Luke 12**
> [25] Which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

Who would think of exerting himself in order to grow physically? It is true that exercise influences growth, but it is not the cause of growth, nor is there anything that man can do to cause it. The principle of development is in every human organization by nature, and asserts itself as a principle of all living beings; and all that man can do is to secure those conditions within which this principle can operate to the best good of the individual.

So it is in the spiritual world. The principle of growth is implanted by God at the new birth, and only needs right conditions to cause the babe in Christ to grow up to the full stature of Christian manhood. Man can interfere with this principle, and repress it, but he cannot create it. But the devil, who understands all this, continually sets men to work to try to make themselves grow by exertion. He would have men think that by taking thought and doing a large amount of good works they can add a cubit to their stature in Christ. And men try this plan, as they have been doing for ages in the past, and keep trying it until they find that it does

not work. They find that after years of such efforts, they are not any stronger Christians than they were at the start, nor reach higher up into the spiritual atmosphere of heaven. Then they become discouraged, and the devil, who knew what the result would be, comes and tempts them, and finds them ready to fall an easy prey to his devices.

But there is no impossibility in the way of Christian growth. The difficulty was, they did not understand the nature of that growth. They did not know the conditions under which alone it could take place. They were not instructed by that which God has revealed in His word and in nature. A plant grows and reaches up and becomes stronger without any exertion on its own part. It simply looks to the sun. It feels the vivifying influence of its rays, and reaches up toward the source from which they come. The whole process is simply an effort to get nearer to the source of its life. In the soil it finds water and the various elements that enter into its composition as a plant, and the principle of assimilation within it, which it has so long as it looks at the sun, draws up the substances through the roots and into the stem and leaves. The plant simply lets the process go on according to this law of assimilation which its Creator gave it.

So it must be with the plants in the heavenly garden. They cannot grow by looking at themselves; they cannot grow by looking at other plants around them. They must look at the sun. Neither must they exert themselves to assimilate that which is necessary to build them up and make them strong, but simply *let* the process of assimilation go on according to the "law of the Spirit of life"[149] that has been put within them.

Philippians 2
5 *Let* this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

–is the exhortation that is given us. It will be in us if we will let it. All God wants of any person is to *let* Him work in him.

[149] *Romans* 8:2.

Man is continually doing something to hinder God's work. He is continually putting self in God's way. He refuses to submit his will to God's will. And this is all the difficulty about living the Christian life. It is not a difficulty of performing works, but the difficulty of making the right choice, of yielding to God and not to self, of looking to Christ and not to something else, and of *letting* His mind and His spirit be in us. He is our Sun, the…

Malachi 4
[3] …Sun of Righteousness.

If we will look steadfastly at Him as the plant does at the sun that shines in the heavens, if we will make it our constant effort to turn toward Him as the plant does to the source of its life, and to reach up more and more toward the brightness of His face, we shall experience no difficulty in obtaining the full measure of growth that we desire.

But we need not expect to realize the fact that we are growing, any more than we can realize that we are growing physically by trying to note changes in our stature from day to day. If the plant should turn its head away from the sun to look at itself and see how fast it was growing, it would soon cease to grow; and just so with the Christian. When he tries to see himself growing spiritually he is taking one of the most effective means to stop his growth entirely.

There is no cause for discouragement therefore in the fact we do not at any time realize this process of growth. It is taking place just as truly as it takes place in the physical world, and we need not make the outcome a matter of anxious concern. The outcome will be that which the Apostle Paul describes in his letter to the Ephesians, for whom he prayed that they might be strengthened by the inward presence of the Spirit,

Ephesians 3
[17] …that you, been rooted and grounded in love,
[18] May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth and depth and height:

[19] And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be *filled with all the fullness of God.*

We are not told to grow in the knowledge of self or the knowledge of our sinfulness or that of our neighbors, but...

2 Peter 3
[18] ...in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We cannot know His grace and all His attributes unless we see them; and we cannot see them unless we look to Him.

9. Getting Rid of Self

Present Truth, January 4, 1894

IT IS quite generally recognized that "self" is the great thing that stands in the way of Christian progress, and that it must be denied and put away. Accordingly we hear people express the determination to get rid of self, so that the Lord may have a complete possession. But too many forget that they themselves cannot put away self. For it is obvious that when *self* attempts to put *self* away, *self* will remain all the time. *Self* is sin, and only Christ can put away sin. He has appeared to...

Hebrews 9
[26] ...put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Galatians 1
[4] He gave himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world.

Only the power by which He "emptied himself,"[150] can empty us of self. Let us rejoice that He is abundantly able to do it, and simply yield ourselves to Him, that He may work His own will in us.[151]

[150] *Philippians* 2:7 RV.
[151] *Hebrews* 13:21.

10. A Question of Yielding

Present Truth, January 18, 1894

THE worldling cannot see how believing the word of the Lord can make any actual difference in the life of the individual. The idea that a wicked man can be made righteous, and work that which is right by faith, seems to such a one preposterous. The cross of Christ is foolishness to the worldly wise, but it is nevertheless the very power of God.

Believing God is yielding to Him implicitly. Let us take a feeble illustration of what yielding will do, from the experience of those who are so thoughtless as to yield their wills into the hands of one having the powers of hypnotism. The subject is told that he cannot speak, and he cannot. He is told to sing, and the will of the operator uses the voice. And so it acts in everything, limited only by the power of the man directing. The secret of the matter is that the subject is fully yielded, and the will of another is working instead of his own.

Now the man who believes the Lord yields himself into the hands of the Lord, and the power of God works in him just in the measure that his will is yielded up. And the power of God is creative power; so that it is not simply a directing of what exists, but bringing forth of new power, of the new heart and the new life. Unless a person yields, he can never know that believing God makes any difference. And the reason why the sinner does not yield, and will not believe, is because he fears there really is a power in believing which will take from him some ways of self in which he wishes to indulge. But the man who yields to God wholly, with no reserve for self, knows that faith alone brings to him life that is not of himself, that works in him that which is not of his own doing. Read the 11th chapter of *Hebrews*, and see the effect that believing God has on the life. If you do not know that God's power is working in you day by day, be assured that you are not believing, not yielding.

11. A Living Temple

Present Truth, January 25, 1894

A wonderful house have I,
That God has made for me,
With windows to see the sky,
And keepers strong and free.
The door has a tuneful harp,
A mill to grind my bread,
And there is a golden bowl,
A beautiful silver thread.

HOW often we have read or sung these words, and been led to exclaimed, "Yes,"

Psalm 100
[3] It is He that has made us, and not we ourselves,

Psalm 139
[14] I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

But how often have we fully realized why God has given us this wonderful house? Why did God create you and me? Why has He placed us upon this earth? He himself tells us:

1 Corinthians 3
[16] Know you not that you are the *temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*
[17] If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

Again we read,

1 Corinthians 6
[19] What? know you not that *your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you*, which you have of God, and you are not your own?

Isaiah 43
[7] I have created him for my glory,

Job 33
[4] The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life.

Plainer still:

Job 27
[3] All the while my breath is in me, and the *Spirit of God* is in my nostrils.

When man was created, God breathed into him the "breath of life,"[152]—some of His own life, His own Spirit. 'Tis true He did the same for the beasts, for we read that man and beasts…

Ecclesiastes 3
[19] …have all one breath,

–but the Spirit was intended to do more for man than for the beast, for we read that only the…

Psalm 49
[20] Man that…understands not, is like the beasts that *perish*.

He that understands not is he that does not recognize this life as coming from God, and does not honor Him with it, for we read:

Job 28
[28] The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

But when man recognizes God's life in him and also the fact that his body is its temple, and allows it to live its own way in him, it works righteousness in him, even the righteousness of God. And righteousness is life, and the never-changing, eternal life of Christ. When such a one lies down in death, he does not perish as the beasts do, but he merely sleeps in Jesus. His eternal life is untouched, and unharmed, for…

Ecclesiastes 12
[7] …his spirit returns to God who gave it,

[152] *Genesis* 2:7.

Colossians 3
[3] ...[his] life is hid with Christ in God,

–until the resurrection morn when it will be restored to him. This is the reason for those words in:

1 John 5
[12] He that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

The one who does not recognize God's life in him and allow it to control him in everything, resists its purifying and life-giving power and thus brings eternal death upon himself instead of eternal life. He therefore shall...

John 3
[6] ...not see life.

Now we read:

Malachi 3
[1] Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple...
[2] But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appears? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap.

Romans 13
[12] The night is far spent, the day is at hand!

Oh, in what condition will He find your heart temple and mine? Will He say to us as He did to the priests in Jerusalem,

Matthew 21
[13] My house shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves?

Is our body...

Revelation 18
[2] ...the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird?

Is it a temple in ruins, with the lamps extinct, the altar overturned, the mercy seat displaced by a throne for the prince of darkness, the fragrant incense exchanged for a stench, and the order and purity for confusion and filth?

God forbid! Let us speedily…

1 Peter 3

15 …sanctify the Lord God in our hearts.

Let us recognize our high calling in Christ Jesus and allow His life which is in us to indeed make us holy temples for the Holy Ghost.

12. God Not Limited

Present Truth, February 1, 1894

IN A review of the past year, we read:

> Whatever God may or may not have done for us this past year, He has certainly done all that He could be expected to do in view of the material with which He has to work.

If the thought here suggested were true, namely, that God is limited in His work by the material at His hand, it would be most discouraging; for He will never have any better material of which to make saints than He now has. It is to the glory of God that He can do great things with the poorest and most unpromising material.

1 Corinthians 1
[28] Base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are.

Nothing is too hard for Him, for He is the Creator. If we are but willing, and continually willing, He can and will take us at our lowest state, and make us…

Ephesians 1
[6] To the praise of the glory of His grace.

13. I Want To Be the Lord's

Present Truth, February 1, 1894

"I want to be the Lord's."

YOU do not *want to be* the Lord's unless you *are* the Lord's, for the Lord wants you to be His so much that He gave himself for you; and the only thing that ever kept you from Him was your unwillingness.

"I want to serve the Lord."

You do not *want to* serve Him unless you *are* serving Him.

Romans 6
[16] To whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are.

The enemy is simply deceiving you. Satan has deceived multitudes of souls, and is still deceiving, making them satisfied with the *want* to live the Christian life instead of the Christian life. People have thought,

"If we can only want and keep wanting, and let the Lord and the people know that we want everything that is good, want the Lord to dwell with us, and want to serve Him, what more could be asked than that?"

There is a good deal more we could ask for. I am hungry; I want something to eat. What more could you ask? Food is better than that. Eating is a good deal more satisfactory than wanting to eat. To want to eat is dissatisfaction. When a man is hungry and wants to eat, there is nothing in the world that will satisfy him but something to eat. The man who is always *wanting* to serve the Lord, will be "found wanting"[153] at last.

The Lord says there is no want to them that fear Him, for He supplies the want.

[153] *Daniel* 5:27.

Psalm 23
[5] You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

Satan is round about us seeking to destroy us. Yes; and the enemy has dominion in ourselves, in the evil that is in our hearts. Yet the Lord prepares the table before us. That presents a picture of wonderful confidence in God. The enemy is raging around us, while we sit down to eat with the Lord, and have a good feast. The Lord has provided the table, and says we are to eat.

"Yes, Lord, but here is the enemy coming."

"Never mind; eat."

What is the food that is prepared in the presence of the enemy?

John 6
[57] As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eats me, even he shall live by me.

Eat Him. Take Him into the inmost being, and there is life. Then He gives the victory. He is the victory. He is our strength. He satisfies the desire of every living thing.[154]

Philippians 4
[19] My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory.

[154] *Psalm* 145:16.

14. The Song in the Heart

Present Truth, February 8, 1894

OFTEN those who are glad in the Lord for the revelation of what He is to all men, feel diffident about telling of His goodness, because they feel unable to frame their thoughts in words. It is like the tune, the air of which runs in the mind, but which the person cannot sing audibly. But the apostle speaks of:

> **Ephesians 5**
> [19] ...singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

God understands the language of the heart.

We read that the saved sang a new song before the throne, which none could learn except those who had gone through that experience. Sometimes the trouble is that when we sing the Lord's song, we want to put it into our own words. But He furnishes the music, and He will furnish the words also. Let Him do it. So if we cannot sing that song in the words we would choose, let Him put the words in our mouth.

Perhaps it may not sound so finished and elegant in phrase, but sometimes the Lord will let us be fools for His sake. Let it be so. Sometimes we interfere with the Lord. He fills our heart with a song of joy and gladness, and we attempt to sing it in our own way, instead of in His way. David said,

> **Psalm 40**
> [3] He has put a new song in my mouth.

The Lord put it there. Suppose David had said,

> "Lord, these are not just the words I was going to use; I think it ought to be put in this way."

Just leave the Lord free, and He will make it all right. He who is a fool for the Lord's sake is a blessed one.[155]

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[155] *1 Corinthians* 1:27.

We have all heard those simple, broken testimonies that came with more power and did more good than the most finished exhortations. It came from the heart, and it was the power of the life of God in them that was manifest. One of the most eloquent testimonies we remember was one where the individual could not speak a word. The heart was too full for expression. The Spirit of the Lord understood the language of the heart, and translated it into language that all who knew the voice of the Spirit could understand.

15. Making Mistakes

Present Truth, February 8, 1894

THE fact that God dwells in an individual, as He does in every one that believes on the name of Jesus, does not preclude that individual from exhibiting the limitations of humanity. It keeps him from sin, but not from all the mistakes that arise from the limitations of human vision and judgment.

The mystery of godliness is God in man,—God manifested in the life of righteousness and man manifested in the frailties of the flesh. The one contrasts with the other, and by the very contrast it is manifest that the life is not of man, but of God; and that to Him alone belongs the glory.

16. The Power of the Cross

Present Truth, February 8, 1894

THE power of the cross is love; but the love of God is the life of God; for...

1 John 4
[8] God is love.

God was in Christ reconciling us to himself, and in the cross it is that He gives us His life. Failure to realize this, is the reason we have failed many times in the crosses we have borne. We bore crosses separated from Christ, and therefore the power in the cross was only the power in our own lives. It was nothing.

But when we are crucified with Christ, and thus bear the cross with Him, we get the power of the cross, which is the power of the life of Christ. It was a power that all the hosts of Satan could not affect. It was a power that Satan could not hold in the grave.

So when the cross comes, if we share it with Christ, then the power of the cross to us is the power of His endless life.

17. Counting It Joy

Present Truth, February 8, 1894

CHRIST is crucified, and as He dwells in the heart by faith,[156] His cross is set up in every heart. So we may…

James 1
[2] …count it all joy when we fall into divers temptation;

–because being crucified with Him, His life is with us, and by His life the temptations are met. And…

Psalm 16
[11] In His presence there is fullness of joy.

There is joy in the overcoming of temptations. It is the joy of life.

Hebrews 12
[2] For the joy that was set before Him [Christ] endured the cross.

With the joy set before us, we may endure the cross with Him. Only let us not make the mistake of trying to bear the cross and leave Christ out.

[156] *Ephesians* 3:17.

18. Courage

Present Truth, March 8, 1894

THE worldling may associate gentleness and meekness with lack of firmness and strength; but in this is shown only the folly of worldly wisdom. Love vaunts not itself and makes no display that appeals to the senses and passions, but it is an element that stands firm when all else is shaken. The Christian character is the firmest and most unyielding thing in this world; because it is the life of Christ within, the power that upholds all things,[157] the word indwelling which stands though heaven and earth pass away.

Proverbs 16
[32] He that rules his own spirit, is better than he that takes a city.

Mere physical courage cannot fathom or comprehend moral courage. Many a soldier who is nourished by the peculiar fighting passion of the battle field to engage superior numbers or storm a battery amidst a shower of shot and shell, has been too great a coward to yield to the convictions within that told him he ought to read his Bible and pray, even though his companions showered ridicule and harmless abuse upon him. Physical courage may enable a man to kill somebody else, but only moral courage strengthens him to crucify the flesh with its lusts and ways. True courage is of God; wars and fightings are of the devil.

No such battle was ever fought, and no such courage ever required as in the Christian warfare, which is waged…

Ephesians 6
[12] …not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,
against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,
against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The strength for this battle is given of God, and with it the courage of God. It is strength and courage every hour for the con-

[157] *Hebrews* 1:3.

flict with sin. One who fights this battle, and allows the Lord to lead him as He pleases, will not be engaged in fighting against the flesh of others. There will be no time when he can draw off his forces to combat somebody else.

The man who yields most fully to the gentle life of the Lord will be firmest in standing for that which is right and truth. With Christ he can say,

> **Isaiah 50**
> [7] The Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

The lack of firmness and strength, and the timidity, is not because of humility and meekness, but is an evidence that we have not learned to distrust ourselves and put our trust in God. Christ said,

> **Hebrews 2**
> [13] I will put my trust in Him,

And to us is given "the faith of Jesus,"[158] the same trust, that like Him our faces may be set like a flint, and that like Him also there may be nothing of hardness in the disposition, but only gentleness, meekness, love.

[158] *Revelation* 14:12.

19. Your Choice

Present Truth, March 29, 1894

THE Christian life is a life of choosing that which is right and good and refusing that which is wrong.

When temptation comes to you, you have the privilege of choosing between your Saviour and that to which you are urged by the temptation.

Choosing Him, you will be chosen by Him, and He will make himself more precious to you than any selfish thing, and keep you by His power from all evil.

20. Nothing to Boast About

Present Truth, May 3, 1894
Original title: Front Page

WHEN a man boasts of what his ancestors did, it may be set down as a pretty sure thing that he himself has never done anything of which one could boast.

For the fact that he boasts of his ancestry, shows that he is a boaster, and no boaster will pass himself by for another, except in extreme necessity.

21. The Power of the Tongue

Present Truth, May 10, 1894

MEN are usually very careful in handling things that have great power.

- A steam engine or an electric dynamo is not a thing to be set going by any careless, inexperienced novice.
- A case of dynamite is not usually tumbled about in a careless manner, and left to come into chance contact with external forces.
- A lion is not turned loose to roam through the streets at large.
- The helm of a ship is not left to be manipulated haphazard by crew or passengers.

But in the use of the tongue, people throw aside all thought and all restraint, and let it do its work as it will. Yet,

> **Proverbs 18**
> [21] Death and life are in the power of the tongue,

–no less than in dynamite or the steam motor or the beast of prey.

Doubtless more care would be exercised in the use of the tongue if individuals realized the extent to which their own interests, as well as those of others, are affected by their words. An individual's words are the measure of his worth. They measure his character, not only in the eyes of men, but of God; and therefore the Scripture says,

> **Matthew 12**
> [37] By your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.

And James writes,

James 3

[2] If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

But if the tongue is evil, the body cannot be good. The whole body is affected with this one member. Though the result be not immediately seen or felt, it is registered on the soul, and sooner or later must be taken into account. As well might a person allow his body to be maltreated at the will of some reckless tyrant as to indulge a thoughtless and reckless tongue. The effect in either case would be very much the same in the end.

God has invited men to take Him at His word; and He in like manner expects to take men at their word. Therefore it behooves every person to abide by his word, and to tell the truth. Just what our word is worth, that we are worth. With what confidence could we approach God, if His word had ever failed? If such a thing should occur, He would at once sink down from the place of Deity. The throne of Omnipotence would be vacant. By His word He upholds all things, and His eternal power and Godhead stand or fall with it. And when a man utters that which is not true, or which he fails to fulfill, he lowers himself to the level of vanity and foolishness. He marks up the measure of himself, which God will use in the judgment.

The Psalmist writes,

Psalm 15

[1] Lord, who shall abide in your tabernacle? Who shall dwell in your holy hill?

[2] He that walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart.

[3] He that backbites not with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor.

[4] ...He that swears to his own hurt, and changes not.

As the helm controls the ship, so the tongue controls and carries with it the whole body. A lying tongue will go into the lake

of fire, but it will take the body with it.[159] While some men may view lying as an occasional necessity, it is not so in the eyes of the Lord. While men depend upon Him, the same power that upholds Him in the truth will uphold them. Men are not to speak idly, without particular thought of the truthfulness or import of their words. He who trifles with the tongue, trifles with life and death.

The power of the tongue is one which affects the individual who wields it more than it can affect anyone else. Though it may shoot barbed arrows that cause pain and sorrow in other hearts, their deadliest poison is imparted to the place from whence they came. No greater folly can actuate the mind than that which leads a person to seek revenge on others by poisonous words. They may cause some injury to the one against whom they are spoken, but they must inevitably be more injurious to the speaker. What folly to roil the stream from which we think others must drink, by stirring up filthy and mire within our own minds!

Moses made the greatest mistake of his life when, at the rock at Horeb,

Psalm 106
[33] ...he spoke unadvisedly with his lips.

Ananias made the greatest mistake in his when, in reply to Peter's question, he dared to utter a lie.[160] Such examples might well be kept before the minds of the people of this generation.

Psalm 34
[12] What man is he that desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good?
[13] Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile.

The tongue is a mighty power for good when it is used in the cause of truth. By the blood of Christ and the word of his testi-

[159] *Revelation* 21:8.
[160] *Acts* 5:1-10.

mony the Christian overcomes Satan, witnessing as Christ did before Pilate, "a good confession,"[161] for...

Romans 10
[10] ...with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

This is the use appointed the tongue by its Creator.

22. A Spectacle unto Angels

Present Truth, May 17, 1894

THE believer who first of all counts the costs, and decides that the Christian life is worth the price, need not be troubled at every new step by thoughts of what the world will say, or what friends will think. If he follows the Lord, yielding to His word, he will assuredly be called peculiar by the world; but...

Titus 2
[14] [Christ] gave himself for us, that He might...purify unto himself a peculiar people.

The person who is unable to bear the reproach of unlikeness to the world, really shrinks from bearing the glory of the likeness unto Christ.

The seriousness of the Christian life will overcome this thought of what people may say, if the follower of the Lord will constantly remember it. That actor playing on the stage to amuse the audience, or the man engaged in any exercise for money or applause, very naturally thinks of the approval of the spectators. But one having the very life at stake has no thought for his surroundings. Then with more than this life at stake, with eternal life as the thing to be laid hold upon, who that thinks soberly of the issue can let the opinions of the world, and the fear of man's disap-

[161] *1 Timothy* 6:13.

proval or contempt, weigh for a moment in deciding to follow that which the Lord declares to be truth?

It is true that the Christian is a spectacle to the world, but it is encouraging to remember that we are also a spectacle to angels.

1 Corinthians 4
[9] ...for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

Let that soul that hesitates in deciding for the Lord because of the words or taunts of men, think of the heavenly spectators rather than the earthly. The approval of heaven is to be weighed against the applause of the world.

The Christian life is a wonderful stage. The Lord is working out through simple men the mystery of His Gospel, and by the power of that Gospel enfeebled, fallen beings, and fallen angels are learning more and more of the mystery of God. The Gospel is proclaimed,

Ephesians 3
[10] To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God.

The church of Jesus Christ, and every follower of Jesus, is to be a revelation to the angels of the power of redeeming grace. No wonder, then, that, the apostle should say,

Ephesians 4
[1] I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called.

It is a tremendously responsible calling to stand forth as an object lesson, in this life's span of ours, to show to principalities and powers the glory of the Lord, who has called us out of darkness for this end. One who lives in the conscientiousness of this will not ask what the world will think, but only what God says. In Christ's day the great majority, even of those who professed the service of God,

John 12
43 ...loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Every believer who finds the light that is sown in the word for the righteous will continually have to choose between these two; but what are the praises of men to the praise of God? Forget the presence of men in the sacredness of God's presence, and instead of acting for the pleasure of men, think of the host of angels that excel in strength and power, who yet are watching these lives of ours to see the operation of the Gospel. Oh, it is a wicked thing to be ashamed of God, and deny His power because the path He points out leads us out of the broad way along which men delight to go.

23. Ignore Him

Present Truth, July 12, 1894

IT IS the privilege and the duty of every person to ignore Satan and his evil hosts in all the affairs of life. Not that we should ignore the fact of his existence, or that of his going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; but we should ignore *him*. He is constantly seeking to hold communication with us, in order that he may deceive or discourage us in our spiritual undertakings. He is a constant meddler in all our affairs pertaining to our relation to God, and he should be treated as such. His suggestions should not be listened to, or his authority or power recognized. To parley with him is of no possible use, for we can never convince or persuade him, while He only too often persuades us thereby. We can ignore him by...

Hebrews 12
2 ...looking unto Jesus,

–whose glory and loveliness have power to charm the eye and can take hold on the affections of the heart.

24. Getting Angry

Present Truth, July 19, 1894

NEARLY everyone knows by experience that it is a bad thing physically to allow feelings of anger to rage inside the heart, whether the feelings are directly expressed or not. Impatience and forgetfulness make many people old before their time. Madame Modjeska recently said:

> I cannot afford to get angry. A woman at my time of life must economize her emotions and her nerves if she wants to hold the remnants of her youth and beauty.

Anger means physical ill, but, worse than that it means also spiritual death. The light was an unnatural one on Stephen's face, when the council saw it,

> **Acts 6**
> [15] ...as it were the face of an angel,

–but his face would not have shown as the face of an angel if he had one trace of anger and bitterness in his heart toward those who were about to martyr him for his testimony.

25. The Cross of Christ

Apples of Gold Library, No. 15
August 1894

THE failure with many people is that they make a distinction between the cross of Christ and their own crosses. There is no cross that comes to any person on earth, except the cross of Christ. If we will always remember this, it will be life and joy to us.

The Lord does not give us some crosses of our own,—little crosses adapted to different ones,—one having one cross and another a different one. We cannot separate Christ from His cross. Christ is crucified; He is the only crucified one; therefore whatever cross comes to us must be the cross of Christ; and that cross is with us continually. But in the cross of Christ we find Christ himself.

Union with God by the Cross

What do we get through the cross? Forgiveness of sins, reconciliation.

> **1 Peter 3**
> [18] Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

> **Ephesians 2**
> [16] That He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross.

It is the cross, then, that unites us to God, and makes us one with Him. Everything then that is a real cross is life to us, because it brings us to God. Take the things that come to us; new duties, perhaps, are revealed to us; sins, it may be, are shown to us, that must be denied. Different things come up that cut directly across our habits and our own way and convenience. We can take them in a hard and cheerless way, groaning over our religion, and giving everybody that comes near the idea that it does not agree with us, but that we must endure the service of Christ, hoping

that by and by we shall get something better, when we get out of this grinding service. Or we can find joy in the cross, and salvation and peace and rest, by recognizing that cross as the cross of Christ.

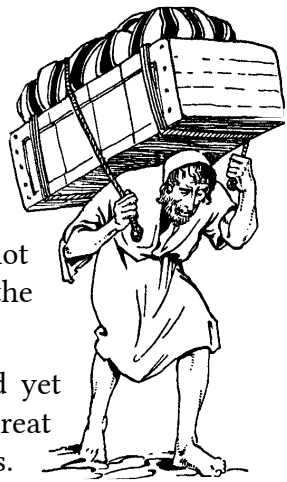
The Cross Without Christ

Suppose we are stingy. Well, we have to make sacrifices for the cause of God, and so we know we must give something. We groan over it, and shrink from it, but finally by dint of hard work, will manage to give something. Then we think afterwards of what a hard cross we have borne.

Or take the Sabbath as a typical case. To keep the Lord's Sabbath is very inconvenient for our business, and we perhaps stumble over that cross a long time. But there it is plainly before us:

> **Exodus 20**
> [10] The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

If we do not keep the Sabbath, we are afraid we shall be lost. So in order to save ourselves from destruction, we agree to keep the Sabbath. It is a weekly cross, and we are always thinking of the inconvenience and hardship. Surely it must be we shall get credit for that because it is so hard to do. Not so; when we take it that way it is our own cross, with Christ left out; and there is no salvation except in the cross of Christ.



With a thousand other things it is the same. We mourn over them, and it is only by will power that we force ourselves up to the rack, and take the bitter medicine, consoling ourselves with the thought that by and by all this will be ended. We shall not have such hard times when we get into the kingdom.

Possibly we put this rather strongly and yet this is the idea of the Christian life with a great many people who profess to be Christians.

We sing of the "resting by and by," and of joys to come, giving the world the idea that there is no joy in the present. The idea held so commonly is that the harder the cross is, the more joy there will be when it is done with.

Pagan and Papal Penance

That is not Christianity at all. It is heathenism. How much more Christianity is there in that than in the case of the man who puts pebbles into his boots and goes on a pilgrimage, so that the worse he can make himself feel now, the better he will feel when his journey is ended? The only difference is in the sort of penance we endure. We take this duty and that as scourges with which to afflict ourselves, thinking we are working out everlasting joy for ourselves by and by.

We have all done more or less of this. It is human nature. That is the devil's way of deceiving people. He does not care how many crosses we endure. In fact, he must thoroughly enjoy seeing people groaning over their religion, and having a hard time of it generally.

Now all these things we have been laboring over may be things that God requires us to do. He doesn't require us to scourge ourselves with whips, or to go on pilgrimages on our knees; but the only difference between ourselves, when we have made burdens of our duties, and the man who has scourged himself or worn a hair shirt, is that we make our penances out of those things which God requires, and he makes his out of those things which the Lord has not required. Yet we have thought we were better than he!

Opposition to Christ

Both classes are trying to put up a cross that would take the place of the cross of Christ. People ask the Lord to accept their offering for sin. Every cross men bear in that way is hard. If that were all that is in the cross, those crosses ought to have served the purpose; for they were bitter and cruel enough. Then there must be

something else in the cross besides hardness. Popularly the idea is that anything that is a discomfort, that a person doesn't like to do, is a cross, and some men perform their duties as the Catholic wears his hair shirts, to make themselves uncomfortable all the time.

It makes no difference how much people talk about the Lord; how much they say they believe in Christ; how much they call themselves Christians; the setting up of a cross aside from the cross of Christ, is opposition to Christ. Although there is much about Christ and much about crosses, in Roman Catholicism, we know that in the system itself there is none of Christ. Of course many individual Catholics have Christ, and many more would gladly know of Him; but, as a system, with its penances put upon the people, we know that Catholicism tends to eclipse and shut out the cross of Christ; so that each individual is virtually to have his own cross, and atone for his own sins. In many cases the individual is deluded with the idea that what he is enduring is the cross of Christ, and that is worse yet.

Now thousands of professed Protestants are doing what amounts to the same thing, and yet all the time they are preaching and talking against the papacy. These crosses, men have thought, were going to bring them nearer the Lord. The idea has been, "No cross no crown;" the more we suffer, the more we shall enjoy by and by. This is the time of suffering; by and by we shall have the time of enjoyment. So we will endure it. Certainly, we thought, these crosses will bring us nearer to God.

But as a matter of fact, try as hard as we could, even at things that were right in themselves, we couldn't get nearer to the Lord than before. We were always wanting to get nearer, and yet finding ourselves afar off. Then we did not have Christ in the cross, although we persuaded ourselves that we were believing in Christ and bearing His cross. For if we had Christ in the crosses that we bore, we should have been brought near to God. The trouble was

that we had a cross in the place of the cross of Christ,—a substitute for it.

Self in Place of Christ

Who was on that cross? Self. The power of the cross of Christ is the power of His life, the power of an endless life. The power in our crosses was only the power of our own life, which is nothing, and could not bring us nearer to God. We were crucifying ourselves on our own crosses; and as we thought that those crosses were the cross of Christ, we were putting ourselves in the place of Christ. We were very Antichrist ourselves! And all the time we were doing that, we were throwing stones at the Pope. Christ said those who were without sin might throw stones; and whoever indulges in stone-throwing, thereby tacitly proclaims himself to be sinless.

And those who do as described above are claiming that very thing; because the cross is a sacrifice for sin, and atonement for it, and they are "bearing the cross."

> "Didn't we do this duty? Didn't we perform that uncomfortable service? Didn't we deny ourselves?"

And thus by all these crosses, had we not, in our own minds, freed ourselves from sin, so that we could throw stones at other people? Again we put the case rather strongly, perhaps, and yet we are assured that we are giving the experience of the natural heart. Many who have found Christ indeed testify to these old experiences, and there are many who are living through these experiences now, and are finding the way hard and wearisome and deceitful.

Only One Cross

There is only one actual cross in the world, and that is the cross of Jesus Christ.

> **Matthew 16**
> [24] If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

We have often thought we were denying self, when we were only building self up; we were putting ourselves in the place of Christ. Our talk of self-denial was but Pharisaism. People are apt to get a wrong idea of what a Pharisee was. The word "Pharisee" denoted one who was "separated." They were the separated ones, zealous for the law, and for God, as they supposed. They were not bad as people saw them. The observer might find nothing crooked in the outward life of Saul, the Pharisees; before men he was blameless. But when he came to himself he saw that he was all sin. There is no writer who states the depravity of human nature so vividly as the Apostle Paul. While it was all written by inspiration, he wrote what he had experienced. When he told of the wonderful grace of God, he told exactly of that grace that had been revealed to him, as chief of sinners; for the man who sins and calls it righteousness, is of all sinners the chief.

Knowing Christ

The question for everyone is,

> "Do you know that Christ lives in you? Are you joined to Him?"

There are many who are workers for Him professedly, who dare not say that Christ lives in them; they do not know that Christ is one with them. When we were bearing crosses after the manner we have described, we could not say,

> "Christ lives in me."

So we were separated from Him, and thus separated from His cross. It was self in the place of Christ,

> **2 Timothy 3**
> [5] ...a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,

–for the power of godliness is the cross of Christ. We denied the cross of Christ, and so denied the power of the gospel.

We are not crucified with Christ except we are one with Him in the crucifixion. He must be identified with us in the cross; for it is

His. There is no crucifixion of the man that amounts to anything unless he is crucified with Christ. Crucified together with Him, there is virtue to us, because we get the virtue that is in Christ. That virtue is freedom, separation from sin, and redemption, life, joy, peace. So it is not so difficult a thing to bear the cross when we are crucified with Christ. He is with us and in us. Now it is Christ enduring the cross, and to us there is joy in the Lord in it. Christ has made peace for us through the blood of His cross.

Christ was crucified for sin. There was no cross except for sin. He bore our sins. There is wonderful joy that comes to us in this, that while we are yet in sin we are permitted to claim Christ as ours, and to say,

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

If we could not assert this with all assurance while yet sinners, we never could assert it. But while in sin we may claim Christ as ours, and that He is in us. We know it because the Holy Ghost says that it is so. To the man who believes the Lord and dares assert it, it is everlasting strength.

Ephesians 2
[4] God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,
[5] Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ.

We could not be quickened or made alive together, unless dead together. So Christ identifies himself with us in death, even the death in trespasses and sins, and it is He who bears the burden in His own body on the cross; and while we are crucified with Him we also live with Him, delivered from sin.

Saved by the Life

Christ is the present Saviour of all men. He is the…

Revelation 13
[8] …Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

John says,

1 John 2
[1] If any man sin, we have an Advocate [or Comforter] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;
[2] And He is the propitiation [sacrifice] for our sins.

Romans 3
[25] Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation [sacrifice] through faith in His blood.

His blood is now shed for us; He is now lifted up for us. The knowledge that the cross is set up in every heart, that He is crucified for us, makes a delight of the crosses which come to us, all the burdens to be born, all the habits to be given up, which are as taking our life, because they are our life. The knowledge that now Christ is crucified for us, that now are we crucified with Him, not in fancy but in fact, makes the presence of the cross a joy to us, for there we find Christ, and are brought into fellowship with His death, and live with Him. Being reconciled by His blood, we know we shall be saved by His life.

To take up the cross is to take Him. To deny self is to own Him. To crucify self indeed is to take His life, and the life we live with Him is not one of hardness and discomfort, and the performance of disagreeable duties for the sake of joy by and by, but it is the constant springing up of life and joy; so that with joy, and not groaning, we draw water from the wells of salvation.

It makes all the difference when we have His cross.

Isaiah 51
[11] Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head.



Paul chooses the Cross of Christ

26. Weakness and Strength

Present Truth, November 1, 1894

WHEN men are strong then they are also weak; and they are weak in the very point wherein lies their strength. Were this not so, they would have something of their own wherein to glory. Men are very apt to pride themselves on their "strong points;" but such points are strong only in comparison with other points in their own character which are weaker. Compared with the power of the forces of evil, men have no strength, but can manifest only varying degrees of weakness.

It is upon these "strong points" that men make their greatest moral failures.

- Peter's strong point was his boldness; but behold him cowering in the judgment hall, afraid to confess his Lord!
- Solomon was the wisest man on the earth; but what more pitiable exhibition of folly could there be than the king of Israel surrounded by seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, hearkening to their counsel and leading the people of God into idolatry!
- Moses' strong point was his meekness; but we find him at Meribah saying to the multitude, "Hear now, you rebels; must *we* bring you water out of this rock?"[162]

Men naturally trust in their "strong" points, and every man is weak when he trusts in himself. We speak about "guarding our weak points;" but our strong points need guarding just as much. Our weak points include our strong ones. We have nothing but weak points. Whatever point it is that we trust in, that point especially is weak. And we are not guarding the weak points unless we are guarding every point. But we must remember that it is not our resolutions, our will, or our vigilance that guards us, but our faith.

[162] *Numbers* 20:10.

Ephesians 6
[16] ...the shield of faith [is what] quenches the fiery darts of the wicked.

The armor that is prepared for us is not of human manufacture, but is such as God himself has made in His own wisdom, and endowed with His own strength.

But we need not be discouraged because we find ourselves weak where we had fancied ourselves strong, for our dependence is not self, but God; and depending on Him, we are strong where we are weak. This was the experience of Paul, as he wrote to the Corinthians.[163] We only need to unite our weakness to God's strength. Then, like the apostle, we can...

2 Corinthians 12
[10] ...take pleasure in infirmities, and reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake.

God has to reveal to every man his weakness before He can save him. The devil, on the other hand, leads men to think themselves strong in order that, by trusting in themselves, they may fall and be ruined. When we feel strong, the admonition is,

1 Corinthians 10
[12] Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

But when we feel weak, too weak to do anything of ourselves, we are in a position to gain the victory. The danger is that we will not feel weak enough; for men in their weakest moments have strength enough to resist the Holy Spirit and prevent God from working in them. If we are weak enough to yield entirely to the Lord, we then, for those purposes for which we need strength, become as strong as the Lord himself.

[163] *2 Corinthians* 12:10.

27. The Way of Escape

Present Truth, January 3, 1895

IT IS the will of God that men should live without sin, and He has made provision that they may do so. We are inclined to think that at times we cannot help being overcome, but this is a mistake. Paul writes,

> **1 Corinthians 10**
> [13] There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to men; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

The way is there; the only trouble is that we fail to see it. We look at the temptation, we look at ourselves, and we seem to be hopelessly trapped. Ah, we do not see Christ! He is the way of escape. There is no sin in that Way. We have but to see and fly to it, and we are safe. It is only when we look away from Him that danger comes.

28. Looking Backward

Present Truth, February 21, 1895
Proverbs 4:18

THIS is one point in which the Christian life is distinguished from the life of the world. The Christian has no occasion to look behind him. He may have passed the days of youth, when his body was sound and vigorous, or the period when prosperity smiled upon him with an abundance of temporal blessings; but still he has not to look mournfully back to the joys of other days. His joy remains the same as before; the brightness of his life has not grown dim, because it comes from before him.

Proverbs 4
[18] The path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.

The climax of his hopes and of his efforts have not been reached and passed, as with the worldly man; but he is ever attaining to the high and glorious purpose of his existence. It matters not if dark days and trying ordeals may have been met, which would cast a gloom over all the future of a career built upon worldly wealth and fame. No sorrows can bind him with their chains. The rule of his life is,

Philippians 3
[13] Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
[14] I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

There are many things which it is pleasant to forget, and the Christian life provides that all shall be forgotten that is painful and evil. The time is coming when God will create a new earth, and…

Isaiah 65
[17] …the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind;

–a time when God will fulfill His word concerning His people, that…

Hebrews 8
[12] …their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

When God will not remember our sins, none of us will be able to remember them. And even now,

Philippians 3
[14] …the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,

–shines so brightly before us, that in the sight of it we count the pain and sorrow of this life as…

2 Corinthians 4
[17] …light afflictions, which are but for a moment.

29. Guarding Reputation

Present Truth, February 28, 1895

THE man who sets himself the task of jealously guarding his reputation, has a job that will last him a lifetime, and which will give them no opportunity to do anything else. He must needs keep himself informed of everything that everybody says about him, and must give diligence to correct every erroneous statement. The life of such a man must be a burden to himself; most certainly it is to everybody else.

30. Satisfaction

Signs of the Times, April 25, 1895

Isaiah 48
[22] There is no peace, says the Lord, unto the wicked.

Isaiah 57
[20] The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

James 4
[1] From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?
[2] You lust, and have not: you kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; you fight and war, yet you have not, because you ask not.
[3] You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts.

THIS is a description of man by nature. Everywhere we find unrest and dissatisfaction. The poor have no cause to envy the rich, for discontent is found in the mansions as well as in the hovel. Those in any station of life who are perfectly contented, are in a very small minority. Everywhere we see people working for happiness in various ways, vainly confident that they will find it if they pursue the object of their desires for enough.

Although these longings are so often for things forbidden, and for that which only increases the dissatisfaction, it is God himself who has implanted this in the human heart. It is not that God has caused men to desire unlawful things, but that the desire of unlawful things is only the perversion of a desire which God himself has planted in man.

God is a bounteous provider. He scatters His benefits with a lavish hand. He desires that men should enjoy the abundance which His love has prepared, and that they should be satisfied. He is no niggard, neither is He a tyrant. He knows what will perfectly satisfy every soul, yet He never attempts to compel anyone to find satisfaction in His way. He knows that no one can be satisfied under compulsion, and that even that which is real will not

satisfy unless it is the individual's own choice. So He gives every one full liberty to choose whatever he will.

Jesus Christ is…

Habakkuk 2
[7] …the Desire of all nations.

There are comparatively few of the people in the world who know Him and who recognize Him as the object of their desire, but it is a fact that all the varied longings of the human heart can be satisfied in Christ, and in Him alone. God has implanted desires in every soul which can be satisfied only by the possession of Christ, then, they may see in Him the object of their desires and be drawn to Him. The devil's work is to deceive people with the thought that those desires may be satisfied in some other way than by the possession of Christ.

David was a man of like passions with other men. His flesh was sinful, and as full of evil desires as any other human flesh. Yet when the Spirit enlightened his understanding, he said,

Psalm 62
[1] O God, you are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.

And again:

Psalm 84
[2] My heart and my flesh cries out for the living God.

How can it be made to appear that the appetites and lusts of the flesh are really the crying out of the flesh after God? Simply by the fact that no man was ever yet satisfied by the indulgence of fleshly appetites and lusts. The drunkard drinks to satisfy a craving that is never satisfied. The vicious and licentious man, in common with the miser, finds no satisfaction in the gratification of his passion. The reason why he follows the lusts of the flesh so eagerly, is that they make him their slave, deluding him with the idea that the next time he will find that complete satisfaction

which evades him this time. The Lord, knowing that He alone can give the soul perfect and complete satisfaction, calls to us, saying,

> **Isaiah 55**
> [2] Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfies not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

What are we to eat? The flesh of Christ, which is true meat. Of those who obey the call, and eat of His fullness, it is said:

> **Psalm 36**
> [8] They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of your house; and You shall make them drink of the river of your pleasures.

What a wonderful God is ours! How tender, and loving, and thoughtful! What wonderful provision He has made for the salvation of every soul! He has so constituted man that he cannot find peace and rest outside of himself; for the reason that everything outside of Him is death, and in Him alone is life and safety. Those unsatisfied longings of weary hearts are but a proof of the tender, loving care of the Father above, in that He will not leave any of His children without continually reminding them of the fullness that He has to bestow; for every want felt by mankind is but the announcement, if they would recognize it so, of the fact that God has something which He wishes to give us,—something which will satisfy the want. Only at His hand can "the desire of every living thing" be satisfied.[164]

Thus God has provided comfort for us, even from our very weaknesses and lusts. Here is help for the tempted. No matter how much the flesh cries out for sinful pleasure, we may be assured that those things are "deceitful lusts,"[165] that will not give the satisfaction they promise; and then the comfort comes in the knowledge of the fact that the longing is in reality for Christ, and

[164] *Psalm* 145:16.
[165] *Ephesians* 4:22.

that by accepting Him for all that He is, the desire will be satisfied. There is life and victory in that. Knowing that, we may count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, because with the very temptation, He provides the way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. Then we shall be able to sing:

O Christ, in Thee my soul has found,
And found in Thee alone,
The peace, the joy, I sought so long.
The bliss till now unknown.

Now none but Christ can satisfy;
None other name for me;
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in Thee.[166]

[166] Frances Bevan, *None But Christ Can Satisfy.*

31. The Waves and the Rock

Signs of the Times, August 15, 1895

IT IS impossible to imagine what some of the song writers would do if they were shut off from likening the Christian life to a voyage upon the ocean, and the Christian to a man in a boat tossed by the waves, and buffeted by the winds. But if they had a strict regard for Scripture imagery, they would be forced to forego such illustrations.

The Bible does refer to the sea, but not as affecting the Christian.

> **Isaiah 57**
> [20] The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

It speaks also of the man who does not have faith in God, but who wavers.

> **James 1**
> [6] He that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

But surely such a man receives nothing from the Lord.

When a ship is in the sea, it must of necessity be more or less at the mercy of the winds and the tide. Perhaps this is the reason why so many who have accepted the idea of the "Gospel ship" as scriptural, have supposed that instability is a necessary part of Christian experience. They expect to be up and down, according to the state of the tide.

But what says the Scripture? The Christian is not on the restless waves, but on the solid rock.

> **Psalm 40**
> [2] [The Lord] brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

Walking upon a rock is vastly different from being rocked in a boat. The wind and the waves have no effect upon the rocks. The tide rises and falls, but the rock remains unchanged. The fierce waves beat against it with a thundering sound, but it moves not. It does not even tremble. Therefore he who is upon the solid rock cannot be affected by the ebb and flow of the tide, nor by wind or weather. Jesus said,

Matthew 7
[24] Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;
[25] And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.

Jesus Christ is the everlasting Rock.

Psalm 92
[15] He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

His word is the same as himself.

Psalm 119
[89] For ever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven.

Psalm 111
[7] The works of His hands are verity and judgment; all His commandments are sure.
[8] They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

John 6
[63] They are Spirit and they are life,

–even His own eternal life. Reader, where are you? Are you floating upon the sea? or are you established upon the Rock?

32. Nearness to God

Present Truth, November 7, 1895

SOMEONE has said:

> "Never separate yourself from God. How sweet it is to live always near those who love us."

But it is sweeter still to live near those whom we love, and the reason why we do not delight more in nearness to God is not because God does not love us, but because of our lack of love for Him. Let the Christian meditate on the wonderful love of Christ, and the sacrifice made by Him to save and bless lost, ruined sinners, until the fire burns in his heart, and he can say in sincerity and truth,

2 Corinthians 5
[14] The love of Christ constrains us.

Then we shall find it sweet to feel that we are near to God. Then we can sing,

> Nearer, my God, to Thee,
> Nearer to Thee!
> E'en though it be a cross
> That raises me.[167]

Then, if perchance some sin committed by us has hidden His face, like the psalmist we shall soon be found crying out,

Psalm 42
[2] My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?

[167] Sarah F. Adams, Hymn: *Nearer, My God, to Thee*, 1841.

33. The Enemy Within

Present Truth, November 28, 1895
Original title: Front Page

ONE likes to flatter himself that it was because someone else treated him badly that he felt irritated and impatient.

It is well to remember that it is not the wrong that another does that leads to evil feelings on our part, but the wrong that is in our own heart stirs up the resentment at an affront.

Not the devil and the other man but the spirit of the evil one in us is the cause of the irritation. A dead person can feel nothing, and if self is dead it will not feel slighted and hurt, even when an affront is intended. Irritability and anger come from within and not from without.

Whenever, then, we find ourselves harboring the aggrieved feeling let us remember that it is merely the warning signal telling us that the old self is asserting its sway, and that it is for us to repent of the evil thing in our heart rather than allow ourselves to be diverted by the enemy into warring against the person who has given the offense. It is very natural to lay the blame of our failures on others, or on circumstances, but the evil heart is the heart of the difficulty. And, thank the Lord, we may have His peace to guard both heart and thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4
[7] And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

34. Where Do You Live?

Present Truth, March 11, 1897

EVERY day, and every hour, as we grow from childhood to maturity and old age, we are building, and furnishing, mansions and palaces of thought for our souls to dwell in, not creations of fancy, or "Castles in Spain," but veritable abodes for the soul. And every one, however humble, however poor, may, if he will, live in "The House Beautiful." But these homes of the soul are as varied as the grave, the prison, the castle, the palace, and the home; and there are those which are a foretaste of the mansion which He has gone to prepare.

35. Uncovering Sins

Present Truth, September 30, 1897
Proverbs 28:13

Proverbs 28
[13] He that covers his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy.

HE THAT covers his sins, says the Lord, shall not prosper. He is not genuinely repentant, and does not know the Lord, or would know that nothing can be hid from Him. The Lord wishes us to deal frankly with Him. The old Anglo-Saxon version of Mark's Gospel says that the people went down to John's baptism,

Mark 1
[5] ...naming their sins.

That is what confession is. An evangelist tells the following story, illustrating the manner in which men sometimes try to generalize with the Lord, and so miss the blessing that comes when sin is uncovered in the light of God's countenance to be consumed in mercy:

> A member of the church once got drunk. He sought to go back to God and get his peace restored. He could not find the Saviour, so he sought again. His minister called upon him. The minister said, "You pray again." They knelt down together.
>
> "O God, You know your servant in a moment of unwatchfulness was overtaken by a sin!"
>
> "Nonsense," said the minister, "tell the Lord you got drunk."
>
> That was another matter; he could not bring that up. He began again: "O Lord, you know your servant in his weakness and frailty was overtaken by a besetment!"
>
> "Nonsense! tell the Lord you got drunk."
>
> At last the poor fellow said, "O God, have mercy on me; I got drunk!"
>
> Then very speedily that man was at peace with God again.

36. Forgiveness and Overcoming

Present Truth, January 20, 1898

> I have confessed my sins, and have confessed Christ, and believed, or thought I did, that He gave me His righteousness; and He has helped me in many things; but now I see in myself the sin of impatience in little things; is that an evidence that I was mistaken, and that I did not really believe, and so did not really receive Him?

THIS is a question that has been asked, not once merely, but very many times, and therefore an answer may be of benefit to many. The answer, in short, is, "No." You have things directly turned round, and are looking in the wrong place for evidence of acceptance with God. We are made…

Ephesians 1
[6] …accepted in the Beloved,

–and not in ourselves; for what He is worth, and not for what we are worth. We believe in Christ, not because we see ourselves sinless, but because we see ourselves sinful, and He is sinless.

Never yet did any person overcome sin by looking at it, either in himself or in somebody else. Sin is darkness; righteousness is light. God's glory is His sinlessness.

Romans 3
[23] For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

How do we get that sinlessness?

2 Corinthians 3
[18] We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We get righteousness by beholding the righteousness of God in Christ, and in no other way; and we retain it in the same way; never by gazing at our own imperfections.

For example, we have a harsh, unforgiving nature. If one injures us, we find it difficult, yes, impossible to forgive the wrong. Stop now, and think of God's tender, forbearing, forgiving disposition. See how gentle He is to all, how patient and considerate with the erring, and especially how patient He has been and is with us, and how much He has freely forgiven us. As we gaze and meditate, our impatience and bitterness vanishes, we know not how. Certain it is, that no person can contemplate the wondrous love of God in Christ, and at the same time harbor resentment towards anyone. Whatever the sin that besets you, consider the absence of that sin the corresponding righteousness—in Christ, and you have the remedy.

When you first trusted the Lord for salvation, why was it? What was the ground of your confidence? Was it the good things that you had done? or was it the goodness and mercy of God? Certainly it was the latter, for you had no good things in which to trust. Your very helplessness was what led you to trust the Lord. Now read this text:

Hebrews 3
[14] We are made of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

The beginning of your confidence was in the goodness of God, while you were nothing; that is to be your confidence unto the end. Do not get the idea that after living the Christian life for awhile, you can go in self-confidence. Do not think that whereas your confidence in the beginning was in the Lord's goodness your confidence now may be in your own goodness. Never! He is the beginning and the end.[168] Whatever goodness we may have, even in eternity, will be the Lord's, and we shall retain it then, even as now, only by "looking unto Jesus."[169]

Colossians 2
[6] As you have, therefore, received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk

[168] *Revelation* 22:13.
[169] *Hebrews* 12:2.

in Him,
7 Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

37. Deciding for the Right

Present Truth, June 15, 1899

WHAT men lack in these days more than anything else is decision of character for the right. The world is not getting better, as many say; but rather is becoming worse and worse. Why? Certainly not because the people do not know the right for never has it been made more plain; but it is because while knowing the right, they haven't the moral backbone to do it.

There are many people who want to do right, and desire to be right; but when they see that it means the sacrifice of some cherished idol, the loss of some friendship or the giving up of some worldly prospect, they hesitate, and hesitation generally ends in a decision on the wrong side.

There are others who content themselves with letting someone else be their conscience. In a crisis, they wait till they see how someone in whom they have confidence speaks, and then they agree with him. They are like a man who can only walk with the aid of crutches. If the crutches are removed, and he tries to take a step, he falls to the ground. So with those who have always made someone else their moral prop; when they have to act and speak for themselves, they are without strength of character, and are always found on the wrong side. God wants men who will stand firmly for the right, though the heavens fall. Such men He can use as He used Daniel, and Joseph and Noah, and through them He will carry forward His work in the earth.

38. Reputation

Present Truth, September 6, 1900

MANY persons are more careful of their reputations than of their characters. Reputation is only what people think of you; but character is what you are in yourself. If we take care of our characters, God will, in the end, vindicate our reputations; but if we are careless of our characters, God himself cannot finally save our reputations.

Matthew 16

[25] For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

39. Greater Freedom in the Gospel

Present Truth, May 9, 1901
Original title: Back Page

THE Gospel has often been preached as a Gospel of *giving up*. But instead, it is a Gospel of *receiving*. The Lord Jesus Christ is the One who has given up everything, and we are the ones who receive everything.

There is glorious freedom for the children of God now; and when at the last the creation itself, that is, the visible creation, the earth itself and all that it contains, which is now subject to vanity is delivered from the bondage of corruption, it will be delivered only into the glory of the present liberty of the children of God.

Before this corruptible body is made incorruptible, and the natural, sinful body is exchanged for the spiritual, sinless body, God will demonstrate what He can do in spite of corruption and mortality. He has condemned sin in the flesh, showing that even in sinful flesh He can live a sinless life. His perfect life will be manifested in mortal flesh, so that all will see it.

When God has given this witness to the world of His power to save to the uttermost, to save sinful beings, and to live a perfect life in sinful flesh, then He will remove the disabilities and give us better circumstances in which to live. But first of all this wonder must be worked out in sinful man, not simply in the person of Jesus Christ, but in Jesus Christ reproduced and multiplied in the thousands of His followers.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is in the world today to bring men back to the beginning; and when the Gospel shall have finished its work, and every soul susceptible to the influences of the Spirit of God has yielded to that influence, then will the end come, and the new earth and the new heavens will be here as in the beginning; and the beginning will always continue unto the end; and there will never be any end, because the end will be the beginning. Always fresh, always new, will the earth be; always now

will the body be. The power by which Jesus is able to subdue all things to himself, the power by which the heavens and the earth shall be made new, is the power by which He takes this sin-cursed body, and works His will in it; finally, by that same power, quickening it, and making it immortal.

Romans 5
[20] Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

God's power is so great that He makes the devil himself serve Him. He takes the wrath of man, and makes it praise Him. He takes the wrath of man, and binds it about Him, girds himself with it, and is victorious even by means of it. He takes the evil passions of man, and makes them serve out His purpose. Do you not know He did it with Joseph? His brethren were moved with envy, and sold him into Egypt; but it was God who sent him there. So Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the rulers of Jerusalem, stood up against the Lord and against Christ. What for? To do all that He had appointed to be done. They were not serving the Lord intentionally, but although they conspired against the Lord, to do Satan's utmost will, nevertheless, God's will was worked out. God can work in spite of the devil. More than this, since the wrath of man and devils praises God; every effort against the truth only makes the power of God more striking.

"Can any man live a sinless life?"

–we have been asked. No, but Christ can.

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me.

I have demonstrated that I can do nothing. The wages of sin is death, and so I must die, and let the Lord take the management. The first man showed his impatience, and now the second man Adam comes in, and in Him God's power is fully revealed.[170] There is only one man, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. By the

[170] *1 Corinthians* 15:45.

obedience of One many are made righteous. We become men indeed, perfect men, only as we are in Him.

We are…

1 Peter 2 [RV]
[9] …a people for God's own possession.

Not simply a people that He calls His own, and claims as His property; but the people whom He possesses, the people possessed of God. That is to say, that just so completely as a person may be possessed of the devil, so that he is held captive by him at his will, the old things may pass away, and that person may be possessed of God, so that he is held captive by God, at His will. God's captive is a free man.

Just as the old man found pleasure in serving the devil, even so, and ten thousand times more, will the new man find joy in the will of God, so that you and I like Christ—nay, not you and I, but Christ in us,—may say,

Psalm 40
[8] I delight to do your will, O my God,

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

We are to be possessed by Him, possessed by the Spirit of God, so that His mind is our mind; as He thinks, we act. That is possible. Oh, that God would give every one the conception, not only of the possibility of such a thing, but of the joy and blessedness of it.

God puts His name upon His people, that all may know to whom they belong. Men put their names upon their places of business for a sign. Christ says,

Isaiah 8
[18] Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and for wonders.

Wherever the men of the world come into contact with the people of God, they are to see the name of God, and recognize at a glance that God dwells within, and does business there.

We often hear the old exhortation, "Give the devil his due," the idea being that one must not too severely condemn the acts even of that enemy of all righteousness, and accuser of the brethren. There is a lot of misplaced charity in this world, and just because it is misplaced, it ceases to be charity. We have no right to condemn any soul, not even the devil himself; for judgment has not yet been given to the saints of the Most High; but that does not mean that we must gloss over their evil deeds. A woe is pronounced upon those…

Isaiah 5
[20] …that call evil good; and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness.

To "give the devil his due," is to hold to that which is true of him, namely, that he is the hater of everything good,

John 8
[44] …a murderer from the beginning,…a liar and the father of it.

Whoever calls evil good, gives place to the devil, and declares that goodness is sin.

40. How to Please God

Present Truth, May 30, 1901
Original title: Back Page

WHAT have we to do in order to please God? Simply to allow Him to do; to see Him in all His works and all His gifts, and to know that He alone can do things well enough to be pleasing to Him, and that all that He does in you is reckoned as your own deed. And when He who does the good works dwells in you by faith, can there be any doubt that you will have in yourself the witness that you please God? Therefore,

Hebrews 13
[20] The God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,
[21] Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight.

41. True Greatness

Present Truth, October 10, 1901
Original title: Back Page

WHICH is higher and greater, to love, or to be loved? To love, most certainly, because God, who is the Most High, and the Almighty, loves even when He is not loved.[171] His love, put into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, enables us to love, and that exalts and magnifies us. True greatness comes only through service rendered to others.

Everybody recognizes the fact that we labor for those whom we love; but many do not know that it is equally true that we love those for whom we labor. If there are people for whom you feel no love, do something for them. Whoever performs a service for another, with his whole heart in it, is sure to want to repeat the act. The real pay for doing a kindness is the privilege of doing another.

[171] *Romans* 5:10.

42. Continual Victory

Present Truth, October 17, 1901
Original title: Back Page

Romans 6
[14] Sin shall not have dominion over you.

THAT is a blessed promise, and by it we may conquer; but we must remember that conquering implies fighting. We must not imagine that the promise frees us from sin's attacks. Satan, the author of sin, still goes about...

1 Peter 5
[8] ...like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,

–but he cannot overcome us while we resist him steadfast in the faith of God's Word; for the assurance is:

James 4
[7] Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

A continual victory means continual fighting in the strength of the Lord Jesus.

43. Christian Warfare

Present Truth, October 31, 1901

IN OUR Christian warfare we may learn a lesson from even a prize-fighter, for the apostle Paul has given us a valuable lesson from the prize ring. The Bishop of Chichester says that when he was a young man at the University he was taking lessons in boxing, and once when he got a very hard blow in the face he struck out wildly. His instructor, an old prize-fighter, took him aside, and said to him:

> Mr. Wilberforce, when you get a blow, don't strike out, but take a step back, and ask yourself—what was I doing wrong, that I got that blow for?

That is practical advice that we would all do well to heed. We should know that we never get a blow that we have not invited by our carelessness, or do not need for our correction; and instead of angrily and wildly resenting it, we should at once seek to find out the fault in us that caused it, and learn how to avoid a repetition of it.

44. Saved from Evil

Present Truth, December 12, 1901
Original title: Back Page

HERE is a promise of God, that ought to make everybody rejoice:

Jeremiah 45
[5] Behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, says the Lord; but your life will I give unto you for a prey in all places where you go.

Doubtless many will ask,

"How do I know that it means me?"

That you can very easily determine; the first part of the same verse says:

[5] Do you seek great things for yourself? seek them not.

Whoever is willing to accept this as addressed to him, and will heed it, being content with small things, may know that the promise of life, which follows, will be fulfilled to him also.

45. Learning to Walk

Present Truth, January 16, 1902

THE following text may well be read in connection with the article, "Walking by Faith,"[172] on another page:

Hosea 11
[1] When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.
[3] I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by the arms; but they knew not that I healed them.

Moses said to Israel just before they went into Canaan:

Deuteronomy 1
[31] You have seen how that the Lord your God bore you, as a man does bear his son, in all the way that you went, until you came to this place.

The record of the dealings of God with Israel, and of the healing of the lame man, is designed to teach us that we are but little children in God's sight, and that if we willingly yield ourselves to His power and wisdom, He will increase our strength even as He does that of the little child, and will teach us how to walk uprightly both physically and spiritually.

Psalm 32
[8] I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you shall go,

He says.

Psalm 40
[2] He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

[172] This article is available in the collection, *Paul and the Early Church*, under the section "Acts."

46. A Confidential Word with a Penitent Soul

Present Truth, April 17, 1902

YOU say that you cannot overcome your besetting sin; that you have tried, and failed; that the temptation comes so unexpectedly and so strong that you cannot resist. Let me tell you what that sort of talk really means, and perhaps you will change your tone. You are virtually saying that Satan is more powerful than Christ;

2 Chronicles 20

15 ...for the battle is not yours, but God's.

The controversy is between Christ and Satan over your soul. You belong to the Lord; but Satan claims you, and you have been serving him, and he has no mind to give you up. Christ will not arbitrarily claim even His own; He has all power in heaven and in earth,[173] but He will not control you without your consent. All He asks of you, and that which He earnestly longs for, is that you unreservedly give yourself into His hand, acknowledging Him as your sole Master and Lord. When you do that, and as long as you continue it, He holds himself responsible for your salvation.

Now you say that you long for freedom from sin, and that you accept the Lord as your Saviour. Now if that is really so, can you not see that when you say that you cannot overcome you are really saying that the devil has more power than Christ? But that is not so. Christ has "*all power.*" It is, however, a fact, if we are overcome by sin, that Satan has more power *in us*, than Christ has, for Satan is the one that works in the children of disobedience.

1 John 3

8 Whosoever commits sin is of the devil;

–but the Son of God was manifested for the sole purpose...

8 ...that He might destroy the works of the devil,

[173] *Matthew* 28:18.

–and, thanks be to God, He is abundantly able to do it.

1 Corinthians 15
[57] God…gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,

–and it is the victory that He has already won.

Ephesians 6
[12] We wrestle…[with] principalities and powers,

–but Christ has "spoiled" them, disarmed them.[174] Therefore,

1 John 5 [RV]
[4] This is the victory that *has overcome* the world, even our faith.

Now to whom do you intend henceforth to give the credit for having supreme power—to Christ, or to Satan? That is the question for you to answer. Decide definitely and finally who is the most mighty monarch, and then serve that one. Which shall it be?

[174] *Colossians* 2:15.

47. Guarding the Thoughts

Present Truth, April 30, 1903
Original title: Back Page

THE flesh is carnal, and it will continue to be so until the coming of the Lord,

Philippians 3
[21] Who shall change our vile body.

Sin is always crouching at the door, and is upon us the instant we look away from the Lord. But the believer does not live in terror.

Philippians 4 [RV]
[7] The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

God can guard even the thoughts from the enemy. But if He is to guard the heart and mind, they must be yielded to Him. If we hold to our own ways and thoughts He cannot guard them from evil; for they are evil.

Isaiah 55
[7] Let the wicked forsake his way, and the righteous man his thoughts.

VI. Faith

1. Almost Discouraged

Signs of the Times, March 2, 1882

> "I am so weak, and have so much to overcome, that I am almost discouraged."

HOW often do we hear this expression in social meeting. It is the burden of some testimonies. It seems as though some people think that there is special merit in depreciating themselves. They almost take pride in their humility. Others do not seem to know that there is any better way for them to do. But however true it may be, or however often it is repeated, it cannot but be displeasing to God. We are commanded to…

Hebrews 3
[13] …exhort one another,

–and to…

Hebrews 10
[24] …provoke unto love and good works,

–but such language is anything but encouraging. Its effect is seen on the individual who uses it. It soon becomes habitual, for each time it is uttered the discouragement increases. It grows by repetition, but it is withering to the soul.

It is the language of unbelief. Although the individual may be unconscious of the fact, the spirit which prompts it is the same as that possessed by the ten spies who brought back an evil report. God had said:

Exodus 33
[14] My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.

Having this promise, it was exceedingly wicked for them to say they could not possess the land. On this occasion, as well as at other times of murmuring, God showed His great displeasure. In this instance we see the natural result of such distrust. They did not enter the promised land.

Numbers 14

[26] And the Lord spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,
[27] How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.
[28] Say unto them, As truly as I live, says the Lord, as you have spoken in my ears, so will I do to you:
[29] Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,
[30] Doubtless you shall not come into the land, concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

They said they could not go, and they did not; but Caleb and Joshua, who said,

Numbers 13

[30] Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are able to overcome it,

–did enter the promised land.

Distrust and faint-heartedness are as displeasing to God now as then. His promises are abundant. Listen to a few:

Hebrews 4

[15] For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
[16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

James 1

[5] If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not; and it shall be given him.

God does not upbraid us, *does not* taunt us with our weakness. A child has not the strength of a man, and no father will ridicule his infant child because of its weakness. Its very helplessness appeals to his sympathy. So God says,

Psalm 103
[13] Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him.
[14] For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

But it is necessary to...

James 1
[6] ...ask in faith, nothing wavering, [for]...

Hebrews 11
[6] Without faith it is impossible to please Him.

Again we are exhorted:

Hebrews 13
[5] Be content with such things as you have for He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you.

And yet again:

Romans 8
[32] He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

One more passage ought forever to stop all our murmurings and doubtings:

1 Corinthians 10
[13] There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Read also:

Hebrews 2
[18] For in that He himself has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.

Hebrews 12
[1] Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin

which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,
[2] Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
[3] For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds.
[4] You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Hebrews 13
[8] Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

Philippians 4
[4] Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.
[13] I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

And especially:

Psalm 139
[17] How precious also are your thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!
[18] If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with You.

Lamentations 3
[22] It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.
[23] They are new every morning: great is your faithfulness.
[24] The Lord is my portion, says my soul; therefore will I hope in Him.
[25] The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeks Him.
[26] It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.
[27] It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.
[28] He sits alone and keeps silence, because he has borne it upon him.
[29] He puts his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.
[30] He gives his cheek to him that smites him: he is filled full with reproach.
[31] For the Lord will not cast off for ever:

[32] But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies.
[33] For He does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

Do we really believe these promises? If we did would we not appropriate them to ourselves? We read them, and say we believe them, and yet to very many they seem vague and unreal. But if they are to be of any benefit to us we must consider them as real, and make our requests accordingly.

Our belief is measured by our actions, not by our words. Is it not as much infidelity to disbelieve a promise that God has given as it is to disbelieve any other portion of His word?

Hebrews 3
[12] Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

But ought we not to be sensible of our weakness? Certainly; the more so the better. But we are not to think of it in such a way as to become discouraged. There are two ways of looking at our own frailties:

1. To brood over them, lose sight of God's willingness to help, and become discouraged. This pleases Satan. If we are prone to doubt and become faint-hearted, he will assist us to see more lions in the way than really exist.[175] And such a course is really a form of selfishness. The individual becomes so intensely self-conscious that he can take cognizance of nothing else. He thinks of himself so much that he loses sight of Christ. He imagines that he himself must do the great work that is to be done, and when a few attempts show him the impossibility of it, he becomes discouraged.

2. To consider them as in the light of the promises of God. When we do this we have every reason to be encouraged, and

[175] PP Editor's note: This is probably a reference to the book, *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Christian met with Lions in the way.

God is pleased with us. The more we distrust ourselves while trusting God, the stronger we will be, for God has said:

2 Corinthians 12
[9] My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

And in view of this, Paul was led to say:

[10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for *when I am weak then am I strong.*

No man ever had more trials than Paul had, or felt less confidence in himself; but he believed God's promises, and it was no vain boast for him to say:

Philippians 4
[13] I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

Thus it was with Caleb and Joshua. It was not vain self-confidence which led them to say,

Numbers 13
[30] We are well able to overcome it.

Hear them:

Numbers 14
[8] If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which flows with milk and honey.
[9] Only rebel not against the Lord, neither fear the people of the land; for they are bread for us; their defense is departed from them, and *the Lord is with us:* fear them not.

So the Lord is with us; His promises are multiplied to us. We have the accumulated proofs of His power and goodness through thousands of years past. It is far more sinful for us to distrust God now, than it was for ancient Israel. Then,

Hebrews 10
[23] Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised.

2. Faith and Presumption

Signs of the Times, April 19, 1883

A RELIGIOUS journal thinks that the following by a Sunday-school boy is the best definition of faith that it ever saw:

> "As near as I can make out, it is feeling perfectly sure of a thing when you have nothing to back it up."

But that is not a definition of faith at all. It is more nearly a definition of presumption; in fact, it is an exact definition of presumption. We have known persons to whom the truth of the Sabbath question had been presented, and who had tried in vain to find even an excuse in the Bible for Sunday-keeping, to settle down complacently into their old habits, expressing their firm faith that God would not punish them, because they had so much love for Him. Now, their condition is exactly expressed by the above definition; they felt perfectly sure of a thing when they had nothing to back it up. They were positive that Sunday is the Sabbath, although they could not bring a scrap of evidence to support their belief. They had strong faith that God would not punish them for violating His law, although He has plainly declared to the contrary. They had no faith at all; they were simply presumptuous.

No doubt the man whose case is recorded in the 16th chapter of *Numbers* felt "fully assured" that he was all right. He did not believe that God was going to punish a man for so small a thing as picking up a few sticks on the Sabbath-day. He had too much faith in God and His goodness to think He would do such a thing. And yet his case is left on record as a typical case of presumption.

But,

> **Hebrews 11**
> [1] Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen.

That is the inspired definition of faith. It cannot be that our contemporary ever read the 11th chapter of *Hebrews*. There can be no faith without evidence. The Christian religion requires the exercise of less credulity than any other system of religion known. There are no men on earth who are so "perfectly sure" of a thing when they have "nothing to back it up" as modern infidels. They are always positive in their opinions, while at the same time they have literally "nothing" upon which to base them. According to the definition given, infidels would be men of the greatest faith; but they are simply terribly presumptuous.

We repeat, there can be no faith without evidence. The Christian may have the "full assurance of faith,"[176] and he has no lack of matter with which to "back up" his belief. We believe that there is a God, all nature declares the fact.

Psalm 19
[1] The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork.

Romans 1
[20] The invisible things of God,...His eternal power and Godhead,...are clearly seen,...from the things that He has made.

We believe the Bible to be the true word of God, because the prophecies bear, beyond all cavil, the mark of inspiration, and their fulfillment cannot be denied. But the Bible is so harmonious, and all its parts are so closely interwoven that it all stands or falls together. Nothing within the range of human reason is so easily demonstrated, as that the Bible is what it purports to be,—one inspired word of God.

We can then rely on the testimony of the Bible as on first principles. So when it assures us that the Lord will come the second time, and that His coming is near, we know it; and we can point to the evidence. And when we are told that in order to enter into life we must keep the commandments, we dare not presume upon

[176] *Hebrews* 10:22.

God's mercy by walking in a way which He has declared leads to death. We must confess to having so little faith that we cannot feel perfectly sure of a thing when there is nothing to back it up.

It is true that the Christian often seems, to the outside observer, to be walking blindly; to be accepting things as true, without having any evidence. But this is only seeming. It seems so because the skeptic looks at things from a different standpoint. A picture will often present a vastly different appearance when viewed in one position, from what it does to a person standing somewhere else. So there are things connected with God and his truth which worldlings can never understand.

1 Corinthians 2
[14] The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Many things that appear perfectly reasonable to the Christian, and for which a perfectly logical reason can be given, are foolishness to the skeptic. It is as true now as ever, that…

John 7
[17] If any man will to do His will, he shall *know* of the doctrine.

There is no guess-work about the religion of the Bible.

3. What Is Faith?

Signs of the Times, February 18, 1886

THIS question presented itself very forcibly to our mind a few days ago, when we read in a religious paper the following quotation from an eminent minister:

> "Faith is the true anesthesis of the soul."

We do not propose to enter into a fine-spun theological discussion as to the exact definition of faith, but simply to cite a few instances of true faith, that we may see how the possession of it affects people.

Let us first get the meaning of the quotation. An anesthetic is something which is administered to produce insensibility, so that surgical operations may be performed without pain to the patient. Anesthesis is the state of insensibility which is produced by the administration of an anesthetic. The meaning of the quotation, then, is that faith is that condition in which the soul has no sensibility, no consciousness. That is, it is a state in which the individual feels perfectly secure, having no care for surrounding circumstances.

Hebrews 11
[1] Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Faith is active; it is keenly alive to all the dangers that surround, yet is confident, because it has a clear perception of certain evidence. Take the case of Caleb and Joshua. When the ten spies brought back an evil report, and said,

Numbers 13
[31] We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we,

–these two men said,

[30] Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

Was it because Caleb and Joshua did not understand the danger, that they were so confident? No; they had seen the walled cities, and the giants, before whom they were as grasshoppers. But they had faith in God. They said,

Numbers 14
[8] If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us;...
[9] ...and the Lord is with us; fear them not.

This was true faith.

When David went forth to answer the challenge of Goliath, he knew that the giant had for forty days defied the army of Israel. He did not in the least underestimate the giant's strength and skill. But he believed that the One who had delivered him in his encounters with the wild beasts of the forest, would help him now. So the stripling went boldly toward the giant, saying,

1 Samuel 17
[45] You come to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.
[46] This day will the Lord deliver you into my hand; and I will smite you, and take your head from you; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

David knew the power of the giant; but he believed the evidence which he had received, that the Lord is stronger than all, and willing to help those who trust Him. This was true faith. But it is worthy of note, that although David said to Goliath,

[46] This day will the Lord deliver you into my hand,

–he did not sit down and wait for the Lord to deliver the giant into his hands. He made use of the means which the Lord had provided, believing that the Lord would bless them.

Take the case of Paul on his sea-voyage to Rome. Among the two hundred and seventy-six souls on board the vessel, Paul alone was calm and unmoved amid the terrible tempest. Could it be that he was insensible to the danger? By no means. He had many times been on the sea, and he realized the danger of the situation better than any one else did. When the sailors thought the prospect was favorable, Paul had told them that the voyage would end disastrously.

Acts 27

[9] Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,

[10] And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

[11] Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

What was the source of his courage? Hear his words to the passengers and crew:

[22] There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

[23] For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

[24] Saying, Fear not, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God has given you all them that sail with you.

[25] Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Paul's belief in the promise of God, however, did not keep him from putting forth every possible effort for the safety of himself and his fellow passengers. He exhorted them to eat, that they might retain their strength, and he hindered the sailors from leaving the ship, declaring that if they should leave, the rest could not

be saved. The sailors were needed on board the ship, to do all that they could towards managing it. It is worthy of note, also, that because these people were saved in answer to his prayers, Paul did not set up in the life-saving business, and advertise that he would deliver from shipwreck all sailors who would take him along to pray for them.

The definition which we quoted is incorrect, because anesthesis, —indifference to danger,—leads one to make no effort for self-preservation; and faith which is unaccompanied by works is no faith at all, for...

James 2
[20] ...faith without works is dead.

That which is dead has no existence.

Sometimes that which is called faith is only blindness or negligence. For instance, there are many professors who, no doubt, pray for their children, and who therefore have, as they think, faith that they will be saved. Yet they do nothing more than pray occasionally for the children, and leave them practically without restraint. Now is it a manifestation of faith for the parents to believe that their children will be saved? Not at all; for the "evidence" is all against such a result.

Proverbs 29
[15] ...a child left to himself brings his mother to shame,

–says the Bible. Self-deception and careless security are altogether different from faith.

Thousands have no thought but that they will enter Heaven at last. Under certain circumstances it is proper to have faith that we shall be saved; but if the conditions are not met, there is no ground even for hope. What are the conditions?

Matthew 19
[17] If you will enter into life, keep the commandments,

–says the Saviour. Again:

Revelation 22
[14] Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

We may believe in Christ after a manner, that is, we may believe that He is the Son of God; but unless our belief leads to obedience, it is not true faith in Christ, because Christ suffered for us in order...

Romans 8
[4] That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.

James 2
[18] Yea, a man may say, You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

4. Effects of Erroneous Opinions

Signs of the Times, June 23, 1887

IT IS very common for those who are quite loose in their belief, or who do not believe much of anything, to ease their consciences by saying,

> "God will never condemn a man on account of his opinions; it is how a man lives that determines his condition at last."

How these people acquired such intimate knowledge of God's plans, so as to be able to speak so definitely of what He will or will not do, is not apparent; for it is very evident from the Bible that a man's opinions have a good deal to do in deciding his final destiny.

It seems never to occur to those who use the expression quoted above, that they are strangely inconsistent with themselves. The very ones who use such language will speak very slightingly of one who "has not the courage of his convictions," that is, one who holds opinions which he dare not act out. Such a man they justly accuse of leading a double life; and yet they seem to think that God will be perfectly satisfied with a man who leads such a life.

But the great mistake is in supposing that a man can hold opinions which will not to a greater or less extent influence his actions. The statement by Watts, that "the mind's the standard of the man,"[177] is but another way of expressing the truth uttered by Solomon:

> **Proverbs 23**
> [7] As [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he.

[177] PP Editor's note: This comes from the poem, *False Greatness*, by Isaac Watts. The verses involved state:

> If I could reach from pole to pole
> Or grasp the ocean with a span,
> I would be measured by the soul
> The mind's the standard of the man.

A man cannot entertain vile thoughts and still have all his actions pure. Neither can a man entertain erroneous opinions without acting in accordance with them, unless his circumstances hinder him; and in that case he is entitled to no more credit than the thief in prison is to be commended for not stealing.

In times past people have suffered severely on account of their opinions. When Paul says,

Hebrews 11
[31] By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace,

–he says in effect that the inhabitants of Jericho perished because they believed not. If they had believed, they might have been saved as well as the harlot Rahab. But they were of the opinion that their gods were stronger than the God of Israel. Somebody might have said to them,

"It doesn't make any difference what ideas you have about God; it is your actions that will determine your final lot."

But their ideas of God had everything to do in shaping their actions and their erroneous ideas led them into practices which caused their ruin. Again, we read of the children of Israel:

Hebrews 3
[16] For some, when they had heard, did provoke; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.
[17] But with whom was He [Christ] grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?
[18] And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that did not believe?
[19] So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Here we have the plain declaration that it was the unbelief of the Israelites that shut them out of the promised land.

[19] They could not enter in because of unbelief.

But would they not have been allowed to enter in if they had not sinned? Certainly; and they would not have sinned but for their unbelief. Their sin was a necessary consequence of their unbelief.

How was it with the inhabitants of Sodom? When Lot, who believed the warnings of the angels, went out to tell his relatives that God was going to destroy the city,

Genesis 19
[14] ...he seemed as one that mocked.

They regarded him as a fanatic; very likely they thought he was losing his mind, and would have to be cared for. But the Lord did destroy the city, and all those who disbelieved perished with it. It was their opinion that they were safe enough, and in consequence of their erroneous opinion they perished.

We may learn a lesson from them. Indeed their case is recorded for our admonition. Christ says:

Luke 17
[28] Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;
[29] But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.
[30] Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

All over the land the coming of the Lord is being proclaimed. The same word of prophecy foretells that His coming is now very near. Yet these things are to thousands as idle tales. Those who preach the nearness of the second advent are regarded as fanatical. It is the common opinion that the world is just in its infancy. Men say,

> "Well, it doesn't make any difference how we believe in regard to the coming of the Lord, if we only live right."

But still the truth exists that only...

Hebrews 9
[28] ...unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Why will this be so? Simply because those who do not believe that His coming is near at hand, will not be getting ready for it.

Let no one delude himself with the idea that he has "a right to his own opinions," and that he can believe what he pleases and still be safe at last. It is true that so far as other men are concerned, he has a right to his own opinions; that is, he is not answerable to any man for what he believes; but all men are answerable to God for their opinions. No man has a right to hold an opinion contrary to what God has revealed in His word.

And those who shall cling to their self-assumed right to believe what they please, will find at the last that it was a dearly-bought privilege. Among those who...

Revelation 21
[8] ...shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death,

–the *unbelieving* occupy a prominent place.

Hebrews 3
[12] Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

5. Learning by Obedience

Signs of the Times, June 1, 1888

AFTER the plain truth of the Scripture has been set forth concerning the Sabbath, the nature of man and his dependence upon Christ for life both here and hereafter, the coming of the Lord, and kindred subjects, it is very common to hear someone talk something like this:

> "That seems very clear; but there's one objection that bothers me; and until it is answered I cannot think of accepting the doctrine that you have been expounding."

Now while it is perfectly proper to seek to have everything made plain, such a position as that noted above is not consistent. It is likened to the infidel assertion,

> "I will not believe anything that I cannot fully understand."

When a person takes that position he effectually cuts himself off from really understanding anything. Very often the acceptance of a thing which we do not fully understand, is necessary to a full understanding of it. The child who should refuse to accept any principle in mathematics until he could understand the reason for it, would never advance to the higher mathematics in which the earlier principles are rightly demonstrated.

Many things which, when we were children, we took upon trust, we find ourselves able to fully analyze as our minds become mature. And so it is in matters of religion. It is utterly impossible that we should understand all the truth of God at once. If we accept as much as we can see, the way will be prepared for greater light to come to us.

Romans 1

[17] The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.

And when we arrive at a state of more mature spiritual judgment, we shall find that what we thought were objections are not

objections at all. There were many people to whom the whole matter was perfectly clear, even while it seemed to us an insuperable objection; but it was an objection to us because of our own ignorance. And because of our immature judgments in spiritual things they could not explain it to us. The Christian must grow in knowledge, and this presupposes the fact that he doesn't know everything when he first starts out.

6. Clouds

Signs of the Times, January 21, 1889

WE HEAR a great many Christians complain of clouds. Such testimonies as this are common:

> "I enjoyed so much of the blessing of God a few days ago, and felt such peace in my heart, but lately I have been under a cloud."

And the poor souls mourn and despond as though the Lord had lost all interest in them, and they could have no more confidence in Him until He should remove that cloud.

We feel intensely sorry for such people, for they are making trouble for themselves, depriving themselves of great blessings, neglecting work that they ought to be doing for the Master, and dishonoring God by doubting Him. Let us look at the matter for a few moments in the light of the Scriptures and common sense.

In the first place, clouds are very unsubstantial things. Sometimes, indeed, they look very dark and heavy and threatening, but the worst of them are nothing more than mist. We have seen heavy clouds hanging low upon the mountains, completely hiding their tops, but we have gone up through them without meeting the slightest difficulty, and have found clear sunlight above. Indeed, the cloud itself was not very dark when we got into it.

That which from a distance looked like an impenetrable wall, was only vapor, and we found that when we were in the midst of it we could see quite a distance.

We never knew a cloud to fall down on a man and smother him. Clouds do not usually knock people down. They do very often shut out a good many of the sun's rays, but no clouds have ever yet been known to cause the sun to stop shining. They cannot even shut out all of its light from the earth. Take the most cloudy day, and you would find that if the sun should actually cease shining, the darkness would be inconceivably greater. The clouds do not get so thick but that some rays of light pierce through them.

The person who should say on a cloudy day that the sun had entirely ceased to shine, would be thought to have very little knowledge of the nature of the sun. So the person who thinks that God's love ceases every time a little gloom comes over the mind, either from natural causes or from Satan's malice, shows but little knowledge of the character of God. The psalmist says:

Psalm 90
[1] Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.
[2] Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

And the apostle describes our Saviour as…

Hebrews 13
[8] Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

If God's love has been manifested toward us, we may be sure that a passing cloud cannot drive away that love. If He loved us yesterday, He loves us today. Listen to the words of the beloved disciple:

John 13
[1] Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the

Father, having loved His own which were in the world, *He loved them unto the end.*

To be frightened at the shadow of a passing cloud is an evidence of lack of faith in God.

"But I don't feel near to God at such times," says one, "I feel just as though God was angry with me, and I dare not look up to Him."

That is just the trouble; you don't *feel*. When you *felt* the smile of God resting upon you, you trusted in that feeling, and not in the love and promise of God. But…

2 Corinthians 5
[7] …we walk by faith, not by sight.

Romans 1
[17] The just shall live by faith.

Know, then, that nothing but sin can separate a soul from God.[178] And even sin does not drive God away; it is simply that by which *we take ourselves away* from Him. Now if the cloud is caused by sins committed, we know it; and knowing it, we know how to remove it. But if you are not conscious of having committed any sin that would bring darkness, then let your faith hold onto the promise of God. Know that God has not changed.

Psalm 92
[1] It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto your name, O Most High.

The failure to thank God for mercies received, often brings darkness. It was a lack of thankfulness that made men heathen.

Romans 1
[21] Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was *darkened.*

[178] *Isaiah* 59:2.

When people feel peculiarly happy, they are ready to exclaim with the psalmist:

Psalm 34
[1] I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
[2] My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

But they forget all about their resolution just as soon as their good *feeling* passes away. Instead of that, when clouds come, they should bring sunshine again by their praises to God. It is by simple faith, not by feeling, that we know the love of God. It is impossible for us to feel the love of God, unless we have appropriated it by faith. It is faith that makes it real to us, so that we may feel it.

How can anybody doubt God? Has not Christ died? And if God…

Romans 8
[32] …spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

What greater assurance can we ask for? Oh, that all might have such simple faith in God that they would take Him just at His word, trusting Him as fully in the darkness as in the light, knowing that the darkness and the light are both alike to God. Then they could say with the prophet:

Habakkuk 3
[17] Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:
[18] Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

That is true faith. It was such faith as Job had when he said,

Job 13
[15] Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.

When everything is clear, there is no call for faith; but when the clouds hang low, shutting out the beacon light, then faith that makes the darkness even as the noonday, is the faith that overcomes the world. And why should we not have such faith, since Paul, who had every opportunity to make a careful calculation of the matter, says:

Romans 8
[38] For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
[39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7. Living by Faith

Bible Students Library, No. 75, December 1, 1890

IN *Romans* 1 the apostle Paul makes the following statement:

> **Romans 1**
> [17] For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

This statement is the summing up of what the apostle has to say about the gospel. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, but only...

> [16] ...to every one that believes [in it],

–is the righteousness of God revealed.

- The righteousness of God is the perfect law of God,[179] which is but the transcript of His own righteous will.[180]
- All unrighteousness is sin,[181] or the transgression of the law.[182]
- The gospel is God's remedy for sin; its work, therefore, must be to bring men into harmony with the law,—to cause the workings of the righteous law to be manifested in their lives.
- But this is wholly a work of faith,—the righteousness of God is revealed from "faith to faith,"—faith in the beginning, and faith to the end,—as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."[183]

This is true in all ages since the fall of man, and will be true until the saints of God have His name in their foreheads,[184] and see

[179] *Isaiah* 51:6-7; *Psalm* 119:172.
[180] *Psalm* 40:7-8.
[181] *1 John* 5:17.
[182] *1 John* 3:4; *Romans* 7:7.
[183] *Romans* 1:17.
[184] *Revelation* 14:1, 22:4.

Him as He is.[185] It was from the prophet *Habakkuk*[186] that the apostle quoted the statement. If the prophets had not revealed it, the first Christians could not have known of it; for they had only the Old Testament. To say that in the most ancient times men had but an imperfect idea of faith in Christ, is to say that there were no just men in those times. But Paul goes right back to the very beginning and cites an instance of saving faith. He says:

> **Hebrews 11**
> [4] By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous.

He says of Noah, also, that it was by faith that he built the ark to the saving of his house;

> [7] By the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

We say that their faith was in Christ, because it was faith unto salvation, and besides the name of Jesus,

> **Acts 4**
> [12] There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

There are too many who try to live the Christian life on the strength of the faith which they exercised when they realized their need of pardon for the sins of their past life. They know that God alone can pardon sins, and that He does this through Christ; but they imagine that having once been started they must run the race in their own strength. We know that many have this idea, first, because we have heard some say so, and second, because there are such multitudes of professed Christians who show the working of no greater power than their own. If they ever have anything to say in social meeting, besides the ever-recurring formula,

> "I want to be a Christian, so that I may be saved,"

[185] *1 John* 3:2.
[186] *Habakkuk* 2:4.

–they tell only of a past experience, of the joy they had when they first believed. Of the joy of living for God, and of walking with Him by faith, they know nothing, and he who tells of it speaks a strange language to them. But the apostle carries this matter of faith clear through to the glorious kingdom, in the following most forcible illustration:

Hebrews 11
[5] By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.
[6] But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Note the argument to prove that Enoch was translated by faith:

- Enoch was translated because he walked with God, and had the testimony that he pleased God;
- But without faith it is impossible to please God.

That is enough to prove the point. Without faith, not an act can be performed that will meet the approval of God. Without faith, the best deeds that a man can do will come infinitely short of the perfect righteousness of God, which is the only standard. Wherever real faith is found it is a good thing; but the best of faith in God to take away the load of the sins of the past will profit a person nothing unless it is carried right through in ever-increasing measure until the close of his probation.

A Cause of Failure

We have heard many people tell how hard they found it to do right; their Christian life was most unsatisfactory to them, being marked only by failure, and they were tempted to give up in discouragement. No wonder they get discouraged; continual failure is enough to discourage anybody. The bravest soldier in the world would become fainthearted if he had been defeated in every battle. Sometimes these persons will mournfully tell that they have

about lost confidence in themselves. But if they would only lose confidence in themselves entirely, and would put their whole trust in the One who is mighty to save, they would have a different story to tell. They would then…

Romans 5
[11] …joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Says the apostle,

Philippians 4
[4] Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.

The man who doesn't rejoice in God, even though tempted and afflicted, is not fighting the good fight of faith. He is fighting the poor fight of self-confidence and defeat.

All the promises of final happiness are to the overcomer:

Revelation 3
[21] To him that overcomes will I give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.

Revelation 21
[7] He that overcomes shall inherit all things.

An overcomer is one who gains victories. The inheriting is not the overcoming; that is only the reward for overcoming. The overcoming is now; the victories to be gained are victories over the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life[187]—victories over self and selfish indulgences. The man who fights and sees the foe give way, may rejoice; nobody can keep him from rejoicing, for joy comes spontaneously as the result of seeing the enemy give way. Some folks look with dread upon the thought of having to wage a continual warfare with self and worldly lusts. That is because they do not as yet know anything about the joy of victory; they have experienced only defeat. But it isn't so doleful a thing to battle constantly, when there is contin-

[187] *1 John* 2:16.

ual victory. The old veteran of a hundred battles, who has been victorious in every fight, longs to be at the scene of conflict. Alexander's soldiers, who under his command never knew defeat, were always impatient to be led into the fray. Each victory increased their strength, which was born only of courage, and correspondingly diminished that of the vanquished foe. Now how may we gain continual victories in our spiritual warfare? Listen to the beloved disciple:

1 John 5
[4] For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

Read again the words of the apostle Paul:

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Here is the secret of strength. It is Christ, the Son of God, the One to whom all power in heaven and earth is given,[188] who does the work. If He lives in the heart to do the work, is it boasting to say that continual victories may be gained? Yes, it is boasting; but it is boasting *in the Lord*, and that is allowable. Says the Psalmist:

Psalm 34
[2] My soul shall make her boast in the Lord.

And Paul says,

Galatians 6
[14] God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

The soldiers of Alexander were reckoned invincible. Why? Was it because they were naturally stronger and more courageous than all their enemies? No, but because they were led by Alexan-

[188] *Matthew* 28:18.

der. Their strength was in his leadership. Under another leader they would often have been defeated. When the Union army was fleeing, panic-stricken, before the enemy at Winchester, the presence of Sheridan turned their defeat into victory. Without him the men were a quaking mob; with him at their head they were an invincible army. If you had listened to the remarks, after the battle, of the soldiers who served under those and similar leaders, you would have heard the praises of their general mingled with all their rejoicing. They were strong because he was; they were inspired by the same spirit that he had.

Our Mighty Leader

Well, our Captain is the Lord of hosts. He has met the chiefest foe of all and has vanquished him single-handed. Those who follow Him invariably go forth conquering and to conquer. Oh, that those who profess to be His followers would put their trust in Him, and then, by the repeated victories that they would gain, they would…

> **2 Peter 2**
> [9] …show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light!

John says that he that is born of God overcomes the world, through faith. Faith lays hold of the arm of God, and His mighty power does the work. How the power of God can work in a man, accomplishing that which he could not possible do for himself, no one can tell. It would be as easy to tell how God can give life to the dead. Says Jesus:

> **John 3**
> [8] The wind blows where it lists, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

How the Spirit works in a man to subdue his passions, and to make him victorious over pride, envy, and selfishness, is known only to the Spirit. It is sufficient for us to know that it is done, and will be done in everyone who wants that work wrought in him,

above all things else, and who trusts God for the performance of it.

We cannot tell how Peter was enabled to walk on the water, when the waves were rolling about him; but we know that at the command of the Lord he did it. So long as he kept his eye fixed on the Master, Divine Power enabled him to walk as easily as though it were solid rock underneath. But when he looked at the waves, possibly with a feeling of pride in what he was doing, as though he himself was doing it, fear very naturally took possession of him, and he began to sink. Faith enabled him to walk on the waves; fear made him sink beneath them.

Says the apostle,

Hebrews 11
[30] By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days.

Why was that written? For our learning,

Romans 15
[4] ...that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Why, is there any prospect that we shall ever be called upon to fight armed hosts, and to take fortified cities? No,

Ephesians 6
[12] For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

But the victories which have been gained by faith in God over visible foes in the flesh, are placed on record to show us what faith will accomplish in our conflict with the rulers of the darkness of this world. The grace of God, in answer to faith, is as powerful in these battles as in those; for says the apostle:

2 Corinthians 10
[3] For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh;

[4] For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;
[5] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

It was not physical foes alone that faith enabled the ancient worthies to conquer. We read of them that they not only…

Hebrews 11
[33] …subdued kingdoms, [but] wrought righteousness, obtained promises,

–and, most wonderful and most encouraging of all,

[34] *…out of weakness were made strong.*

Their very weakness became strength to them through faith, because the…

2 Corinthians 12
[9] …strength [of Christ] is made perfect in weakness.

Romans 8
[33] Who, then, shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies.

And,

Ephesians 2
[10] We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

Romans 8
[35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
[37] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

From Faith to Faith

There is another expression in the text which stands at the beginning of this tract:

Romans 1
[17] For therein [in the gospel] is the righteousness of God revealed *from faith to faith.*

This expression has been the subject of much learned discussion by theologians, and very few of them are agreed as to its meaning. The fact that learned men are disagreed in regard to it, need not frighten us from it with the thought that it cannot be understood, for we read that things hidden…

Matthew 11
[25] …from the wise and prudent, are revealed unto babes.

If we are but simple enough to accept the obvious Scripture meaning, as explained by the Scriptures, we need not be in darkness.

One of the greatest causes of the failure of many people to understand the book of *Romans*, and indeed any other portion of Scripture, is a failure to hold to first principles and Bible definitions. Men attempt to define some terms according to their theological training, and find it hard work to make them fit. Then if they at one time accept the Bible definition of a term, they do not adhere to it, but give it some other meaning the next time they meet with it. This can lead to nothing else but confusion.

The cause of the difficulty in understanding this text, is a failure to cling to the Bible definition of the term,

Romans 1
[17] …the righteousness of God.

We have already seen that it is an expression indicating God's character, and that His character is set forth in the ten commandments. They sum up the whole duty of man, which is to be like God. The law, having been transgressed, cannot, as a matter of course, be perfectly represented in any person's life, and so the gospel was devised, that man might, in Christ, find the perfect righteousness of the law. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, because it makes manifest the

righteousness of God. Not only is the law—the righteousness of God—preached, and its majesty upheld, by the gospel, but by the gospel the fruits of righteousness are made to appear in the life of the believer.

Some would make "righteousness of God" in this text synonymous with "justification." That is all right, if they do not limit the application of the text to the moment of justification from past transgression. It is the application of the law in Christ to the life of the transgressor that justifies him. Through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, God by His grace counts the past life of the sinner who believes as though it had been in every respect, in accord with His law.

> **Romans 3**
> [25] Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

This is justification. It is the revelation, or manifestation, through the gospel, of the righteousness of God.

> [21] But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;
> [22] Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.

But the text says that this is revealed "from faith to faith;" and this can mean nothing else but a progressive work of righteousness. The verse teaches that the righteousness of God is revealed from one degree of faith to a higher degree of faith, and consequently that righteousness must ever be on the increase. This is shown by the quotation which the apostle makes to prove his statement.

> "It must be that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith," he argues, "because it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"

Christian Growth

The force of this is found in the fact that the Christian life, which is the result of faith, is progressive. The Christian life is a continual growth. Peter says:

> **2 Peter 3**
> [17] You therefore, beloved, seeing you know these things before, beware lest you also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.
> [18] But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The only way to keep from falling from that which we have, is to grow. David says of the righteous man that…

> **Psalm 1**
> [3] He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

This means continual growth. We read of the path of the just, that it…

> **Proverbs 4**
> [18] …shall be as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.

But,

> **Romans 1**
> [17] The just shall live by faith;

–therefore it must be that their faith increases.

Again, Paul says to the Corinthians:

> **2 Corinthians 9**
> [10] Now He that ministers seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.

To the Thessalonians he wrote:

> **1 Thessalonians 3**
> [12] And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men.

And again he said:

1 Thessalonians 4
[6] But we beseech you, brethren, that you increase more and more.

But faith works by love; that is, love is the outgrowth of true faith; therefore increasing love must be the result of increasing faith.

To the Hebrews, the apostle wrote:

Hebrews 6
[1] Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.

And in the epistle to the Philippians, Paul said:

Philippians 3
[12] Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.
[13] Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
[14] I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Here is set forth a continual reaching out for some higher attainment. The "calling of God in Christ Jesus," is a calling to holy or righteous living, for we read:

1 Peter 1 [RV]
[15] But like as He which called you is holy, be you yourselves also holy in all manner of living;
[16] Because it is written, You shall be holy; for I am holy.

This righteousness to which we are called, and for higher attainments in which we must constantly press, is obtained only by faith, as Paul expresses his desire to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of

Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.[189] Therefore, since righteousness comes only by faith, and it must increase, it follows that faith must also increase. So it was not a vain prayer which the disciples uttered, when they said,

Luke 17
5 Lord, increase our faith.

That faith is susceptible of growth, is plainly declared by the Scriptures. Paul had hope that when the faith of the Corinthian brethren was increased, he should be helped by them to preach the gospel in the regions beyond them.[190] To the Thessalonians he wrote that he prayed exceedingly night and day, that he might see them, and might perfect that which was lacking in their faith.[191] And still later he wrote:

2 Thessalonians 1
3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith grows exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abounds.

This last text contains the whole of the argument that we have made. Their faith grew, and as a consequence their charity abounded. Charity, or love, is the fulfilling of the law.[192] It is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, and is a result of true faith, for faith works by love, and the only righteousness which will be accepted when the Lord comes is that which is by the faith of Christ,

Romans 3
22 ...the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Such being the teaching of Scripture, there is no reason why we should not understand *Romans* 1:17 just as it reads: The righteousness of God is revealed, or manifested, from faith to faith.

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[189] *Philippians* 3:9.
[190] *2 Corinthians* 10:15-16.
[191] *1 Thessalonians* 3:10.
[192] *Romans* 13:10; *1 John* 5:3.

One or two notable instances recorded in Scripture will illustrate this. The apostle records that…

Hebrews 11
[31] By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

This case has been a cause of stumbling to some who have not given careful thought to it. It is well known that Rahab lied to the men sent by the king of Jericho to seize the spies,[193] and they imagine that in saving her God placed a premium on lying, and that it is right sometimes to lie. Neither is true. Rahab was saved, not because of her lie, but because of her faith. She, in common with all the people of Jericho, had heard how the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea, and how He had led the Israelites; but she alone, of all the inhabitants of Jericho, believed that the hand of the Lord was in the matter, and that He had given the land of Canaan to the Israelites. She had simple faith, but was totally ignorant of God's law. In the code of heathen morality, lying was accounted a virtue, and she knew nothing better. But her faith made it possible for her to be saved, and brought her into a place where she could learn righteousness. As a natural consequence her faith in God would increase when she learned more of Him. In her case we have a clear instance of the revelation of the righteousness of God from faith to faith.

The same thing is true of Cornelius. He feared God with all his house, and gave much alms, and…

Acts 10
[2] …prayed to God always.

As a consequence, an angel was sent to him, directing him to send for Peter, who should tell him what he ought to do.

The sum of the whole thing is that it is faith that brings God near to us. If we first believe that He is, He will reveal himself to us more fully. If we rejoice in that light and walk in it, our faith

[193] See *Joshua* 2:2-6.

will be increased, and that will bring more light. As with Rahab, so with all. God does not grant us a blessing because we are righteous, but in order that we may become righteous. When our faith brings us to Christ, it is that we may learn of Him. To our faith we add virtue and knowledge.[194] But as…

Romans 10
17 Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,

–it follows that the more we really know—accept—of the word of God, the greater will be our faith. And so, increasing daily in faith, the just go on from strength to strength, until the dawning of the perfect day ushers them into the immediate presence of God.

[194] *2 Peter* 1:5.

8. The Full Assurance of Faith

Bible Students' Library, No. 64, June 16, 1890

THE Christian's faith in something that cannot be seen is a source of wonder to the unbeliever, and is often the object of ridicule and contempt. The worldling regards the simple faith of the Christian as an evidence of weakness of mind, and with a complacent smile at the thought of the superiority of his own intellect, he declares that *he* never believes a thing without evidence; *he* never jumps at conclusions, and doesn't believe anything that he cannot see and understand.

The saying that the man who believes nothing that he cannot understand will have a very short creed, is as true as it is trite. There is not a philosopher living who can understand the one-hundredth part of the simple phenomena that he sees every day. Scientists have found out by observation that certain kinds of soil are specially adapted to certain kinds of produce; but nobody can tell why.

As a matter of fact, faith is one of the commonest things. There is no skeptic who does not have faith to a greater or less degree; and in very many cases they go even farther, and manifest simple credulity. But the element of faith underlies all business transactions, and all the affairs of life. Two men make an appointment to meet at a certain time and place, to transact certain business; each has to trust the other's word. The merchant has to exercise faith in his employees and his customers. Yea, more, he has to, unconsciously it may be, exercise faith in God; for he will send his ships across the ocean, with confidence that they will return again loaded with merchandise, and yet he must know that their safe return depends on the winds and the waves, which are beyond human control. And even though he never once thinks of the power that controls the elements, he puts confidence in the officers and crew. He will even trust himself on board of one of the ships, whose captain and crew he never saw, and confidently expect that they will bring him to the desired heaven.

One of these men who thinks that it is foolish to trust in a God "whom no man has seen, neither can see,"[195] will go to a little window and lay down a twenty-dollar gold-piece, and in return will receive from a man whom he never saw before, and whose name he does not know, only a little strip of paper which says that he is entitled to a ride to a distant city. He perhaps has never seen that city, and knows of its existence only by the reports of others, yet he steps aboard the cars, gives his bit of paper to another total stranger, and settles down in comfort. He has never seen the engineer, and does not know but that he may be incapable or malicious; yet he is perfectly unconcerned, and confidently expects to be carried safely to the place, the existence of which he knows only by hearsay. More than this, he holds in his hand a piece of paper prepared by some men whom he never saw, which states that these strangers, to whose care he has intrusted himself, will land him at his destination at a certain hour; and so implicitly does this skeptic believe this statement, that he sends word ahead to some other person whom he has never seen, making arrangements to meet him at that specified time.

Still further, his faith is drawn upon in the sending of the message announcing his coming. He steps into a little room, writes a few words on a slip of paper, which he hands to a stranger sitting by a little machine, pays the man half a dollar, and then goes his way believing that in less than half an hour his unknown friend a thousand miles away will be reading the message which he left in the station behind him.

When he reaches the city, his faith is still further manifested. While on the cars he has written a letter to his family, whom he has left at home. As soon as he reaches the city, he spies a little iron box fastened to a post in the street, and straightway he goes and drops his letter into it, and walks off without giving the matter a second thought. He confidently expects that the letter which he has dropped into that box without saying a word to anybody,

[195] *1 Timothy* 6:16.

will reach his wife within two days. And yet this man thinks that it is extremely foolish to talk to God with the expectation that any attention will be paid to the words.

But to all this the skeptic will reply that he does not blindly trust in others, but that he has *reason* to believe that he will be carried safely, that his message will be sent correctly, and that his letter will reach his wife in good season. His faith in these things is based on the following grounds:

1. Others have been carried in safety, and thousands of letters and telegrams have been correctly sent and promptly delivered. Whenever a letter has been miscarried, it has almost invariably been the fault of the sender.

2. Those men to whom he entrusts himself and his messages, make a business of carrying people and messages; if they should fail to fulfill their agreements, nobody would place any confidence in them, and their business would soon be ruined.

3. He has had the assurance of the government of the United States. The railroad and telegraph companies receive their charter from the government, which thereby becomes in a measure responsible for their faithfulness. If they do not do as they agree, the government can revoke their charter.

His confidence in the letter-box was due to the fact that he saw upon it the letters "U.S.M.," and he knew that they mean that the government has promised safely to deliver any letter placed in the box, if it is properly addressed and stamped. He believes that the government will fulfill its promises, because if it does not, its existence must soon come to an end. Its existence depends on its power to fulfill its promises, and its integrity in performing them. It is to the interest of the government to fulfill its promises, just as much as it is to the interest of the railroad and telegraph companies to fulfill theirs. And all these things form a solid ground for his faith.

Well, the Christian has a thousand-fold more ground for his faith in the promises of God. Faith is not blind credulity. Says the apostle:

Hebrews 11
[1] Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence [ground, or confidence] of things not seen.

This is an inspired definition, and therefore we may conclude that the Lord does not expect us to exercise faith except on evidence. Now it can readily be shown that the Christian has the same ground for exercising faith in God, that the skeptic has for his confidence in the railroad and telegraph companies, or in the government; and a great deal more.

1. Others have trusted the promises of God, and have found them to be sure. The 11th chapter of *Hebrews* contains a long list of those who have verified the promises of God;...

[33] Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,
[34] Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens.
[35] Women received their dead raised to life again.

2. The God whom we trust makes a business of answering prayers, and of protecting and caring for His subjects.

Lamentations 3
[22] It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.

And,

Micah 7
[18] He delights in mercy.

Jeremiah 29
[11] For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

3. The existence of God's government depends on the fulfillment of His promises. The Christian has the assurance of the government of the universe, that every lawful request that he makes will be granted. Government is especially for the protection of the weak. Suppose now that God should fail to fulfill one of His promises to the very weakest and most insignificant persons in the world; that single failure would destroy the entire government of God. The whole universe would at once be thrown into confusion. If God should break one of His promises, no one in the universe could ever have any confidence in them, and His rule would be at an end; for trust in the ruling power is the only sure ground of obedience.

The Nihilists of Russia do not obey the czar, because they do not trust him. Any government that, through failure to meets its obligations, loses the respect of its subjects, is in an unstable condition. Therefore the humble Christian *depends* on the word of God, knowing that God has more at stake than he has. If such a thing were possible as that God should break His word, the Christian would lose only his life, but God would lose His character, the stability of His government, and the control of the universe.

Moreover, those who put their trust in human government, or in any institution of men, are liable to be disappointed.

With the best of intentions, mistakes will be made, because men are but fallible. But to the Christian the firm assurance is given:

> **Deuteronomy 33**
> [26] There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rides upon the heaven in your help, and in His excellency on the sky.
> [27] The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

His power is shown in creation. The things that He has made attest His eternal power and Godhead. The more powerful the Government, the greater the confidence in it. Then what more reasonable than that we should have implicit confidence in the

God whom nature and revelation combined declare to be omnipotent, eternal, and unchangeable?

If I should express to an infidel my doubts as to the integrity of one of his friends, he would say:

> "That's because you don't know him; just try him, and you will find him as true as steel."

This would be a fair reply; and so we say to the infidel who doubts the promises of God,

Psalm 34
[8] O taste and see that the Lord is good;...
[9] ...there is no want to them that fear Him.

What right has anybody to doubt the promises or the power of God before he has given them a fair trial? And in that case, what right has anybody to doubt God, since everybody is testing His power and goodness every moment of his life?

In the 1st chapter of *2 Corinthians*, verses 18-20, we find the following positive statements:

2 Corinthians 1
[18] But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.
[19] For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea.
[20] For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

In this fact alone can the sinner find any confidence in approaching to God.

Hebrews 13
[8] Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever,

–is the sinner's only hope. It is not to taunt them, nor to glory in disappointing them, that the gracious call is given to men:

Isaiah 55
[1] Ho, every one that thirsts, come to the waters, and he that has no money; come, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Says Jesus,

John 6
[37] Him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out;

And Paul says that:

Hebrews 7
[25] He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.

And the same apostle also says:

Hebrews 4
[14] Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.
[15] For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
[16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Again we read:

Hebrews 11
[6] But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Faith, then, and boldness, are characteristics that the Lord wants those to manifest who come to Him. Our mind was forcibly turned to this line of thought a few days ago, by reading an old hymn, the first three stanzas of which are as follows:

> Come, humble sinner, in whose breast
> A thousand thoughts revolve;
> Come, with your guilt and fear oppressed,

And make this last resolve:
I'll go to Jesus, though my sins
Like mountains round me close;
I know His courts, I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

Prostrate I'll lie before His throne,
And there my guilt confess;
I'll tell Him I'm a wretch undone
Without His sovereign grace.

That is good; no better resolve could possibly be made; it is just what God wants every sinner to do. He says:

Isaiah 55
[6] Seek the Lord while He may be found, call you upon Him while He is near;
[7] Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

This is the language of positive assurance. What then shall we say to the sentiment expressed in the fourth stanza of the hymn above referred to? It reads thus:

Perhaps He will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

Such language might be excusable in one who knew nothing of God; but uttered by one who has known God, or, rather, is known of God,[196] it can be regarded only as a libel upon God's word. The sinner is exhorted to resolve to throw himself prostrate before God, to confess his sins, and plead for mercy, and then is "encouraged" with the thought that *perhaps* God will hear his prayer, and admit his plea. Not in that manner does God encourage those who are sick of sin. Says the beloved disciple,

[196] *Galatians* 4:9.

1 John 1
[9] If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

He promises that he will "have mercy" upon and "abundantly pardon" those who turn to him confessing and forsaking their sins.

There is no such thing as "perhaps" with God. His promises to the penitent, and his threats to the impenitent, are equally positive.

Mark 16
[16] He that believes and is baptized *shall be saved;* but he that believes not *shall be damned.*

To the straying he says:

Jeremiah 29
[12] Then shall you call upon me, and you shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.
[13] And you shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart.

Again he says:

Isaiah 45
[19] I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek me in vain; I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

Christ says:

Matthew 11
[28] Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
[29] Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls.

There is no "perhaps" about this.

1 John 4
[16] God is love;

–He has revealed himself to us as a God that…

Micah 7
[18] …delights in mercy.

The surety of this is found in the fact that Jesus died for us.

Romans 5
[8] God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

And,

Romans 8
[32] He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

1 Timothy 1
[15] This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Since He came for this express purpose, how can there be any doubt about His receiving those who come humbly to Him? When Queen Esther was implored to go in before Ahasuerus, to beg for the life of her people, she at first refused, because it was death to go before him without being summoned; but finally she yielded, saying:

Esther 4
[16] Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.

Ahasuerus (Xerxes) was a heathen king, and an unreasonable despot. In going before him, the queen took her life in her hand. But our God has held out His scepter to us; He wants us to come, and entreats us to come.

Ezekiel 33
[11] Say unto them, As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Revelation 22
[17] And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

We said that there is no such thing as "perhaps" with God. James says that with Him is…

James 1
[17] …no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Then those who come to Him, doubtful if they will receive what they ask for, must displease Him, because they reflect upon His truthfulness. That God is displeased with the one who doubts, is evident from *Hebrews* 11:6, and also from the following words:

[5] If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not; and it shall be given him.
[6] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.
[7] For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

The man who thinks that "perhaps" God will hear his prayer, thinks that "perhaps" He will not; such a one cannot ask in faith, nothing wavering, and consequently cannot receive anything. The only way to come is to come boldly.

Matthew 11
[12] The violent take the kingdom of heaven by force.

One thought more. God is pleased to have us come to Him with confidence, because it shows that we believe what He says; and His own glory depends on the fulfillment of His promises. Says Paul:

Ephesians 2

[4] But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,
[5] Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace you are saved;)
[6] And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:
[7] That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

That is, God intends to exhibit us throughout eternity, as an evidence of the exceeding riches of His grace; the souls that are saved will be an everlasting trophy of His unchanging goodness; how then can it be imagined that He will not hear the prayer of the contrite soul, with whom He has said that He delights to dwell?

Have you repented of your sins? Do you hate them, and long for a better life? Have you confessed them? Then take the assurance of God's word as evidence that your sins are forgiven, and that you are entitled to peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then you may say with the prophet:

Isaiah 12

[1] And in that day you shall say, O Lord, I will praise You; though You were angry with me, your anger is turned away, and You comfort me.
[2] Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.

9. Saving Faith

Present Truth, July 31, 1890

Romans 10

[6] But the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise, Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above);
[7] Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead).
[8] But what says it? The word is nigh you, even in your mouth, and in your heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach;
[9] That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

1. May we accept these words, especially the statement in the last verse, as literally true?
2. Shall we not be in danger if we do?
3. Is not something more than faith in Christ necessary to salvation?

TO THE first of these questions we say, "Yes," and to the last two we say, "No," and refer to the Scriptures for corroboration. So plain a statement cannot be other than literally true and one that can be depended on by the trembling sinner.

As an instance in proof, take the case of the jailer at Philippi. Paul and Silas, after having been inhumanly beaten, were placed in his care. Notwithstanding their lacerated backs and their manacled feet, they prayed and sang praises to God at midnight and suddenly an earthquake shook the prison, and all the doors were opened. It was not alone the natural fear produced by feeling the earth rock beneath him nor yet the dread of Roman justice if the prisoners in his charge should escape, that caused the jailer to tremble. But he felt in that earthquake shock a premonition of the great judgment, concerning which the apostles had preached; and, trembling under his load of guilt, he fell down before Paul and Silas, saying,

Acts 16
[30] Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

Mark well the answer; for here was a soul in sorest extremity and what was sufficient for him must be the message to all lost ones. To the jailer's anguished appeal, Paul replied,

[31] Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.

This agrees exactly with the words which we quoted from Paul to the *Romans*. But someone will say,

"Faith is good, and necessary, but it is not enough."

If that be true, then Paul kept back something that was profitable to the jailer, and this we cannot admit.

"But isn't there some work that must be done? Are we not to obey the commandments of God?"

Most certainly; the same apostle declares that we should…

Titus 3
[8] …be careful to maintain good works,

–and the works that God requires are works of obedience to His law. Yet we still affirm that faith is all-sufficient for salvation. How is this? Let the Saviour's own words answer. On one occasion the Jews said unto Jesus,

John 6
[28] What shall we do that we might work the works of God?

Just the thing that we want to know. Mark the reply:

[29] This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

Would that these words might be written in letters of gold and kept continually before the eyes of every struggling Christian. The seeming paradox is cleared up. Works are necessary, yet faith is all-sufficient, because faith does the work. Faith comprehends everything and without faith there is nothing.

The trouble is that people in general have a faulty conception of faith. They imagine that it is mere assent and that it is only a passive thing to which active works must be added. But faith is active and it is not only the most substantial thing but the only real foundation. The law is the righteousness of God,[197] for which we are commanded to seek,[198] but it cannot be kept except by faith, for the only righteousness which will stand in the Judgment is…

Philippians 3
[9] …that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Read the words of Paul:

Romans 3
[31] Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

Making void the law of God by man is not abolishing it; for that is an impossibility. It is as fixed as the throne of God. No matter what men say of the law, nor how much they trample upon it and despise it, it remains the same. The only way that men can make void the law of God is to make it of none effect in their hearts by their disobedience. Thus in *Numbers* 30:15, a vow that has been broken is said to have been made void. So when the apostle says that we do not make void the law through faith, he means that faith and disobedience are incompatible. No matter how much the law-breaker professes faith, the fact that he is a law-breaker shows that he has no faith. But the possession of faith is shown by the establishment of the law in the heart, so that the man does not sin against God. Let no one decry faith as of little moment.

"But does not the apostle James say that faith alone cannot save a man and that faith without works is dead?"

Let us look at his words a moment. Too many have with honest intent perverted them to a dead legalism. He does say that faith

[197] *Isaiah* 51:6-7.
[198] *Matthew* 6:33.

without works is dead and this agrees most fully with what we have just quoted and written. For if faith without works is dead, the absence of works shows the absence of faith; for that which is dead has no existence. If a man has faith, works will necessarily appear and the man will not boast of either one, for by faith boasting is excluded.[199] Boasting is done only by those who trust wholly in dead works or whose profession of faith is a hollow mockery.

Then how about *James* 2:14, which says:

> **James 2**
> [14] What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith and have not works? Can faith save him?

The answer necessarily implied is, of course, that it cannot. Why not? Because he hasn't it. What does it profit, if a man *say* he has faith, if by his wicked course he shows that he has none? Must we decry the power of faith simply because it does nothing for the man who makes a false profession of it? Paul speaks of some who profess that they know God but who deny Him by their works.[200] The man to whom James refers is one of this class. The fact that he has no good works—no fruit of the Spirit—shows that he has no faith, despite his loud profession, and so of course faith cannot save him; for faith has no power to save a man who does not possess it.

This is but a brief presentation of this subject. Much more ought to be said, and many difficulties that arise in honest people's minds ought to be met, and this will be done in due time. But the scripture cited should be sufficient to cause us to heed the exhortation to…

> **Hebrews 10**
> [23] …hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering, [knowing that] He is faithful that promised.

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[199] *Romans* 3:27.
[200] *Titus* 1:16.

10. Faith Comes by Hearing

Present Truth, October 5, 1893

THE evangelist, L. W. Munhall, relates in the New York *Independent* the following of the inquiry room, which is but an illustration of the statement that:

Romans 10
[17] Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 5
[1] Being justified by faith, [not by feeling,] we have peace with God.

But we have need to take heed how we hear. All of the difficulties that people experience in understanding the Bible, and all the conflicting theories that are said to be derived from it, arise from the fact that people do not take the word just as it says, but persist in reading their own doubts into it. Mr. Munhall was conducting a series of meetings, and during one of the inquiry services he was told that a man named John Ewing was in great distress of mind, and anxious to see him. He proceeds thus:

> I found Mr. Ewing in a corner of the room, behind a door, on his knees, before a chair. His hands were laid open upon a chair, palms downward. His face was turned upward, was ashen-hued and covered with great drops of cold perspiration. He was the perfect picture of despair. I dropped upon my knees by his side and the following conversation took place:
>
> "I understand, Mr. Ewing, you wish to see me."
>
> "Yes, sir!" he replied.
>
> "What is your trouble?"
>
> "Oh, sir, I am such a great sinner."
>
> I said: "Praise the Lord!"
>
> I can never forget the look he gave me as he said:
>
> "I see nothing for which to praise the Lord."

"Doubtless that is so," I responded; "but that is because 'the eyes of your understanding' are not 'enlightened that you may know what is the hope of His calling.'[201] There is hope for the man who believes himself to be a great sinner. Jesus came not 'to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' 'They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.'[202] Do you not know, Mr. Ewing, that we have a very great and gracious Saviour?"

"Yes," he said, "but my sins are heinous and very black."

"But," I responded, "Jesus 'is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.'"[203]

"That may all be true," he replied; "but I am the vilest sinner in this city. I have sinned knowingly and with a high hand."

I opened my Bible to the 53rd chapter of *Isaiah*, and laid it upon the chair before him. I asked: "Do you believe the Bible is true?"

"I do," was the quick response.

I then said: "Will you notice carefully the three things stated in the sixth verse of this chapter. First: 'All we like sheep have gone astray.'[204] Do you believe that?" I asked.

"Yes; I know I have wandered like a lost sheep."

"Second: 'We have turned every one to his own way.'[205] Do you believe that?"

"Oh, yes, sir. I know I have not walked in God's way."

"Third: 'And the Lord has laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all.'[206] Do you believe that also?"

He responded, hesitatingly and evasively: "I have been the wickedest man upon earth."

"So, then," I said, "you believe the first and second statements of that verse, but not the third?"

"O, sir, I believe it all."

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[201] *Ephesians* 1:18.
[202] Matthew 9:13, 12.
[203] *Hebrews* 7:25.
[204] *Isaiah* 53:6.
[205] *Ibid.*
[206] *Ibid.*

"Are you certain of it?"

"Yes, sir; but I am such a great sinner."

"Do you really believe God laid your iniquities on Jesus? It says that, does it not?"

"Yes, it says, 'And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' Well, I believe it."

"With your whole heart?"

"Yes, with my whole heart?"

"Well," I then asked, "where are your iniquities?"

"On me, sir; and they are very great and heavy."

"And you say, Mr. Ewing 'I believe the Bible is true;' and yet, when God says He 'has laid on Him the iniquities of us all,' 'who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree,'[207] and thus has 'put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,'[208] you say, in effect: 'It is not so; my sins are yet on me.' In other words, God says He laid your sins on Jesus, and you say it is not so; and yet claim to believe the Bible."

"But, sir," he answered, "I do believe God's word."

"Very well," I said, "let us look at it again. God says: 'And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all,' does He not?"

"Yes, that's how it reads."

"Well, then, where are your iniquities?"

With somewhat of hesitation, he said: "I suppose, sir, they must be upon Christ."

"You suppose so? Don't you know so?"

"Well, but I'm such a very great sinner."

"Very well, then, I'll read it your way, and we'll see how it sounds. Will you listen?"

"Certainly."

Again I read: "'All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all,' excepting John Ewing."

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[207] *1 Peter* 2:24.
[208] *Hebrews* 9:26.

Springing to his feet, he shouted: "That's not there, sir! It doesn't say that!"

I replied: "I know it does not. But that's the way you have been reading it all the while, in spite of my every effort to get you to see what it really does say."

"I see it! I see it!" he said, vehemently and exultingly: "He did lay my sins on Jesus! He did! He did!" and he clapped his hands again and again in the ecstasy of his joy, and shouted aloud the praises of God.

11. Key Note of Christian Living

Present Truth, October 5, 1893

HERE is an extract from a letter written by Ruskin to a young student of his, which touches the key note of Christian living:

I believe there is no means of preserving rectitude of conduct and nobleness of aim but the grace of God, obtained daily, almost hourly—waiting upon Him and continual faith in His immediate presence. Get into this habit of thought, and you need make no promises. Come short of this, and you will break them, and be more discouraged, than if you had made none. The great lesson we have to learn in this world is *to give it all up;* it is not so much resolution as renunciation—not so much courage as resignation that we need. He that has once yielded thoroughly to God will yield to nothing but God.

12. The Eye of Faith

Present Truth, November 2, 1893

THE Christian sees with the eye of faith. Faith is the only means through which we obtain a knowledge of the things to which Christianity pertains.

- By faith we have received all that we know of the life to come.
- By faith we look back to the time before man was, and "understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God."[209]
- By faith also we understand truths of the highest importance pertaining to the present life.
- By the eye of faith we are enabled to guide our feet in the narrow path that leads by many snares and pitfalls to an eternity of joy and peace.

Faith sees that which is not cognizable to the natural senses. We are told in *Hebrews* 11:

> **Hebrews 11**
> [1] Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

But faith does more than simply see that which the natural senses cannot perceive, it contradicts the evidence of the senses. It refuses to see that which the senses claim to perceive. And this is where faith is especially valuable, for if we allowed ourselves always to believe the evidence of our senses, we should wander quickly and hopelessly away from the path which leads to God.

One of our senses,—feeling, for instance, that inner feeling which is of the mind and heart—says, I do not see any happiness in the way, or any eternal weight of glory at the end of it; but faith says,

[209] *Hebrews* 11:3.

"It is there!"

Again, feeling says (and perhaps reason backs it up), I see great difficulty in the way; but faith says,

"It is not there; what you saw was only an appearance, not a reality."

Faith deals only with realities. They may be invisible to us now, but they are no less tangible. That which seems so awfully real to us now, is described by Paul as the…

2 Corinthians 4
[17] …light affliction, which is but for a moment.

The invisible glory beyond is an…

[17] …eternal weight.

Perhaps you see before you—or seem to see—a great list of very grievous sins that have darkened your past life. You have repented of and confessed them, but the devil comes and holds them up before you and says,

"There are your sins; do you not see them? You are too wicked a person for the Lord to save."

But faith says,

"They are *not* there."

And why? Because it quotes to you these words of God himself,

1 John 1
[9] If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all of righteousness.

And when God forgives sins, He removes them from us,

Psalm 103
[12] As far as the east is from the west.

The very fact that the devil tries to discourage you with a long and vivid array of your past sins that you have confessed, is rea-

son for encouragement, because the devil never brings to a person's mind sins that are not confessed and pardoned. His work is to keep people in ignorance of their sin; but as soon as they are seen and confessed, and God has removed them according to His word, the devil holds them all up and tells the individual they are still there, in order to make him discouraged. He is as persistent in bringing such sins to the Christian's mind and keeping them before him, as he was before in keeping them in the background.

But faith says,

> **Psalm 103**
> [12] As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

And thus we are enabled to know the *truth* on this vital point; for faith always speaks by the word of God; and His word is truth.[210]

- Where feeling sees mountains, faith sees only molehills.
- Where feeling sees only the arm of flesh, faith sees only the arm of God.
- Where the wisdom of man sees foolishness, faith sees the wisdom of God.
- Where feeling and reason see nothing but defeat, faith sees eternal victory.
- Where feeling and reason see only death, faith sees everlasting life.

It makes all the difference in the world whether we share our course in accordance with the evidence of the one, or the other.

Faith sees nothing but truth. More than this; it sees nothing but that which is worth seeing. Paul said to his Philippian brethren,

> **Philippians 4**
> [8] Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatso-

[210] *Romans* 10:17; *John* 17:17.

ever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

These are just the things that faith sees. So long as we direct our steps by the eye of faith, we shall walk in the paths of righteousness, but when we cease to walk by faith and begin to walk by sight, or by reason, or by feeling, we begin to go wrong, because we are guided by appearances and not by truth.

Moses at the Court of Pharaoh, and Joseph and the house of Potiphar, walked by the eye of faith and thus kept themselves from paths that were false and evil. We are told that Moses…

Hebrews 11
[27] …endured as seeing Him who is invisible;

–and we may be sure that Joseph, surrounded by the licentiousness and idolatry of Egypt, walked in the midst of them as one who saw them not. And so it is with the Christian of today. He is not influenced by that which he does not see. Though he may see evil and wickedness with his natural eyes, and feel the promptings of evil in his own heart, he *walks* by faith, which sees only his Saviour and the pardoning blood of Calvary, and the things of the kingdom of God.

The Christian must walk by faith, and faith alone. He will not be safe in making the least departure from the path that faith marks out, or in substituting any other source of knowledge for it, for all other sources of our knowledge are liable to be fallacious and misleading. And the devil can mislead a man every time when he can get him to substitute reason or feeling or something else, for faith. The devil surrounds his deceptions with very plausible appearances of truth. Notice how it was that he deceived our first parents. He appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent; and as she beheld him he was among the branches of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, eating of its fruit. As she came near the serpent spoke to her. She was surprised to hear a serpent speak, for she knew God had not given it the gift of speech. Then the

serpent told her that the fruit of the tree of knowledge would not cause her to die, but would open her eyes and make her like a god;

> "For see," he said, "I have eaten of the fruit and it has not hurt me; and more than that, it has given me the power of speech!"

This, when we come to consider it, was really an overmastering deception. Her eyes, her ears, her reason, all testified to the truth of what the serpent said. Ah, had she then been guided by faith, and not by these, she would have known the truth, and the history of the world would have been deferred. Faith would have said,

> **Genesis 2**
> [17] In the day that you eat thereof, you shall surely die.

This was the truth, and all the specious appearances before her were entirely false.

The devil has lost none of his cunning since he tempted Eve. He has worked continually upon men's feelings, upon their reason, upon all their natural senses, to get them to discredit the word of God. If he can do this he can deceive them every time. But if we will cling to the word of God, if we will have faith in it in spite of all appearances, however plausible, that contradict the word, we shall escape the deceptions of the devil, and keep our feet in the straight path that leads to eternal joy.

13. Getting Faith

Present Truth, November 2, 1893

HOW often in a conference meeting we hear someone say,

> "What we need in order to make our Christian work more of a success, is more faith."

Very often a member will make the confession,

> "I know that the trouble with me is that I have not enough faith."

And then they will resolve to pray for more faith. People seem to think that if they have not faith it is the Lord's fault, and that if He wishes them to have more of it, He must give it to them. They seem to think that faith is something that God must pour down from heaven, as He does the rain.

It is an utterly senseless thing for men to complain that they have not enough faith. The only way to have faith, is to believe, and God has given all possible foundation for that in His word. What would be thought of a man on a broad plain, or by the sea-shore, who should complain that he is not breathing as much as he ought to? We should say to him,

> "Then breathe; for God is giving you abundance of air."

So to the faithless one we may say,

> "Believe; for you have the word of God as free and as abundant as the air."

14. Insulting God

Present Truth, January 4, 1894

THIS is what many professed Christians do, who would be shocked at the bare suggestion. Moreover they are not ashamed to do it to His face. Let us illustrate. Suppose I had an acquaintance to whom I would say on almost every occasion when we met,

> "I find it very difficult to believe what you say to me; I wish you would help me to believe what you say."

That would not be complementary, to say the least; but the man might be so forbearing as to repeat his statements and promises. He might even go so far with me as to take a solemn oath that his words were true. Nevertheless I continue to say to him,

> "It is so difficult to believe you."

And then when I meet with friends I speak of this one, and tell them how hard it is for me to believe him. Would not such conduct be justly called an insult to the man? Would what I say have a tendency to give others confidence in him? Everybody can see that such language would be the same as saying to others,

> "Be very cautious in your dealing with that man; look out for him, and do not trust him too much, or you may be deceived."

Now that is just the way thousands of professed Christians treat God. It is an insult to God, and a disgrace to the cause of Christ, for any professed Christian to talk about lack of faith. They do not treat God with the ordinary courtesy that they would show a neighbor. Who can expect to see sinners converted to God, when those who profess to be acquainted with Him talk and act as though He were not to be trusted?

15. Examining Ourselves

Present Truth, February 1, 1894

WE ARE to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith. It is not to find out what is in the heart, because no man on earth can find out what is in the heart. The man who starts out to do that is going to be terribly deceived; for…

Jeremiah 17

[9] The heart is deceitful above all things,

–and it will deceive him every time. But the Lord says,

[10] I the Lord search the heart.

He makes known to every man the fruit of his ways, and we want to have confidence enough in Him to let Him do the searching of the heart. When we find out that we are in the faith, we shall not be afraid to trust the Lord to search the heart and make known the sin. If we be in the faith, we know that Christ died for sinners, in order that they might be separated from sin. Therefore He is more interested in having us know the sins, so as to give them up to Him, than we are to know them.

It is not an unheard of thing, by any means, to find professed Christians who do not know that the Lord loves them when in sin, and so they are always afraid of the Lord, from a sense of their sinfulness. Are you in the faith? If so, you will accept the knowledge of sin as the result of the revelation of the righteousness which will take away that sin, and rejoice in the Lord.

16. Wanting at Last

Present Truth, February 8, 1894

PEOPLE say they want to serve the Lord; want to be consecrated; want to do right; want the blessing of the Lord, etc. That kind of service will find one wanting at last. Wanting, wanting, wanting,—and never getting; thanking the Lord that we want to do this or that, and never doing it. That experience cannot result in anything at last, but,

Daniel 5

[27] You are weighed in the balances, and are found wanting.

If you want blessings, take them. The Lord has given them to you. If you want the Lord, take Him; for He is yours whether you have acknowledged it or not. And you are the Lord's whether you want to be or not; for He has bought you with His own blood.

17. Speculation and Faith

Present Truth, February 15, 1894

SPECULATION is uncertainty. It is always a risk. A man ventures something, not knowing what the result will be. He thinks that a certain investment will be a safe one, and will yield large returns, but he is not sure. He has no means of being sure. If he could be sure of the result, it would not be speculation. Very often the man who feels the most confident of the good results of his investment is most sorely disappointed.

This element of uncertainty is that which wears out the speculator, and makes him prematurely old. His nerves are always in tension. He may have all his fortune at stake, and it is impossible for him to rest in perfect ease when he knows that a very little thing may dash it from him in a moment. No wonder that a man in such a condition often finds it impossible to sleep.

Faith is altogether different from this. Faith knows. It runs no risks. There is no element of uncertainty in it. Christ is the only object of faith, and…

Hebrews 13
[8] [He is] the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

He never fails. His power is almighty, and He loses nothing that is intrusted to Him; no one can snatch anything from His hands.

John 10
[28] And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.
[29] My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

John 17
[12] While I was with them in the world, I kept them in your name: those that You gave me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

Christ is the "tried stone," the "precious corner stone," the "sure foundation;" and…

1 Peter 2
[6] …he that believes in Him shall not be confounded.

His ability to keep is shown in the fact that He upholds all things by the word of His power.[211] When the Lord would encourage us to put our trust in Him, He says,

Isaiah 40
[26] Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, but not one is lacking.

So it is as unto "a faithful Creator"[212] that we are to commit the keeping of our souls to Him. That which may be known of Him, even…

Romans 1
[20] …His eternal power and Godhead,

–are clearly revealed in the things that He has made, so that all have ample opportunity to become acquainted with Him. Therefore the language of faith is,

2 Timothy 1
[12] I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

Faith knows nothing of worry. There is no straining of the nerves to the utmost pitch of anxiety, for fear of what may happen in the future. He who knows the Lord would as soon think of worrying lest a comet should strike the earth, or lest the earth should come into collision with some other planet, and thus be wrecked, as to worry lest at some future time the Lord might allow him to fall. His strength is in quietness and confidence.[213] Un-

[211] *Hebrews* 1:3.
[212] *1 Peter* 4:19.
[213] *Isaiah* 30:15.

der the shadow of the Almighty he abides secure, and is not afraid, knowing that nothing present or to come can separate the soul from that…

Jeremiah 31
[3] …everlasting love.

18. The Faith of Jesus

Present Truth, February 15, 1894

Revelation 14
[12] Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

IN THE 22nd *Psalm* it is said,

Psalm 22
[8] He trusted on the Lord.

He had faith, and was…

[9] …made to hope even from his mother's breast.

How are we going to get that faith? We have it.

Romans 10
[8] The word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach.

The only thing we have to do is to keep the faith, as Paul did.

Romans 12
[3] God has dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Ephesians 4
[5] One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
[6] One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
[7] But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

One faith, and that only the faith of Jesus, and God has dealt it to every man. Only recognize it, and thank God for it.

Revelation 3
[11] …hold that fast which you have.

19. Doubt

Present Truth, March 1, 1894

DOUBT means devil. You can keep this in mind by the fact that both words have the same number of letters, and both begin with the same letter; and they mean the same thing. Belief comes from Christ; for...

Hebrews 12
[2] [He is] the Author and Finisher of our faith.

He is the faithful One.[214] Doubt is simply the whispering of the devil. Belief is the acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20. Today

Present Truth, March 1, 1894

MANY are afraid to rejoice in the Lord today, for fear that they will fall in the future. But the Lord delivers from all fear:

1 John 4
[18] [His] love casts out fear.

There is no danger of falling in the future, today. It cannot be done. Tomorrow cannot be brought into today. And when tomorrow comes, it will be today. So that if we trust the Lord today, we can trust Him for ever. All time is present with God. So we may rejoice in the full salvation of God now, and the future can throw no cloud over today, to darken the way of rejoicing.

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[214] **Revelation 1** [5] ...Jesus Christ,...the faithful witness. **Hebrews 1** [1] ...Christ Jesus; [2] Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

21. Feeling at Liberty

Present Truth, March 8, 1894

THE religion of Jesus Christ is not simply one of emotions. It does not quench feelings, but it consists of more than emotions. It is a fact. It holds good when a person can have no emotions. It holds good when the body is paralyzed, and the nerves are numb,—when there is scarcely enough consciousness left to take notice of anything, and the mind has almost ceased to work. The man who knows Christ does not then have to reason out his hope, but rests in the consciousness of the fact of the life.

It is a glorious truth that the religion of Christ needs not to be reasoned out. We do not have to trace evidences, and weigh arguments to know at any time what it is. This does not mean that God discounts the intellect with which He has endowed His creatures, but that faith is superior to reason. Human reason, not guided by the Spirit of God, leads to folly. Faith is a guide of reason; but the truth of the Spirit of God is not to be reasoned out, else there would be partiality; the kingdom of heaven could not in that case be received by a child as well as by a philosopher. But,

1 Corinthians 1
[21] The world by wisdom knew not God.

The righteousness of God is not revealed to reason, but to faith. When one is at the very point of death, and the brain so sick and sore that it is a positive task to think at all, one can lie perfectly still and *know* that he is accepted, not because he feels that he is, but because God has said so. He need not look about to see if his feelings correspond to the demands, but he can rest in the Lord, knowing that he is in His hands.

There are times, and it will come to every Christian, when he will not *feel* that he is free. He may be depressed in body. The weather often has an effect on people, and at any rate we are all still in the flesh. The flesh is still unconverted, and it will always remain so, for it is enmity against God, and cannot be subject to

Him. It will demand that we serve it in this and that thing, and will demand satisfaction. Then is the time we want to know that we are free. If there is any doubt then we are in danger.

The devil knows the weakness of the flesh, and he will work to regain his position. You say,

> "I am in doubt, and do not know. The other day in meetings the Lord seemed to set me free; but I do not feel so now. If I were free why should I feel so depressed?"

And when we begin to hesitate and temporize, the devil, who is an expert in his art, brings us into discouragement and captivity. It is a fact that the Lord has proclaimed liberty to the captives. He holds the keys still, and the devil never can get hold of them. He has loosed the bonds of every man. David says,

Psalm 116
[16] I Lord, truly I am your servant;...You have loosed my bonds.

And it is true of every soul. There is not a soul in the world who might not say with truth, "You have loosed my bonds;" and if he continued to say it on the authority of God's word, he would continue free; for the Lord has proclaimed liberty to every captive.

It is not a matter for feeling, but for practical use. When the enemy comes to destroy, when the flesh would rise up to assert its domination, then is the blessedness of this word,

> "I am free."

God has freed from that power, and He has power to maintain the freedom. Why should the experience of so many professors be fitful, now rejoicing and then again gloomy and full of doubt? God has declared freedom; will He put us in prison again?

How many times we hear people talking about being in the dark;

> "It was light, but now it is gloom."

They have simply allowed Satan to thrust them into the dark cell, because they wandered near Doubting Castle. Bunyan had the truth of the thing when he told the story of Christian and Hopeful in Doubting Castle. They had been lying there in the dark for a week or more when Christian bethought himself of the key of Promise which he had in his bosom, which opened every door and gate in the castle, and they walked at liberty because they believed the Lord.

Now why should we be in doubting Castle when the Lord sets us free and enlightens the gloom? We have the promise that the word is not far off. It is not in heaven, that we should go up to bring it, nor across the sea, that we should send for it. It is nigh you, even in your heart. So to everyone that key has been given, and all can be free all the time, if they will use it. The Lord never puts us in bondage, and the time for us to assert our liberty is when the enemy would drag us back into captivity. He would be a strange man who, when the notice came to him in prison that he had been pardoned and set free, should wait until he felt free, before walking out at liberty. It would show that he did not believe in the genuineness of the pardon, or that he doubted its authority. It is because people do not believe God, that they refuse to assert their freedom when He proclaims it to every soul.

22. Discrediting the Lord

Present Truth, April 26, 1894

MANY do not think the Lord is as good as they are. They are willing to give up everything for the Lord, but do not believe the Lord is willing to give up everything for them. When they give themselves to the Lord they do not take Him, and the fact that they do not take, shows that they do not believe that He has given everything.

23. The Gospel Does Not Depend Upon Man

Present Truth, May 10, 1894

WHENEVER a man apostatizes, the scoffers set up a shout, as though the Gospel had been greatly weakened. Even many Christians are sometimes thrown into perplexity. They lose courage, and are almost in doubt as to the truth, because some have turned from it. Such need to learn that the Gospel does not depend on man. They must know that it rests on the unchangeable word of God. Paul knew whom he believed,[215] and therefore he could write without a shade of discouragement or doubt,

> **1 Timothy 1**
> [15] This you know, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me.

What if all the professed Christians in a province apostatized, and his work seemed to have been entirely in vain?

> **2 Timothy 2**
> [19] Nevertheless the foundation of God stands sure.

The truth is no more true because many men, and even great men, believe it; and it is no less true because many reject it. Jesus was just as much the Son of God when all forsook Him and fled, as He was when the multitude followed Him, shouting,

> **Luke 19**
> [38] Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord.

[215] *2 Timothy* 1:12.

24. The Minimum of Belief

Present Truth, May 10, 1894

WE LEARN from a contemporary that some candidates for the ministry are raising the query,

> "How little is a man compelled to believe?"

Very little indeed, if we take the word that comes to us from some teachers. It is quite in keeping with the present discussion of fixed standards, that the minimum of belief should be fixed by those who know just how little religion will ensure entrance into the kingdom. Lovers of the word will agree that the minimum of belief is thus defined,

Acts 16
[31] Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

But this is the maximum of belief also; for He is…

John 14
[6] …the Truth,

–and in Him is…

Colossians 2
[9] …all the fullness,
[3] [and] all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

The Apostle Paul preached Jesus as the sum of all belief, and he therefore believed…

Acts 24
[14] …all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.

Believing in Christ is not believing a little, but believing *all truth*. The man who thinks he is believing on the Lord, and who yet rejects any word of the Lord, believes nothing. Belief, with a Christian, is not a burden, of which he wants as little as possible; it is an uplifting power which grows stronger as it brings the Lord nearer.

25. The Unpardonable Sin

Present Truth, January 31, 1895

THIS may be defined in few words. It is simply the sin of unbelief. Faith that appropriates the life and power of God is the only means of salvation. There is no sin that cannot be forgiven the one who believes, for,

Romans 10
[10] With the heart man believes unto righteousness.

But he who refuses to believe, shuts himself off from the fountain of life and righteousness. In short, the unpardonable sin is the sin that rejects pardon.

26. Faith's Victory

Present Truth, February 14, 1895

1 John 5
[4] This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

THE only victory that can be gained in this world is the victory of faith. Faith is the only thing that cannot be defeated. Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, gained great temporary triumph; but defeat overtook them in the end.

- The first succumbed to his own devices,
- The second to the assassin, and
- The third to the enemies over whom he had long triumphed.

Wealth never enabled a person to end his life victorious, neither did power, nor fame. But the man of faith, though alone in the midst of his enemies, was never conquered. He might be ridiculed and denounced, but this could not touch his character. He might be imprisoned or put to death, but he lost nothing thereby, for he was already dead, having been crucified with Christ,[216] and the life of Christ, which was his, could not be bound or taken away.

[216] *Galatians* 2:20.

27. The Things Set Before Us

Present Truth, June 27, 1895
Original title: Front Page

IF WE would but open our eyes, we should see that God has set wonderful things before us, not only within our sight but within our reach, which should fill us full of hope and rejoicing. It is common to say,

> "We know not what is before us;"

–but this expression is not altogether of faith. The uncertainty is not so much in regard to what is before us, as to what will be our choice, and what course we will pursue. The Lord says,

> **Deuteronomy 30**
> [15] See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil.

These things are as certainly set before each of us as they were before ancient Israel, for…

> **Hebrews 4**
> [2] Unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them.

But whether we will choose life or death, good or evil,[217] is a matter which rests altogether with us.

Of our Saviour we read that…

> **Hebrews 12**
> [2] [He] for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame.

Yet through all His earthly life He walked in the shadow of Gethsemane and Calvary. He knew the ordeal that was before Him. Yet He looked not at this, but at the joy that was set before Him. And if He could walk joyfully in the full knowledge that His pathway led to such an awful hour of agony and gloom, certainly we, for the joy set before us, can do the same. For the joy that was

[217] *Deuteronomy* 30:15.

set before Him, is also set before us; the faithful will finally enter into the joy of their Lord.[218]

It was by faith that the Saviour saw the joy that was set before Him. And the same faith is given unto us; for He is…

Hebrews 12
[2] …the Author and Finisher of faith,

–and there is no other faith but His. Faith is not a thing of human manufacture.

Ephesians 2
[8] It is the gift of God.

The saints…

Revelation 14
[12] …keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

The faith of Jesus will do for us what it did for Him. And as it enabled Him to see the joy that was set before Him, and thus to endure the cross, despising the shame, so it will enable us, whose conflicts and trials are so much less than His, to walk joyfully in the Christian pathway. In Gethsemane and Calvary the faith of Jesus met the supreme test, and triumphed gloriously. And that was also an eternal triumph for those who follow Him. Having endured the greatest test, that faith will certainly endure all lesser ones.

1 John 5 [RV]
[4] And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

The joy, the life, the glory that will never end, are set before us. This we know; it is as certain as that the Word of God is true. But whether we have them or not depends upon our own choice. We may make it a certainty by our decision. There is no uncertainty about it save what we create ourselves.

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[218] *Matthew* 25:21.

The very doorway of Heaven is set open before every soul.

Revelation 3
[7] These things says He that is holy, He that is true, He that has the key of David, He that opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens:
[8] I know your works; behold I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it.

28. Faith Knows No Failures

Present Truth, October 24, 1895

THE history of missions in modern days has many a record of those who seemingly failed, but whose apparent failure was success. The man who goes forward in the path of duty, even though he perish in it, has left a life story that still testifies the power of faith.

When Captain Allen Gardiner died in Terre del Fuego he had no results of his mission to the savages there to encourage his last hours, but the promises of God were his then, and the results have followed since.

It was the mission to the Yahgans of this cheerless region that drew from the naturalist Darwin an acknowledgment of the power of missions to lift up the degraded. He had seen these natives on his voyage with the *Beagle*, about 1880, and considered them about the lowest forms of human life. But after many years of Gospel work Darwin saw them, and was so surprised at the change that he became a subscriber to the mission.

It was the early account of the pitiful condition of the people that led young Gardiner to organize an expedition to carry them the Gospel. The natives received them with hostile demonstrations, and after months of exposure to the pitiless climate the party actually starved to death.

When a relief expedition went to visit them the next year, an inscription on a rock, still said to be visible, "Go to Spaniard Harbour," directed the searchers to the place where the remains of the missionaries were found. The diary and papers left bore witness to the privations endured, and urged that the pitiless natives should not be abandoned.

The heroism of their lives inspired friends at home to redoubled effort, and thus changes have been wrought in Tierra del Fuego which have drawn from unbelievers a confession of the power of the Gospel to lift up those who were supposed to be utterly abandoned. There is but one power that can save to the uttermost.[219]

29. He Is Responsible

Present Truth, September 17, 1896

IF YOU have committed your ways and yourself to God, do not rob yourself of the joy of His salvation by doubting His power to keep you.

> **2 Timothy 1**
> [12] I know whom I have believed, [said Paul,] and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

He has the responsibility of the keeping if only we continually choose Him.

> **Jude 1**
> [24] Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory,...
> [25] ...be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.

[219] *Hebrews* 7:25.

30. Independence

Signs of the Times, August 26, 1897

THE feeling of independence is inherent in human nature. The first declaration of independence against God was made by Lucifer, in the courts of heaven, and next, at his instigation, by man in the Garden of Eden, when he set about to make himself equal to God, and thus independent of His authority. The first marked feature to manifest itself in the infant is the disposition to have its own way; and unless this disposition is checked, it grows stronger with years until even in early youth he declares his determination to have his own way, regardless of what anybody else may say or think.

Who Shall Rule?

This is easily answered in the case of the infant. That the child is of right subject to the parent, is so self-evident as to need no special argument. The child is *not* independent of its parents. Why not? Simply because *it is not*. It cannot be. It depends upon them for existence in this world, and after it sees the light of day it is as dependent as before. It is absolutely impossible for it to maintain an independent existence. If forsaken by its mother, and left with no one else to take her place, it would perish in a very short time. For years the child is the most helpless of animals; it is absolutely dependent on the exertions of others for its existence. Then of course it must be subject to those who provide for it, because—

Dependence Means Subjection

He who provides a thing has a right to say how that thing shall be used. To partake of one's bounty,—to be absolutely dependent, —and at the same time to rail against him, and to use all one's power against him, is the basest ingratitude. Whoever does that is by common consent regarded as lost to all sense of justice. So long as one is absolutely dependent on another, that other must of right have the controlling voice in the dependent one's affairs.

Who Is Independent?

Who is there that is indebted to no one for his existence? Not one; as already seen, every child is of right subject to its parents. But the parents themselves,—whence do they derive their support, their life itself?

Acts 17
[24] God that made the world and all things therein,...
[25] ...gives to all life, and breath, and all things;
[28] For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.

The parents of every child, yea, every person in the world, are as absolutely dependent on God for existence and its continuation, as the infant is upon its parents. The strongest and wisest man in the world is far more helpless compared with God, than the newborn infant is compared with him. When Peter stepped out upon the water at the word of Jesus,[220] he was conscious of the fact that he was dependent upon Jesus for support. But he was just as much dependent on that support when walking on the land.

God the One Ruler

Those who are nearest to God, beholding His power and glory, and who themselves occupy the highest position of all created beings, do humble reverence to God, saying,

Revelation 4 [RV]
[11] Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for You did create all things, and because of your will they were, and were created.

Psalm 100
[3] Know you that the Lord He is God; it is He that has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

Therefore, just as the child is of right subject to his parents, because dependent on them for existence, so all men are of right

[220] *Matthew* 14:27-32.

subject to God, absolutely dependent on Him for life, and breath, and all things; and this is the very lesson that God would have both parents and children (and that includes everybody) learn from the relation of parent and child. The child is dependent on its parents, in order that both it and they may see their common dependence upon God; and the child is by the nature of things compelled to be dependent on its parents until it comes to years of discretion, in order that, in the proper order of things, it may learn the lesson of dependence, and pass from the recognition of dependence upon its parents to the recognition of its dependence upon God; nay, more, long before it ceases to be dependent upon its parents, it should learn the lesson that it is subject to them, for the reason that all are subject to God.

The Responsibility of the Independent One

We speak now of the one who chafes under proper restraint, and who imagines himself to be independent, for God alone is independent. Well, since God alone is independent, from Him alone may we learn the responsibility that one really assumes when he asserts his independence. God is self-existent; his name is I AM;[221] no other being in the universe contributes the slightest particle to His support. Therefore He has a right to do as He will, and none can question Him and say,

> **Daniel 4** [Job 9:12]
> [35] What have You done?
>
> **Psalm 115**
> [3] Our God is in the heavens: He has done whatsoever He has pleased;

–and none have ever been able to withstand Him;

> **Isaiah 14**
> [27] For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who shall disannul it? and His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

[221] *Exodus* 3:13-14.

He who would stay the Lord in any of His purposes, must be one who has first given to Him; but there are none such.

What it Means

The one therefore who assumes that he is independent, and who asserts his independence, takes upon himself the responsibility of maintaining his own existence. When the headstrong youth declares his independence of his father's control, the father sometimes allows him to carry his declaration to its legitimate conclusion, and attempt to provide for his own support. Now it may be that the youth from that time is able to live without his father, although but for his previous dependence he could not now be seemingly independent, but it is impossible for him to be independent of God. He goes out into the world in his boastful pride, declaring himself to be independent even of God. He blasphemes the name of God. He will not be dependent on any being, not he.

But wait! He is breathing, yes, even breathing out defiance to God. Where did you get your breath, my friend? Did you make it? No, you didn't have anything to do with it. You found it ready made and used it, and the supply is kept up while you are asleep. Now, no matter who made it, it is certain that you did not, and therefore if you are determined to be independent, you must at once cease using it. Of course no other man made it, any more than you did; God alone made it. Now the only way for you to be independent of God is for you to provide your own air, and use no other. Everybody who declares independence against God, puts himself under obligation to make his own air. You cannot do it? No, of course you cannot. If you cease using God's air you will immediately die. Whose life are you using, then? Why, God's and His only. Certainly then it is nothing more than common fairness that He be allowed to direct His own life. Every man who breathes is by that very act under obligation to devote His life to the Lord, for Him to control.

His Mercy Endures Forever

We have said that sometimes an earthly father tells his rebellious sons that he may look out for himself if he will not acknowledge parental authority; but this God does not do.

Psalm 136
[1] His mercy endures forever.

Matthew 5
[43] He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Luke 6
[35] He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

This is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance.[222] If men would only acknowledge the truth that is evident in every breath they breathe, the very drawing of their breath would draw them to God. How easy is it to believe God? Just as easy as it is to breathe. Then,

Psalm 150
[6] Let everything that has breath praise the Lord,

–and thus prepare the way for God to show them His salvation.

[222] *Romans* 2:4.

31. Captivity Led Captive

Present Truth, April 20, 1899
Original title: Back Page

PEOPLE get discouraged sometimes because they see so many difficulties in their path. If it were not for this obstacle and that, the way would be open for them to live as they would like to, and to be thorough Christians. But every one who reasons in this way makes a great mistake. There are no difficulties. The things which he looks upon as hindrances are helps. If he were to go up to them in faith, he would find it so, but many are too frightened at their appearance to go near them.

The promise of the Lord to those who accept His mercy is,

> **Isaiah 14**
> [2] They shall take them captives whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

It is not in the plan of God that any of His people shall be led captive by Satan. Instead, Satan is to be led captive by them. Christ spoiled Satan and all his angels, and…

> **Colossians 2**
> [15] …made a show of them openly, triumphing over them,

–and, in the same way,

> **2 Corinthians 2**
> [14] [God] always causes us to triumph in Christ.

Satan is under the feet of Christ. But the feet of Christ are a part of His body, and His body is the church; so that the lowest part of the church of Christ is set far above the power and might of the adversary. We read concerning Satan, when he is seen in his true aspect and condition, that he is…

> **Isaiah 14**
> [19] …as a carcass trodden under feet.

So we see that instead of finding him an almost insuperable barrier between us and God, we may make him a stepping-stone every time he thrusts himself upon us. Satan can do nothing against the truth, but all his efforts, in spite of their malicious animus, will work for the truth.[223]

This was made evident in the case of Christ. The Saviour receives His exaltation, and the name which is above every name, by reason of His humbling himself to death, even the death of the cross. But if it had not been for Satan, Christ would not have been crucified. The princes of this world would not have done it,[224] if Satan had not blinded their eyes.[225] So that when Satan was making his supreme attempt, to overthrow the truth, he was contributing more than ever to its successful establishment.

The same was true in the experience of the apostles. Paul and Silas were taken captive at Philippi, and thrust into the inner prison, but it resulted in the jailer himself being led captive and in the morning Paul and Silas ruled over their oppressors. So when Paul was taken captive to Rome, it seemed to every one that he was very much a prisoner, with a centurion and a large band of soldiers to keep him, yet before the journey was ended Paul had taken them all captive. God gave him all that sailed with him.[226]

So let no one be dismayed because of the lions in the way. They are all chained. Captivity has been led captive by Christ.[227] The Lord has turned again the captivity of His people. The things that threaten to hinder us are only permitted to help us, so long as we abide in Christ.

Romans 8
[28] And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

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[223] *2 Corinthians* 13:8.
[224] 1 Corinthians 2:8.
[225] *2 Corinthians* 4:4.
[226] *Acts* 27:24.
[227] *Ephesians* 4:8.

32. Faith Will Not Cease

Present Truth, August 23, 1900
Original title: Back Page

IN PRAYER and song we often hear expressions of longing for the time "when faith shall be lost in sight." This is the expression of the common idea that in the kingdom of glory faith will be unknown, having ceased to exist, and that the saints in glory will live by sight only instead of by faith only, as in this present, evil world.

That this idea is altogether erroneous, is taught in the words that tell the place of faith in the Gospel,

Romans 1
[17] The just shall live by faith.

Note that this is absolute and unqualified. It does not say that *some* of the just shall live by faith, nor that the just shall live by faith *for a little while*, but simply that:

[17] The just shall live by faith.

That is, that *all* the just shall live *only* by faith, and that they live by faith *as long as they are just*. But in the kingdom of glory there will be none but just ones, therefore there will be there no life but that of faith. Men are made righteous by faith, and to all eternity they will hold that righteousness only by faith.

1 Corinthians 13
[13] And now abides faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Faith and hope abide as long as love does. All three abide. Love is the greatest of the three, but it does not outlast the other two. It is greater in that it contains them, for:

[7] [Love] believes all things, hopes all things.

Men will not cease to believe God when they get to heaven; no, but faith will then be perfect, and it will be perfect because the

followers of God will in the present world have perfectly learned the lesson of faith.

33. Mourning Lack of Faith

Present Truth, November 29, 1900

IT IS not an uncommon thing to hear a Christian speak something like this:

"I mourn my lack of faith."

We never hear this without thinking,

"What is the use?"

Why waste time mourning over that which may easily be remedied? We are doubtless all sorry for past unfaithfulness; but mourning will not remedy the matter, and we may rejoice because we know that the sin is covered by the faithful righteousness of Christ. And as for the present, it seems not merely useless, but positively sinful, for a man to say that he mourns his lack of faith. It is an insult to the Lord. Imagine one man saying to another,

"I am very sorry that I have very little faith in what you say."

What would the other understand by it? Just this:

"I am sorry that your word and character are so uncertain that I cannot have more confidence in you."

Everybody would know that this was what he meant; yet they cannot see the inconsistency of saying that they know that God is true, yet they cannot believe Him. If you have not had faith until now, then know that God abides faithful,[228] and cannot lie,[229] and then believe Him at once and for ever; and the God of hope will...

Romans 15

13 ...fill you with all joy and peace in believing.

[228] *2 Timothy* 2:13.

[229] *Titus* 1:2.

34. Pleasing God

Present Truth, May 2, 1901

WOULD you like to please God? Many have never given it thought, and many, alas, would much rather displease Him; but there are many who reply to the question,

> "Yes, indeed; who would not be unspeakably happy to be able to do something that would actually give pleasure to the Almighty Creator, something that would make Him smile for joy! But oh, how can I hope to do it?"

It is not only possible, but is really one of the easiest things in the world. Listen, and I will read you something about it.

> **Hebrews 11**
> [5] By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God took him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.
> [6] But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Note the facts: It was by faith that Enoch was translated, and he was translated because he pleased God; it is evident, therefore; that faith is the one essential to pleasing God. Without faith it is impossible to please God; but faith makes it not only a possibility, but an accomplished fact. Note further:

> [6] Without faith it is impossible to please Him for he that comes to God must believe that He is.

That is to say, that faith consists in believing that *God is*. That is all. Whoever believes that *God is*, has faith, and pleases God. A simple thing, is it not? You say,

> "Yes; everybody does that; at least all Christian people, and many more who make no profession of religion; I have never doubted the existence of God, yet I have never, at least not for any length of time, had the assurance that I pleased God."

Ah, you don't seem to comprehend what it is to believe in the existence of God—to believe that *He is*. It is much more than to believe that somewhere in the universe there is a Being who has charge of it in a general way. Faith brings Christ, whose name is Emmanuel—God with us—to dwell in our hearts as a recognized Presence.

Ephesians 3
[17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

John 1
[12] As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

"Do you mean that whoever does not recognize and welcome the presence of God in his heart does not believe in God's existence? does not believe that He is?"

Exactly that. The man who does not know that God dwells in him, does not know God, and does not really believe that He exists, however much he may talk about Him; and so of course he cannot please Him. You cannot expect to please one in whose very existence you do not believe, can you?

God is infinite.

Jeremiah 23
[24] Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

His everlasting power and divinity are plainly to be seen in everything that He has made, even in man, for there is no motion or existence apart from Him. Therefore whoever has a conception of a single spot where God is not, does not believe that He is.

Well, when God's presence in us is constantly recognized and welcomed, what then? Just this, that we shall please Him. It must be so, for He is "living and active,"[230] always working, and…

[230] *Hebrews* 4:12 RV.

Philippians 2
[14] It is God which works in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Whoever recognizes God's presence in him, will give Him full control; for nobody would be so presumptuous as to attempt to manage his own body when its Maker is present. And when God works unhindered, it must be that He pleases himself. Is it not plain enough?

35. Unbelief

Present Truth, October 10, 1901
Original title: Back Page

BELIEF of that which is not the truth is unbelief.

36. Success to the Man Who Believes

Present Truth, January 23, 1902

IT IS impossible for people to do the things which they think they cannot do. The commander of a squadron once came back from an expedition and reported failure.

> "Do you know why you did not succeed?" asked the admiral.
>
> "Because the enemy's position was too strong," was the reply.
>
> "No," said the admiral. "It was because you thought you could not do it."

It is *not* true that a man can do anything he *thinks* he can; but it *is* true that it is impossible for a man to do a thing that he thinks he cannot do. In the case referred to, the admiral *knew* that the position could be taken; and his confidence would have given him success. So in life one must know the Lord and His will, and must be assured that the Lord's will can be done. Then it will never occur to him to think that a thing in harmony with God's will cannot be done, and he will carry to success everything that he undertakes. Even the will of God cannot be accomplished in the one who doubts; but:

Romans 10
[17] Faith comes by hearing the Word of God,

–and,

Mark 9
[23] All things are possible to him that believes.

VII. Law and Grace

1. Is Your Heart Right?

Signs of the Times, September 16, 1880

"It makes no difference what I believe if my heart is right."

"God will never condemn a man for his honest opinions."

THESE are expressions that we frequently hear from individuals when certain truths of God's word are presented to them. Many seem to think that they can thus screen themselves from the necessity of obeying God's law. It is usually a last resort, and nothing could be more fallacious. It is true that God will not condemn a man merely for his opinions, for the Judgment tries men's characters; and those will be condemned who have...

John 5
[29] ...done evil.

Neither will a man be saved for his opinions, for it is only those who "do His commandments" who are blessed with a right to the tree of life.[231]

Romans 2
[13] For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

It is "every work" and not every opinion that shall be brought into Judgment, and the standard by which these works are to be judged is not an individual standard, but the commandments of God.[232]

But how are we to know that our hearts are right? Are we ourselves the proper judges? What says the Bible?

Jeremiah 17
[9] The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?
[10] I the Lord search the heart.

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[231] *Revelation* 22:14.
[232] *Ecclesiastes* 12:13-14.

Thus we see that if we judge ourselves by any standard of our own we shall fall into error; but God sees the heart, and cannot be deceived. His standard is His holy law.[233] It is evident, therefore, that a man's heart is right when it leads him to do the things contained in God's law; but if he finds himself unwilling to obey any portion of that law, he may be sure that his heart is not right, but is sinful. Paul says,

Romans 8
[7] The *carnal mind* is enmity against God: for *it is not subject to the law of God*, neither indeed can be.
[6] [And] to be carnally minded is death.

The man whose heart is right will not find the requirements of God irksome, but will be ready to exclaim with David,

Psalm 119
[97] O how I love your law! it is my meditation all the day.

It is dangerous to try to excuse ourselves from keeping any of God's commandments. God will not excuse us.

James 4
[17] To him that knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin.

The feelings and consciences of men unenlightened by the word of God are a very unsafe guide. The only safe way is to follow God's word.

Psalm 119
[130] The entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding unto the simple.

Reader, are you *sure* that your heart is right?

[233] *James* 2:8-12; *Romans* 2:12.

2. Charity

Signs of the Times, December 2, 1880

1 Peter 4
[8] And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

MANY persons suppose that this text teaches that it is wrong to point out the errors of individuals. When a person is guilty of sin either intentionally or ignorantly, he cries out against the one who would reprove his course, and accuses him of a want of charity. Now, although the Bible teaches that charity…

1 Corinthians 13
[5] …thinks no evil,

–and that we should be very cautious about judging the motives of others, yet it nowhere teaches that it is any part of charity to uphold wrongdoing in any manner whatever. Charity…

[6] Rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.

The spirit which would shield the evil-doer from justly merited censure is not charity, but perverted sympathy. He has the most true charity who is the most faithful in reproving sin.

How then can charity be said to cover a multitude of sins? A few texts will make this plain. We read in *James* 5:20 that…

James 5
[20] He which converts the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

By comparing this text with *1 Peter* 4:8, we learn that the exercise of charity results in the conversion of sinners. But sin is the transgression of the law,[234] and the law of God alone will convince a man that he is a sinner.

Romans 7
[7] I had not known sin but by the law.

[234] *1 John* 3:4.

The law, then, is the active agent in conversion.[235] When the sinner, by means of the law, realizes his guilt, and is led to exclaim with Paul,

Romans 7
[24] ...who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

–he finds that it is only...

[25] ...through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He comes to...

John 1
[29] ...the lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world,

–and obtains forgiveness for his sins. If he continues faithful, his sins will be finally blotted out,[236] and thus his "multitude of sins" will be covered. We conclude, therefore, that Bible charity, or love, consists in keeping God's law and leading others to do so. This is verified by the following texts:

1 John 5
[3] For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments;
and His commandments are not grievous,

Romans 13
[10] Love is the fulfilling of the law,

–and,

1 Timothy 1
[5] The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart,
and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned,

We are not to suppose, however, that we are to be ever on the alert to point out some defect in our neighbors. If our eyes are opened to behold "wondrous things" out of the law,[237] we shall have quite enough to do to bring our own lives up to the proper

[235] See *Psalm* 19:7.
[236] *Acts* 3:19.
[237] *Psalm* 119:18.

standard; and this will generally prove the most effectual, and for most persons, the safest way to reprove others. The godly life of a humble follower of Jesus will often send conviction to the heart of the sinner when words would simply harden his heart.

Matthew 5
[16] Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.

3. A New Creature in Christ

Signs of the Times, July 17, 1884

WE HAVE shown from the Scriptures that the whole duty of man is to keep the commandments, and that only by so doing can we gain eternal life.[238] We have also found that the law, being perfect and holy, condemns the whole world, and that we can be freed from this condemnation only by faith in Christ. The law condemns; Christ has opened the way for pardon. When the sinner has acknowledged his guilt, and has accepted Christ as his Saviour, he can say,

> **Romans 5**
> [1] Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We now inquire,

> "What is his relation to the law from this time on?"

–and,

> "Does this condition of things make any less true the statement that to fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man?"

In *2 Corinthians* 5:17 Paul describes a man in this justified state:

> **2 Corinthians 5**
> [17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.

We have heard this text quoted to prove that a man in Christ has no more use for the law, that such old things as that are done away. The absurdity of such a claim is manifest on its very face; for if that supposition were true, it would amount to saying that the law is abolished only for Christians, but that it is in full force

[238] PP Editor's note: This article belongs in a series. The whole series is not reproduced in this collection. It is found in the collection titled, *The Law and the Gospel*.

until a man becomes a Christian; and since Christians and sinners live side by side in this world, we would have the anomaly of the law being both abolished and in full force at the same time!

But the eighteenth verse tells what the new things are:

2 Corinthians 5
[18] And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.

If a man in Christ does all things that "are of God," he certainly will not violate God's law. The statement of what Christ did for us, proves this:

[18] ...who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation;
[19] To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

The act of reconciliation implies that certain parties have been estranged from each other—have been enemies. So Paul, in *Romans* 5:8-10, shows that while we were sinners—transgressing the law—we were the enemies of God, and that we are reconciled by the death of His Son. The prophet Isaiah shows very clearly in what rebellion against God consists, where he says that...

Isaiah 30
[9] This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord.

And Paul also states that the carnal mind is enmity against God, simply because...

Romans 8
[7] ...it is not subject to the law of God.

Since, then, our enmity to God while we were sinners consisted simply in disobedience to his law, it must necessarily follow that when we are reconciled we will keep the law. Indeed, the very act of reconciliation implies submission on our part to the require-

ments of God. Paul goes on to say that having received the commission from God,

2 Corinthians 5
[20] We [that is, the ministers of Christ] are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God.

This means simply that the work of the gospel is to persuade men to keep the law of God. The thing is stated in plain words by the apostle Peter, when he says,

1 Peter 1
[24] The grass withers, and the flower thereof falls away; but the word of God endures forever.
[25] And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

The point, however, is established beyond all controversy by the closing words of…

2 Corinthians 5
[21] For He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

The turn which some give to the first part of this verse, *viz.*, that Christ was made a sin-offering for us, robs the text of all its force. It is true that Christ was our sin-offering, but that is not what the apostle here states. God made Christ (the sinless one) to be sin for us. He was made…

Hebrews 2
[17] …in all things…like unto His brethren;

–and that means not simply as to the outward, physical frame, but that He bore sin, just as we do. The sins that He bore were not His own, but ours.

2 Corinthians 5
[21] [He] knew no sin,

–yet,

Isaiah 53
[6] The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Although the sins that He bore were ours, they were counted as His own, and so caused His death.

Isaiah 53
[5] He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.

And why was this done? Why was the spotless Lamb of God made to be sin for us? Paul answers:

2 Corinthians 5
[21] ...that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

What is the righteousness of God? We have already shown from *Isaiah* 51:6-7 that it is nothing else but the law of God. Then Paul's words mean that Christ was made to be sin for us in order that, in Him, we might be conformed to the law of God. This, then, is what it is to be a new creature in Christ; it is to put away the old life of sin, and to become reconciled to God by keeping His law.

In the 2nd chapter of *Ephesians* Paul briefly states the change from being dead in trespasses and sins to being quickened, and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is done because God is rich in mercy. We read:

Ephesians 2
[8] For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God:
[9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.

The term "saved" is sometimes used in an accommodated sense. We are really saved only when we are given the victory over death, and are made immortal in the kingdom of God. This salvation is brought to us...

1 Peter 1
[13] ...at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

But since this everlasting salvation is given only to those who overcome their sins,[239] we are said to be saved when we are freed from our past sins through the pardoning mercy of God. If we continue in this condition, we will receive our full salvation. In this place the word may be taken in both senses.

Ephesians 2
[9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Simply a repetition of *Romans* 3:28. God was not under obligation to save us, and we could not atone for past sins, and thus earn salvation. Our salvation is wholly due to the infinite mercy of God through the merits of Christ and consequently we have nothing whereof to boast. Shall we conclude from this, then, that Christ does everything for us, that is, in our stead, and that we have no call to work for ourselves? Paul does not so teach.

[20] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

By being "created in Christ Jesus," we are made new creatures in Christ; and for what? That we might be able to perform good works, for that is what God from the beginning designed that we should do, and this is our whole duty.

And now we are able to understand fully Christ's reply to the young ruler who asked the way of life. While He said,

Matthew 19
[17] If you will enter into life keep the commandments,

–you will notice that He did not leave him with that. Christ well knew that the man, in spite of his self-righteousness was a sinner. By a simple test He showed that the young man was not only covetous, but that he did not love his neighbor as well as he did himself, and that he did not love God with all his heart. He was selfish, and loved himself and his property more than he did

[239] *Revelation* 3:21.

God and his neighbors; and so he was a violator of all the commandments, for he broke the two great precepts upon which they hang.[240] Christ well knew that the young man could not justify himself, nor even keep the commandments as they should be kept, in his own strength, and so He added the words,

Matthew 19
[21] Come, and follow me.

What for? That in Christ he might be a new creature; that, whereas by himself he had utterly failed of fulfilling the righteousness of God, in Christ, he might attain to that; in short, that he might be enabled to keep the commandments.

And so it still remains a fact that to fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man and Christ has simply come to our aid, to help us to do our duty. While He assumes the responsibility of the sins which the believer has committed in the past and thus sets him once more in the right way, justified before God, He tells him that…

John 15
[5] …without me you can do nothing.

We are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works," but it is only while we abide in Him that we can bear any fruit.[241] Without Christ our efforts to obey God are vain struggles; with the strength which He gives we can do all things, and at last stand…

Colossians 2
[10] …complete in Him.

And this opens the way for us to understand how it is that Christ is the end of the law, which will next be considered.

[PP Editor's note: This study belongs in a series. The complete series is not reproduced in this collection. It is found in the collection titled, *The Law and the Gospel*.]

[240] *Matthew* 22:36-40.
[241] *John* 15:4.

4. The Death of Adam

Signs of the Times, June 8, 1888

WE FIND on our table a question concerning the death of Adam. The writer quotes God's words,

> **Genesis 2**
> [17] In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die,

–and thinks there is some plausibility to the objection that they were not fulfilled, and that the devil told the truth when he said,

> **Genesis 3**
> [4] You shall not surely die.

But the fact is, Adam did die, for the record says that…

> **Genesis 5**
> [5] All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

This therefore disposes of the supposition that Satan told the truth. Now how about the words of the Lord? Adam did not die that day, but lived nine hundred and thirty years. Our answer is found in the words of Christ:

> **John 3**
> [16] For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

To say that God ought to have put Adam to death that very day, is equivalent to saying that God had no right to provide a plan of salvation for fallen man. All must admit that God does not deny himself by offering salvation to sinners. God is…

> **Romans 3**
> [26] …just, [at the same time that He is] the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.

Although God had announced a specific penalty for transgression, He certainly could with perfect justice remit that penalty in

the case of anyone who should accept the offering which He freely provided, and which was outside the demands of the law. Moreover, if God provided such a plan, it must necessarily, in order that strict and equal justice should be done, include all men, not excepting Adam. And, still further, since such a plan was provided, the execution of the penalty must necessarily be stayed, in order to give man an opportunity to accept the offered salvation, if he wished; for it would be but mockery to devise such a plan and still execute the penalty without giving the fallen one any chance to accept it.

Adam had a second probation, and if, as we believe, he repented of his sin and exercised faith in Christ, he will receive eternal life when Christ comes to confer immortality; but since he was only dust, and was removed from the source of life, he necessarily, in the course of time, returned to the dust, just as God said he should. And all of his posterity being likewise of the earth, earthy,[242] have also returned to earth. Men die now simply because they are born mortal; Adam died as the direct consequence of his sin.

The penalty, however, whose execution was stayed, still hangs over the fallen race, and when Christ shall cease to interpose in man's behalf, it will fall upon all who have not hidden in Him. Then the folly of those whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil, because sentence is not executed speedily, will be manifested, and it will be seen that every word of God is sure.

2 Peter 3
[9] The Lord…is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Happy are those who believe that…

2 Peter 3
[15] The long-suffering of our God is salvation,

–and who accept that salvation.

[242] *1 Corinthians* 15:47.

5. The Condemnation of Sin

Signs of the Times, October 12, 1888

A CORRESPONDENT writes:

> Please harmonize *John* 3:17 and *Romans* 8:3. The former text declares that God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, while the latter text seems to teach that the law had not of itself the power to condemn sin, and that it was necessary for Christ to come in order that sin might be condemned.

We very gladly proceed to help our questioner out of his difficulty, stating by way of preface, however, that we cannot harmonize any two texts in the Bible, because it is already done. The Holy Spirit did that when it moved the holy men of old to write. There is the most perfect harmony between all portions of the Bible; all we have to do is to study to appreciate the harmony that already exists. We would state further, also, that it will not do to rest satisfied with what "seems," on a casual reading, to be the meaning of some of Paul's utterances. He was writing...

2 Peter 3
[16] ...some things hard to be understood;

–but that need not discourage us, for they may be understood by study; and the blessed truth which they contain well repays the hardest toil. But to the question.

It is the law of God that condemns sin and sinners. There is nothing else that can or ever could. Says Paul:

Romans 4
[15] The law works wrath;

Romans 6
[23] The wages of sin is death.

The very instant the first sin was committed, whether in Heaven or on earth, the law of God condemned the act. To say

that it was necessary for Christ to die, or to offer to die in order that sin and sinners might be condemned, is a gross perversion of God's word, and a fearful charge against His justice. The simple statement of Christ himself is sufficient to settle this point:

John 3

[14] And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

[15] For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

[16] For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.

The lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness is given as a parallel to the offering up of Christ. Now to say that God gave His Son to condemn sinners, is the same as to say that Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, in order that the bite of the fiery serpents might be fatal. But God sent His Son in order that those who should believe on Him should not perish, which shows that if He had not been sent, the whole world would have perished. God sent His Son to save, not to condemn. There was condemnation enough, but in the eighteenth verse Christ declares that…

[18] …he that believes not is condemned already.

What the world needed was not condemnation but salvation.

Just think for a moment what is implied by the theory that it was necessary for Christ to come in order for the world to be condemned. That implies that there was no sin before Christ was given as man's ransom; for where there is no condemnation there is no sin. And so the real teaching of the theory is that God looked upon the world that was uncondemned, and said,

"I'll condemn them; I'll send my Son to die for them, and then they cannot escape condemnation."

A theory that charges such a thing upon God is certainly God-dishonoring if not blasphemous. And besides it shuts off the whole world from salvation; for if Christ,—the only name under Heaven given among men whereby we can be saved,—condemned men, then certainly there would be no hope. But it is not so, for…

Romans 5
[8] God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;

–and,

Romans 8
[1] There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

When then does *Romans* 8:3 mean? Let us read it carefully:

[3] For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

To anybody who has even a slight acquaintance with the laws of language, a single reading of the text is sufficient to show that it is not complete. The apostle Paul does not always confine himself to grammatical rules. In this instance, instead of giving the predicate of the sentence, he leaves it to be understood, and throws in an explanatory clause. The idea is that what the law could not do, God *did* by other means. We shall see that both the context and other passages warrant only this view.

What could not the law do? It could not make men free from sin. Why? Because it is that by which sin is made known. Read:

Romans 3
[19] Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law [that is, within the sphere of the law]; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

This text also destroys the theory that God gave His Son to condemn the world. It is the law of God that makes all the world "guilty before God."

But what the law could not do, God did without the law, as we have before stated, and as Paul shows in the 3rd of *Romans*. After stating, as just quoted, that the law shows all the world to be guilty before God, and that therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified, or made righteous, he adds:

Romans 3
21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;
22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference:
23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Thus we see that what the law could not do, namely, free a man from the condemnation of sin, God does by His own free grace alone. And this passage tallies with *Romans* 8:3, as to how God does it. It is done through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

25 Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.

So in the text which is the subject of query, *Romans* 8:3, the apostle's incomplete sentence states that God does for man what the law could not do, and then tells how He does it, in the following words:

Romans 8
3 ...sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:
4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

But to free man from condemnation is to free him from sin, and this taking away of sin is what is meant by condemning sin. The

word in this connection carries the same idea as in *2 Peter* 2:6, where it is said that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were *condemned* with an overthrow. Now turn to *Romans* 6:4-7, and we shall find something directly on this point. The apostle says:

Romans 6
[4] Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
[5] For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection:
[6] Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
[7] For he that is dead is freed from sin.

The apostle is here speaking of the same class that he speaks of in *Romans* 8:1-3, namely, those who are in Christ. To such there is no condemnation. And why? Because in them sin has been condemned or destroyed. And what is the consequence? The apostle answers,

Romans 8
[4] That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

In other words,

Romans 6
[6] That henceforth we should not serve sin.

Thus we see what the condemnation of sin is. It is the destroying of the body of sin, in order that we may serve God. Before that is done, the individual cannot do even the good that he may want to do, as Paul shows in the latter part of the 7th of *Romans*. That is done when the person becomes crucified with Christ—is united with Him by death. When that is done, he is freed from condemnation, and not till then can the righteousness of the law be fulfilled or manifested in him. And this wonderful work is

done because Christ himself was made sin for us, although He knew no sin; and…

1 Peter 3
[18] …[He] suffered for sins,—the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God;

2 Corinthians 5
[21] …that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

2 Corinthians 9
[15] Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!

6. Christ the End of the Law

Bible Echo, February 15, 1892[243]

IN *Romans* 10:4 we read as follows:

> **Romans 10**
> [4] For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.

Before showing what this text means, it may be well to briefly show what it does not mean. It does not mean that Christ has put an end to the law, because:

1. Christ himself said concerning the law,

   > **Matthew 5**
   > [17] I am not come to destroy.

2. The prophet said that instead of destroying it, the Lord would…

   > **Isaiah 42**
   > [21] …magnify the law and make it honorable.

3. The law was in Christ's own heart:

   > **Psalm 40**
   > [7] Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,
   > [8] I delight to do your will, O my God; yea, your law is within my heart.

4. And since the law is the righteousness of God, the foundation of His government, it could not by any possibility be abolished.

   > **Luke 16**
   > [17] And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

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[243] This article was similar to one published in *Signs of the Times*, April 8, 1886, with the same title. But it appears to have been revised and changed for this periodical, thus justifying its inclusion here. The other article appears in the collection, *The Law and the Gospel*.

The reader must know that the word "end" does not necessarily mean "termination." It is often used in the sense of design, object, or purpose. In *1 Timothy* the same writer says,

1 Timothy 1
[5] Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

The word here rendered "charity" is often rendered "love," and is so rendered in this place in the New Version.

1 John 5
[3] This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

Paul himself says that:

Romans 13
[10] ...love is the fulfilling of the law.

In both these texts the same word (*agape*) is used that occurs in *1 Timothy* 1:5. Therefore we say that this text means,

"Now the design of the commandment (or law) is that it should be kept."

Everybody will recognize this as a self-evident fact. But this is not the ultimate design of the law. In the verse following the one under consideration, Paul quotes Moses as saying of the law that...

Romans 10
[5] The man that does those things shall live by them.

Christ said to the young man,

Matthew 19
[17] If you will enter into life, keep the commandments.

Now since the design of the law was that it should be kept, or, in other words, that it should produce righteous characters, and the promise is that those who are obedient shall live, we may say that the ultimate design of the law was to give life. And in harmony with this thought are the words of Paul, that the law...

Romans 7
[10] ...was ordained to life.

But,

Romans 3
[23] All have sinned and come short of the glory of God,

–and,

Romans 6
[23] ...the wages of sin is death.

Thus it is impossible for the law to accomplish its design in making perfect characters and consequently giving life. When a man has once broken the law, no subsequent obedience can ever make his character perfect. And therefore the law which was ordained unto life is found to be unto death.

Romans 7
[10] And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

If we were to stop right here with the law unable to accomplish its purpose, we should leave all the world under condemnation and sentence of death. Now we shall see that Christ enables man to secure both righteousness and life. We read that we are...

Romans 3
[24] ...justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 5
[1] Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

More than this, He enables us to keep the law:

2 Corinthians 5
[21] For He [God] has made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

In Christ, therefore, it is possible for us to be made perfect—the righteousness of God—and that is just what we would have been by constant and unvarying obedience to the law. Again we read,

Romans 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.
[3] For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;
[4] That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

What could not the law do? It could not free a single guilty soul from condemnation. Why not? Because it was "weak through the flesh." There is no element of weakness in the law; the weakness is in the flesh. It is not the fault of a good tool that it cannot make a sound pillar out of a rotten stick.

The law could not cleanse a man's past record and make him sinless; and poor, fallen man had no strength resting in his flesh to enable him to keep the law. And so God imputes to believers the righteousness of Christ, who was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," so that "the righteousness of the law" might be fulfilled in their lives. And thus Christ is the end of the law.

To conclude, then, we have found that the design of the law was that it should give life because of obedience. All men have sinned and been sentenced to death. But Christ took upon himself man's nature and will impart of His own righteousness to those who accept His sacrifice, and finally when they stand, through Him, as doers of the law, He will fulfill to them its ultimate object, by crowning them with eternal life.

And so we repeat, what we cannot too fully appreciate, that Christ…

1 Corinthians 1
[30] …is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

7. The Tongue

Present Truth, October 12, 1893

> "There are but ten precepts of the law of God," says Leighton, "and two of them, so far as concerns the outward organ and vent of sins there forbidden, are bestowed upon the tongue (one in the first table and the other in the second), as though it were ready to fly out both against God and man, if not thus bridled."

THE apostle James says,

> **James 3**
> [2] The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell.
> [6] If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

The reason of this is, as stated by our Saviour, that...

> **Matthew 15**
> [18] Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.
> [19] For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

> **Matthew 12**
> [34] Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Therefore when a man offends not in word, he has a clean heart, and when the heart is clean, freed from its "murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts," etc., the man is perfect. All these things exist in the heart before they exist in the outward acts; for the acts are but the outward manifestations of that which already existed within the individual who does them. For, as our Saviour declared, hatred in the heart is murder, and lust in the heart is adultery.

It is useless to attempt to control the tongue while the work goes no deeper than the tongue. The stream cannot be cleansed

except at its fountain head. The work must be done in the heart; and then out of the abundance of a good heart, the mouth will speak only that which is pure and truthful.

Matthew 12
[35] A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things.

8. Love the Manifestation of the Life of God

Present Truth, December 14, 1893

SINCE love is the manifestation of the life of God in the soul, and that is righteousness, it should be evident to everybody that righteousness cannot be forced. No man can force another to do right; no man can even compel himself to do right.

Neither good resolutions in individuals, nor laws in the State, can make people righteous, or contribute anything toward it. Societies, in which the members bind themselves to love one another, or even to love those who are not of their number, are of no account.

Love is a growth, not something tied on; it is from within, not from without. It flows spontaneously from the heart. When the love of God is in the hearts of men, they do not have to resolve to love one another, neither do they love only those of their own class.

9. Abounding Grace

Present Truth, February 1, 1894

BY THE abundance of the air which God has given to surround us we may know how freely the Lord has given us His Spirit. And as we draw in the breath of life so easily, we may know how easily we may drink in the Spirit of God, which is the water of life.

10. The Preparation of the Gospel

Present Truth, May 17, 1894

IT IS supposed by some that commercial enterprise is the handmaid of the Gospel, opening up heathen countries and preparing the way for the missionary. Nothing could be further from the truth. The pioneer is the missionary, and the field needs no preparation before him. He carries the "preparation *of* the Gospel of peace." It would be well to remember that there is no preparation *for* the Gospel, either at home or abroad, it is the power to save and lift up the lowest, and the only power to save to the uttermost.

The commercial spirit has been the curse of missions. The cannibals of many of the islands of the new Hebrides have turned from their former ways unto the Lord, but now that the white man dares to set his foot in the group he is demoralizing the natives. Dr. Patton, who went over there thirty years ago, and has seen the change accomplished by the Gospel, said last week that:

> The great drawback and curse to the whole work was that no sooner were the islands civilized, or partially civilized, than the white men, who before had avoided the islands, brought brandy and opium and demoralized the natives.

The real influence of what is falsely called "our Christian civilization" is a curse today to the ignorant and weak. It is not our civilization, but the Gospel which civilization talks about but does not obey, that can do good to the nations that sit in darkness.

11. Civilization and Evangelization

Present Truth, May 17, 1894

EVEN many Christian people seem possessed with the idea that "civilization" prepares the way for the introduction of the Gospel among native races. In the meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, the Rev. R. Darby, of the Congo Mission, gave a little idea of the way "civilization" prepares the way for the Gospel. He said:

> I went out by a steamer that traded along the coast and stopped at various ports, and the cargo we landed at every port was in green cases—gin, old flint-lock muskets, the barrels looking as if they were old, defunct gas-pipes, and barrels of gunpowder, half of it dirt. These are the civilizing agencies.
>
> I came down to the coast about nine months ago to see my wife off, and we brought with us a boy from the interior who had never in his neighborhood been able to buy any European liquor. He had never tasted it; but one day he came to me and said, "Please, sir, we have had no fish to eat for two days."
>
> I said to him, "I am very sorry, my boy," and gave him two francs to buy some fish at the trading-house or in the market-place.
>
> He went, and soon came back, and said, "This money is no good."
>
> "Indeed," I said; "that is the money which the Government have made for us to buy goods with."
>
> "Oh," he said, "I can't buy nothing in the market-place unless I have got gin."
>
> And that poor boy had to take the two francs, go to the trading-house with them, buy gin, and take the gin on to the market-place to buy the fish with.

The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and it is dishonoring to God to suppose that it depends in any degree upon the power of man. "Civilization" without the Gospel is nothing but polished heathenism. It is not civilization that unenlightened hea-

thens need, but evangelization. With evangelization, every needful thing will come.

12. Didn't Think

Present Truth, June 14, 1894

WHEN reminded of the performance of some misdeed which comes very naturally to us, we are prone to excuse ourselves with the statement,

"I didn't think."

That is a mistake. True, we did not think of the right thing; but our performance of the deed was due to the fact that our thoughts were unconsciously running in that channel.

Matthew 12
[34] Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Proverbs 23
[7] As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

If a man did not think evil, he would not do evil. No man ever yet committed a sin that he had never thought about.

Right Thoughts

But we cannot cease thinking. God does not wish us to, for He has given us brains with which to think. The secret of right doing is right thinking. If we could always think of the right, we should never do the wrong. But how shall we think of that which is right? Here is the answer that the Lord gives:

Hebrews 8
[10] I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts.

The holy, just, and good law of God[244] in the mind will insure our thinking upon…

Philippians 4
[8] …whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.

And with these thoughts in the mind, the actions will correspond.

Controlling the Thoughts

"It is easy enough to say that if we had right thoughts we should act rightly; but that is only putting the difficulty one step farther back; how can we think of what we ought?"

The promise in the new covenant tells us,

Hebrews 8 [Jeremiah 31:33]
[10] I will put my laws in their mind, says the Lord.

He alone can do it. Give Him the ordering of your ways, and He will give you right thoughts.

Proverbs 16
[3] Commit your works unto the Lord, and your thoughts shall be established.

The Spirit of God can do that which is impossible for man.

2 Corinthians 10
[4] For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;
[5] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

[244] *Romans* 7:12.

13. The Uneasy Conscience

Present Truth, July 26, 1894

HOW fearful the darkest conscience sometimes is at the knowledge of its guilt is shown by the notes of a journey into unexplored regions of Central Asia, made by a late Russia traveler. The natives had a myth that…

> "Any Russian article, if stolen, would at once begin to cry out, 'I am here,' till it was rescued."

These people, Tunguts by name, greet one by putting out their tongues, and bid farewell by knocking their heads silently together.

> "As they never wash, and seldom remove their clothes, this etiquette has other disadvantages than the percussion."

Yet these ignorant and unwashed Tunguts have enough of the law written in their hearts by nature so that their consciences accuse and terrify them when they wish to steal from the Russians.

14. The Two Covenants

Written for *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, 1899

1. When God was about to speak the law to Israel, of what did He tell Moses to remind them?

   Exodus 19
   [3] Tell the children of Israel;
   [4] You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

2. What covenant did He propose to make with them?

   [5] Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:
   [6] And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel.

3. What is a covenant?

   "A mutual agreement of two or more persons or parties, in writing and under seal, to do or to refrain from some act or thing; a contract." *-Webster*

4. When Moses told the people what the Lord had proposed, what did they say?

   [7] And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord has spoken we will do.
   [8] And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

5. In the covenant which the Lord proposed to make with Israel what did He say that they were to do?

   [5] Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant…

6. What was His covenant which they were to keep as their part of the mutual agreement or covenant between Him and them?

Deuteronomy 4
[13] And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone.

7. What relation did the ten commandments bear to the covenant made between God and the children of Israel?

As seen by the last text quoted, the ten commandments were the "covenant" to which the Lord referred, when in proposing a covenant with Israel, He said,

Exodus 19
[5] If you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant…

The ten commandments were termed God's covenant *before* the covenant was made with Israel. They were not an agreement made, but something which God commanded them to perform, and He promised them something, provided they would keep them.

Thus the ten commandments—God's covenant—became the basis of the covenant made between Him and Israel. The ten commandments, in all their details, are "all these words," concerning which the covenant was made. *Exodus* 24:8

8. After God had spoken His law (the "covenant which He commanded," *Exodus* 20:3-17), did He continue speaking to the people?

Deuteronomy 5
[22] And He added no more. And He wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

What was the nature of the instruction afterward given to Moses (*Exodus* 20:22 to close of *Exodus* 23)?

It was a practical application or explanation of the ten commandments, so that the people might be able better to understand what was involved in the keeping of them.

The reference to the altar—how it should be built, and how approached—in *Exodus* 20:24-26, simply shows the care that God would have taken in His worship.

In *Exodus* 23:14-19 we have other commandments also concerning worship.

9. When Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and they promised to be obedient (*Exodus* 24:3), what did Moses then do, that there might be no misunderstanding?

Exodus 24

[4] And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

[7] And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people.

When the people had again heard the words of the Lord, and again promised obedience (verse 7), what was done to ratify the covenant which had thus been made?

[8] And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you concerning all these words.

Hebrews 9

[19] ...and sprinkled both the book and all the people,

[20] Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God has enjoined unto you.

Note: We have here the complete account of the making of the first covenant. It consisted of a promise of obedience to the ten commandments, on the part of the children of Israel, and the statement by the Lord of what He would do for them provided they obeyed His voice.

Is the covenant made at Sinai the only covenant which God made with Israel?

Jeremiah 31

[31] Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

[32] Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says the Lord.

10. What comparison does God make between the two covenants?

Hebrews 8
[6] But now has He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.
[7] For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

11. In what respect was the first covenant faulty?

It must have been faulty in the very particulars wherein the second was better, namely, in the promises, as seen by last part of verse 6:

[6] ...He [Christ] is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

12. What are the promises of the new covenant?

[10] For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:
[11] And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

Jeremiah 31
[34] For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

13. Are these promises stated in the order of their fulfillment?

It is evident that in *Jeremiah* 31:33-34, where the promises of the new covenant are more fully stated than in *Hebrews* 8:10-11, those promises are not stated in the regular order of their fulfill-

ment; because forgiveness of sins is mentioned last, whereas it must necessarily precede the writing of the law in the heart.

The order is as follows:

1. Forgiveness of sins;
2. Putting the law in the inward parts, and writing it in the heart;
3. Remembering sin no more, or blotting out of sin; and
4. Translating the people to the heavenly Jerusalem, where all shall see and know the Lord.

See *Isaiah* 54:11-13; *Revelation* 21:2-4.

14. In the first covenant, to what was Israel's promise really equivalent?

In the first covenant the people promised to keep all the commandments of God, so as to be worthy of a place in His kingdom. This was a virtual promise to make themselves righteous; for God did not promise to help them. But Christ says,

John 15
[5] Without me, you can do nothing.

And the prophet says,

Isaiah 64
[6] All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

The only perfect righteousness is God's righteousness, and that can be obtained only through faith in Christ. See *Romans* 3:20-26. The only righteousness that will insure us an entrance into the kingdom of God, is…

Philippians 3
[9] …the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Of those who shall inherit the kingdom of God, the Lord says,

Isaiah 54
[17] Their righteousness is of me.

And the prophet says of Christ, when He has taken His place as king over all the true Israel,

Jeremiah 23
[6] This is His name whereby He shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness.

15. Yet what must be done in order to have eternal life?

Matthew 19
[17] If you will enter into life, keep the commandments.

See also *Revelation* 22:14.

16. Then how could ancient Israel have any chance for eternal life?

Hebrews 9
[14] How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
[15] And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Note: The fact that Christ, as mediator of the second covenant, died for the remission of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, shows that there was no forgiveness by virtue of that first covenant.

How alone can the good works required by the law be manifested in the lives of men?

See *John* 15:4-5; *Philippians* 2:13; *Ephesians* 2:10; *Hebrews* 13:20-21; *1 Corinthians* 15:10; *Galatians* 2:20.

17. In order to have God make us "perfect in every good work to do His will," what must be our position?

James 4
[7] Submit yourselves therefore to God, resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.

Romans 6
[13] Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

18. What is said of the law in the second, or new covenant?

Jeremiah 31
[33] I [the Lord] will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.

19. Since no such promise was made in the old covenant (see *Exodus* 19:5-8; 24:3-7), were not the promises of the new covenant much "better" than those of the old?

20. When and how was the second covenant ratified?

By the death of Christ:

Daniel 9
[27] And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.

Hebrews 9
[16] For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.
[17] For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator lives.

21. Then how could the Israelites, or any people before the first advent, derive any benefit from it?

By faith in the promised Redeemer:

Hebrews 6
[13] For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,
[16] For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.
[17] Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an

oath:
[18] That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:
[19] Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil;
[20] Where the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

Romans 4
[17] (As it is written, I have made you a father of many nations,) before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickens the dead, and calls those things which be not as though they were.

22. How and in whom was the covenant with Abraham confirmed?

In Christ:

Hebrews 6
[13] For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by himself,
[16] For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.
[17] Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath:
[18] That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:
[19] Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil;
[20] Where the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

Galatians 3
[17] And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

23. Is there anything in the second covenant that was not in the Abrahamic covenant?

Galatians 3
[29] And if you be Christ's, than are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
[6] Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.
[7] Know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.
[8] And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed.
[9] So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Note: None should allow themselves to be confused by the terms first covenant and second covenant. While the covenant made at Sinai is called "the first covenant," it is by no means the first covenant that God ever made with man. Long before that He made a covenant with Abraham, and He also made a covenant with Noah, and with Adam.

Neither must it be supposed that the first or old covenant existed for a period of time as the only covenant with the people before the promise of the second or new covenant could be shared. If that had been the case, then during that time there would have been no pardon for the people.

What is called the "second covenant" virtually existed before the covenant was made at Sinai; for the covenant with Abraham was confirmed in Christ (*Galatians* 3:17), and it is only through Christ that there is any value to what is known as the second covenant. There is no blessing that can be gained by virtue of the second covenant, that was not promised to Abraham. And we, with whom the second covenant is made, can share the inheritance which it promises, only by being children of Abraham. To be Christ's is the same as to be children of Abraham (*Galatians* 3:29); all who are of faith are the children of Abraham, and share in his blessing (*Galatians* 3:7-9); and since no one can have anything except as children of Abraham, it follows that there is noth-

ing in what is called the second covenant that was not in the covenant made with Abraham.

The second covenant existed in every feature long before the first, even from the days of Adam. It is called "second" because both its ratification by blood and its more minute statement, were after that of the covenant made at Sinai. More than this, it was the second covenant made with the Jewish people. The one from Sinai was the first made with that nation.

24. Then why was the covenant made at Sinai?

The Lord was just giving His law. The promise of the Israelites to keep it perfectly, and their failure; brought them face to face with the consequences of violating the law of God. The consciousness of guilt, and a sense of its consequences, would be much more forcibly impressed upon their minds than if they had not made the promise which they did.

And being thus brought face to face with their sin, and realizing its full enormity, they would be driven to the only source of help, ample provision for which had been made in the covenant with their father Abraham.

Thus it might be said that the first covenant was made in order to bring the second covenant (all the terms of which were the Abrahamic covenant) into bolder relief, and to secure its acceptance by the people.

Notes

When it is demonstrated that the first covenant—the Sinaitic covenant—contained no provisions for pardon of sins, some will at once say,

"But they did have pardon under that covenant."

The trouble arises from a confusion of terms. It is not denied that under the old covenant, i.e., during the time when it was specially in force, there was pardon of sins, but that pardon was not offered in the Old Covenant, and could not be secured by virtue of it. The pardon was secured by virtue of something else, as shown by *Hebrews* 9:15.

Not only was there the opportunity of finding free pardon of sins, and grace to help in time of need, during the time of the old covenant, but the same opportunity existed before that covenant was made, by virtue of God's covenant with Abraham, which differs in no respect from that made with Adam and Eve, except that we have the particulars given more in detail.

We see, then, that there was no necessity for provisions to be made in the Sinaitic covenant for forgiveness of sins. The plan of salvation was developed long before the gospel was preached to Abraham,[245] and was amply sufficient to save to the uttermost all who would accept it. The covenant at Sinai was made for the purpose of making the people see the necessity of accepting the gospel.

Hebrews 9:1 is a text that hinders many from seeing that all God's blessings to man are gained by virtue of the second covenant, and not by the first. That text reads:

> **Hebrews 9**
> [1] Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

This, together with the fact that when men complied with these ordinances of divine service, they were forgiven,[246] seems to some conclusive evidence that the old covenant contained the gospel and its blessings. But forgiveness of sins was not secured by virtue of those offerings,

> **Hebrews 10**
> [4] ...for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Forgiveness was obtained only by virtue of the promised sacrifice of Christ,[247] the mediator of the new covenant, their faith in whom was shown by their offerings. So it was by virtue of the

[245] *Galatians* 3:8.
[246] *Leviticus* 4.
[247] *Hebrews* 9:15.

second or new covenant that pardon was secured to those who offered the sacrifices provided for in the ordinances of divine service connected with the old or first covenant.

Moreover, those "ordinances of divine service" formed no part of the first covenant. If they had, they must have been mentioned in the making of that covenant; but they were not. They were connected with it, but not a part of it. They were simply the means by which the people acknowledged the justice of their condemnation to death for the violation of the law which they had covenanted to keep, and their faith in the mediator of the new covenant.

In brief, then, God's plan in the salvation of sinners, whether now or in the days of Moses, is:

1. The law sent home emphatically to the individual, to produce conviction of sin, and thus to drive the sinner to seek freedom;
2. Then the acceptance of Christ's gracious invitation, which was extended long before, but which the sinner would not listen to; and lastly,
3. Having accepted Christ, and being justified by faith, the manifestation of the faith, through the ordinances of the gospel, and the living of a life of righteousness by faith in Christ.

15. Keep the Faith

Present Truth, August 24, 1899
Original title: Back Page

Romans 12
[3] [God has] dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Ephesians 4
[7] Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

THE power by which Jesus overcame is given to every one. Our part is to *keep the faith*, as Paul did.

2 Timothy 4
[7] I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

Christ alone is righteous; He has overcome the world, and He alone has power to overcome it. In Him dwells all the fullness of God, and if he dwells in our hearts by faith we shall be filled with the same fullness.

Ephesians 3
[17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
[18] May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;
[19] And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

He has kept the law to perfection, for it was in His heart; by His faith,—by *living* faith, that is, the faith that comes by His life in us,—can we be made and kept righteous—obedient to God's holy law.

Revelation 14
[12] Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

The law of God convicts us of sin, and condemns us to death. But instead of waiting to be driven to execution, we willingly and gladly suffer death with Christ, who gave himself willingly for us, and who for our sakes…

Luke 22
[37] …was reckoned among the transgressors.

It is in Christ that we receive the penalty of the law—death. So long as the "old man," "the body of sin," that transgressed the law, and which the law condemned to death remains destroyed, and a "new man" lives in his stead, the law has nothing against us, any more than it has against Christ. We are to remain dead to sin, but alive unto God.

Romans 3
[20] By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

The law which condemns also kills. The law condemns all, and therefore it will kill all; but each one has his choice as to how he will die. He may either die now willingly, or have his life taken from him at the last day. If in Christ we willingly allow the law to take our life now,—yielding it up even as Christ did,—then so long as we remain in Christ we are considered dead by the law, doing nothing to offend it; and at the last day it will have no occasion to take our life. It cannot do it then, for there will be no cause of death in us.

Jeremiah 50
[20] In those days and in that time, says the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

Christ is…

Acts 3 [RV]
[14] …the Holy and Righteous One.

1 John 3

[5] He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him is no sin.

Therefore it is impossible that He should impart any sin to anybody. In the stream of life that flows from the heart of Christ, there is no trace of impurity. It is impossible that He should be the minister of sin, that is, that He should minister sin to anyone. If in any persons who seek righteousness through Christ, or who have actually found it, there appears any sin, it is only because they have dammed up the stream, and allowed it to become stagnant; they have not kept the channel open, so that the water of life could flow freely. The Fountain is pure, but the purest water becomes corrupt if it is confined after it has left its source. Keep the channel constantly open; let the stream of life from the slain Lamb in the midst of the throne[248] flow through you, and cleansing from sin will be constant.

[248] *Revelation* 5:6, 7:17.

16. Peace

Present Truth, June 12, 1902

THROUGHOUT all the civilized world the news has been proclaimed that the long and tedious war in South Africa has been brought to an end, and that Boers and Britons are now at peace; and the reception of the news has been attended with great rejoicing, especially heartfelt by those who have friends and loved ones in the army. One can seem to feel in the very atmosphere that a load has been lifted from the people.

Of this peace we do not need to say more than that we heartily join in the general thanksgiving; for all our readers have already learned more about it from the newspapers than we could possibly tell them; but there is another proclamation of peace which has been much more widely proclaimed, over which there are no such universal signs of joy, although it is…

Luke 2
[10] …to all people.

All mankind is in rebellion against God; for…

Romans 8
[7] The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

But,

1 Thessalonians 5
[23] The very God of peace…

–has sent word to all nations,

Acts 10
[38] …preaching peace by Jesus Christ: He is Lord of all,

–and therefore He is authorized to proclaim peace to all.

Colossians 1 [RV]
[19] For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell;

[20] And through Him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

God has no need to be reconciled to man; for He was never at variance with us. His kingdom and His very nature are peace; and He says:

Jeremiah 29
[11] I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace and not of evil.

Jesus, the Prince of peace, says to us:

John 14
[27] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world gives I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

He gives His own peace, which cannot possibly be provoked into retaliation.

Many people want to know how to have peace with God. The way is simple—cease fighting against Him. Trust in His goodness.

Romans 5
[1] Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Everlasting peace has been proclaimed, and we have only to accept it and keep it.

Isaiah 54
[8] In a little wrath I hid my face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on you, says the Lord your Redeemer.
[9] For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with you, nor rebuke you.
[10] For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the

covenant of my peace be removed, says the Lord that has mercy on you.

This everlasting covenant of peace is God's law, which by the Holy Spirit is written in the heart. God says:

Isaiah 48
[18] O that you had hearkened to my commandments! then had your peace been as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea.

But although we have rebelled, the offer of peace still holds good, and we may have it any moment we choose. Then…

Colossians 3
[15] Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

VIII. Safety, Security, & Strength

1. Christ the Only Source of Strength

Signs of the Times, November 30, 1888

NOT long since the Michigan *Christian Advocate* contained a eulogy of the work of Sam Jones, the professional revivalist, with some quotations from his wise sayings, among which was the following:

> "If you want to be good, you must do your part. God will go you halves, and that's about all He will do."

That such an utterance could be quoted with approval in a Methodist paper, is evidence that Methodism has changed greatly since the days of Wesley. For nothing is more certain than that preaching which is like the above quotation, is not gospel preaching, and is calculated either to cause men to despair, or else to become conceited, self-sufficient professors.

While reading the above quotation, one text comes very forcibly to mind. It is *Ephesians* 2:8-10:

> **Ephesians 2**
> [8] For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God:
> [9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.
> [10] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

Boasting is utterly excluded from the gospel of God; but if a man were able to do half in making himself good, then he would certainly have something whereof to boast.

Not only is such doctrine productive of boasting, but it is discouraging; for everything that tends to bolster up self-confidence, tends also to discourage those who see things as they are. What comfort can there be to the poor sinner who is

> **Proverbs 5**
> [22] ...held with the cords of his sins,

–to say to him,

> "You got into that condition through your own fault, and now you must help yourself before you can expect any help."

Says Paul:

> **Galatians 5**
> [17] For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that you cannot do the things that you would.

His recital, in the 7th chapter of *Romans*, of his own experience, shows the utter powerlessness of any man to free himself from sin. And Christ himself testifies to the weakness of human nature, when He says:

> **John 15**
> [4] Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me.
> [5] I am the vine, you are the branches; he that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing.

We become branches of the true Vine by being grafted into it. Before that takes place, we are as withered and useless as the branch that has been severed from the vine. Now since the branches of the vine bear fruit only because of their connection with it, what folly to ask the sapless scions that lie around on the ground, to bear a little fruit as evidence that they will bear fruit after they are grafted upon the vine.

To say to the prisoner who is locked in the iron cell, and bound to the floor with heavy chains,

> "We will help you out if you will rise from the floor and break at least half of your fetters,"

–would be the most cruel mockery. Not so does God deal with His creatures. Knowing the helplessness of humanity, He reaches

down to the lowest depths, to lift up the fallen and degraded in whose heart His all-seeing eye can discern the longings for purity of soul.

Read the prayer of the inspired apostle, for us:

Hebrews 13
[20] Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,
[21] Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ.

So then whatever of good there is in any individual is the direct result of the working of God in the soul,—Christ dwelling in the heart by faith,—and to Him is all the glory due.

Not only are we dependent upon God for the good that may be manifested in our lives, for the power to rise in the scale of morality, but we are dependent on Him for the very desire to rise. Says the apostle:

Philippians 2
[12] Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.
[13] For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

When Adam sinned, he suffered a complete moral fall. He placed himself in direct antagonism to God, and in perfect accord with Satan. His sin was not the light thing that many suppose, but a complete renunciation of allegiance to God, and as complete a surrender to Satan. If he had been left to himself, his desires would have been as fully toward the ways of the devil as are those of the fallen angels. But God in His mercy interposed. The plan of salvation provided not only a way of escape from sin, but the desire to escape. And so God said to the serpent,

Genesis 3
[15] And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed.

Whatever desire for a higher and holier life any man has is due to the mercy of God. God has implanted in the soul of every man some knowledge of right and wrong, and some natural desires for the right; and whenever a man gives himself wholly to sin, he does so only by resisting the strivings of the Spirit.

So it is that to Christ we are indebted for every good not only in fact but in possibility. So it is that Christ is the…

John 1
[9] …true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

Thus it is that Christ is made unto us,

1 Corinthians 1
[30] …wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

And so the true child of God, while continually growing in grace, patiently continuing in well-doing, and steadily rising to new heights of holiness, will ever exclaim,

Galatians 6
[14] God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

And when all the redeemed stand at last before the throne of God, and see His face, their whole ascription of praise will be…

Revelation 1
[5] Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

2. God's Providence

Present Truth, October 19, 1893
Original title: Front Page: God's Providence

THERE is nothing more comforting to an individual who knows his own weakness and the limitations of his powers, than a belief in a supreme power and goodness, which watches over all things and attends to the wants of all living creatures. And there is nothing more comforting to one who holds this belief than to see, in the light of Divine revelation, the care of Him who is the embodiment of that power and goodness, for every one of His children here on earth.

We live in a world of suffering and sorrow, and our eyes have become familiar to sights of poverty and distress of every kind. Yet God has not withdrawn His care from the world; He has not left His earthly children to take care of themselves. While they meet with experiences which try their faith, they are not left without the evidence of His guiding hand in all the darkness and difficulties of the way; and they may see, if they will, tokens of the abiding presence of that love which gave the Son of God to die upon the cross for their salvation.

Our conceptions of things are so colored by the false light of human ideas and human practices, that it is natural for us to think of God and His dealings with us much as if He were a man like ourselves, only a little higher up in the scale of being. As we seem to have come into the world by accident, and the care and attention which we receive from men comes by the accident of our association with them, so it seems to us that our relation to God is also accidental. Since we are here, He is obliged to take notice of us, and when He finds us in the midst of difficulty and danger, He helps us out, at other times leaving us to look out for ourselves. And perhaps we are all the time worrying about what we shall do in this or that difficulty that looms out before us, for fear if we trust to the Lord, we may find Him unprepared for the emergency.

With such a conception of God's providence toward us, it is not surprising that we are so often afraid to trust Him. It would be different if we would take the view which is revealed to us in His word. Let us glance at some words of the Apostle Paul upon this point:

Ephesians 1

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

[4] According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love:

[5] Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

[6] To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Do we grasp the meaning of these words? If we do, we see that God thought of us before ever we thought of ourselves. He thought of us ages before we ever came into existence. His love and His care were exercised toward us before the foundation of the world! The Omniscient, looking ahead to the ages to come, down even to the scenes of the present hour, saw *us*, and chose us in Christ, adopting us into His royal family, making us sons and daughters of God! These were the conditions under which we were born into the world.

God not only saw us before the foundation of the world, but He knew us by name. The Old Testament record furnishes an instance of God's calling an individual by name long before that individual came into being.

Isaiah 45

[1] Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

[2] I will go before you, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:
[3] And I will give you the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the Lord, which call you by your name, am the God of Israel.
[4] For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my elect, I have even called you by your name; I have surnamed you, though you have not known me.

This is a prophecy of the taking of Babylon by the Medo-Persian armies under the leadership of Cyrus and Darius. It was uttered about 712 years BC, and the event which it foretells took place about 538 BC. And thus king Cyrus, nearly 150 years before he was born, was called by name and "surnamed" by the God of heaven, for the sake of Israel His elect, who were to pass sixty years in Babylonish captivity. And surely God knows His own elect as well as those whom He uses as the instruments of their welfare.

But who are the "elect" of God? The apostle says,

Romans 8
[26] Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.

And Peter tells us that the elect are…

1 Peter 1
[2] …elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Again we read that it is an…

Romans 11
[5] …election of grace;

–which grace is…

2 Timothy 1
[9] …given us in Christ Jesus.

The "calling and election"[249] of God are in Christ. They apply not to us by ourselves, but only in Him; and they apply to all that are in Him. It is so,

Ephesians 3
[11] According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It was the fulfilling of the "everlasting covenant" of grace, which from eternity provided for the acceptance of the sinner in Christ. If then we are in Christ we are numbered with God's elect; and if we are out of Christ we should without delay come to Him, accepting the invitation given us; for it is to all, saying,

Revelation 22
[17] Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.

God not only saw before the world began, and sees us now, but He looks ahead and sees us in the ages to come; for we read that…

Ephesians 2
[4] God, who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us,
[5] Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace you are saved;)
[6] And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:
[7] That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

God will show to…

Ephesians 3
[10] …the principalities and powers in heavenly places,

–the wonderful riches of His grace, in taking from among frail, sinful, fallen men, those who in future ages will sit with Christ and share in the deliberations of heaven.

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[249] **2 Peter 1** [10] Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your *calling and election* sure: for if you do these things, you shall never fall.

Who will say, then, that they are here in this world to contend with chance or with fate. Is it not evident that in the Christian's life at least, there is no such thing as chance? Certain it is that He who knew us and exercised His grace toward us before the foundation of the world, does not withdraw His love and care when we are here on the stage of action. He sees every event of our lives before it comes; and we are told that…

Romans 8
[28] All things work together for good to them that love God.

All things must, therefore, be under His control and direction, even those events which seem the most strange and accidental. Let us, then,

Psalm 37
[3] Trust in the Lord, and do good;

–let us…

[7] Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him,

–believing that He who began the work of grace toward us before the foundation of the world, will not fail now to carry it forward to a glorious completion.

3. Yokefellows

Present Truth, February 15, 1894

ACKNOWLEDGING that we are weak and without strength makes us yoke-fellows with Christ; for He took upon Him our sins, and is now...

Hebrews 4
15 ...touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

Hebrews 2
9 He...tasted death for every man.

Isaiah 53
6 The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Then He says to us,

"That is not your sin any more, it is mine;"

–for...

Galatians 1
4 [He] gave himself for our sins.

If you believe Him, that weakness, that infirmity that binds you down is not your yoke; it is His, and He bears it for you, while you walk at liberty. He says,

Matthew 11
29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls.

4. Identified with Us

Present Truth, February 22, 1894

THE Lord has given His life to everyone.

Acts 17
[28] In Him we live and move and have our being.

This was said, not to Christians, but to heathen. It was His life that we have been squandering in fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Only by the power of His life, which He allowed to remain with man when he had sinned, could man work evil, and live on in wickedness. Thus,

Hebrews 4
[15] [He is] touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

He feels the infirmity, and feels it now; for He still gives life to men. He is one with us.

Then the very fact that we feel the weaknesses of the flesh will be, if we allow it to be so, a reminder of Christ. How He feels our infirmities and bears our weaknesses we do not know, but so it is. It is because He feels the infirmity, and because sin touches His very life, that He makes it known to us, in order that we may free Him from the burden of that sin, and ourselves also may walk at liberty. He felt it, and reminded us of it, causing us to long to renounce it.

We may take this thought as encouragement, that God is not far from every one of us. The enemy has made us think that the Lord was far off, and that has been the source of our weakness. But, so far from having us discouraged at the weakness, the Lord would remind us by that very thing that He is near. When we feel the weakest, then we may be more sure of the presence of the Lord. We know that Christ was without sin, even though He bore our sins;[250] and therefore when the weaknesses of the flesh remind us of His identification with us in the flesh, they also re-

[250] *1 Peter* 2:22-24.

mind us of the fact that He is with us as the power of God. By this we can understand what the apostle means when he speaks of those who…

Hebrews 11
[34] …out of weakness were made strong.

5. The Little Burdens

Present Truth, October 22, 1896
Original title: Front Page

IT IS easy enough for the Christian to believe that God will intervene to help in great trials and desperate necessities. But very often it is taken for granted that the Lord is too great to give attention to small details of life, the little burdens that it is thought can be endured alone or worried through with in some way.

But it is precisely in this way—trying to carry the little cares ourselves—that we most frequently fail. The word of the Lord is,

1 Peter 5
[7] Casting *all* your care upon Him; for He cares for you.

All care, in small affairs and great ones, is to be left with Him, and He will do the caring.

Isaiah 57
[15] Thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

It is because God is so great that He dwells with the humble and the poor who are rich toward God; and as He lives with them, He can understand the perplexing cares that come to humble homes.

There was once a widow in Zarephath whose little store of food was nearly gone, and it was a time of famine. God knew when the barrel of meal was all but empty and the cruse of oil nearly dry. Just then the prophet Elijah came, asking her to share the little that remained with him. She did so, and the barrel of meal wasted not and the cruise of oil failed not until the famine was passed.

God apparently added to her cares by sending a man who promised at first to be a burden to her, but when she accepted the Lord's word and shared her little with a stranger she found it God's way of preserving her life. He knew the exact moment when she needed special help. And it is very likely that all through those months of famine there were but a few handfuls of meal and a little oil in the larder at any time.

In the days of Elisha the sons of the prophets were felling trees along the Jordan, in order to build a larger house to dwell in.

2 Kings 6

[5] But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water.

It does not seem a great calamity, but axes were probably more expensive in those days than with us now; and, worse still for the poor man, it was not his own.

[5] ...Alas master! [He cried to Elisha,] for it was borrowed.

And then by Elisha's word, the Lord caused the iron head to swim upon the surface of the river, and the young man took it up again. It was not too small a matter for the Lord to help the man out of his dilemma.

God is ready to carry the little burdens as well as the great ones. He knows what makes up human life, and how galling the little worries are to the spirits of men. The one who has no strength cannot bear up under the smallest of loads. We have absolutely no strength of our own. He gives all we have; and it is misusing His gifts and distrusting His comforting presence to shut Him out of any experience that comes in life.

6. God with Us

Present Truth, November 26, 1896

WHEN the Chaldeans protested to the king Nebuchadnezzar that he required too much of them, in demanding that they should declare his dream, they said that only the gods could tell such a thing,

Daniel 2
[11] ...whose dwelling is not with flesh.

But Daniel knew the true God, whose dwelling is with flesh, and he obtained the desired answer for the king. It is not enough to assent to the fact that Divinity is in the heavens. What we must know is that God is near at hand to help, and that...

[20] ...wisdom and might are His,

–as Daniel said. His name is...

Matthew 1
[23] ...Emmanuel...God with us.

If any lack wisdom—and who does not?—He will supply it, and as for strength, He will strengthen...

Ephesians 1
[19] ...according to the working of His mighty power.

7. Strength Now

Present Truth, December 24, 1896

SOME time you intend to be strong, and do better; when this weakness is overcome the strength will come. This thought that sometime the overcoming power will come makes many content to be weak. But God is strong now. We are weak; well,

Isaiah 40
[29] He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might
He increases strength.

It is a wrong idea of how strength comes that leads one to go on in weakness expecting some day to get strong.

Ephesians 6
[10] Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

This is God's command. It is not to the strong, but to the weak that He gives strength. Confess the weakness, not as an excuse for continuing in it, but as the reason for laying hold of God's strength now.

8. The Voice of the Deep

Present Truth, August 5, 1897

IT IS impossible that anyone who is acquainted to any degree with the Lord should stand by the sea without being reminded of the mighty power of the Creator. Yet many gaze upon the sea day after day with never a thought of its Maker, and even openly defy Him. To such the Lord says:

Jeremiah 5
[21] Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding: which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:
[22] Do you not fear me? says the Lord: will you not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?

But it is not in order to produce fright that the Lord reminds us of His mighty power that can set bounds for the sea, so that it cannot pass over in its fiercest tumult. No; it is that we may trust Him. Perfect faith and love drive fear away. So the power of God over the sea is referred to as evidence of His faithfulness.

Psalm 89
[8] Oh, Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto You? or to your faithfulness round about You?
[9] You rule the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, You still them.

An example of this faithfulness is given in the description of the storm at sea, when the terrified disciples awakened Jesus and:

Mark 4
[39] [He] rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still...and there was a great calm.

This was but the manifestation of the original creative power. He who created the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in

them is, retains full control over all. In those words, "Peace, be still," we hear the same voice that said,

Genesis 1
[9] Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place.

1 Peter 1
[25] And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached to us;

–so we are to learn from God's power over the sea, which is His because He made it, His power over the waves of strife that surge through human hearts. For the angry sea represents the wicked.

Isaiah 57
[20] The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

Christ is our peace. The word which He spoke to the sea of Galilee that night is the word which He speaks to us.

Psalm 85
[8] I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

Surely here is comfort for those who have long struggled in vain with fierce passions.

Not only is God's power over the sea a symbol of His power to save men from the tide of sin, but it is also a pledge and surety of their final complete deliverance. It also shows the power with which God is going to clothe the preaching of the Gospel message in the last struggle preceding His second coming. Read the soul-thrilling words of:

Isaiah 51
[9] Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Are you not it that has cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

[10] Are you not it which has dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that has made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?
[11] Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.
[12] I, even I, am He that comforts you: who are you, that you should be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;
[13] And forget the Lord your maker, that has stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and has feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?
[14] The captive exile hastens that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.
[15] But I am the Lord your God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts is His name.
[16] And I have put my words in your mouth, and I have covered you in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, You are my people.

9. The Day of Small Things

Present Truth, February 24, 1898
Original title: Back Page

Zechariah 4
[10] Who has despised the day of small things?

NOT the Lord, for He makes use of small things to accomplish His purposes.

1 Corinthians 1
[27] But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;
[28] And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are.

In harmony with this, the Lord says:

Isaiah 41 [margin]
[14] Fear not, you worm of Jacob, and you few men of Israel;...
[15] Behold I will make you a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; you shall thrash the mountains, and beat them small, and shall make the hills as chaff.

Isaiah 60
[22] A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

Nothing is too small for the Lord to pay attention to it. If God did not care for small things He would neglect the principal part of the world, because there are far more small things than large ones. Indeed, even the large things are composed of small particles. God's infinite greatness manifests itself in this, that He can personally superintend an infinite number of details, without being worried or flurried. Where there is the greatest weakness, there does He exhibit His greatest power. Therefore,

Isaiah 40
[27] Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?
[28] Have you not known? have you not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding.
[29] He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength.

Psalm 40
[17] I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinks upon me: You are my help and my deliverer.

10. Waiting on the Lord

Present Truth, November 3, 1898

THE promise of God is:

> **Isaiah 40**
> [31] They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings eagles; they shall and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.

What is it to "wait on the Lord?" Is it simply to spend a certain amount of time in prayer to God? or does it mean vastly more than this? The Scriptures themselves must tell us, and in the various places where the expression occurs we must find the answer.

The very word "wait" suggests continuity, and not intermission. One may tarry for another for a certain length of time; but if he at last wearies, and goes away, we say that he does not wait. The one who gets impatient does not wait. This idea of something constant is conveyed in:

> **Psalm 25**
> [5] Lead me in your truth, and teach me; for You are the God of my salvation; on You do I wait all the day.

Of course that means not merely one day, but every day. So in verses 20, 21 of the same *Psalm:*

> [20] O keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in You.
> [21] Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on You.

The preservation is a result of waiting on the Lord; one is preserved so long as he waits on the Lord, so that the waiting must be continuous, without intermission.

But, the word "wait" contains more than the idea of expectation; it means more than simply to tarry for another; it involves the idea of service. A waiter is one who serves. So in *Psalm* 123 we read,

Psalm 123

[1] Unto You do I lift up my eyes, O You that dwell in the heavens.
[2] Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our until that He have mercy upon us.

Now it is true that in the Hebrew there is no verb expressed in this verse, neither *look* nor *wait;* but the thought is there, for with the eyes one looks, and one who is looking steadfastly upon another is waiting. But *waiting* in this sense, which is exceedingly common, does not mean standing in a state of idle expectancy; it means *serving*. A servant is most actively employed while waiting on his master.

That to wait on the Lord means to serve and obey Him, may be seen from:

Jeremiah 14

[22] Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? Are not You He, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon You; for You have made all those things.

Here the contrast is between God and the idols of the heathen, which are emptiness and vanity, without power. They can do nothing, and are therefore not worthy of any attention. God can cause rain; therefore we will wait on or serve, Him.

Why is a servant called a waiter? Because he is supposed to be always on the alert to respond to the call of the master. Even though for a season not on active duty, his time is not his own; he cannot engage in any enterprise for himself, lest his master should call him, and he be not ready to serve. So in the service of God. To wait upon Him means to be constantly devoted to Him. He who waits on the Lord recognizes himself to be just what is described in the 40th chapter of *Isaiah:* simply grass, "less than nothing, and vanity,"[251] and he recognizes God as what He is,—the

[251] *Isaiah* 40:17.

eternal Creator and Preserver, who alone has power. One who is in that state will hold himself, soul, body, and; spirit, absolutely at the disposal of the Lord. He, with all his bodily organs, will simply be an instrument through which the Holy Spirit will manifest himself visibly.

Under such circumstances it cannot be otherwise than that one's strength will be renewed; for,

> **Romans 8**
> [11] If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you;

–the result being that we live no more after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This is the power by which God forgives all our iniquities, and heals all our diseases.[252] God's presence sanctifies every place where it is manifested; and it should be remembered that real service to God is not what *we do* for Him, but what *we allow Him to do* with us. No one can give anything to God. We serve God when our whole being is passive in His hands, for Him to do as He will with us. This is constant waiting on the Lord, and the strength that is renewed to such is the eternal power of God.

Therefore,

> **Psalm 27**
> [14] Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.

[252] *Psalm* 103:3.

11. Something That Will Last

Present Truth, February 8, 1900[253]

ENDURANCE is a quality much sought for. If a man goes to buy a coat, he examines the quality of the material, to see if it will wear well. He does not expect it to last for ever, but he wishes it to last as long as possible.

If he finds that his coat lasts ten years, he does not set it down to accident; he attributes its lasting qualities to the skill and honesty of the manufacturer. The manufacturer knew how to do good work, and he did as well as he knew how.

That is all plain enough: but when it comes to goodness in men, to holiness, wholeness in body and soul and spirit, most people seem to think that it is accidental. The mass of people, including not a few professed Christians, act and talk as though sin and disease were the normal condition of men, and righteousness and health only accidental states.

We are all acquainted with people who are always and everywhere expecting and prophesying evil. They are frequently called "croakers," and not without reason. They never enjoy sunshine, because they are sure it is going, to rain. Greet them with a cheery remark about the beautiful weather, and they will grudgingly assent to it, but will endeavor to spoil your enjoyment by immediately adding,

> "But we shall pay for it later on."

They seem really to find a sort of delight, the only pleasure they have, in adversity, because it seems to justify their doleful predictions.

There are so many of these hypochondriacal Christians, whose greatest encouragement to any young convert is,

[253] PP Editor's note: This article was mistakenly dated as February 8, 1899 in the *Pioneer Writings*. It should be 1900.

"I hope you'll hold out,"

–the implication being that they do not expect him to. More frequently, on hearing of the conversion of some reckless young man, or some hardened sinner, they will say,

"Yes, that is very good; but I'm afraid it will not last;"

–or,

"I don't believe it will last."

Poor souls! They never know the joy of real life, because they do not really know the Lord.

The fact is that the most enduring thing in the world is salvation.

1 John 2
[17] The world passes away, and the lust thereof; but he that does the will of God abides for ever.

God says:

Isaiah 51
[6] My salvation shall be for ever; and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

Isaiah 45 [Lowth]
[17] Israel shall be saved in Jehovah with eternal salvation; you shall not be ashamed, neither shall you be confounded, to the ages of eternity.

God is the manufacturer of salvation; He knows how to do perfect work; and He always does His best.

That perfect salvation begins here and now. He who can save men in eternity, can save them now. To say that in the world to come people will be free from sin and disease, because the conditions will be so much more favorable than they are here, is to make God the slave of circumstances. Jesus Christ lived a perfect

life under the most unfavorable conditions, and He is our salvation. The everlasting God is our refuge.

Isaiah 12
[2] Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.

12. Clothed with Strength

Present Truth, March 16, 1899

GOD does not give as the world gives. His thoughts are not as ours. Therefore it is a mistake for the Christian to take counsel with himself, or his knowledge of the ways of the world, when considering what he may expect from the Lord. Before every believer there are trials and conflicts, but not one of them, however severe, will reveal any weakness in the Divine provision for his continual triumph. All the way along he will find that God does for him exceeding abundantly above all that he can ask or think. The victory over every foe is given him at the outset, and he may shout his triumph just as safely before the battle as after it. Indeed, if he does not there is danger that there will be none to shout over.

1 John 5
[4] For whatsoever is begotten of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

The call to those who will hear it is,

Isaiah 52
[1] Awake, awake; put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem.

These words are addressed to those who have sold themselves

for naught, and whom the Lord redeems without price.[254] It is not His fault, or His intention, that His people lack strength or beauty. These are provided for all who will put them on. Just as the guest who came to the marriage supper, but failed to put on the clothing provided,[255] was speechless when asked,

> **Matthew 22**
> [12] Friend, how came you in hither not having a wedding garment?

–so would every one be speechless and without excuse to whom the Lord should say,

> "Why are you not clothed with strength and beauty?"

The garments are not to be acquired during the course of the Christian's experience. It is true that their beauty is to be made manifest, but this could not be unless it were already there. Too many feel that while the Lord gives them garments of salvation, He expects that they will put into the garments the beauty and the strength by their own efforts. Repeated failures to do this make them discouraged and faint-hearted, whereas the blessed truth is that God gives the beauty and the strength to begin with, and all that the Christian has to do is to let these qualities appear. This is easy enough for the weakest if they are only there, and they are by the Lord's own handiwork.

When the temptation comes to try the faith of the Christian, unless he holds fast his confidence, he is apt to forget that the Lord has clothed him with strength, and to go out trembling against the enemy in his own strength which is but naked weakness. Of course, the tempter prevails, and then tries to instill doubts as to whether there is any real strength in the armor of God, seeing it failed him then. Of course it did. All the armor in the world would not protect a man who did not make use of it. The trouble with the tempted soul was that he did not put on his

[254] *Isaiah* 52:1-4.
[255] *Matthew* 22:11-14.

strength, or rather that he allowed Satan to persuade him to leave it off for a little while.

Whoever knows, by believing God's statement, that he is clothed with strength and beauty, will meet the enemy with confidence, knowing that it is God's strength, and "the beauty of the Lord"[256] with which he is clothed. He will not wonder how he can strengthen or beautify his life, because He will know that God has done this for him freely in a measure that he could not ask or even think. It is for him to rejoice and find rest in the accomplished fact.

Jesus counsels us to buy of Him…

Revelation 3
[18] …gold tried in the fire.

The riches that God bestows, whatever they are, do not have to be tested to see whether they will wear; they are already tried in the fire. The Christian need not wonder how long they will last when he receives them, for they endure for ever. They are given just as freely and fully to the believer of a day's standing as to the man who has been in the way for many years, and the former may, by simple trust in their sufficiency, be preserved as safely as the latter can be. It does not matter how severe the tests may be. They will only bring out more clearly the beauty and strength and the riches of the life of Christ, which is given to all who receive Him by faith.

Hebrews 3
[14] We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

[256] *Psalm* 90:17.

13. Strength in Weakness

Present Truth, June 14, 1900

GOD chooses in general the weakest men, and often those who have been the wickedest, to carry out His work in the world, in order that the weakest sinners may thereby have courage to believe that there is hope for them.

If the one who preaches the Gospel were by nature strong and good, most people would entirely lose heart; but when they see what the preacher, one like themselves, has attained to by the grace of God, they take courage to go forward. It is for this reason, if for no other, that the minister of the Gospel ought above all things, never to forget the pit whence he was; drawn, or the weakness and sinfulness of his nature. Every priest of God, taken from among men, must be one…

Hebrews 5

[2] Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

Then, strengthened morning by morning by the word of the Lord, he will always…

Isaiah 50

[4] …know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

14. Believing What God Has Spoken

Present Truth, September 26, 1901
Original title: Back Page

THE Lord says:

> **Isaiah 52**
> [13] Behold, my servant shall deal prudently.[257]

Are you the Lord's servant? Have you yielded yourself to Him? Then this means you. Don't say that you have not acted wisely, and therefore you are not His servant; say rather,

> "I am the Lord's servant, therefore I shall deal prudently."

Everything that Christ is to us or gives to us through any visible agency, He can be and give to us by His spirit without any visible means.

> **Psalm 46**
> [2] Therefore,...although the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, and the earth itself be removed,

–God's people can rest secure in His invisible, but everlasting arms.[258]

> When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
> Oh, Thou who changest not, abide with me.[259]

God has revealed wonderful truth in His Word. If we believe them we shall know them, and to say that we *know* is only an expression of faith, and not presumption. The presumption comes in when one, after having heard or read, says that he does not know. Such a one presumes to say that God does not know. Not to know is not to believe; and whoever disbelieves God, declares Him to be

[257] Prudently: in a way that shows care and thought for the future.
[258] *Deuteronomy* 33:27.
[259] Henry Frances Lyte, *Abide With Me*, 1847. The two lines come from different stanzas in the hymn.

a liar. How is it possible that any mortal dare venture to doubt a thing that God has spoken?

15. Lifted Up By the Cross

Present Truth, October 17, 1901

WE CAN never tire of singing that grand hymn:

> Nearer, my God, to Thee,
> Nearer to Thee;
> E'en though it be a cross
> That raises me.

But we ought in our minds, if not with our voices, to amend one line, making it,

> Although it be a cross
> That raises me,

Since nothing but the cross can raise us up to sit with God. Jesus fell beneath the weight of His cross as He carried it; yet it was that same cross that lifted Him up from the earth; and by nothing else could He have been raised to a seat at God's right hand. It is by it also that He draws us to Him. Then let us say,

> "Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified unto me, and I unto the world."[260]

[260] Paraphrase of *Galatians* 6:14.

16. A Weak Heart Strengthened

Present Truth, November 28, 1901

WOULD you rather have a weak heart, or a strong one?

There is no doubt as to the answer; there are too many deaths reported from "heart failure," for people to desire a weak heart. Anything that will strengthen is considered a boon. A weak heart, whether literally or figuratively, is a great hindrance to any person. The man who has a weak heart physically cannot exert himself very much: and he who is faint-hearted, nerveless, purposeless, can never accomplish anything. Yes; there can be no question but that a strong heart is greatly to be desired.

Yet people are never weary of charging God with injustice for giving Pharaoh, king of Egypt, just that blessing. The reason is that in the expression "hardened" they do not see the word "strengthened;" but it is there. In every case where we read that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, the Hebrew word is "strengthened." Look in the margin of the *Revised Version* at *Exodus* 7:13; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:12, 35; 10:27, and you can see that this is so.

Let us now examine a few other passages out of the many where the same word occurs, to see how it is used.

When Joshua was charged with the task of conducting the children of Israel into Canaan, God said to him:

> **Joshua 1**
> [6] Be strong and of a good courage; for unto this people shall you divide for an inheritance the land which I swore unto their fathers to give them.
> [7] Only *be strong* and very courageous.
> [9] Have not I commanded you? *Be strong* and of a good courage.

When Daniel fainted at the sight of a messenger from heaven, the words came to him,

Daniel 10
[19] O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto you, *be strong*, yea, *be strong*.

And Daniel's testimony is that he was *strengthened*.

[19] ...And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened.

To Jehoshaphat the king, the prophet of the Lord came, and said,

2 Chronicles 19
[11] Deal courageously [literally, "Be strong and do"], and the Lord shall be with the good.

Giving instruction for His people for the time just preceding Christ's coming, God says:

Isaiah 35
[3] *Strengthen* the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.
[4] Say to them that are of a fearful heart, *Be strong*, fear not.

In these passages the italicized words are from the very same Hebrew word that is rendered "hardened," in the history of Pharaoh. Thus, in the one last quoted, we see that in the last days God hardens [strengthens] the hearts of the timid, in order that they may stand the perils of persecutions.

Now was it a good thing, or a bad thing for Pharaoh, that his heart was hardened, or strengthened? Was it not only good? Is it ever a good thing to have a weak heart? The answer is obvious.

"But," you say, "Pharaoh was stubborn, and resisted."

True; but he did not have to resist. His heart was no stronger than that of Moses, and Moses yielded. God requires strong hearts in His service; and what a power for good Pharaoh would have been if he had been willing to be classed as the servant of God, instead of exalting himself as king in opposition to God.

Pliable, who at once yielded to the solicitation of Christian, to go on pilgrimage, and turned back at the first difficulty, was no

better man than Obstinate, who would not listen to a word. Both turned back to the City of Destruction. But if Obstinate could only have been convinced, what a brave companion he would have made for Christian, clear through to the Celestial City.[261]

Not every stout-hearted man acts as Pharaoh did. Saul of Tarsus was every whit as stubborn, and kicked against the pricks like an unruly beast;[262] but when he once submitted to the yoke he pulled faithfully to the end of his life. Just such a faithful servant would God have made of Pharaoh, and such can He still make of the most obstinate men; for when Christ ascended on high, and received gifts for men,[263] He received them…

Psalm 68
[18] …for the rebellious also;

–and all the day long He holds out His hands to a rebellious people.[264] Then,

Ephesians 6
[10] Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

Isaiah 50
[7] Set your face is like a flint;

Psalm 27
[14] Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart.

Psalm 31
[24] Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you that hope in the Lord.

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[261] PP Editor's note: The characters mentioned are from John Bunyan's book, *The Pilgrim's Progress*.
[262] *Acts* 9:1-5.
[263] *Ephesians* 4:8; *Psalm* 68:18.
[264] *Isaiah* 65:2.

17. The Stability of Righteousness

Present Truth, April 24, 1902

IT IS a common saying that "nothing is settled until it is settled right." That is a truth that is stated at length in the following scripture:

Isaiah 28

[15] Because you have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

[16] Therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believes shall not make haste.

[17] Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

[18] And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then you shall be trodden down by it.

Nothing can stand except that which is built upon the foundation of truth and righteousness; every other structure that is built for a refuge will fall down, and will involve in its destruction all have taken refuge in it. The living God, the God of truth, is the only sure refuge, and His truth is a shield and buckler to every one who accepts it and hides in it alone.

This suggests another phase of the same truth, and that is, that whenever a thing is settled right it is absolutely settled. This is stated in the following scripture:

Isaiah 32

[16] Judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

[17] And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.
[18] And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Righteousness is the sure and everlasting foundation. Whoever is right, and knows that he is right because he is building solely on God's Word, can rest in quiet, no matter how much people may rage against him.

- He may be misrepresented, and his motives maligned, or even his life threatened but none of these things will move him.
- He does not need to vindicate the truth, for it is its own authority; and
- He doesn't need to defend himself, for the truth is his defense.

What a condition of perfect rest in peace this is!

Psalm 119
[165] Great peace have they which love your law; and nothing shall offend them [or, "cause them to stumble"].

18. A True King

Present Truth, June 12, 1902
Original title: Back Page

Psalm 20
[7] The king trusts in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved.

THAT is the secret of power—trust in the Lord. Whoever trusts wholly in the Lord is king; he is master of every situation and of all circumstances; nothing can move him. Therefore,

Isaiah 26
[4] Trust in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

19. Gentleness and Firmness

Present Truth, August 21, 1902
Original title: Back Page

GENTLENESS and courteous grace are not incompatible with firmness. Moses, the meekest man,[265] was one of the firmest and most immovable. Daniel very politely and meekly requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself with the king's dainties: but he had…

Daniel 1
[8] …purposed in his heart…

–that he would not. He did not think that it was necessary, however, to bluster, and to use strong language, in order to impress the one in charge; it is only the weak man that does that; the strong man is quiet simply because he is strong.

Isaiah 30
[15] In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.

[265] *Numbers* 12:3.

20. Depending on God

Present Truth, October 9, 1902

"Remember, now, I am depending on you; so don't fail me."

HOW often we hear words similar to these. We make an appointment with a friend, to assist him in something, or to accompany him to some place, and as he takes leave of us, he says,

"Very well, I shall depend on you."

We undertake some responsibility, and the one interested in the outcome says to us,

"Can I depend on you?"

–and when we assure him that he can, he dismisses all care of it from his mind, provided he has confidence in us.

It throws us on our honor, and calls forth all our energies, to have somebody depending on us. When they say that they depend on us, it does not mean merely that they are helpless without us; it may mean that, and it may not; but in any case, it means that they are expecting that we will do what we have agreed to, and will not disappoint them.

Just so we may and should regard our dependence on the Lord. Of course when we say that we depend on the Lord we mean that without Him we are helpless; but we ought never to let it rest with that. When we tell the Lord that we are depending on Him, we have a right to say it in a way that shows that we are appealing to His honor that He will not fail us. We may with great boldness say,

"I depend on You to help me in this difficulty,"

–thus letting Him know definitely, that we throw the responsibility upon Him, expecting Him to shoulder it. Of the one who thus practically puts his trust in the Lord, it is said,

Psalm 25
[13] His soul shall dwell at ease.

God has firmly committed himself, saying,

Joshua 1
[5] I will not fail you.[266]

He has pledged himself to help us, and He has a good reputation.

Hebrews 10
[23] He is faithful that promised.

Psalm 9
[10] They that know your name will put their trust in You; for You, Lord, have not forsaken them that seek You.

Psalm 125
[1] They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abides for ever.
[2] As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even for ever.

Psalm 121
[3] He will not suffer your foot to be moved; He that keeps you will not slumber.

From depending on the Lord,—hanging on His word,—it is easy to pass to the thought of resting in Him, in His everlasting arms, —building on Him. The root of the Hebrew word meaning *believe* is the same as that meaning *to build;* so we might properly read that Abraham built on God; and *2 Chronicles* 20:20 could without violence be read,

> "Build on the Lord your God; so shall you be built up."

In keeping with this thought are the statements that Christ is the only foundation, that He is the Living Stone, and that coming

[266] Also *Deuteronomy* 31:6, 8; *1 Chronicles* 28:20.

to Him we are built up a spiritual house. He is the chief Corner Stone,

Ephesians 2
[21] In whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto a holy temple in the Lord.

Isaiah 28
[16] Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believes [he that builds on it] shall not make haste,
[17] ...[even when] the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters overflow the hiding place.

The house that is built on Christ's word shall stand even though the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon it.

This is most strikingly illustrated in the case of Rahab at the fall of Jericho. She lived in the most exposed place in the city.

Joshua 2
[15] Her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

We know that after the walls of Jericho had been compassed by the Israelites they "fell down flat,"[267] yet her house stood. How could her house stand when it was built on the wall, and the wall fell flat?

Hebrews 11
[31] By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not.

She had a more substantial foundation for her house than the stone wall of Jericho; she had the Word of God. We see in her case how literally true it is that faith furnishes a solid foundation, and that our visible houses may stand fast on the invisible Word. These things are written that we may learn to say,

[267] *Joshua* 6:20.

Psalm 46
[1] God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble,
[2] Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed.

21. God Standing With Man

Present Truth, December 25, 1902

WHEN Moses went up Mount Sinai the second time, with the tables of stone in his hand, on which the law was to be written,

Exodus 34
[5] The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there.

What a wonder! what condescension! The Lord of hosts, the mighty God, coming down to earth and standing by the side of a man! Who would not feel honored by such notice? And who would not feel overawed by the perfection of the Almighty? Just that honor, however, is granted to every humble disciple, and, moreover, everyone must necessarily receive it; for we are exhorted to walk with God, and He must stand by our side before we can walk with Him. The Lord is no respecter of persons, and what He did for Moses, He does for all.

Psalm 121
[5] The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade upon your right hand.

Psalm 16
[8] Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Isaiah 41
[10] Fear not; for I am with you; be not dismayed; for I am your God. I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness.

The first two verses of the 1st chapter of *Hebrews*, literally translated, tell us that God who in time past spoke unto the fathers "*in* the prophets," now speaks to us "*in* the Son." The revelation of God in Christ was simply the fullness of what had previously been incompletely manifested in men, and it set the pattern of what will be when…

Ephesians 4
[13] …we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

He says to those who are brought before governors and kings, to testify for Him,

Matthew 10
[20] It is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you.

How greatly we, the whole body of professed Christians, have failed to realize the lesson of the birth of Christ.

Isaiah 9
[6] Unto *us* a Child is born; unto *us* a Son is given.

And when we like Mary, say, and say continually,

Luke 1
[38] Be it unto me as You will,

–He will be formed in us, and we shall be…

Ephesians 3
[19] …filled with all the fullness of God.

There is no more vivid and striking illustration of the power in weakness, which is the characteristic of the Gospel, than that presented in *Revelation* 5:5-6. When no man in heaven or earth could open the sealed book, one of the elders said to John,

Revelation 5
[5] Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda…has prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

In accordance with the elder's words,

Revelation 5
[6] [John] beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne…stood a Lamb as it had been slain.

There was "the Lion of the tribe of Juda." John looked for the conquering Lion, and he beheld a slain Lamb! A more striking contrast, and greater seeming contradiction, could not be imagined; yet the two are one and the same. In the slain Lamb which is the conquering Lion, we see how God ordained strength out of the most abject weakness,[268] and thus we have…

Hebrews 6
[18] …strong consolation.

[268] *Psalm* 8:2.

22. God Will Keep Us

Present Truth, September 10, 1903
Original title: Back Page

THE man who gets victory over temptation, and is not continually falling into sin, is the one who allows God to keep him. We cannot, by our own precautions and efforts, preserve ourselves. In the very effort our minds are fixed on ourselves.

Isaiah 26
[3] You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You: because he trusts in You.

Psalm 116
[8] You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

Psalm 141
[3] Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

Psalm 51
[15] O Lord open my lips; and my mouth shall show forth your praise.

Ephesians 4
[30] And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.

23. Renew Their Strength

Present Truth, December 15, 1904

Deuteronomy 33

[25] As your days, so shall your strength be.

[26] There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rides upon the heaven in your help, and in his excellency upon the sky.

[27] The Eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

READ the context, and see how exactly it coincides with the text,

[25] As your days, so shall your strength be.

This is commonly quoted,

"As your *day* so shall your strength be,"

–and is taken to mean that whatever any day may bring, strength will be given to bear it. This it does mean, and more, too. What it says, and what the Hebrew expresses still more plainly, is that as many as our days may be, while they last, strength will last. Strength is to increase with our days, when we continually rest in the everlasting Arms. This is in harmony with the assurance that...

Isaiah 40

[31] They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

IX. Suffering

1. Religion and Happiness

Signs of the Times, June 17, 1886

> "For a person to live and die happy, he must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ."

THESE words we lately saw in a religious journal and have very often heard similar expressions. The utterance of such a sentiment gives evidence of very crude idea of religion and its object. We think that such a view of religion is injurious yes, for the following reasons:

1. Fosters Selfishness

It fosters selfishness, which is directly opposed to true religion. To make happiness the sole or the principle incentive for gaining religion, is to direct the attention of the individual to himself rather than to God. Love should be the mainspring of every act of the Christian. The reward of the righteous, and the punishment of the ungodly are both set before us, to stimulate us both by hope and by fear; yet these are not the main incentives.

> **1 John 4**
> [18] Perfect love casts out fear.

It is certain that when one is imbued with the spirit of Christ, who said,

> **John 4**
> [34] My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work,

–he will not do his work through fear of the consequences if he should neglect it. At the birth of Christ the angels sang,

> **Luke 2**
> [14] Glory to God and the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And the first commandment is,

Matthew 22
[37] You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all my mind,

–while the second is,

[39] ...You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

In true religion there is no place for thoughts of self; the glory of God, and the welfare of our fellow-men comprise our whole duty. All the thought the Christian has to take of self is to keep himself unspotted from the world.

2. Tends to Discouragement

The idea is injurious because it tends to discouragement of those who hold it. If a man thinks that happiness is the sure and invariable result of belief in Christ, he will surely be discouraged when trouble comes, as it certainly will. When the Thessalonians were in distress, Paul wrote to them...

1 Thessalonians 3
[3] ...that no man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed there unto.

It is enough for the disciple if he is as his Lord, and He was...

Isaiah 53
[3] ...a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

So He says to His followers:

John 15
[20] If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

John 16
[2] Yea, the time comes, that whosoever kills you will think that he does God service.
[33] In the world you shall have tribulation.

True, the Christian will be...

2 Corinthians 7
[4] ...joyful in tribulation,

–yet it will be tribulation still.

3. Tends to Produce False Hopes

The idea that happiness is a constant accompaniment of belief in Christ, is injurious, because it tends to produce false hopes.

The careless sinner and the professor who is "at ease in Zion,"[269] having this idea, a fancy that they are in a good ease. They have no trouble, therefore they think the Lord must be pleased with them. They forget that:

> **Hebrews 12**
> [6] Whom on the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.[270]

Pious Job was afflicted almost beyond conception, while the wicked men whom David saw were not in trouble as other men, neither were they plagued like other men. They were in prosperity, and had more than heart could wish.[271] And this was just because they were wicked. The devil can well afford to let his servants dwell in peace, but…

> **2 Timothy 3**
> [12] All that will live God in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

A happy death is not in itself any evidence of a person's piety, nor an assurance that he is sure of final happiness. The psalmist says of the wicked,

> **Psalm 73**
> [4] There are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm.

On the other hand, a good man may, like Hezekiah, be in sore distress at the thought that he is near death.

In a word, the honor and glory of God should be placed before our own happiness. Indeed, happiness should never be sought. If we seek for happiness, it will be sure to escape us, although we

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[269] *Amos* 6:1.
[270] Also *Proverbs* 3:12.
[271] *Psalm* 73:3-7.

may be satisfied with a spurious article. If we glorify God, that is of itself true happiness or blessedness, for Christ declares that they that mourn *are* happy. And this should show the folly of trusting to *feeling* in any case. The basis of the Christian's hope and trust is not feeling, but knowledge. In the midst of terrible trial he can say,

Job 19
[25] I *know* that my redeemer lives;

–and although he may feel that because of poverty and low station, he is despised by men, if he keeps…

Revelation 14
[12] …the commandments of God and faith of Jesus,

–he may have, not the *feeling*, but the *assurance* that he pleases God.

2. Job and His Friends

Signs of the Times, December 29, 1887

HUMAN nature in the days of Job was just the same as it is now. We have proof of it in the way that Job was treated by his friends. He himself tells how he was regarded in the days when he was…

Job 1
[3] …the greatest of all the men of the East,

–when the rock poured him out rivers of oil. He says:

Job 29
[8] The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, and stood up.
[9] The princes refrained talking, and laid their hands on their mouth.
[10] The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

Still further he shows how ready men were to fawn over him, and how glad to be noticed by him:

[21] Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.
[22] After my words they spoke not again; and my speech dropped upon them.
[23] And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.
[24] If I laughed on them, they believed it not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.

That was when he was wealthy; but now that he had lost everything, and was afflicted, his friends had changed. He says:

Job 30
[1] But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.

The friends of his prosperity had gone, and the vilest of men heaped contempt upon him. More than this, he says,

Job 19
[14] My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

But this state of things did not always last, for:

Job 42
[10] The Lord turned the captivity of Job;...also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

Now read what happened when this turn had taken place in Job's fortunes:

[11] Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

Plenty of friends now. "All they that had been of his acquaintances *before"* came to see him, "and did eat bread in his house." They had no doubt eaten bread in his house before; they knew how hospitable he was, and what a good table he always set, and so they were wonderfully rejoiced to learn of the restoration of his fortune.

[11] ...and they bemoaned him.

Yes, they were very ready to bemoan him then; but if they had come when Job was suffering the greatest poverty and affliction, their comfort would no doubt have been more acceptable. Doubtless they have a plausible excuse for not coming to his aid when he was in distress; they were "very sorry that circumstances made it impossible for them to come," etc., but they would now show that their affection for him had not waned in the least, by everyone giving him a piece of money, when he had no earthly need of it.

The story of Job and his friends is true to life. Job must have known more of human nature after his affliction then he did before. The friends of his prosperity do not commend themselves to us anymore than do those of his adversity. But we do not read that Job became sour and cynical over this revelation of human fickleness. He didn't jump at the conclusion that there was "not an honest man in the world." Many people say that or its equivalent; yet there never was a man who said it, who believed it. Every man who said so mentally excepted himself. But while Job learned much of human nature he had also learned much of the divine nature, and he knew there were many in whom the image of God was not wholly obliterated. So we can believe that since Job had seen that…

James 5
[11] …the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy,

–he had learned to have a charity for the failings of others. The man who allows affliction to make him sour and morose, fails to learn a great lesson which affliction is designed to teach. If the love of God is shed abroad in the heart,[272] tribulation works only patience.[273]

[272] *Romans* 5:5.
[273] *Romans* 5:3.

3. Be of Good Courage

Present Truth, November 17, 1892

A DISCOURAGED MAN is not good for anything. This is well understood in all the affairs of life. In election campaigns we find the party manager sending out the most cheering news, and insisting that victory is sure. Even though there are adverse circumstances, they will say nothing about them, but keep the minds of the people encouraged with the thought of victory. They know that this is their only hope of success. If the people should be allowed to think that the issue is doubtful, they would become discouraged, and then they would not make any efforts.

And going into battle the most stirring tunes are played by the bands, so that the soldiers may be filled with the thoughts of victory. Alexander's soldiers were said to be invincible; but the only reason of their continued victories was that they were continually of good courage.

They were no braver than other men, but they were filled with the idea that their commander could not lose a battle, and therefore they had no fear of defeat. And because they expected to win, they did win.

So in the Christian life we are exhorted to be of good courage, because only in that lies our hope of victory. And if our courage is good there can be no doubt of victory. It is no vain confidence that we are to have, but confidence that comes from the certainty of victory. It is not confidence in ourselves, but in God.

Ephesians 6
[10] Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

2 Timothy 2
[1] You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

And why strong in Him? He himself gives the reason.

John 16
[33] These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

He has overcome the world; therefore everyone that trusts in Him will also overcome the world. In Him the victory is already gained.

1 John 5 [RV]
[4] This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Christ has spoiled principalities and powers, so that when we meet them in His strength, they have no power against us. So we may well be of good courage, knowing that in the Lord there is no possibility of defeat. If any are not of good courage, if they doubt, it is because they do not have confidence in the power of the Leader, in whom alone there is victory.

1 Corinthians 15
[58] Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

4. Our Duty to Rejoice

Present Truth, September 21, 1893

IT IS the privilege and duty of the Christian to rejoice. In the Christian life, privilege and duty go hand in hand. Duty is a privilege to the Christian, and it is his duty to improve his privileges. And one of the privileges given him by the God whom he serves, is that of always rejoicing.

> **Philippians 4**
> [4] Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice.
> [6] Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.
> [7] And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The Christian life is the only life which affords *continual* joy. The world says,

> "Rejoice when everything goes right,—when you have health and home and position and money and friends,"

–but in this life of sudden changes all these things are not likely to keep company very long in the experience of any one individual. The day of misfortune comes, when one or more of these happy accompaniments of life's journey takes its flight, and lo! he is left in mourning and gloom. The conditions which prevail in this world do not invite one to hope for a life of happiness in any of its pathways. But in the path that leads up from earth to the city of God, that leads away from sin to holiness, it is not so. There joy is continually present, no matter how rough the road and how dark the way; for there is One who walks beside the traveler, who lights his path and whose presence gives rest and peace.

The Christian's joy may be perpetual, because he can "rejoice *in the Lord*." This is the secret of his ability to rejoice in the midst of trials. In God there are no difficulties and no trials. Whatever he

loses here, he has again "in the Lord." God has everything, and can lose nothing. No misfortune can befall Him. All the conditions of perfect happiness are constantly with Him. And all these conditions surround the individual in whom He dwells. For God dwells in the human heart by faith,[274] and the human body is made the temple of His Spirit.[275] And no individual is of such lowly station that He may not have God's company; for it is not with Him as it is with the worldly great, who deem themselves too honorable to associate with such.

Isaiah 57
[19] For thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

And,

Proverbs 10
[22] The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and He adds no sorrow.

The psalmist understood all this when he penned the beautiful and familiar words of the 23rd *Psalm:*

Psalm 23
[1] The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.

The divine Shepherd is able to supply every want of all in His flock.

[2] He makes me to lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside the still waters;

–and when misfortune and sorrow come,

[3] He restores my soul.
[4] Yea, [the psalmist exclaims,] though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me.

[274] *Ephesians* 3:17.
[275] *1 Corinthians* 6:19.

If God be for us, what can be against us?[276] Truly, nothing; for there is nothing that can stand against Him.

> "One person, with God on his side, is in the majority."[277]

Even in view of the dark passage through the valley of the shadow of death, in the midst of all the vicissitudes that marred his life, the psalmist could say,

> **Psalm 23**
> [5] ...my cup runs over.
> [6] Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

And these words were written for the afflicted and the sorrowing of all succeeding ages; for God is the Shepherd of all His people, as He was of Israel's king. He will do for them what David knew He would do and was doing for him.

Therefore we can take to ourselves these words of cheering admonition:

> **Psalm 32**
> [11] Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you that are upright in heart.

[276] *Romans* 8:31.
[277] PP Editor's note: This quote is widely attributed to the American abolitionist, speaker, and former enslaved person, Frederick Douglass. He reportedly used a similar phrase during his advocacy for the abolition of slavery.

5. God Is for Us

Present Truth, November 16, 1893

WE HAVE not learned the greatest and most precious truth in the world, if we have not learned that God is for us. God is not for sin, but He is for the sinner. He hates the one, but He loves the other. This is what the Gospel means. It is God *for us* and God *with us*.

Romans 1

[16] It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes,

–and it is sent to no one who is not a sinner. Here is a world of comfort for every person who will open his eyes and heart to realize the fact. Wheresoever he may be, whatsoever may be his surroundings, whatever his dangers and difficulties and enemies, he is not beyond the reach of this mighty truth. He is not beyond its power and discomfort. He is not beyond the love and mercy of God.

God has given to all men a revelation of himself. He has surrounded all with the tokens of His creative power; He has sent His word to all, telling that this power is for them,—that the power of God in creation is…

[16] …the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believes.

The salvation is salvation from sin, which means victory over every temptation, and therefore victory over every opposing force or influence that wars against our eternal welfare.

It matters not what this opposing power may be, whether it be within us or without us,—the pride and lust of our own hearts, the misfortunes that come upon us, the scorn and hatred of those around us, or the fiery temptations of the evil one in self,—all fall far beneath "the power of God unto salvation." To every fear that arises in the heart as these obstacles loom up in the pathway, the answer of God is,

2 Corinthians 12

[9] My grace is sufficient for you.

Most assuredly; for all these opposing forces are finite, while the power of His grace is omnipotent!

Romans 8

[35] Who, [says the apostle,] shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

[36] As it is written, For your sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

[37] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

[38] For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

[39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There is nothing that can keep us from the love of God, and His love includes His power, His wisdom, and everything else that can be needed for our salvation.

[32] He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Only we ourselves can take ourselves out from the hands of Him who would do this work for us. Only we ourselves can close to ourselves the flood gates of the mighty tide which is the power of God unto salvation. We may forget that God is for us; we may become discouraged at the difficulties and trials of the way; we may doubt the power or willingness of God to carry us through, and so remove ourselves, in a great measure, from the channel of His grace, for He can never work for any person except in a way that will bring glory to His name, He cannot reward doubt or distress. He must guard His glory for the welfare of His creatures, for His glory is their strength. The greater the glory of our God, the greater is the hope and confidence which we may have in Him.

But we need not doubt or distrust God. We may know that He is for us; we may know that His salvation is for us. We may know it on the authority of His word, for He has sworn by himself that the blessing of an inheritance in the new earth—which is eternal life—shall be to all that are the children of faith, the seed of Abraham.[278] He has said it, and we may know it by believing it. It is a way that is not too difficult for anyone. True, it will be contradicted by many things that appeal to our feelings, our natural senses, or our reason; but God is greater than all these, and His word is as great as himself. The question for all is,

> "Will you believe? Will you have the faith which works?"

If you will, you can in no wise lose its reward.

[278] See *Hebrews* 6:13-20.

6. Supping with Christ

Present Truth, December 28, 1893

JESUS says:

> **Revelation 3**
> [20] Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

He is the King of kings, yet He consents to sit as a guest with "any man," even the humblest. Nay, He begs the privilege of associating with us. But what shall we set before Him, for He comes and knocks when we are…

> [17] …wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

He knows this, and so He brings abundant provision with Him. He himself is the Bread of life. He says,

> **Isaiah 55**
> [2] Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

But do not forget that we must sup with *Him*. What that means we learn from His prayer in the garden.

> **Matthew 26**
> [37] And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.
> [38] Then He said unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry here, and watch with me.
> [39] And He went a little further, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will.
> [40] And He came unto the disciples, and found them asleep, and said unto Peter, What, could you not watch with me one hour?
> [41] Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

> [42] He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, your will be done.

If we would sup with Him, we must not refuse the cup of temptation, suffering, and reproach. The joy of it is that we have the presence of Christ with it. In Him we have peace in the midst of tribulation. There is exquisite joy in sorrow when Christ shares it with us.

7. Sacrifices

Present Truth, February 15, 1894

THERE is only one sacrifice in the Christian religion, and that was made by Christ. We have never made a sacrifice. God does not call us to make sacrifices, but to accept the sacrifice that He has made. True, we have to give up all things that pertain to self, but giving up self is simply taking Christ. Suppose a poor beggar comes to us, with ragged clothing, and a few coppers in his pocket, and we say to him,

> "Take off these rags and we will give you a new suit, and give up the coppers and we will fill your pockets with sovereigns."

Would he begin to mourn, or talk about the great sacrifice he was called upon to make in giving up his rags and the coppers he had in them?

Of course we give up something, but what sacrifice is it, when we get ten thousand times as much, and infinitely more? God wants us to give up…

- our miserable ways, and take *His* ways;
- our narrow, circumscribed thoughts, and take His thoughts;
- our poverty, and get His riches;
- our gross ignorance, and get His wisdom;
- our wickedness, and get His righteousness.

8. The Blessing of Suffering

Present Truth, March 15, 1894

SUFFERING is not usually counted a blessing, but it is such, if received in the proper way. Besides working in us patience and other Christian graces, when endured without murmurings or rebellion, it identifies us with Christ. For the Apostle Paul wrote,

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ,

–the result being that…

[20] …Christ lives in me.

Crucifixion means suffering; but it means also union with Him. Christ suffered in being tempted.

Hebrews 2
[18] For in that He himself has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.

So when we are tempted and endure suffering in not yielding to it, we have the blessed assurance that in that very thing we become identified with our Lord and Saviour; knowing that those who suffer with Him will also reign with Him in His glory.

9. Truthfully Accused

Present Truth, December 13, 1894
Original title: Front Page

TO BE falsely accused is usually felt to be one of the worst calamities that can befall one. It is too grievous to be borne. But there is something far worse, and that is, to be truthfully accused of an evil deed.

When one's motives are misjudged, and he is misunderstood and thought to be guilty of things of which he is innocent, it will help him to be cheerful and composed, if he will call to mind how many times he has been given credit for good intentions and qualities which he did not possess.

When a certain public man was being pilloried in the newspapers for certain irregularities with which he was charged, a friend met him and began to console with him.

> "Don't say anything," said the other, cheerfully, "they don't know half of it."

There are few men who do not know more evil about themselves than anybody has ever thought about them.

10. Need of Patience

Present Truth, January 17, 1895

PATIENCE is a much rarer virtue among men than is generally supposed. Very few, comparatively, know what real patience is; and no one can know it save by the revelation of God. It is a Christian grace, and belongs not to human nature. The Apostle Peter expressed the common idea of patience when he asked the Saviour if he should forgive his brother who trespassed against him until he had repeated the offense seven times. The Lord replied,

> **Matthew 18**
> [22] I say not unto you, till seven times, but until seventy times seven.

The same apostle afterward wrote,

> **2 Peter 1**
> [5] And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge and to patience.

Patience is not the starting point of the Christian experience. It cannot be summoned in at a moment by an effort of the will whenever the situation may demand it. It must be developed.

> **Romans 5**
> [3] Tribulation works patience.

We need patience much more than we need pleasure and ease. Better is it that we should experience tribulation than that we should lack this grace. Without it we should fail in the time of waiting for the salvation that is brought by the appearing of Jesus Christ.

People who have not patience easily deceive themselves into thinking that they are, or can be, very patient. But there is only one kind of patience, and that is…

Revelation 14

[12] ...the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Those who have this patience are those who keep the commandments and have the faith of Jesus Christ. In the epistle to the *Hebrews* we read,

Hebrews 10

[36] You have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise.

Having done the will of God, we may yet need patience to wait the fulfillment of His word. If we have not done His will we are not in a position to receive the reward of patience, and if we have, it is not conclusive evidence that this heavenly grace is sufficiently developed within us.

"The patience of the saints," like all Christian graces, is an attribute of God.

- It is the patience with which He bears with sinners, and offers them mercy and pardon.
- It is the patience which Christ manifested when He was mocked and crucified by His enemies.
- It is patience which "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."[279]

It does not become exhausted when a few draughts have been made upon it. The person who "loses all patience" is the person who has no patience of the true sort. And without patience of the true sort, we cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Therefore when tribulations come, we should welcome them, knowing that...

Romans 5

[3] ...tribulation works patience;

[4] And patience, experience; and experience, hope.

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[279] *1 Corinthians* 13:7.

When patience has had…

James 1
[4] …her perfect work, [we are made] perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

It is thus that Christ was made…

Hebrews 2
[10] …perfect through sufferings.

The suffering must not only be experienced, but it must be endured. Only…

Matthew 24
[13] He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

11. Worth Telling

Present Truth, January 31, 1895

THE patient Job had something worth telling to his companions. He was leading a very monotonous life at the time,—sitting in sackcloth and ashes day after day, crushed and helpless beneath his burden of affliction. But this does not affect the wonderful knowledge that had come to him, or his appreciation of the great truth. So worthy of telling did he think it that he exclaimed,

Job 19
[23] Oh, that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book!
[24] That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

And what words were they that he wished so recorded?

[25] I know that my Redeemer lives!

The glory of that mighty truth eliminated all the darkness of his surroundings. The two disciples with whom Jesus journeyed to

Emmaus, when He had made himself known to them, rose up and returned in haste to their companions at Jerusalem; and the word they brought was the same which Job had uttered:

"I know that my Redeemer lives!"

And what a wonderful message they deemed it! Yet it is no less wonderful today to the person who grasps and knows it.

The resurrection of Christ was for ages a fact of prophecy, and for other ages it has been a fact of history; but how few have never known it in truth. It cannot be known but as a revelation from God. And when it is known,—when the individual can say,

"I *know* that my Redeemer lives,"

–he sees it to be the transcendent truth, the one fact of all others most worth telling, and most needful to be learned by a sinful world.

12. The Glory of the Cross

Present Truth, April 18, 1895
Original title: Front Page

Galatians 6
[14] God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

THE cross is carried with us. The Saviour said,

Luke 9
[23] If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

All Christians have the same cross, and that is the cross of Christ. There is no other cross to which salvation from God descends to fallen man.

The cross means suffering and death; not once, but daily, as long as we continue in this present state. But this is not all; for at the cross we need also the glory, the power, and the life of God. The world saw Christ's suffering and humiliation, and it sees only this in the cross of Christ today. But faith sees the power of God working out for us truth across the eternal and glorious purposes of God.

If we are to glory in the cross of Christ, we must glory in suffering and infirmities which are endured for His sake. We must experience…

Philippians 3
[10] …the fellowship of His sufferings,

–which is to have fellowship with Him through sufferings. But it is a glorious thing to have fellowship with Christ. It means walking in light.

1 John 1
[7] If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.

The Christian's pathway, therefore, is not darkened by trials and distresses, but through all these it shines…

Proverbs 4
[18] …brighter and brighter, unto the perfect day.

In fellowship with Christ through suffering we learn also the power of God.

Hebrews 2
[18] For in that He himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able also to succor them that are tempted.

2 Corinthians 12
[9] Most gladly, therefore, [said Paul,] will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
[10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ"s sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Christians are not the only ones who experience tribulation in this life. That is the common lot of all; but it makes a vast difference whether it is met in "the pathway of the just," or out of it. Upon that pathway is shed the light of the cross, and the peace and joy which the cross has brought to earth. Christ is all along that pathway—a ladder reaching from earth to heaven—and He bears His cross with us. We do not follow Him afar off, for we take the cross together. We are close enough to have fellowship one with another.

So far from being, as some think, an evidence of separation from God, and of His displeasure, trials are to the Christian but a token of the cross that connects him with God, and with the eternal power and life and glory. And therefore he glories in the cross and all that pertains to it. There is glory for fallen man in the cross, and nowhere else. No man creates this, but by coming to the cross he receives it. To the world it appears as darkness, but to the eye of faith it is light.

1 Peter 4
[14] If you be reproached for the name of Christ, [writes Peter,] happy are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

And this is true of all trials that are endured in following Him. They all pertain to the cross.

13. Enduring Hardness

Present Truth, January 30, 1896

THE unbeliever never can understand the motives which lead the missionary into danger from violence and deathly climates. Now and then some secular paper condemns such recklessness. But the same paper has nothing but praise for the soldier who goes into the same regions for a salary of so much a day, or perhaps from the motive of extending the power of his country. What is sometimes required of men in serving their country is shown by the following words, descriptive of the work of the Chinese marines in the naval battle of the Yalu:

> Bravest of all were the engineers working below in darkness, the battle going on overhead, the ship on fire also, and the ventilators stopped while the flames were fought. Prisoned as they were in the stoke-hold they received orders only by speaking-tube, yet stood faithfully to their posts, continuing their labors in a temperature bordering on two hundred degrees. After several hours the fire was extinguished and they were relieved. Every man of them was found to be terribly burned and disfigured, and several were blinded for life.

Such is life below decks in the modern battleships when in action. These heathen fought for merely worldly gain, should the Christian shrink from enduring hardness and suffering, or from death itself in serving the Lord?

14. Job's Patience

Present Truth, July 16, 1896

James 5
[11] Behold, we count them happy which endure. You have heard of the patience of Job.

YES; we all have heard of it. Job's patience has been proverbial for thirty centuries or more.

But we have heard of something else also. Indeed, we never should have heard of Job's patience if we had not heard of Job's trials.

Many who wish they had Job's patience forget how he got it.

Romans 5
[3] Tribulation works patience.

When we pray for patience, let us remember what it is that works this Divine grace, and then we shall not be surprised if in answer to the prayer the trial comes which is to develop the grace in our souls.

Some are very apt to talk as though they would be examples of marvelous patience if it were not for the trials they have to endure. It is the trial that makes them hasty of temper and impatient. What a misreading of human experience! It is the trial that works the patience.

In the life of Jesus we have the Divine example of patience—the highest degree of patience brought out by the sorest trials that humanity ever bore. We are exhorted to…

Hebrews 12
[3] Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds.

It is only by considering His patience that we can be patient. It is important to remember this: that, as all the faith that we have is of Him—"the faith of Jesus,"—so all patience is His. And as His pa-

tience comes only by tribulation, it necessarily follows that He bears the trial every time one of His children is called upon to pass through tribulation. The suffering works that sweet grace of patience because Jesus himself shares in the suffering, bears the infirmity, and His all-sufficient grace bestows upon the tried one His own patience. Knowing this, we can heartily and joyfully…

Romans 5
[3] …glory in tribulations also.

We know then that they are not against us, but for us; that in this experience God is giving us patience, and Jesus is proving His fellowship with us in suffering. When Job suffered affliction, it was just as true that Jesus suffered with him and strengthened him to patiently endure, as it was that when Israel suffered in the wilderness,

Isaiah 63
[9] In all their affliction He was afflicted.

Those who hastily conclude that God suffered affliction to come to Job, and harshly left him to bear it alone, fail to see…

James 5
[11] …the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Job saw the end that the Lord had in view, and preserved his integrity, and received the gift of the patience of which all have heard.

15. Will It Always Work?

Present Truth, August 6, 1896

WILL tribulation always work patience in those who believe the Lord? Yes, invariably.

> "Well," says one, "I am sure that anybody would be impatient if he had as much to trouble him as I have."

Question: Would Christ become impatient? He had the things to endure that you have. Did He not have as much to endure, and more? You must admit that He did. Was He impatient?

> **Isaiah 53**
> [7] He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth.

Then if He were in your place, He would be patient. Why, then, do you not let Him be in your place? Faith brings Christ into the heart, so that He is identified with us, and therefore He bears the burdens.

> **Psalm 55**
> [22] Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

16. Assurance in Trial

Signs of the Times, October 15, 1896

THE apostle Peter gives us this exhortation:

> **1 Peter 4**
> [12] Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you;
> [13] But rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.

It is the thought that when we are tempted we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that enables us to…

> **James 1**
> [2] …count it all joy when we fall into diverse temptations.

> **Hebrews 2**
> [18] For in that He himself has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.

We are to overcome even as Christ himself overcame.

> **1 Peter 4**
> 1 Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

It becomes us, therefore, to study carefully the account of the great temptation of Jesus in the wilderness.

In the first place, remember that the great temptation immediately followed the anointing by the Holy Spirit. Let no one therefore think that a wonderful blessing is a pledge of freedom from trial. Rather conclude that God, foreseeing fierce temptations about to assail you, is preparing you to meet them successfully. Satan plies his temptations the most vigorously after one has been greatly helped, because he knows that he may find the soul off his guard.

2 Chronicles 26
[15] [Uzziah] was marvelously helped, till he was strong.
[16] But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction.

1 Corinthians 10
[12] Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

The first recorded words of Satan to Jesus were,

Matthew 4
[3] If you be the Son of God…

He would have Jesus doubt his Sonship. There is no way in which Satan causes more people to fall than by leading them to doubt their acceptance with God. And these temptations are the most likely to come, too, just after a great spiritual uplifting. Satan will seek to lead us to doubt our experience, or to think that God has forsaken us.

At such times it is a most blessed thing to know that we have the same assurance that Christ himself had. What was the evidence to Him that He was the Son of God? It was the word of God that came to Him after His baptism, saying,

Matthew 3
[17] This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

That same word comes to us,

1 John 3
[2] …now are we the sons of God,

–and calling us "beloved."

1 John 4
[17] Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world.

17. Disgrace and Accusation

Signs of the Times, September 16, 1897

THE only disgrace that can come to any man in this world is the commission of sin. It is not the exposure and punishment of crime, but the crime itself, whether known or not, that constitutes the disgrace. Therefore the fact that a man has committed gross sin, is not necessarily a disgrace to him. That depends wholly upon whether or not he has repented of the sin. If he holds to the sin, the disgrace still clings to him; if he has repented, the disgrace is removed; because the grace of God removes the sin of him who repents, and where the grace of God abounds, there can be no disgrace. This is self-evident.

This shows that there is no disgrace to the repentant sinner in the fact that people who do not know the grace of God still remember his previous misdeeds, and despise him. It is not what others think of us, but what we are, that determines whether or not we suffer disgrace. And so it is no disgrace for a man to be unjustly suspected or accused. The disgrace rests upon the false accusers alone. Many people will say, even after a falsely-accused person is proved to be innocent,

> "There must be something wrong that gave rise to the suspicion."

Such persons should remember that Christ,

2 Corinthians 5
[21] ...who knew no sin,

–was accused of the grossest misdeeds. He himself has said,

Matthew 5
[11] Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

18. Standing for Principle

Present Truth, June 1, 1899

THE stand that the three Hebrew children took as they faced the fiery furnace is one that every Christian must take every day. Every morning we are commit our ways to God, for we do not know what will befall us. The thing is to be ready for the furnace no matter whether it comes or not. No harm can come to us when we are hidden in Christ, and whatever He permits will always be for a purpose.

It was because these men had taken up the position of adhering closely to principle long before, that they were ready for the experience they were now called upon to pass through. So we, if we would be prepared for the fiery trials that will surely come to all, must begin now to be loyal to God; study to know His will, and then fearlessly do it no matter what the surroundings are. The very thing that was intended for the utter destruction of these worthies, set them free. This is God's way of working.

When king Nebuchadnezzar made a decree that all people, nations and languages should worship the golden image which he had set up, music was an important feature of the occasion. The instruments used were the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery—just the instruments used in the worship of God. It is therefore nothing in the instrument, but the use of it, that makes it evil or good. So it is with us; we can yield our members…

Romans 6

[13] …as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, [or] as instruments of righteousness unto God.

The use to which we put them—that is the important thing. And more, the higher the capacity for right service, the greater the harm done when they are put to a wrong use.

19. The Trial and the Victory

Present Truth, June 1, 1899

WHEN three Hebrew children were brought face to face with the fiery furnace, their reply to the king was,

Daniel 3
[16] We are not careful to answer you in this matter.
[17] If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace...
[18] But if not, be it known unto you, O king, we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up.

Here is presented the principle that is to be followed by every one who would be loyal to God. We do not know whether God will deliver us from the trial, or in the trial, or whether the victory to the world will be apparent at all or not. No matter what the results, we are to stand faithful to principle. Victory will come some time, and we can afford to wait.

Trials are not pleasant; they are furnaces of affliction, and by them the child of God is purified. They are the means of perfecting character. But the hardest of all trials to bear is that where the world sees only defeat. When Christ was brought to the test of the cross, who of His followers thought that for Him it was a victory that day? There was but one who believed He was King, and that was the thief upon the cross by His side.

Luke 23
[42] Remember me when You come into your kingdom.

And yet there was no day in all the earthly experience of Christ when He was more of a victor than He was that day.

By faith the Christian can see victory where the world sees only defeat. The earth belongs to the meek:

Matthew 5
[5] Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth,

–but they are not yet in possession of it, and present appearances do not indicate that they ever will be, but time will prove it.

2 Peter 3
[9] God is not slack concerning His promises.

His eternal purpose and the principles of the Gospel are bound to prevail. The question with each of us should be whether when they triumph,—and triumph gloriously they will,—we shall be there to triumph with them.

20. A Cheering Thought

Present Truth, July 27, 1899

THE marks of sin are plainly visible everywhere around us. Disappointments are on every hand, tears flow freely, heartstrings are bleeding and torn, our loved ones are snatched from our embrace; and were it not for the hope of the Christian, we should truly be…

1 Corinthians 15
[19] …of all men most miserable.

But thanks be to the God of love, while it is appointed for man *once* to die, he does not need to die *twice*. And it is a most solemn yet joyful thought that the time is drawing near when the entombed millions who have fallen asleep in Jesus will hear the shout that will call them forth from their dusty beds, and in the twinkling of an eye be made immortal.

2 Peter 3
[14] Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for such things, be diligent, that you may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.

21. Christianity Practical

Present Truth, August 10, 1899

CHRISTIANITY is practical. It is designed to give courage and strength to meet the trials of life, just when and where they come, and to be victorious over them. It was this that enabled Joseph and Daniel to live such upright lives, even amid the most adverse circumstances. If an individual has not such a hold on God that he can receive strength for the everyday and perplexities that come to him, of what use is his Christianity? None whatever. That kind of Christianity is spurious.

Only a short time ago a person said,

> "There is no use in my trying to be a Christian *here*—I can't stand the pressure of the opposition I have to meet. If I could only get away from these temptations that would be different."

Yes, if he could; but he can't. These trials come in consequence of a weakness in his character, and until that weakness is overcome, these trials will come in one form or another no matter where he is.

There was a time when Israel thought to escape the judgments that the Lord permitted to come upon them by saying:

Isaiah 30

[16] We will flee on horses;...we will ride upon the swift.

But the Lord immediately replied,

[16] Therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

So it is in the Christian warfare, in our struggle with the enemy of souls. There is no place we can go to that he cannot go also; and there is no means of flight so swift that he has not a way just as rapid. Then to think that by change of location, we can get away from the devil and his temptation, is only deceiving ourselves.

Then what is to be done? Put our trust in one stronger than Satan, and that is Jesus Christ. He has met the enemy and conquered him, and He says unto us,

1 Corinthians 10
[13] There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

There is the secret of the Christian strength and security.

Deuteronomy 8
[2] You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness.

These words come to every one personally. When they were first spoken, many of the audience had not spent forty years in the wilderness, yet that did not excuse them from the obligation of remembering how God had led them forty years. Later generations were required, just as much as that one was, to keep the experience fresh in their memory. Some of us think if God would only give us bread from heaven, or water from the rock, we would never all our life long, or doubt Him again. Well, He has given these experiences to every one. Surely to us, in this generation, He says,

"You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God led *you* these thousands of years."

Let us remember it with joy, and as we dwell upon what He has already done, and what He has promised yet to do, be glad that...

Psalm 48
[14] This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

22. Through Much Tribulation

Present Truth, August 24, 1899
Original title: Back Page

IT IS through much tribulation that we enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many put the kingdom of heaven entirely in the future, and think that the Scripture means that only those who suffer persecution from wicked men or who suffer severe affliction, can get to heaven. With this thought in mind, they often wonder how it can be that so many godly people have led such quiet, peaceful, uneventful lives. The erroneous thought leads many to seek persecution, in order to make sure of reaching heaven. That, of course, is pure heathenism, of the same class as that which leads the Hindu devotee to try to throw himself before the car of juggernaut.

The fact is that…

Mark 1
15 …the kingdom of God is at hand.

It is now. It is "within you."[280] It is a hidden treasure waiting for discovery. We enter into the kingdom of God when we enter into perfect fellowship with God, sitting with Christ on His throne. It is only through tribulation that this is attained. The Psalmist says,

Psalm 119
67 Before I was afflicted, I went astray.

Deep sorrow,—the very deepest, so deep that nobody but the one who has it is conscious of it,—is necessary in order to make us acquainted with the fullness of the joy of Christ. He suffered alone, and…

2 Corinthians 1
5 As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ.

[280] *Luke* 17:21.

Romans 5
[3] Therefore we glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation works patience,
[4] And patience experience, and experience hope,
[5] And hope makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

23. The Lesson for All to Learn

Present Truth, April 12, 1900

ONE of the most wonderful things about the Gospel is its simplicity. There is nothing complicated about it. It consist of principles, not of rules; and these principles are so few and so easily comprehended that children of tender years can understand them. Indeed, unless one becomes as a little child, artless, trustful, confiding, he will not, cannot understand them.

Now the spiritual life of a Christian is but a repetition in principle of his physical life.

John 3
[7] [He] must be born again,

–and after that grow up…

Ephesians 4
[13] …unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The one lesson for children to learn while under parental control is obedience; not that which comes through fear of punishment, because of dogmatic requirements or arbitrary commands, but a willing, cheerful obedience, such as springs from a heart of love. Jesus knew this lesson. When chided by His parents because He remained in the temple, talking with the doctors, although He gave a good and sufficient reason for His action, the record says,

Luke 2
[51] He went down with them…and was subject unto them.

And has it not occurred to us that this lesson of submission that He learned in His youth helped Him to say, in the hour of His great trial,

Luke 22
[42] Not my will but yours be done?

And just as the child is to be subject to his parents, so the Lord would have a willing, cheerful submission to His requirements. That is all there is in Christianity. From first to last this is the one trait of character most prominent in Christ's life. This is the one great lesson that Abraham had to learn, but when he had learned it, the Lord could trust him, and make of him a great nation.

Some of the Bible characters, like Paul, learned the lesson in a short time, while for others, like Jacob, a whole lifetime was required. But just as that was the one lesson for them to learn in their day, so it is for the Christian now. It is so difficult for us to yield our ways, sacrifice our desires, give up our previous ideas. How hard it is to admit that our ways are not better than the Lord's; and even though we admit it, what a struggle to give them up. Yet this is just what all our daily experience is for,—this is why we have trials, why afflictions and bereavements and losses come to us,—that we may learn submission. And just as soon as we have learned the lesson, the Lord will say to us as He did to Abraham, that it is enough,

Genesis 22
[12] Now I know that you fear God.

James 4
[7] Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

24. Suffering and Rejoicing with Christ

Present Truth, October 4, 1900

HOW many are there, of those who sing with fervor,

> My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;
> For Thee all the pleasures of sin I resign,[281]

–who do not have in their minds, to a greater or less degree, the idea of a sacrifice for the sake of Jesus? Thus, for example, a poor woman who had been converted from Catholicism, and was subjected to petty persecutions by the Romanists, said:

> "No matter what they do, I'll never give up Jesus; and it is not much to bear for Him, who bore so much for me."

Now that is good as far as it goes, but it indicates a failure to grasp what Christ really is to us; and that is the condition of very many. It is well to be moved by gratitude to Christ, for all that He has done for us; but we must not get the idea that by suffering any amount of physical or mental pain we in any degree pay Him for His suffering. He does not take pleasure in our pain; neither can we enrich Him by anything we do. It is impossible for us to make any sacrifice whatever for Him. He himself is the one only Sacrifice. He gives, we receive.

No; the true idea in the talk about resigning everything for Christ, is that of exchanging a bad thing for a good; that which is of no value for that which is above price. We were pleased with sin; but now, having seen Christ, sin pleases us no more. He draws us to himself so irresistibly that we gladly drop everything else, and run to Him. We glory in suffering, not because we think that it pleases Him to see us suffer in our turn, nor as an expression of appreciation of His sufferings for us, but because we suffer with Him, and thus realize the joy of His presence. In His presence is such surpassing joy that even if we have to suffer in order to be near Him, the joy more than obliterates the pain. Even in

[281] William R. Featherstone, Hymn: *My Jesus, I Love Thee*, 1864.

this world of disappointment and sorrow and suffering, the joy of the Lord's presence is so exceeding great that we are perfectly contented and happy; what then must be the state in the world to come, where there will be no suffering, no disappointment, no lack? What language can ever tell it? What mind can ever comprehend it? So we say,

Revelation 22
[20] Lord Jesus, come quickly;

—not to put an end to our sufferings, but to let us revel in the super-abounding joy.

25. Comfort in Trouble

Present Truth, March 14, 1901

"Are you in trouble? Have you been sorely afflicted?"

OF course you say, "Yes," for...

Job 14
[1] Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

But there is a still more important question. It is,

"Are you comforted in your affliction? Do you have peace in the midst of your trouble?"

You say, "No"? Why are you not? Here is the word of truth:

2 Corinthians 1
[3] Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;
[4] Who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

Christ also has said,

John 14
[27] Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

If you say that you have no comfort and peace, you deny the word of God, making Him a liar; or else you have thrown away the gift of God. You didn't know it before? Well, it is not too late now; know it now, and ever remember it, that comfort is always present wherever there is trouble. God speaks peace to you. He has sent the Comforter, and you have been comforted, for He who cannot lie says so. Then wait in the fear of the Lord, and...

Acts 9
[31] ...in the comfort of the Holy Ghost,

–recognizing the gift of God.

What a blessed; glorious Gospel, that makes our very trouble a means of conveying comfort to us!

2 Corinthians 1
[5] For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ.

26. Bless Them Which Curse You

Present Truth, October 17, 1901
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Romans 12
[14] Bless them which curse you; bless, and curse not.

THE Greek word rendered "bless" is our word "eulogize," which needs no explanation. It describes what is done to benefactors and men of great and noble deeds. It is a strong word, and the exhortation is very comprehensive. If we are to speak in terms of highest praise of those who are actually injuring us, and even seeking to take our lives, there surely is not place for speaking ill of anybody. We have a notable example of this respect; for God has eulogized us, rebels as we have been,[282] and Jesus prayed in pity for His murderers. When God has blessed us, it ought to be easy for us to speak well of everybody; and so it will be when we fully realize His blessing.

[282] See *Ephesians* 1:3. PP Editor's note: Also see the two articles, "Eulogies," and "Eulogies Again," by A. T. Jones, contained in the collection, *The Holy Spirit*.

27. The Joy of Tribulation

Present Truth, November 28, 1901
James 1:2

James 1
[2] My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations.

COUNT, that is, consider, believe, that all sorts of temptations are joy; and don't doubt it for a moment.

Count it joy when you "fall into" them as into a trap. The encounter will without doubt reveal some things in your character and disposition that you never knew before; but do not be discouraged; the Lord is not discouraged at the prospect, and He sees much more than you do.

Count it *all joy;* not merely that all of the trial is joy, but that the trial is the fullness of joy. All the joy of the world to come is gained only through trial. It is…

Acts 14
[22] …through much tribulation [that we] enter into the kingdom of heaven.

It was…

Hebrews 12
[2] …for the joy that was set before Him [that Christ] endured the cross, despising the shame.

Now it is quite contrary to our usual custom to rejoice in tribulation; much less is the one who wishes to be a Christian inclined to rejoice at the prospect or the reality of all sorts of temptations; therefore it is well to study the case closely, to find out why we are to count temptations joy, and how we can do it.

The Apostle Paul had a good deal of experience in this line. A messenger was sent direct from Satan to plague him, and he requested the Lord to remove the trial; but the Lord replied,

1 Corinthians 12
[9] My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Therefore Paul exclaimed:

[9] ...Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
[10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches [injuries], in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

The secret of joy in temptation is the knowledge that one is sharing it with Christ. Read the words of Peter:

1 Peter 4
[12] Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:
[13] But rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Still more strongly is it put in *1 Peter* 1:5-8, where, speaking of the...

1 Peter 1
[5] ...salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,

–the apostle adds:

[6] Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations:
[7] That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ,
[8] Whom, having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see Him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

It should be understood that in the Lord's presence there is fullness of joy,[283] and that there is no suffering without Him. His very

[283] *Psalm* 16:11.

presence is joy; therefore suffering, trial, fierce temptations, are a cause for great rejoicing, since they ensure His presence.

Hebrews 13
[5] He has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you,

–and He is not a fair-weather friend.

People get the idea that there is no suffering with Christ unless one is persecuted for righteousness' sake. They do not think that temptations to sin, and suffering which one brings on himself by a wrong-doing, is suffering with Christ; yet so it is. Was He not…

Hebrews 4
[15] …tempted in all points like as we are?

And did He not suffer, being tempted?[284] Thus we must know that not a temptation comes to us that does not first touch Him. Indeed, it comes through Him to us; for…

Galatians 3
[13] Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us:…
[14] That the blessing of Abraham might come us.

If we do not recognize Him in the temptation, it is the same to us as if He were not present, and we get only the wounds and bruises and the heaviness; but if we remember that nothing can come to us apart from Him; that it is in the Cross that we touch Him, and are made partakers of His life; every sharp thrust will only cause us joy, and not sorrow; least of all will it arouse feelings of bitterness.

What a different world this would be, even now with all the curse, the trials, the injustice, the oppression, if people could but know the value of Christ's presence, and that in all their affliction He is afflicted; that He himself bears the sins, the sickness, and the sorrow of the world. Songs and rejoicing would be heard, and sorrow and sighing would indeed flee away. The knowledge of

[284] *Hebrews* 2:18.

His presence bearing all things has caused martyrs to sing for very joy in the midst of the flames.

But we are told that…

> **James 1**
> [14] Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Shall we count that joy? Most certainly; for the Lord is with us then as well as at any other time. Mind, that to be tempted, even when drawn of our own lusts, and enticed, is not in itself sin. We need not consent when sinners entice us, even though the enticer be our own sinful flesh; for Christ has power over all flesh; and the joy of the temptation comes in seeing and experiencing Christ's mastery over sin in the flesh. Ah, what exquisite joy there is in victory! And the fiercer and stronger the foe the keener the joy; and that joy may be ours continually, for Christ has gained the victory for all mankind, and He is with us to the end.

28. Patience and Perfection

Present Truth, December 5, 1901
James 1:4

James 1
[4] Let patience have its perfect work that you may be perfect and entire lacking in nothing.

COMMON as is the word "patience," few people realize its true meaning. That it is wonderfully comprehensive, is seen by this, that the one in whom patience is perfected, will lack nothing. Patience, therefore, contains the sum of all that is needful for any person in this world or the world to come.

The verse before the one just quoted gives us a hint of the meaning of patience.

James 1
[3] The trying of your faith works patience.

This is identical with…

Romans 5
[31] Tribulation works patience.

Keeping these two statements in mind, we are prepared to appreciate the fact that the Greek word rendered "patience" is a compound of two words, meaning, *remaining under*. Patience is endurance.

Temptation, the trying of faith, works patience, provided one is willing that it should. The test not only determines the quality, but improves it. Gold, even though it be tried in the fire, will nevertheless perish; but the trial of our faith is much more precious than that of gold.[285] The testing of gold by fire merely shows what it is, but adds nothing to it. The trial of faith, on the contrary, develops it, increasing the quantity and improving the quality.

[285] *1 Peter* 1:7.

The common way of regarding trials is that the sooner one can get away from them the better; but this is not the teaching of Scripture. The apostle Paul tells us, it is true, that God will in every temptation provide a way of escape; but the way of escape which he presents is different from the usual method. He says:

1 Corinthians 10
[13] God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, *that you may be able to bear it.*

We escape the temptation or trial by remaining under it. How can this be? The question is not difficult to answer. The truth is that God has a purpose for every one of us,—a work for us to do, —a place in His kingdom for us to fill; and He is fitting us for it.

Hebrews 2
[10] It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Then as a matter of course suffering is the only method by which we can be made perfect, and brought to glory. If we are to shine, we must be polished. Now if we object to the polishing, becoming irritated under the roughness to which we are subjected, and petulantly shake ourselves free from it, there is no other way but that we must again be subjected to the polishing process, unless the Lord should cast us off altogether as useless material. It is also evident that when we have pettishly[286] pushed out from a trial, all that we have already undergone counts for nothing. The whole testing process must be gone over again; the lesson must be studied from the beginning.

So the more we reject trials and chastisement, the more of them we bring upon ourselves, so long as God works for our salvation. But if we quietly endure the trial, letting patience—endurance—have its perfect work, we shall be complete as far as the work to

[286] Pettishly: (of a person or their behavior) childishly bad-tempered and petulant.

be accomplished by that particular trial is concerned, and it will not need to be repeated. Thus by enduring trials, we escape them.

But how is it that patience will bring us all things? for that is really what the text says: When patience has completed its work, we shall lack nothing. This we can always readily see, if we remember and believe two familiar texts of Scripture. One is this:

> **John 3**
> [27] A man receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven;

–and the other is…

> **James 1**
> [17] Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Now if we believe these two statements, we shall never proceed rashly to help ourselves to anything that we desire or think we ought to have, but will wait for God to give it to us. All things come from above, and are to be obtained only in Christ. Outside of Him we can really have nothing. If we choose for ourselves, determining that we will have this, or we will not endure that, we can never be sure of anything, for we cannot know that we have chosen what God wishes us to have. And if we have that which He wills that we should not have, it is certain that we cannot keep it, and what we cannot keep we do not indeed have.

Or, suppose that we are sure that God has designed a certain thing for us, but we cannot wait for it, and so we seize upon it at once. That shows unbelief. We either doubt if God did really intend it for us, or we doubt His ability to carry out His purpose, or else we fear that He may change His mind. We have plucked the fruit at an unseasonable time, and so instead of enjoying it, we are injured by it, and lose the fruit besides.

But if we believe God, then we can calmly endure privation and hardship, knowing that all things are ours, and that no power is great enough to keep God's good gifts from us when He sees that

they will benefit us. And then when we have waited for the desired thing, and it has come to us direct from the hand of God, we *know* that it is ours, and we can enjoy it to the full.

Lamentations 3
[26] It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.
[27] It is good for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth.

Christ is the head of all principality and power, and we are "complete in Him;"[287] and here is how His perfect fullness as man was obtained, and how we share in it:

Philippians 2 [RV]
[5] Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
[6] Who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,
[7] But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men;
[8] And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto to death, yea, the death of the cross.
[9] Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and given to Him the name, which is above every name;
[10] That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth,
[11] And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

[287] *Colossians* 2:10.

29. Patience Is Power

Present Truth, December 12, 1901

PATIENCE is power. The converse is equally true; for power is patience. Patience is endurance, the power to bear; and only he who is strong can bear much. It requires power to be patient; irritability, forgetfulness, impatience, are signs of weakness.

God is Almighty; therefore…

Romans 15
[5] [He is] the God of [all] patience.

He can bear all things, even this world with all its weight of sin and crime and misery; for He is love, and…

1 Corinthians 13
[7] Love bears all things.

The mind is lost in contemplation of God's wonderful patience. Think of the small loads we sometimes carry, which cause us to become impatient, and then remember that God bears all that men endure, and the curse of the earth itself. Sin is as disgusting and as painful to God as the worst plague of boils and foul ulcers on the body could be to us; yet so great is God's love for us that He bears it all uncomplainingly.

And it is this patience that destroys it, and relieves Him of the load. And His power of endurance is His eternal love, that swallows up death, He endures patient because eternity is His. He can wait long in quietness for the maturing of His plans and the accomplishment of His purposes, because the longest that He would need to wait would be but a moment compared with eternity. Moreover, He can endure all things without the slightest tremor of weariness or discontent, because eternity is concentrated energy. Eternity is breadth and depth, as well as length, and every moment contains the whole of it; for the name of "the everlasting God" is I AM. Each moment, therefore, contains the concentrated power of the endless ages.

This means everything to us; for in it is the possibility for us to…

Colossians 1 [RV]
[10] …walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, and bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;
[11] Strengthened with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy.

God gives us His life, which swallows up sin and disease and death, in order that we, like Him, or in Him, may endure all things.

Philippians 4 [RV]
[13] I can do all things through Him that strengthens me.

Thus we see that whoever abides in the God of all patience becomes Almighty in Him.

Philippians 4
[13] I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

Power is shown much more in quiet endurance than in active resistance. God might have crushed Satan with a single blow—a word; but that would have been a denial of himself, because it would not have been the exhibition of the highest power. So in Christ He "endured the cross,"[288] thus showing that He is indeed God, the Creator of all things, and therefore the Redeemer. In the cross of Christ we find the infinite power of patience.

If we accept the cross, we receive that power—the power of eternity. Thus no untoward event can be great enough, or can come upon us so unexpectedly, as to flurry or worry us.

2 Corinthians 4
[17] For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;
[18] While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

[288] *Hebrews* 12:2.

1 Timothy 6
[6] Godliness with contentment is great gain.
[7] For we brought nothing in this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.
[8] And having food and raiment let as be therewith content.

Food and raiment are the simple necessities of life, so that the exhortation is equivalent to this:

"Having life, let us be therewith content."

That is equivalent to:

Jeremiah 45
[5] Do you seek great things for yourself? seek them not;...your life will I give unto you for a prey in all places where you go.

Do you think that is little? Ah, what value do you place upon life? What can be compared with it? It is the greatest gift that God can bestow, for in it He gives himself. So then God promises us that if we will seek nothing for ourselves, He will give us everything. Selfishness overreaches itself, and loses what it already has; while self-denial wins the fullness of God.

30. Self-denial

Present Truth, January 16, 1902

FROM our youth up we have heard that:

> "Self-preservation is the first law of nature."

This is true; but nature must give way to grace, if we would be saved; and self-denial is the first law of grace; for when Christ was in the form of God,

Philippians 2
[6] [He] counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,
[7] But emptied himself.

And He says:

Matthew 16
[24] If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

But self-denial does not mean self-torture, nor the doing of penance, nor the depriving of one's self of any real good. We are told that...

Psalm 85
[12] The Lord shall give that which is good.

James 1
[17] Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Psalm 84
[11] No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

He says:

Psalm 55
[2] Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

And of Him it is said that…

Psalm 103
[5] [He] satisfies your mouth with good things.

What then is self-denial? It is just what the term indicates—the denial of *self*. But the denial of self means the acknowledgment and appropriation of God. It means the cross, it is true, because only in the cross do we find God, who is the sum of all good.

Galatians 6
[14] God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

The only thing that the cross takes from us is the world, which, since it is not of God, passes away with its lusts. That is to say, the cross cuts off from us dead things, excrescences,[289] which if not taken away would cause our death. Self-denial, therefore, is nothing more nor less than the rigid separating from ourselves all those things which are injurious.

This necessarily involves some degree of pain and suffering; yet it is pain that brings lasting pleasure—suffering that contains everlasting joy. An abnormal growth on the body cannot be cut off without pain, but it is momentary pain that gives length of quiet days.

Hebrews 12
[2] [It was] for the joy that was set before Him,

–that Christ endured the cross; and this joy is found in the cross itself.

2 Corinthians 4
[17] Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

–not merely at some future time, but,

[289] Excrescence: a distinct outgrowth on a human or animal body or on a plant, especially one that is the result of disease or abnormality.

2 Corinthians 4
[18] While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

Life comes to us through death—the death of Christ, which we must share with Him. We die, self dies, that we may live a new life in Christ. So denying self and taking the cross means simply the cutting off of bad habits and injurious practices, which are ours by nature, and in that very act the finding of the joy of the Lord—the strength of the Divine nature. It does not mean moaning and groaning over hardship endured, but songs of joy for victories gained.

31. Light Out of Darkness

Present Truth, August 28, 1902

THE work of creation shows us the Gospel; in it we learn God's way of working.

2 Corinthians 4
[6] God who commanded the light to shine, [not *into*, but] *out of* darkness, has shined in our hearts.

When we understand the simple lesson taught in these words, and believe that God calls the light out darkness, the darkness will not be dark to us, discouragements will not be able to discourage, nor death to kill; but we shall be able to say,

2 Corinthians 2
[14] Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ.

The glory streaming from the cross of Christ shines out of the thick darkness. In all His previous encounters with the enemy, there had been a clear path of light between Christ and the Fa-

ther. But the dense darkness enveloped in the cross, the thick cloud of our transgressions shut out even the light of the Father's countenance, and drew forth the exceeding bitter cry,

Matthew 27
[46] My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?

The eternal light of the universe was the hour of its thickest darkness.

> In the cross of Christ I glory,
> Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
> All the light of sacred story
> Gathers round its head sublime.[290]

Exodus 20
[21] Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

For a time he was swallowed up in the darkness, but he emerged from it transfigured, with his face shining with the glory of God.

Psalm 97
[2] Clouds and darkness are round about…the throne [of glory],

–and to God,

Psalm 139
[12] …the night shines even as the day.

Those who learn this lesson, though they may seem for a time to be overwhelmed by the clouds of sorrow, and darkness of trial, will come out triumphant with shining faces, and a powerful testimony.

[290] John Bowring, Hymn: *In the Cross of Christ I Glory*, 1825.

32. Tribulation the Gate of Heaven

Present Truth, September 11, 1902

WOULD you like to go to heaven?

"Of course I would," he replies; "that is the one great thing above all others that I long for."

Then you would really be glad to find the gate of heaven?

"Indeed I would; the day that I see it will be the happiest day of my life."

Well, here it is:

Acts 14
[22] We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

That is the gate through which we *must* pass, and there is no escaping it. Surely it is very inconsistent in us to profess to want to enter a certain place, and then begin to complain and to turn back as soon as we come to the door. If we should rejoice to be in heaven, we ought also to rejoice in tribulation. Perhaps we have never looked at it in that way before; if so, then there is joy for us that we never before knew of.

Finding Joy in the Way

Remember that we have only to pass through the great tribulation; we do not have to stay for ever *in* it. But let us not make the mistake of going through it as the boy goes through a piece of treachery imposed on him—grumbling, or at the best, thinking only of a good time to follow.

We must learn to find joy in the way to heaven,
if we expect ever to know the joy of heaven itself.

Seeing the End by Faith

Then, too, we must not forget that while we must *go* through the

tribulations, we do not have to *see* through them. Here is where we most frequently fail; we do not even try to go, because we cannot see through. If we wait till we can see through the thick cloud, we shall never advance, but we can go through without seeing, if we have a good guide. Above the cloud that hides the sun from our eyes we can see the golden beams of light, and thus we can really see more light than if the sun were uncovered so that we could not look that way at all. So, although we cannot see through our troubles, we can always see over them.

Afflictions Needed

And, finally, we come back to the assurance that through much tribulation we *must* enter the kingdom of God. The entering is sure, if we go through the tribulations.

2 Timothy 2
[12] If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.

If the sufferings of Christ abound in us, nothing can hinder the comforts of heaven from abounding in us also.

2 Corinthians 4
[17] For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;
[18] While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

Christ Must

Have you thought that stern necessity laid its hand on Christ, and that He had to endure trials of which we have no conception? He bears His sufferings so willingly and so uncomplainingly that we are often in danger of forgetting their greatness, and that necessity was laid on Him.

John 3
[14] As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up.

Acts 17
[3] Christ *must* needs have suffered.

Acts 2
[23] [It was] by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,

–that Christ was taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain. Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of the Jews, were gathered together to do what God's hand in counsel had…

Acts 4
[28] …determined before to be done.

Then when we find a way full of tribulation and affliction that must be gone through, we may know that Christ must go through also, and He cannot forsake us. Even if we should turn back, He must go through. So we comfort ourselves with the knowledge that if we go forward, He is with us always, and that it is only when we refuse the way of hardship that we lose Him.

33. Hope in Lamentations

Present Truth, September 18, 1902
Original title: Back Page

Lamentations 3
[24] The Lord is my portion, says my soul, therefore will I hope in Him.
[25] The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeks Him.
[26] It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

THIS is from the Lamentations of Jeremiah; if we are Christians indeed, knowing the Lord, we shall make all our lamentations in the same way.

34. The Just for the Unjust

Present Truth, January 15, 1903

1 Peter 3

17 It is better, if the will of God be so, that you suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing.

18 For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

1 Peter 2

19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory is it, if, when you be buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently? but if, when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

21 For even hereunto were you called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving *us* an example, that you should follow in His steps;

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth;

23 Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judges righteously.

HOW slow we are to learn the primary lessons of the Gospel! Even now, after all the years of Christian teaching, and the setting forth of the example of Christ, it is no uncommon thing to see professed Christians grieved and complaining because they have been accused of something of which they are not guilty. Worst of all does it seem to them if they are held responsible for another's fault. In such a case they feel that they are greatly abused, and that they are fully warranted in demanding that justice be done them. They even think that it is their duty to do so, "in the interest of truth."

When we feel thus we forget that as Christians we are called to suffer unjustly without complaining. Christ suffered for sins—the Just for the unjust. We are called to suffer with Him; and this means that "the just for the unjust" is to be the ruling feature in our lives. To the rich oppressors it is said,

James 5
[6] You have condemned and killed the just; and he does not resist you.

Our only concern is to see that we are just.

1 Peter 3
[14] If you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are you.

1 Peter 4
[15] But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.
[16] But if any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed.

35. Meat from the Eater

Present Truth, March 26, 1903

HAVE we yet read the hidden meaning of Samson's riddle?

Judges 14
[14] Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.

We know the story: A young lion came forth and roared against Samson. The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent it as though it had been a kid. Some time afterward passing the spot, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and found in it a swarm of bees and a honey-comb, with which he refreshed himself and his parents. The lion that roared against him was the means of providing him with a sweet repast.

1 Peter 5
[8] Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour.

But if we meet him in the strength of the Lord, we shall be more than conquerors, and get blessing and help from all his attacks. From the eater comes meat, from the strong, sweetness.

James 1
[2] My brethren count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations,

–even though you be in heaviness through them,[291] for:

Hebrews 12
[11] Though no chastening for the present seems to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.

Not only are we ourselves fed and strengthened by our temptations, our tribulations, our difficulties, and our labors, but we thus receive a supply from which we can minister to the needs of others.

2 Corinthians 1
[3] Blessed be God,...
[4] Who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

Thus may our tribulation be to us as a passport by which we may in some degree enter into the joy of our Lord,

1 Peter 2
[24] ...by whose stripes we are healed.

[291] *1 Peter* 1:6.

36. Sin and Suffering Momentary; Righteousness and Glory Eternal

Present Truth, July 16, 1903

SIN is but an incident in God's wondrous economy. When countless ages shall have passed, and we look back, not simply upon our own short lives in this world, but upon the whole six thousand years of sin's continuance, it will be but the faintest line on the spectrum, so little compared with eternity. Sin and its consequent suffering are only momentary, but…

2 Corinthians 4

[17] This light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Out of the pit of corruption comes the blossom of life. In every temptation the way of escape is prepared. In the suffering is the means of life. What a wondrous Gospel this is, that the very lowest place you can get into, is itself the means of lifting you up; that even where sin abounds, God makes His grace much more abound, and that out of death He brings life. Even as sin is but an incident in the economy of God, so suffering is but an incident. It was not in the beginning, neither will it be in the world to come, for…

Revelation 22

[3] There shall be no more curse, neither sorrow, nor crying.

X. Thankfulness

1. Being Thankful

Present Truth, March 22, 1894

WE OFTEN hear the expression that we are not as thankful to the Lord as we ought to be. We do not have to make an effort to be thankful. The effort to be thankful is unthankfulness. If, after we have done a favor for an individual, the person has to make a great effort to be thankful to us for it, we would rather he would not make the effort.

Thankfulness is the natural outgrowth of a recognition of favors granted. If the person is not thankful, he does not recognize the favor. He takes it as his right. But whoever recognizes that he has received a favor, will be thankful.

So we have nothing to do with making ourselves thankful. All we have to do is to recognize God.

- If we believe the promises of God, we cannot help being thankful.
- If we recognize that His life is given, our thankfulness will grow and increase.

Thankfulness is a sign, then, of growth in grace.

2. The Meanest Side of Human Nature

Present Truth, June 14, 1894

DID you ever have the experience of giving to one in need, and continuing to do so until no longer possible to keep it up, and then finding that what you had done only made the individual feel that you were under special obligations to him, and had grievously wronged him when your benefactions ceased?

It is an experience which reveals the darkest side of human nature. Yet so weak is human nature that nearly every one who has had anything to do with business management, and with all sorts and conditions of men, knows something about it. Instead of thankfulness for favors received, which perhaps required real self-denial on the part of the giver, the recipient shows only hatred when the favors cease. It is only the bestial and brutal in depraved natures that wounds the hand that blesses, and knows no such sentiment as thankfulness.

When one feels depressed over such an experience, it is a good time to think about the favors which the Lord has granted to all men. He has given us...

Acts 17
[25] ...life, and breath, and all things.

And yet sometimes we have taken these things as our due, by justice, and have not thanked the Lord from the very soul for these common blessings which come so bountifully.

Really, the Lord has already...

Ephesians 1
[3] ...blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus;

Titus 2
[11] The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men;

–but all men will not take what is brought to them, and men are often so faithless that they do not believe that all blessings have been given; and so they take from the Lord continually, without thankfulness, and at every trial or misfortune are ready to charge God with injustice.

Unthankfulness is a great sin. It was because men glorified not God, "neither were thankful," when they knew Him, that the world went into heathenism.

Romans 1
[21] Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, *neither were thankful;* but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
[22] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
[23] And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
[24] Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves:
[25] Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

The same unthankfulness changes professed Christians into actual unbelievers. In these cultured days men do not always give up the profession, the form; but the person who receives life and all things from God, and takes them without thanksgiving as a matter of course, is just as much a heathen as the man who does the same thing without the profession. It is unspeakably mean for a man to treat another man in this unthankful manner. Is it not unspeakably mean for man to treat the Lord in the same manner when He has given…

2 Corinthians 9
[15] …His unspeakable gift?

3. Politeness

Present Truth, January 3, 1895

MANY people pride themselves on their politeness, who never offer a word of thanks to the Giver of all that they have. True politeness does not ignore a favor because it comes from the Lord.

It is a manifestation of the life within,—of the fragrance of the pure and upright principles that control the heart. Righteousness is both beautiful and fragrant.

If God could be imposed upon and His favors bought, doubtless men would be much more obsequious[292] to Him than they are. But politeness is not a form; it is not a medium of exchange. It is not a mere polish; it is indicative of the nature within.

A polish can be put upon deal[293] and similar woods, but it is a fraud; its only purpose is to deceive the eye. It is altogether different from the polish which comes from the fineness of texture of the wood itself. So the character must be of the right texture before the true polish can appear. And it must be made so by the converting power of God.

[292] Obsequious: obedient or attentive to an excessive or servile degree.
[293] Deal: fir or pine wood.

4. Everlasting Power

Present Truth, November 24, 1898

ACCORDING to the Shastras, or religious code, of the Hindus, the sanctity of the Ganges is shortly to cease. They are not clear as to the precise date, but it will be somewhere about six months from the present time. It is to be hoped that many who now worship the river, will be led to consider what kind of a god it can be whose power and sacredness depart with the lapse of time, and that the Gospel of a Saviour who, because He continues ever, is able to save unto the uttermost,[294] will gain new value in their eyes by contrast with their own decaying deities.

Why is it that men all over the world have come to worship the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever?[295] The answer is given:

> **Romans 1**
> [31] Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, *neither were thankful.*

If thankfulness is involved in glorifying the Creator, it is evident that to know Him as God, is to know Him as giving occasion for thankfulness. Nor is the thankfulness to be on a small scale, but on a divinely infinite one. Therefore to know Him as God, is to know Him as blessing men to an infinite extent.

This must be true still of God, or men would now be justified in not glorifying Him as God; but all who do not…

> [20] ..are without excuse.

Therefore God is still giving infinitely to every man. If He were not, ingratitude would cease to be a sin.

> [19] That which may be known of God is manifest in them.

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[294] *Hebrews* 7:24-25.
[295] *Romans* 1:25.

The creation reveals eternal power and divinity. These may be clearly seen. Take the Ganges for instance. Why does it flow on and on for centuries, carrying down to the ocean a vast volume of water without cessation. Why does the sun pour out unreservedly every moment the fullness of its light and heat, yet have as much today as it had ages ago? These things reveal the *everlasting* power of God. Men who think more of the creature than the Creator predict a distant time when the sun will have parted with all its light, because they do not recognize in the working of all nature the everlasting power of God.

It is this power which keeps the heathen alive, and which keeps up the uninterrupted flow of the Ganges. But does not God know that His precious gifts will be perverted, that the Ganges will get the honor due to himself, and that the men whom He has made will pervert His life, and change the truth of God into a lie? Yes, He knows it perfectly, and it grieves Him at His heart, as did the wickedness of the world before the flood. Yet the current of blessing given in His life flows with unabated volume, because not only is His power everlasting, but His mercy also endures for ever.

In God's hand is the soul of every living thing.[296] No one can go anywhere in the universe out of the presence of God. No matter where he may be,

> **Psalm 139**
> [10] Even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

So God is trying to lead the heathen. They will not be guided by Him, but He does not therefore give them up.

> **Hebrews 12**
> [3] Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself.

[296] *Job* 12:10.

Because He loves them with an everlasting love, He draws them everlastingly to himself with loving-kindness.[297] The more determinedly a man resists this love, the more wonderful it is seen to be. Truly it is love that hopes all things, endures all things;[298] and thus, even where God is rejected by men, they cannot hinder that which may be known of God being manifested in them. The more they do despite to the Spirit of grace, the more they bring out its wonderful long-suffering, its patient, God-like endurance.

Romans 5
[20] Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Every man who does not recognize that he receives his life and breath and all things direct from God,[299] and that God's hand is leading and upholding him every moment, is in the same condition as the Hindu worshipers of the Ganges. Indeed he is worse, for to the extent that he has more light than they, his ingratitude is the baser. He is serving the creature rather than the Creator.

What is the way out of this deplorable condition? Be thankful. Glorify Him as God. We may not see very much to be thankful for at first, but if we give thanks for that, the righteousness of God will be revealed from faith to faith,[300] and the occasion for gratitude will be seen to greatly increase. We will not then glorify ourselves as God but Him, and know that He has all things while we in ourselves have nothing.[301]

In this humility lies the only hope of our exaltation. While we glorify ourselves we will trust in self for everything, and having no power in ourselves will never make any advancement. When we know ourselves helpless, and know that God has all power, we will look to Him for help, and He will not leave us helpless.

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[297] *Jeremiah* 31:3.
[298] *1 Corinthians* 13:7.
[299] *Acts* 17:25.
[300] *Romans* 1:17.
[301] *1 Chronicles* 29:14.

1 Samuel 2

[8] He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

God's princes dwell in His palaces, and in those palaces God is known. He is known as what He is, a refuge. So knowing Him as God, and glorifying Him as God, His people find infinite occasion for thankfulness.

Psalm 48

[1] Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness.

5. The Joy of Self-Denial

Present Truth, October 18, 1900
Original title: Back Page

THE inability to recall the details of all that one sees and hears is not by any means unmitigated evil, for one is thus saved from carrying about in his mind a vast amount of evil. But the mind is not and cannot be blank. If we give ourselves to the Lord, being controlled by His life, we shall have the law of righteousness put into our minds and written in our hearts, so that we cannot forget the good, which is ever present with us, and cannot remember the evil, because we have no knowledge of it.

Whoever looks upon real self-denial,—that is, the refusal to recognize self,—as a continual hardship, a torture, does not know nor take into account the joy of victory. Self, selfishness, is sin; the denial of self is the denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts. Self-denial, therefore, is victory over...

Galatians 1
[4] ...this present evil world,

1 John 2
[16] ...the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

Defeat never brings joy, but brings shame and disgrace; victory brings joy, and only joy. Continual self-denial is therefore continual victory, and that means continual joy.

2 Corinthians 2
[14] Now thanks be to God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ.

1 Corinthians 15
[57] Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Thanksgiving for Abundance

Present Truth, October 16, 1902
Original title: Back Page

OUR thanksgiving to the Lord is too often the polite "Not anymore, thank you," with which the hungry person declines an offered portion of food of which he thinks there will not be sufficient for all if he partakes liberally. It is the forced thanksgiving of refusal, instead of the spontaneous thanksgiving of the one who is being daily loaded with benefits, and who knows that his Father gives to all liberally. When the Bible says,

> **Psalm 34**
> [8] Oh taste, and see that the Lord is good,

–it does not mean that there is but a taste for us. It means that we should try Him, and, finding Him good, should live by Him, feeding on Him, abundantly satisfied with the fatness of His house.

7. Rejoicing in the Lord

Present Truth, August 27, 1903

THE Lord desires that we should praise Him, not only for our own sakes, but that others may learn from us how good it is to trust in Him. As we honor Him, He honors us, and we find that the joy of the Lord is our strength.

> **Nehemiah 8**
> [10] Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Everything that has breath is called upon to praise God,[302] and if men would only stop for a little while to consider why they should praise God, they would see abundant reason. If any human being had been as good to us for a short time as God has been all our lives long, we should not have to try very hard to get up a feeling of gratitude. We would not allow a word to be spoken against such a friend, and we should always be ready to speak words in his praise.

How differently men treat the Lord! He has poured out His life, and everything that was precious in His sight, to redeem His fallen creatures. He places at their command the riches of His grace, not in an indifferent way, but with the earnest solicitude of a loving Father. What is the response that comes from His children?

> **Malachi 2**
> [17] You have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet you say, Wherein have we wearied Him? When you say, Every one that does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delights in them; or Where is the God of judgment?

Again the Lord says,

[302] *Psalm* 150:6.

Malachi 3

[13] Your words have been stout against me; yet you say, What have we spoken so much against You?
[14] You have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?
[15] And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

How it must grieve the heart of the good Lord, as well as the holy angels, to hear so much murmuring and complaining where there is so much cause for praise and thanksgiving. Let none who read these lines have any part in such a chorus of bitterness, and thus bring pain to the heart of their Father in heaven. But these are not the only strains that come up to God:

[16] They that feared the Lord spoke often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.

Every expression of thanksgiving is heard with joy in heaven, every word of praise to God is gladly written down. The Lord listens carefully to every word. As we confess Him before men, He confesses us before His angels:

[17] They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.

While the murmuring words of complaint and distrust and rebellion are being poured into God's ears, let us be among those who give Him pleasure with words of loving trust and grateful appreciation.

The book of remembrance is written for them that fear the Lord. The Lord does not need it for himself, to remind Him of those who honor Him. It will be one of the pleasures of eternity to read in that book how our words of praise brought joy to the heart of God, and to know how they were valued in heaven.

XI. Spiritual Law in the Natural World

1. Spiritual Law in the Natural World

Present Truth, June 20, 1901

DID you know that the entire Gospel is presented as a living picture in the visible creation, and that everything in nature represents some feature of the wondrous power of God to salvation? It is even so. Drummond wrote about *Natural Law in the Spiritual World;* he had a glimpse of the truth, but an inverted one; the truth is, that…

Spiritual law reigns in the natural world.

For example, the continual renewing of our bodies, the amazing promptness with which wounds heal, if the system is given any chance at all, is a standing lesson to us of the power of the new birth. A severe blow destroys the flesh in a certain part of the body; it drops away, or is cut out by the surgeon's knife, and soon new flesh takes its place. In view of these well-known yet mysterious occurrences, who can doubt God's power to make a man all over entirely new? For the power that makes a new muscle, or adds to the size of the muscle in the growing child, and which makes new blood for us every day, is the very same power that is able to do for us spiritually…

Ephesians 3

[20] …exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Indeed, the fact that we are born at all, together with the fact that God is love, is sufficient pledge of the glorious truth. But the existence of men who have been transformed by the renewing of their minds, puts an end to all controversy; for what is the use of arguing about whether or not God can do a thing, when He has already done it?

2. The Growing Power in Plants

Present Truth, February 23, 1893

> Matherbe saw an acacia tree that, languishing in sterile soil, had thrown one of its roots across a hollow sixty-six feet wide, in order to plunge into a neighboring well. M. Grimard mentions a plant which terminated in the bottom of a mine, and raised itself to a height of 120 feet in order to reach the light, though its usual height is but six inches. The luxuriant growth of trees and shrubs in the Bermudas is a surprise to tourists because of the scanty soil upon hard rocks. Upon examination they discover, however, that the roots have sufficient penetrating power to pierce a hard outer shell, thereby finding moisture and foothold in the porous strata beneath. The penetrating force of the roots of plants was strikingly illustrated, some years ago, at one of our railway stations. The platform was laid down with a thick coat of asphalt. Nevertheless the roots of the coltsfoot forced their way through the hard material. The latter was pushed up into little hillocks, which gradually cracked; very soon the young leaves made their appearance, and then the whole plant. The common thistle penetrated in the same way. Let anyone take a cake of asphalt and try to push a stick through it and he will be able to realize how great must be the vital force exerted by the plant-roots in question, which, by adding particle after particle to their structure, are enabled to upheave and displace such a hard, compact material as asphalt.[303]

THOSE are the simple facts, which may be verified by anybody's observation. But how many of those who have seen the simple wonders stop to think of the lesson that they teach? What power is it that is manifested in the growth of plants? Where does it come from? Analysis will not reveal it. There is nothing in the structure of the plant that would indicate the possession of such marvelous power. Pick up that little stalk that has pushed its way through the pavement. It is a tender thing, hardly able to support its own weight. You can twist it into any shape, and it is passive in your hands. It is absolutely destitute of power.

[303] *Interior.*

There is only one answer that can be given to the question as to the source of the energy exhibited by growing plants, and that is that it is the power of God, who fills all things. In Jesus Christ…

Colossians 1
[17] …all things consist.

His word said,

Genesis 1
[11] Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so.

That word is the life and power of everything that grows. We cannot see the word nor its power, but we can see the working of it. Thus the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator are seen in the things that have been made.[304]

But the power manifested through the tender plant is the power that works righteousness in those who believe the Lord. The power of God is seen in the things that He has made; and…

Romans 1
[16] …the Gospel…is the power of God unto salvation.

Plant growth illustrates Christian growth.

Psalm 92
[13] Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God.

Isaiah 27
[6] [God] shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

The Lord says,

Hosea 14
[5] I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

[304] See *Romans* 1:20.

Isaiah 61

[10] I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

[11] For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

3. The Fruits of Righteousness

Present Truth, July 13, 1893

Philippians 1

[9] And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

[10] That you may approve things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ;

[11] Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

THE fruits of righteousness are righteous fruits. These fruits are by Jesus Christ, as He says:

John 15

[1] I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

[2] Every branch in me that bears not fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

[4] Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me.

[5] I am the vine, you are the branches; He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without [apart from] me you can do nothing.

The last verse quoted shows clearly that the fruit borne by the branch that abides in Christ, is deeds of righteousness. The statement is that whoever abides in Christ brings forth much fruit, while separate from Him we can *do* nothing. Doing nothing is made equivalent to not bearing fruit. So then bearing fruit in the vine is identical with doing something. There is nothing more passive than the bearing of fruit; and yet there is nothing in which more intense activity is shown than in a fruitful vine or tree. The tree can do nothing to make itself bear fruit, yet the bearing of fruit is a period of activity.

In *Galatians* 5:22-23 we have the fruits of righteousness spoken of as the fruit of the Spirit. These are,

Galatians 5
[22] ...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
[23] Meekness, temperance.

The fruits which are by Jesus Christ are the fruits of the Spirit, for Christ said of the Spirit,

John 16
[14] He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

This glorifying of Christ is in the fruit that is borne of the Spirit; for the glory of Christ and the glory of the Father are the same, and Jesus said:

John 15
[8] Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.

In the 5th of *Galatians* we have it made very plain that the fruits of righteousness are active deeds. In verses 19-21 we have a list of...

Galatians 5
[19] The works of the flesh,...which are...Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
[20] Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
[21] Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like...

And the apostle says,

[21] ...they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Then in direct contrast with these he places "the fruit of the Spirit," which consists of deeds of a directly opposite nature to the works of the flesh. One set is active wickedness, and the other is active righteousness.

Moreover, the apostle follows the list of the fruits of the Spirit with the statement,

Galatians 5
[23] ...against such there is no law.

That means that they are in harmony with law. As the works of the flesh are violations of law, the fruit of the Spirit is obedience to law.

Evil deeds are called works, because they are done for the purpose of getting a gain, although the doer is grievously disappointed in his wages;

Romans 6
[23] For the wages of sin is death...

But righteous deeds are those that are done with no thought of self, but as the manifestation of the life and love of God in the heart; and the doer receives, not wages, but a free gift; for...

[23] ...the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There is one most encouraging thing in connection with bearing the fruits of righteousness, and that is that the Lord does not cut off the branch that bears only a little fruit. On the contrary, He encourages it, by giving to it the best conditions for bearing more fruit. In the 13th of *Luke* we have a parable, which is represented by a man with a fig tree in his vineyard, to which for three years he has come looking for fruit. To the words,

Luke 13
[7] Cut it down; why does it cumber the ground?

–the vine dresser says,

[8] Let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it:
[9] And if it bear fruit, well: but if not, then after that you shall cut it down.

When the man comes the next year, and finds that the tree has begun to bear fruit, although in a feeble manner, will he cut it down? No, indeed. If he would bear with it three years when it bore no fruit at all, he will certainly much more bear with it now.

He will hail the indications of fruit with gladness, and will more thoroughly continue the work of pruning and dressing,

John 15
[2] ...that it may bring forth more fruit.

So,

2 Peter 3
[9] The Lord...is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Isaiah 42
[3] A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax [dimly-burning wick] shall He not quench; He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

Romans 5
[8] God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
[9] Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.
[10] For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

4. Fruit Trees Yielding Fruit

Present Truth, July 13, 1893

Genesis 1

[11] And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so.

[12] And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

AS WE have already seen,[305] righteousness is declared to be fruit that is borne by those who are abiding in Christ. We have not by any means exhausted the references in which the fruit-bearing is spoken of.

James 3

[18] The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Psalm 92

[12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

[13] Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

[14] They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.

Fruit grows on trees and vines. Therefore as the righteousness of the saints is declared to be fruit, they themselves are called plants. Notice the text just above. They are rooted in Christ,[306] or are branches from Him as the vine.[307] So the Lord, in the parable of the vineyard, says,

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[305] See the previous article from the same issue of July 13, 1893, "The Fruits of Righteousness."

[306] *Colossians* 2:7.

[307] *John* 15:5.

Isaiah 5
[7] The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant.

Again we read that the Spirit of the Lord anointed Jesus...

Isaiah 61
[3] To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

In harmony with this, we are told that the bringing forth of righteousness is exactly like the bringing forth of natural fruit.

[11] For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

In like manner we read in the first psalm:

Psalm 1
[1] Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.
[2] But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night.
[3] And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.

A man is like a tree in that his doings are fruits.

Still further, we have a striking likeness as presented in the 4th of *Mark*, verses 26-29:

Mark 4
[26] And He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;
[27] And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how.

[28] For the earth brings forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.
[29] But when the fruit is brought forth ripe, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

This describes the growth of righteousness, because the kingdom of God…

Romans 14
[17] …is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Therefore as we have learned that the perfecting of righteousness is exactly like the bearing of fruit by the plants of the garden, let us look for a few minutes at how plants grow.

How Plants Grow

Three things are necessary to the growth of plants. These are, a good soil, good sunlight, and plenty of moisture, either from rain or dew, or from both. There is nothing more wonderful than the luxuriant growth of plants under these conditions. Without them, all the efforts of science and art are in vain. Yet we have all seen plants growing under very unfavorable conditions. We said that nothing is more wonderful than the luxuriance with which plants grow under favorable conditions; but really the most wonderful thing is that plants grow at all under some circumstances.

- Who has not wondered to see the trees growing seemingly out of the very rocks on the mountain side?
- Who has not seen the tender plant pushing its way through the almost imperceptible crevices between the stones of the pavement?
- Who has not passed through a corn field and noticed the tender blades coming up under the most discouraging circumstances?

Take, for instance, the case where the seed has been sown in heavy soil, and then the rain has come, followed by sunshine which has baked the earth before the seed sprung up. As you pass through the field you will see little cracks where the blade is forc-

ing its way to the light of day. Here and there you will see a clod of earth standing on edge, and looking beneath you will see that it has been lifted up by a blade of corn. The clod will perhaps weigh several pounds, and the blade of corn only a few grains, yet the clod has to give way before it. The blade of corn will be so tender that if you pull it up it will not be able to stand alone. It cannot, when removed from that spot, bear up its own weight; yet it grows right along, pushing the heavy clod away from before it, as it needs the space, as though the weight upon it were nothing.

The same wonder is seen in the germination of the seed. Take for instance a nut, the shell of which is so hard that several sharp blows of a hammer in the hands of a strong man are scarcely sufficient to crack it; yet when the proper time comes the shell parts as easily and as gently as the opening of the rose bud. This is the same miracle that is seen afterward in the tender plant pushing its way to the surface against the opposing forces of stones and heavy clods of earth.

There we have a remarkable exhibition of power. But whence comes that power? Does it reside in the plant itself? Is it a part of the outfit of the little corn that lies coiled up in the shell, so tiny that often it is invisible to the naked eye? Surely not. Scarcely anything could be weaker or more helpless. If anyone is asked what the power is He can only say that it is *life*. The power exhibited in the growing plant is the power of life. We can see the results of it, but we cannot see the life itself. No eye was ever yet formed that could discover anything in the tiny germ, or the tender blade, that would indicate the power that it afterward manifests, or rather that is manifested in it.

For the power does not reside in the plant, as an inherent part of itself. In the beginning God spoke to the earth, saying:

Genesis 1
[11] Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so.

Immediately the earth responded to the word of the Lord, and since that time it has been obedient to that word.

Hebrews 4
[12] The word of God is living, and powerful.

The words that the Lord speaks are Spirit and life.[308] The words of God are the breath of the Lord, and that is the breath of life. Therefore the life that is exhibited in the growing plant is the life of the word of the Lord. No other explanation can be given of the source of the power that we see in the things that are made. The apostle Paul expressly tells us that the eternal power of God is seen in the things that He has made.[309]

This is not by any means an ignoring of the statement that the plant grows because of moisture and sunlight.

Psalm 84
[11] For the Lord God is a sun and shield.

The light which the sun gives is only a part of the glory of God.

Psalm 19
[1] The heavens declare the glory of God.

Psalm 8
[1] O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth! Who have set your glory upon the heavens.

So it is true in the most literal sense, that Christ is the Light of the world. His word also sends the rain upon the earth.

Plants grow, therefore, because of the voice of the Lord. In the beginning He spoke, and they came forth; and that same word continuing until this day, still causes them to grow.

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[308] *John* 6:63.
[309] *Romans* 1:20.

Psalm 147

[15] He sends forth His commandment upon earth; His word runs very swiftly.
[16] He gives snow like wool; He scatters the hoarfrost like ashes.
[17] He casts forth His ice like morsels; who can stand before His cold?
[18] He sends out His word, and melts them; He causes His wind to blow, and the waters flow.

Thus we may see the direct power of God in all His works.

The Fullness of God

The food materials that are in the soil, the light of the sun, and that dew and rain, which cause the plant to grow, are all from God. In the energy manifested in the plant we see the working of the life of God in it. Without Him nothing exists. All life is from God. He is both Creator and Father. His creating is begetting.

Psalm 90

[2] Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

But although it is the life of God that is the life of all creatures, both animate and inanimate, there is endless variety in creation, because God is infinite. Not only are there many kinds of plants and animals, but no two of the same kind are exactly alike.

1 Corinthians 15

[38] God gives it a body as it has pleased Him, and to every seed His own body.
[39] All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.
[40] There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.
[41] There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.

Since we have the statement that the firmament declares God's glory, which He has placed upon the heavens, we know that the apostle does not mean that the heavenly bodies get their glory from different sources, but that they each have a different measure of it. Yet each one is perfect in its glory; each one gives forth all the glory that it was designed to display.

So in the growth of plants. God has planned each one "after his kind."[310] The life of God in the vine makes it perfect after its kind; the same life in the oak tree makes it perfect in its sphere. The vine can never become an oak, and yet the same life is in both. Each one, being filled with the life of God, grows to perfection, according to the purpose for which God designed it.

All inanimate creation is passive to the will of God, yet we do not see in the most perfect plant the perfection that was in the beginning, when…

Genesis 1
[31] God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.

But this is not the fault of the plant.

Romans 8
[20] The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly.

When man sinned, God said:

Genesis 3
[17] Cursed is the ground for your sake.

And again, after Cain had murdered his brother:

Genesis 4
[12] When you till the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto you her strength.

[310] *Genesis* 1:11-12.

This is the reason why we do not find perfection in anything. Yet the trees and plants afford the best illustration of the power of life of God.

Now just as God manifests His life in the plants, so He will in man, provided man will voluntarily be as passive as the plants are by nature. Man has the power and the right of choosing for himself; and if he chooses to allow the life of God to dwell in him, he will be made as perfect as a man, as the plant is as a plant. For the same life will dwell in them both; only just as the life of God makes a perfect vine and a perfect oak, so the same life in man will develop him into just the perfection that God designed for him.

A little thought will show that the life in man is the same as that in the plant. We have already seen that there is life and energy in the plant, that is not derived from itself, but must come directly from God. The same life that is in the growing plant is all stored up in the seed, to furnish either life for another plant, or for man. The grain is made into bread, and men eat and derive strength from it. A man becomes faint and at the point of death, through long fasting; he eats bread, and life comes to him. No one questions the fact that the new life which he feels comes directly from the bread; but the life in the bread is the life that was in the growing plants; and that was life from God. So whenever we sit down to the table we are as surely taking in the life of Christ as were the men who ate of the five loaves which in the hands of Christ became as many thousands.

Flesh and Spirit

The careful reader will now imagine that he detects a fallacy. He will explain,

> "If what you say is true, then everybody must be good; then all those 'works of the flesh' must be in reality manifestations of the life of God; and therefore since God cannot deny himself, it must be that all will be saved."

Not so fast; there is no fallacy here; every man is partaker of the life of God, and yet all men will not be saved. Let us study a little further.

That every man is a partaker of the life of God, is expressly declared in the Scriptures. Inspiration has set the seal of approval to the statement of a heathen poet, that "we are His offspring;"[311] and the apostle was speaking to a congregation of heathen when he said,

Acts 17
[28] In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

But let it not be forgotten that man differs from the plants and from beasts, in that he has perfect freedom and power of choice, and that in this is his pre-eminence over them. God himself will not interfere with man's will. He will not bend nor break it; He will not in any way coerce it. God leaves man's will as free as His own. This is why there is in man the possibility of being a companion of God, and of associating with Him on terms of the closest intimacy. If God to the slightest degree coerced the will of man, then man would be to that extent the slave of God, and not the son and companion, and therefore could not spend eternity with Him; for...

John 8
[35] The bondservant abides not in the house for ever; but the Son abides ever.

God pleads with man to submit his will to Him; He asks us to choose His will in place of our own, so that our wills may be the same, but when we do that, our will is still free.

Now just as we do not see God's life working complete perfection in the inanimate creation, through no fault of its own, so we do not see it working complete perfection in most men, and that because of their own willfulness. The inanimate creation is sub-

[311] *Acts* 17:29.

ject to vanity unwillingly;[312] man is subject to vanity of his own choice.

The plant and the beast cannot choose how the life of God shall develop them. Consequently the will of God concerning them is perfected, except in the measure wherein they are degraded through the sin of man.

But men can choose what the life of God shall work in them. If they choose to live only a fleshly life, that will be all that the life of God can develop in them. Their life, then, will be of the same nature as that of the beast; and as flesh is corruptible, enduring only for a little while, they are choosing only the limited existence of the beast. So…

Psalm 49
[20] Man that is in honor and understands not is like the beasts that perish.
[14] Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning.

If, however, on the other hand, men submit themselves fully to Christ, His life will develop in them all the perfection which God in the beginning designed for them. What possibilities there are for man, the heights of attainment, no man has ever dreamed. Only God knows the thoughts He thinks toward man,—thoughts of good, and not of evil, to give him an expected end. But although man's possibilities of development are so great that only God's mind can comprehend them, if man will but voluntarily submit himself to the life of God as fully as the plant does involuntarily, he will be brought to that high state of perfection. The same life that brings the plant to its full measure as a physical plant, will make the man reach his highest destiny as a spiritual man.

In the beginning the life of God flowed freely through all things. Man gladly accepted God's will as his own, and so, of

[312] *Romans* 8:20.

course, perfection was seen in all creation. That dominion is lost, but it is to be restored through Christ the Creator acting as Redeemer.[313] Christ died and went into the grave, and rose again and ascended into heaven, in order…

Ephesians 4
[10] …that He might fill all things.

So the possibility before men, even in this life, is thus stated:

Ephesians 3
[17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you being rooted and grounded in love [note the characteristics of a plant],
[18] May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth, and height;
[19] And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

So the church, the body of Christ, consisting of all who abide in Christ, and allow Christ to abide in them, not as their physical life only, but as their wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption,[314]—is…

Ephesians 1
[23] …the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

And when the time comes that God fills all in all, that is, when God is everything in everybody and in everything, then there will be no place for those who have chosen only the fleshly life, and have rejected the Spirit.

Obadiah
[16] They shall be as though they had not been.

Then God will be glorified in His saints, and in all creation, for there will be nothing that will not be the perfect expression of His own personality. Then,

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[313] *Micah* 4:8.
[314] *1 Corinthians* 1:30.

Revelation 5 [RV]
[13] Every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, [will be] heard saying, [even though some of the created things have no voice,] Unto Him that sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever.

5. Christ in Everything

Present Truth, October 5, 1893

THE name of Jonathan Edwards is usually associated only with that which is stern, harsh, and unlovely in religion, and one is glad to learn from the following paragraph from some of his unprinted manuscript, that there was another side to him.

The truth here expressed has been almost entirely overlooked, but it is the very soul of Christianity—Christ the Saviour by virtue of His creative power:

> The beauties of nature are really emanations or shadows of the excellency of the Son of God.
>
> - So that when we are delighted with flowery meadows and gentle breezes, we may consider that we see only the emanations of the sweet benevolence of Jesus Christ.
> - When we behold the fragrant rose and lily, we see His love and security.
> - So the green trees and fields, and the singing of birds are the emanations of His infinite joy and benignity.
> - The easiness and naturalness of trees and vines are shadows of His beauty and loveliness.
> - The crystal rivers and murmuring streams are the footsteps of His favor, grace and beauty.
> - When we behold the light and brightness of the sun, the golden edges of an evening cloud, or the beauteous bow, we behold the adumbrations of His mildness and gentleness.
> - There are also many things wherein we may behold His awful majesty—in the sun in his strength, and comets, in thunder, and the hovering thunder clouds, and rugged rocks, and the brows of mountains.
> - The beauteous light with which the world is filled in a clear day is a lively shadow of His spotless holiness and happiness and delight in communicating himself.

6. Weakness and Power

Present Truth, October 12, 1893

WHAT is more frail, more weak, and more helpless than a little blade of grass? Yet did you ever notice the marvelous power that it exhibits?

Look at that lifting clod,—a hard, heavy, impenetrable mass of dry clay. What is moving it so slowly and yet so surely out of its way? Not an animal, not even an insect,—only a little blade of young grass! The clod is many times heavier than the grass, and yet it seems to lift it with the utmost ease. *You* could not cause a tiny grass root to exhibit such power. You might lay the clod upon it ever so carefully, but it would be crushed to the earth with the great weight. This wonder must be accomplished, then, by some power that is not in man, and that is not in the grass itself. The Bible says that it is the power and life of God's word that causes the grass to grow; for...

Genesis 1

[11] God said, Let the earth bring forth grass...and it was so.

Look at the tiny acorn. How helpless, how worthless! But look again. An unseen life, a marvelous power breaks the hard shell, and pushes little rootlets downward, and tiny branches upward, that grow and grow, turning hindrances aside, climbing over obstacles, and bursting asunder solid rocks. What is the unseen life? What is the marvelous power? The life and power of God's word; for...

> [11] God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth; and it was so.

Although two of the weakest and most helpless things in existence, yet what miracles of strength the grass and the acorn become when their weakness is united to the power of God's word.

In like manner we behold man. Weak? Yes, as weak as the grass and as helpless.

Psalm 103
[15] His days are as grass,

1 Peter 1
[24] ...and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.

His life,—

James 4
[14] ...even a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away.

Helpless, utterly helpless in himself, unable to care for himself a single moment, unable to resist the smallest temptation, unable to do one good act.

But look again. An unseen power has taken possession of him, a new life has animated him, and lo, he has...

Hebrews 11
[33] ...subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions,
[34] Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness was made strong, waxed the valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens!

In that wherein he was weak, now he is strong, where once he would have trembled and fallen, now he stands unmoved like a house built upon a solid rock.

What is this unseen power? What is this new life? It is the life and power of God's word united with man's weakness. It is the life and power of God himself, for God goes with His word...

Hebrews 13
[21] ...*working in you* that which is well-pleasing in His sight.

Philippians 2
[13] For it is *God* which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Man alone, without the Word in him, is like a house that is built on the sand. There is nothing to hold him up when the floods come and the winds blow. It is utterly impossible for him to withstand the tempest, for he has not strength in himself.

But God is willing to take the most helpless man that ever lived, if he will submit like the grass and the acorn, and work through him in the most marvelous manner by His mighty word. He *loves* to do it. He has…

> **1 Corinthians 1**
> 27 …*chosen* the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty;
> 28 And the base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:
> 29 *That no flesh should glory in His presence.*

He says,

> **Matthew 7**
> 24 *Whosoever* hears these *sayings* of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

Then he who receives God's word into his heart and does it, has built upon immovable rock. But Jesus himself is in the word, and is the Word,[315] therefore humbly receiving the Word brings Jesus into the heart to work. Hence man's work is to submit and receive, and Jesus the living Word supplies all the power and does all the work through the man, if he will let Him.

It is not enough for a man to become united to another man who is united to Christ. Each man for himself must come to Christ the Word as to a living stone, and build on Him. Then *he* becomes a living stone, because he partakes of the life of the living Foundation.[316] He and the Foundation grow together until he is a part of the Foundation, and the Foundation is a part of him. Is

[315] See *John* ch. 1 and ch. 6.
[316] *1 Peter* 2:4-5.

it any wonder, then, that he has strength, and that he can stand unmoved through all the storms and tempests of life?

Then when we look at the grass and realize our frailty, and our helplessness, let us not become discouraged, but rather let us lift our eyes in thankfulness to heaven and praise that mighty One who can take the weakest and most helpless of His creatures and by His word strengthen him…

Colossians 1
[11] …with all might, according to His glorious power.

7. Trees of Righteousness and the Secret of Their Strength

Present Truth, October 26, 1893

WHAT a wonderful thing a tree is! Look at it closely; study it carefully. Heaven-sent messages unfold with its opening buds, flutter on its rustling leaves, wave from its swaying branches, and cling to its spreading roots. And if we but pause to listen, from every part of it may be heard the still small voice of the great Creator whispering words of love and instruction, of warning and comfort.

Look at that old familiar friend! For years and years it has guarded the entrance to our home. We have climbed its rugged sides, swung in its branches, rested in its shade, eaten of its fruit, and sought its shelter in the storm.

How often we have seen it bent to the ground and twisted in every limb by the mighty storm-winds. And yet it has straightened up as soon as the storm was passed, and has seemed to grow stronger every day.

The heat and droughts of summer have never affected it. When the grass and flowers were drooping and dying for want of rain, the old tree stood there as bright and green as ever.

Every spring it has put on a new green dress, and adorned itself with fragrant blossoms; every autumn it has rained upon us the most delicious fruit.

What is the secret of its great age and strength, and of its evergreen leaves and never-failing fruit?

Look down at its roots. Uncover them and follow them throughout their endless twistings and turnings, and you will discover the secret of the old tree's strength.

Great and gnarly, underground branches it has spread out on every side, which strike deep into the ground and throw out mul-

titudes of tough, wiry rootlets that twist themselves round the very rocks.

But look again. The old tree is not content to find merely a solid resting-place, it seeks for life and nourishment as well. Down, down, and then farther and farther to the right it has sent out a great strong root. Where does it go? Follow it and you will see. Down under the cellar floor, tearing up the cellar floor, and out at the other side of the house goes that wonderful root, until you find it quenching its thirst at the family well, or at the little stream that flows through the garden!

Ah, no wonder the old tree stands so fresh and green through the heat of summer; it has moisture and nourishment of which we little dreamed! No wonder it stands unmoved through the storms and tempests; its roots are clinging fast to the solid rocks beneath!

Now listen to the heavenly message,

Colossians 2
[6] As *you* have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him:
[7] *Rooted* and built up *in Him*, and established in the faith.

Jeremiah 17
[7] Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.
[8] For he shall be *as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out her roots by the river*, and shall not see when heat comes, but her leaf shall be green and shall not be careful in the year of drought, *neither shall cease from yielding fruit.*

Ephesians 3
[17] Being rooted and grounded in love,

–and…

1 John 4
[8] *God* is love,

Proverbs 12
[3] ...the root of the righteous shall not be moved.

There is the secret of the strength and never-failing fruit of the righteous man. He is rooted and grounded in Christ the solid Rock, and yet the *living*, life-giving Rock. There is the source of all his power to resist the storms of trouble and sorrow, to withstand all the fiery heat of temptations. From Him he draws all his nourishment, and satisfies all his thirst. Christ dwells in his heart by faith, and he is strengthened with all might...

Ephesians 3
[16] ...by His Spirit in the inner man.

His branches bring forth holy fruits because he has sent his roots down deep in Divine love;

Romans 11
[16] ...if the root be holy, so are the branches.

His fruits never fail, for Christ, in whom he is rooted, is...

Hebrews 13
[8] ...the same yesterday, today, and for ever,

–and daily gives him just the nourishment that he needs.

But the wicked are not so;

Isaiah 5
[24] ...their root shall be as rottenness,

Proverbs 10
[25] As the whirlwind passes, so is the wicked no more.

Oh, shall we not learn, before it is too late, the lesson that God would have us learn from the trees? In what kind of soil are we sending down the strong rootlets of our affections? In the barren soil of this earthly wilderness, or in the rich, nourishing soil of heaven? Are we sending out our roots to broken and empty cisterns thinking to quench our thirst? or to the cool, crystal waters of the never-failing Fountain of Life. Do the rough winds of per-

secution and tempests of sorrow cause us to strike our roots still deeper and twine them still closer round the Rock of Ages? If not, can we hope to stand unmoved in the great whirlwind that is just before us? Can we hope to be found standing in our place and bearing good fruit when the Master comes?

8. The Power That Keeps

Present Truth, January 4, 1894

IN THAT wonderful chapter, the 40th of *Isaiah*, we have a most vivid representation of the power of God, and the greatness of His creation. Take, for instance, the fifteenth verse:

> **Isaiah 40**
> [15] Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing.

More literal and more forcible is the rendering in the margin of the *Revised Version*,

> "The isles are as the fine dust that is lifted up."

That is, the islands are no greater to God than the fine dust is to us; more than this, they are no greater to God than the dust, because with God there is no such thing as comparison; nothing is hard for Him. Darkness and light are both alike to Him; great and small have no difference between them in His sight. The greatest thing in our eyes is as easy for Him as that which seems to us easy.

What an idea of the immensity of the universe is given by that expression,

> [15] Behold, the isles are as the fine dust that is lifted up.

All the islands of the sea are no greater, in comparison to the universe of God, than the fine dust that every breeze lifts up is to the whole earth. Truly,

Psalm 95

[3] The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
[4] In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is His also.
[5] The sea is His, and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land.
[6] O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
[7] For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

But this is not all. Our minds are directed to another evidence of His greatness.

Isaiah 40

[26] Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power, not one fails.

With the natural eye innumerable stars can be seen; the telescope reveals innumerable others, but even the most powerful telescope reveals only an exceedingly small fraction of the number of stars. Photography, however, enlarges our ideas. By exposing plates for several hours, the light is accumulated so that stars too distant to be discovered even by the telescope, record their existence. In a photograph of a very small section of the heavens in which no stars could be seen, many thousands were revealed. If our camera were placed on the most distant of the stars, we doubtless should have the same thing repeated. Millions upon millions in number are the stars of heaven; yet God calls them all by name, because He made them; and the word of His power keeps them from falling. They hang upon His word. Well might the psalmist exclaim,

Psalm 104
[24] O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have You made them all.

All this shows the power of God; for the Lord by the Apostle Paul assures us that ever since the creation of the world, the invisible things of God, namely, His eternal power and Divinity, are clearly seen through the things that He has made.[317] It is because He is great in power that none of the host of heaven fall from their places. They do not collide, because His hand guides them in their various orbits. With this view of the power and wisdom of God, how forcible are the words that follow:

Isaiah 40
[27] Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed away from my God?
[28] Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary; there is no searching of His understanding.
[29] He gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increases strength.

No one need fear that he is in danger of being forgotten by the God to whom the names of the infinite number of worlds are as familiar as the names of children are to their parents. The stars are God's flock, which He guards and we are His flock also. That is one point of encouragement. The other is that all this power is for the use of the man who is in need. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. The power by which God is able to keep the soul from falling, is the power by which He keeps the host of heaven in their proper places.

Psalm 33
[6] By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

[317] *Romans* 1:20.

By that same word they are kept.[318] And this is the word of the Gospel which is preached unto us.[319] Therefore we may know that all the power of the universe is pledged for the redemption of those who believe God. The existence of the universe depends upon the fulfillment of God's promises to us; for the same word that brings the promises to us, is the word that upholds all things; and if that word were broken, everything would return to chaos, and vanish from existence. And this comfort is for the poorest and the weakest and most sinful; for God's word would be broken just as surely if it failed to the least, as if it failed with the greatest. So the existence of the stars in the heavens is a pledge to even the weakest soul, that God has not forgotten His promises, and that every prayer of faith will be answered. Thus it is that God's people in the last days, when troubles thicken, and wicked men and persecutors become more rampant, are directed to…

Luke 21
[28] Look up.

Strength comes from looking up. Therefore,

1 Peter 1
[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
[4] To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, preserved in heaven for you,
[5] Who are *kept by the power* of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

[318] See *2 Peter* 3:5-7.
[319] *1 Peter* 1:25.

9. Doubts and Thistles

Present Truth, March 15, 1894

IT IS very bad for a farmer to have thistles growing abundantly in a field. The best thing for him to do is to kill the roots, and thus clear the field of them. But if he will not do that,—if he is determined to raise thistles,—then let him cut off the tops before they ripen, so as not to sow thistles in his neighbor's field. I have seen the air full of thistle down from the field of a slack farmer, providing a crop for all his neighbors, yet I never saw the original crop diminished by so much as one thistle. Remember this: You cannot diminish your own crop of thistles by sowing your neighbor's field with them.

Even so it is with doubts. If you have them, the best thing to do is to root them out. But if you will not do this, do not sow them in the heart of your neighbor. Keep them to yourself. By giving expression to them, you sow the seed in the hearts of others, and do not in the least diminish the amount in your own heart. Keep your thistles and your doubts to yourself.

10. Grass and Trees

Present Truth, March 15, 1894

THE message which God sends to prepare for His coming is briefly summed up in these words:

Isaiah 40
[6] All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field:
[8] The grass withers, the flowers fades; but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

James 1
[11] For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withers the grass, and the flower thereof falls, and the grace of the fashion of it perishes; so also shall the rich man fades away in his ways.

Such is man: as frail and as helpless as the grass. His breath is in his nostrils, and he is nothing to be accounted of,[320] for his life is but...

James 4
[14] ...a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away.

Yet God does not despise the grass, but clothes it with the wondrous beauty, surpassing the glory of Solomon.[321] And so we are to learn that God does not despise our low estate, but cares for us, even to the extent of clothing us with His own beauty. He who does not forget the grass, will surely remember man.

Even in the grass, the mighty power of God is shown,—power to push aside all obstacles. As long as it is rooted in the soil in which God has placed it, His power works through it, till it has accomplished His purpose. So the power of God may be manifested in the feeblest of men, until they have been brought to the standard that He has designed for them,—even to...

[320] *Isaiah* 2:22.
[321] See *Matthew* 6:28-30.

Ephesians 4
[13] ...the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

But when God thus accomplishes His purpose in them,—and He does it in all who are as passive in His hands as is the grass,—they cease to be considered as grass, and are called trees. The message which tells us that we are grass, is a message of comfort, in that it reveals to us the word of power. Now to all those who receive that comforting message from the Lord, comes this further message of comfort, that He has come,—

Isaiah 61
[3] To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

Psalm 92
[12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
[13] Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

And so we have this wonderful growth in grace, that whereas we start as grass, we develop into trees, which cannot be withered, nor wrenched from their place, nor even bent, by the mightiest blast that may blow. What wondrous possibilities there are for those who are rooted in Christ!

11. Glorious Preachers

Present Truth, November 22, 1894

Isaiah 52

[7] How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace; that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation; that says unto Zion, Your God reigns!

THE 10th chapter of *Romans*, together with the 19th *Psalm*, makes us know who these beautiful preachers are. Let us read, in order that we may be able to recognize them when they come.

We begin with *Romans* 10:13, and read to the close of verse 18. We find first that...

Romans 10

[13] Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

But then the questions arise one after the other,

[14] How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believe? and how shall they believe in Him of the whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

These are very natural questions. Men cannot call upon the Lord if they do not believe in Him, and they surely cannot be expected to believe in Him if they have never heard of Him; and the Lord himself, in the words first quoted, and which immediately follow, recognizes the fact that they cannot hear without a preacher.

The apostle quotes the words from *Isaiah* to show that a preacher is necessary in order that men may hear the Gospel;

[15] ...as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

[16] But they have not all obeyed the Gospel,

–because they have not all believed it.

Romans 10
[17] Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

But there is no reason why all should not believe and obey the Gospel, because they have heard it.

[18] Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

What words have gone to the ends of the world? The words of the Gospel, of course, for that is the subject. Who has proclaimed them? The preachers who are sent to publish the Gospel of peace, and to bring glad tidings of good things.

Notice the evidence that the apostle gives to prove that all have heard the Gospel. He says,

[18] ...their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Who are these creatures whose words have been uttered so widely? The 19th *Psalm* gives the answer:

Psalm 19
[1] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork,
[2] Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge.
[3] There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.
[4] Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

The heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, are the glorious preachers whose words have made the Gospel known in every land and among people of every language.

Romans 10
[15] How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace!

Wherever they go, they leave a path of light. And why? Simply because they proclaim only the word of the Lord, the word of power and light.

These preachers have no interpreter. They speak a universal language, and can be understood by all. They proclaim only the power of the word of God, and the message is so simple that all are without excuse if they do not obey it. The message which they preach is that which should be proclaimed by human preachers. Men are simply to take up the strain and echo the story the heavens are telling.

Revelation 22
[17] Let him that hears say, Come.

Not a different message, not the same message with additions, but the very same, for there is but one Gospel. The word of truth is the Gospel of salvation.

Ephesians 1
[13] In whom you also trusted, after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

Therefore let every one, great or small, who would receive praise from the Lord,

2 Timothy 4
[2] Preach the word.

Study those model preachers, the heavens, and our Lord Jesus Christ, to learn the power of simplicity.

12. Carrying the Light

Present Truth, July 4, 1895

WHO has not seen a little child attempt to grasp a handful of sunshine? It would close its hand in the sunlight, and would manifest great surprise when it found, on opening its hand in the shade, that the sunshine had escaped. We are amused at the simplicity of the child, unmindful of the fact that we ourselves often manifest less wisdom in a similar case of far more importance.

For instance, we have learned that the word of God is light. We perhaps believe that if we only have that word we shall have light; and so we make attempts to seize and hold it. When the word is spoken with great clearness, people often jot down the thoughts in their notebooks, and make a special note of the text of Scripture that was referred to, in the hope of carrying the light away with them. But when they have gone to their homes, and have opened their books, they are surprised to find that the light does not shine forth. They thought to show the light to their friends, but it has fled even as the sunshine from the hands of the little child. This time we are not amused, for the case is too serious for amusement.

In each case the desire was most laudable. To "catch the sunshine" is one of the most necessary things. To wish to carry it to others is a blessed thought. The child does catch and carry the sunshine, but in a different manner from what it thinks. Living in the bright sunlight, it takes up the life-giving rays in its blood, and they are manifested in rosy cheeks, sparkling eyes, sturdy limbs, and a cheerful spirit. It carries the sunshine in its life, and carries it to others, too, because…

Proverbs 17

[22] A merry heart does good like a medicine.

The difference between a child who lives in the sunshine and one who lives altogether in the shade is manifest to every one

who sees them. The child of the shade cannot by an occasional run into the sunlight gather up a supply of sunshine in its hands and pockets to distribute to others. There is no other way of carrying sunshine than in the blood.

Even so it is with the light of the word of God. We cannot carry it in our hands, nor in our pockets, nor even in our mouths. Light is life, and there is no way of carrying it except in life.

Proverbs 4
[23] Out of the heart are the issues of life,

–and we are told,

Deuteronomy 6
[6] These words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart.

Colossians 3
[6] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

When the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness are received and absorbed into the life, there will be no difficulty in carrying them to others.

Of Christ it is said,

John 1
[4] In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The life of Christ is the only true light, for he says,

John 8
[12] I am the light of the world.

Since there is no light except in the life of Christ, it is most evident that no man can carry that light except by having the life itself. So Jesus said,

[12] ...he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

We may...

1 John 1
[7] ...walk in the light as He is in the light,

–and not only so, but we ourselves may be lights. Indeed, we are expected to be lights.

Ephesians 5
[8] For you were sometimes darkness, but now are you light in the Lord; walk as children of light.

Also,

Philippians 2
[14] Do all things without murmurings and disputings:
[15] That you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.

The sun shines without an effort because it is light. Christ shines because He is light itself. His life is light and His word is life. Therefore whoever receives that word into his heart and life, will shine with the same light, and with no more conscious effort than the sun itself makes.

Matthew 5
[16] Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

13. Breathing In the Gospel

Signs of the Times, October 10, 1895

Common Things

HOW many go on day after day and year after year receiving the light of the sun, breathing the air of heaven, and never think of recognizing God in them. These things are regarded as only "natural," the sun shines because it is natural for it to do so; the air is here as a regular, thing; the grain and the fruits grow because that is their nature; and these all are but common things.

Common to Heaven

"Common things!" If it were possible for one who goes on day after day receiving these things from God without recognizing them continually and praising God for them,—if it were possible for such a one to get to heaven, he would think it a common thing to see the glory of God day by day, and would regard the water of life as a common thing. If a man sees the glory of God in his works here, and takes it as a common thing, he would regard the glory seen in the works of God in heaven as the same; for it is the same glory and the same power, only there it will be revealed in fuller measure than the eye of mortal man can endure.

Common Paganism

A man may profess to be a Christian, may belong to the church, and may use the name of God in his prayers every day,—taking His name in vain,—but if he does not recognize God as a present, living Saviour, who in the gifts of food and drink, and air and sunshine, and everything, is simply giving us His own life and salvation, that man is simply in paganism. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation,

> **Romans 1**
> [17] For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

And the power of God is seen in the things that He has made.

Romans 1
[20] For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.

Therefore, as the Gospel is the power of God, we should see the Gospel in the things that are made, in the sunlight, air, food, and drink, and all things. The righteousness of God is revealed in them. It was the failure to recognize the power and righteousness of God in the things that are created, that made men base heathen.[322]

Breathing In the Gospel

Romans 1
[17] The just shall live by faith.

But men live by breathing, whether just or unjust. When God made man, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. The ungodly man has all his life been using that breath—not recognizing God in it—to speak his own words, and even to blaspheme. He has been making the Lord to serve with his sins,[323] by perverting the breath of the life of God. But when that unjust man takes the breath by which he lives as being indeed the very breath of the life of God, and lives in the recognition of it, then he is living by faith. And faith justifies.

Romans 5
1 Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Such a recognition of the life of God implies a constant yielding to God to direct the life to His own glory. God has multiplied the means of grace, so that in all the things that He has made men may see Him, and believe on Him unto salvation.

[322] See *Romans* 1:18-28.
[323] *Isaiah* 43:24.

14. Native African Honesty

Present Truth, January 23, 1896

THE *Chronicle's* special correspondent in connection with the Ashanti Expedition, writing from Cape Coast Castle of the arrangements for transporting military stores, provision, etc., into the interior, incidentally gives the following tribute to the honesty of the natives. We are not informed whether or not the natives spoken of professed Christianity; but in any case it is enough out of the ordinary to be worthy of note:

> The more one sees of our colored brethren of these parts, the more one is influenced in their favor. One could hardly meet a more amiable race to work with. Once satisfied that their pay was assured, and that the white officers were disposed to treat them with honesty and justice, difficulties immediately began to disappear. Now daily and hourly gangs leave the yard of the Castle under their headmen and gangers, bearing their various loads, and in no case, with the following exception, have they failed to deliver the loads at their destination. The exception, in my opinion, redounds rather than depreciates the credit due to this cheery race.
>
> In one of the gangs which left some days ago were two men who apparently on the journey up concluded that a life of freedom in their native wild was preferable to one of industry, with the necessary restrictions, under the fostering care of the Army Service Corps. They placed their loads on the side of the road, on the top of their loads they placed their numbered badges, and on the top of their badges they placed the amount of money which had been advanced to them for subsistence on the road. These little tributes to the African sense of honesty were brought back to Major Clayson, a couple of days ago, by two native policemen, who had found them while patrolling. During the time these little piles remained on the roadside many hundred carriers must have past and observed them. Yet not a penny of the subsistence money was deficient.
>
> It is a question for consideration whether in Christian England we could guarantee a similar condition of affairs. From many in-

quiries which I have made I have learned that this is no exceptional case, and that it is a matter of the rarest occurrence for a carrier to make away with a load entrusted to his care.

15. Casting the Shadow

Present Truth, April 2, 1896

MANY persons think so much of the influence they are going to exert that they become vain and self-conscious, and merely exhibit self. The man who must needs assume a weighty and ponderous manner in order to make himself impressive only gives an impression of himself. Spiritual egotism is the most painful thing in the world. Let the man walk with God, with eyes fixed upon Him, and the influence of the life will care for itself—the less one is conscious of it the better. Someone has truly said:

> A growing tree is not thinking of the shadow it will cast. It is growing to bear its fruit or furnish the timber of its being. The shadow grows in consequence. And it is so with an honest, good life. The inspiration of it is not the desire of others' applause, or the growth of personal influence, but the wish to do the duty of the day because it is duty. It is not by mere brains that good, enduring influence is secured, which inspires confidence, wins respect, and by the very laws of life tells on others—this is the force which a good man directs. But self-conceit, a personal vanity, and over-confidence in one's self are not consistent with this character.

16. Diamonds Cut Out of Stone

Present Truth, April 16, 1896

AS IN nature, as in art, so in grace; it is rough treatment that gives souls, as well as stones, their luster. The more the diamond is cut, the brighter it sparkles; and in what seems hard dealing, there God has no end in view but to perfect His people.

17. Rooted in Him

Present Truth, July 30, 1896

THE reason why many are not...

Colossians 2
[7] ...rooted and built up in Him,

–is that they do not abide in Him sufficiently long to get rooted. No plant will root itself firmly in the soil if it is pulled up every day. Just so many who think they want to be rooted in Christ, are variable and changeable, here and there, never settled and established in the truth, and do not abide in Him so that they may be rooted in Him.

18. Applied Evolution

Present Truth, November 12, 1896

EVOLUTION, with its doctrines of the survival of the fittest, represents the religion of human nature. The moral effect of the doctrine has been illustrated wherever a stronger race has come in contact with a weaker. Thus Mr. Selous, the well-known hunter and African explorer, says in his recent book:

> Matabeleland is doomed by what seems a law of nature to be ruled by the white man, and the black man must go, or conform to the white man's laws, or die in resisting them. It seems a hard and cruel fate for the black man, but it is a destiny which the broadest philanthropy cannot avert, whilst the British colonist is but the irresponsible atom employed in carrying out a preordained law—law which has ruled upon this planet ever since, in the far off misty depths of time, organic life was first devolved upon the earth—the inexorable law which Darwin has aptly termed the "survival of the fittest."

The worst of it is that the doctrine encourages the "atom" to believe that he is irresponsible—that the brutal selfishness animating him is a Divine force. The Gospel is founded on self-sacrifice, the stronger helping the weaker. And, when the day of Judgment evens up earth's history it will be found…

> **Ecclesiastes 9**
> [11] …that the race was [after all,] not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.

19. The Pure Metal

Present Truth, March 4, 1897

OFTENTIMES rock which is rich in the precious metals shows no superficial evidence of the fact to the casual observer. An expert will show you a dull-colored, uninteresting-looking bit of broken stone, with the remark, that if you possessed but a small hill of that rock, it would make you richer than Croesus ever dreamed of being. You turn the piece of stone over and over examining it rather skeptically, though quite carefully, but you can see nothing about it which would be likely to make you wish to own a mountain of such rock. Perhaps you even apply a magnifying glass, and search the whole surface of the stone with the utmost care, yet nowhere does the slightest hint of the presence of anything valuable show itself to the eye. You are confident that it is nothing but a bit of rusty quartz. But the mining expert will put that evidently worthless stone under his blowpipe, and tell you to watch. Presently, under the compelling effect of the intense heat you will see this apparently worthless rock seemingly sweat with minute drops of pure gold. It was the burning heat that brought out the hidden value.

Your friend shows you, in his cabinet of curiosities, a dish of sand. It is clear, clean sand to you nothing more. He tells you that if you owned a large sand bank like that it might be possible to utilize it greatly to the benefit of your purse. You cannot see why,—it is merely clean sand, nothing more. It would be utterly useless as soil, nothing would grow in it. You inspect the sand closely, and pass your fingers through and through it, but uncover nothing valuable. Then he takes from another shelf a magnet and runs it into the sand,—then, as he withdraws the magnet you see that it is covered with particles of iron. Your eyes and your fingers would not have found them. It was the magnet that drew the metal.

As with the quartz and the sand, so with men. It may not be possible to distinguish the true metal by any human observation;

but when God's furnaces begin to work, the pure gold may often appear where least expected, and it is the heat of trial and affliction which brings it out. And it is God's love which acts as the magnet, or the flux, and draws to itself, and amalgamates with itself the true, pure metal, separating it from the dross which disappears in the furnace fires.

Of infinite comfort is it to the tried one to know that it is the Lord himself who sits...

Malachi 3
[3] ...as a refiner and purifier.

Job 23
[10] When He has tried me, [said Job,] I shall come forth as gold.

20. The Light That Gives Life

Present Truth, March 4, 1897

THE warmth of the sunny spring days melts the snow of winter, and the solid ice breaks, and the hard clods in the fields are gradually pulverized and spread over the soil, and all the earth made moist, and warm, and fertile, for the reception of the seed, that it may grow and produce a bounteous harvest.

So is the action of God's grace on a frozen and unfruitful heart. There are so many wintry lives; in order that they may become fruitful they must be melted and broken as the ice and snow and frozen earth melts, and breaks, and disintegrates, under the influence of the sun in the springtime.

In both instances it is from Him, the Light of the World,[324] that this influence, which brings forth a renewed and resurrected life, proceeds.

[324] *John* 8:12, 9:5, 12:46, 1:9.

21. Melody That Heaven Hears

Present Truth, May 27, 1897

THE higher degree of excellence that may be obtained in music the better, as ability to produce melody and the ear to recognize it are gifts of God, to be cultivated and used in His service. Therefore the heart must be in it; or it becomes but a travesty of sacred things. The song of praise to God that does not come from the heart is as much a mockery as the prayer that is spoken merely with the lips to be heard of men. The melody that Heaven hears is made in the heart.

> **Ephesians 5**
> [19] Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

This in nowise belittles the importance of being able to express melody by the lips, but it is an encouragement to those of us who have no special gift of musical ability, or have to repent of the lack of it through failure to cultivate it. The "new song" is learned by heart experiences, and God hears the melody of heart praise even when the lips make no sound. The following old monkish legend has a lesson for these days when church music so frequently strains after theatrical effect:

> There was once a band of poor men who had good voices but no idea of music, and so they were filled with regret because their service was so imperfect. One day there came to them one who had spent his whole life with music and musicians, one who understood all possible variations of tones and the relations between them. He pointed out to these humble monks the imperfections in their musical service, and he made them ashamed. They asked him to sing for them, and he sang, and it seemed to them that they had never heard anything so grand. But that night a voice asked the Abbott why they had forgotten their evening song. The old man replied that they had not forgotten it; on the contrary, they had had a most magnificent service. "Magnificent

it may have been," said the voice, "but not one sound of worship has entered heaven this night."

22. One Evil Thing Held To

Present Truth, July 15, 1897

ONE evil habit held to, one wrong sinful way that is not given up, will ruin the life. The Lord wants us to let Him cleanse our hearts from "all sin."

> **1 John 1**
> [7] But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from *all sin*.

However pleasant evil ways may appear to be, they surely end in sorrow, and unless repented of, in death. Here is a little parable that has in it a good lesson for us:

> "Flowers, shake off all your caterpillars," said an old elder tree.
>
> "Why? Why?" said all the flowers.
>
> "Because if you don't, they will eat you all up."

So they shook off all the caterpillars. But one lovely rose tree said:

> "This is such a beautiful caterpillar, and he is not very large! I want to keep him. Just one won't hurt me."

A few days after, there was not a whole leaf on the rose tree; all her beauty was gone.

23. Power from On High

Present Truth, October 14, 1897

THE engineer has turned on the power in the engine rooms, and all through the factory the shafting is turning. Not a machine moves. But let the operatives push the levers that make the connection, and the whole factory is quivering with activity.

God's promise is of power from on high for the daily life of overcoming. The power is at work all about us and in us. From out the throne of His power goes the influence that holds all the universe, and the life that flows through every living thing. What we want is to have that power turned into our spiritual lives, so that it may order our ways after the working of almighty power. The lever is the Lord. He is…

Hebrews 1

3 …upholding all things by *the word of His power*,

–or, "His powerful word." Faith receives the Word into the life and makes the life a part of the living machinery of God's universe. Only think of it; all this power that can control the universe, turned to the ordering of our little lives! Is it not a glorious promise, and one to give us confidence and make glad our hearts?

24. Withered Branches

Present Truth, November 18, 1897

WITHERED branches, sad as it may be, are cut off, and burned. So it will be at last with him who does not bear fruit for God. The end is death. But before that comes, the Husbandman exhausts all His love and power to save. He gives all to win man. He suffers all to save man; but with man rests the decision whether he will be saved.

25. What the Sun Does

Present Truth, January 13, 1898

OF THE work of the sun Sir John Lubbock says in his *Beauties of Nature:*

> It draws up water from the ocean, and pours it down in rain to fill the rivers and refresh the plants; it raises the winds, which purify the air and waft our ships over the seas; it draws our carriages and drives our steam-engines, for coal is but the heat of former ages stored up for our use; animals live and move by the sun's warmth; it inspires the song of birds, paints the flowers, and ripens the fruit. Through it the trees grow. For the beauties of nature, for our food and drink, for our clothing, for our light and life, for the very possibility of our existence, we are indebted to the sun.

But when the scientists takes us no further, and even declares the sun to be "the source and ruler of our lives," he is blind to the truth that the heavens but declare the glory and power of God's life.

John 1

[4] In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

It is just as easy now for men to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator as it was in the days when men first turned from the life of God displayed in all creation to their own imaginings and worshiped the sun and all the host of heaven.

Let the warm life-giving sunshine speak only of the warmth of God's love for His creatures, and of His mercy in giving to all life, and of His power to give righteousness as readily as life, if men will but believe.

26. The Gospel in Grafting

Present Truth, March 17, 1898

IN THE book of nature, as well as in the printed Word, God has revealed himself to us. Everything, animate and inanimate, speaks of the power and wisdom of Him who…

Psalm 148
[5] …commanded and they were created.

Job 12
[7] But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you;
[8] Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you.
[9] Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this?

The Subject Outlined

God's plan for the salvation of lost man is also clearly set forth in "the visible Gospel," His working in…

Romans 1
[20] …the things that are made.

One phase of this teaching will be the subject of our study in this article. The facts concerning the creation of man, his fall, God's purpose to restore him, and the result of this work, are briefly stated in the following scriptures:

Genesis 1
[26] And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness…
[27] So God created man in His own image.

Romans 3
[23] All have sinned and come short of the glory [character or image] of God.

Romans 8
[28] And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.
[29] For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of His Son.*

This is accomplished by...

2 Corinthians 4
[4] ...the light of the glorious Gospel [the Gospel of the glory] of Christ who is the image of God.

1 Corinthians 15
[49] And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

1 John 3
[2] Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.

We may summarize these facts in this way: Man at the first was made perfect but lost that perfection through sin. The Gospel is God's plan and power for restoring man to his original perfection through the gift of Jesus Christ and the acceptance of His righteousness. The result will be that man will be once more like Him.

The Same Thing Revealed in Nature

Now the same facts are brought to our attention in "the visible Gospel" of nature, and in His Word the Lord has made this instruction clear to us. That the original perfection of man and his subsequent fall are taught in nature, is pointed out in this scripture:

Jeremiah 2
[21] Yet I had planted you [Israel, verse 14] a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then are you turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me!

The general method of restoration, as taught by the Saviour, is to…

Matthew 12
[33] …make the tree good, and his fruit good.

The details of the method will be considered later. And the result is…

Isaiah 61
[3] …that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

This shows that the degeneracy of all plants and trees, and their tendency to degenerate, is the visible teaching of the fall of man. And the fact that degenerate plants and trees can be made to yield good fruit teaches the Gospel of restoration for man. And the method by which a degenerate plant or tree can be made to yield good fruit, when studied in the light of the Scripture, reveals the method by which sinful man can be…

Philippians 1
[11] …filled with the fruits of righteousness.

Let us therefore consider it carefully.

The Fruit of the Nature of the Tree

The nature of the fruit depends upon and reveals the nature of the tree.

Matthew 7
[17] Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit.
[18] A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.
[19] Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
[20] Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them.

This is the teaching of nature, and the experience of every man has made him familiar with these facts. But since a corrupt tree

cannot bring forth good fruit, it is evident that, if good fruit is to be obtained from a tree which has become corrupt, the nature or character of the tree must be changed. And every gardener knows that this can be done, and that it is done by the process of grafting. One method of grafting is to saw off the end of a limb of the tree to be grafted, and then insert it in the end one or more grafts or scions from a tree bearing a superior variety of fruit, and the nature of the graft or scion determines the nature of the fruit borne on the new branch. It is a well-known fact that our best varieties of fruits have all been obtained in this way.

The Engrafted Word

But how are these facts interpreted by the Scriptures so that we may see in them what they are designed to teach, *viz.*, the method by which men may be restored to the image of God? Let us read and see.

> **James 1**
> [21] Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and *receive with meekness the engrafted Word*, which is able to save your souls.

How is the degenerate human tree to be restored so that it may bear good fruit? Just as the tree in your garden. It must be grafted. And what is the graft or scion to be used? It is the Word, "which is able to save your souls." But what or who is the Word?

> **John 1**
> [1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

> **Revelation 19**
> [11] And I saw heaven open, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
> [13] ...and His name is called the Word of God.

It is thus evident that the "engrafted Word" which we are to receive, and "which is able to save your souls," is Christ the living Word.

John 1
[11] He came to His own, and His own received Him not.
[12] But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

Acts 4
[12] Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Tree and Graft Must Be of the Same Kind

But it is now necessary to call attention to another fact which is well known to everyone who has had any experience in grafting trees. Any gardener will tell you that in order for the process of grafting to be successful, the graft or scion must be nearly related botanically to the tree which is to be grafted.

> Thus roses will bud on briers, but not on myrtles. Apricots will on plums; pears will on quinces; because all these are closely related. But apples will not graft on plums, being not of the same order.

This is the chapter in the Gospel of nature in which we read of the necessity for, and the fact of, the incarnation of the Son of God. Here we *see* the following scriptures:

Hebrews 2
[14] Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, *He also himself likewise took part of the same;* that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
[15] And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
[16] For verily He takes not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He takes hold [margin].

[17] Wherefore in all things it behoved Him [or He was obliged] *to be made like unto His brethren.*

Romans 8
[3] For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:
[4] That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Hebrews 10
[5] Wherefore when He came into the world, He said, Sacrifice and offering You would not, but *a body You have prepared me.*

God's plan for man contemplated, not the overlooking of sin in man but the removal of sin from man, and his complete restoration to the image of God, a change of character or nature, that we might…

2 Peter 1
[4] …be partakers of the Divine nature.

But since man who was at the first and by creation…

Jeremiah 2
[21] …a noble vine, wholly a right seed [or seed of truth],

–had through sin…

[21] …turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine,

–and had lost the Divine nature so that…

Romans 3
[10] There is none righteous, no not one,

–it was necessary, in order to make it possible for him to receive "the engrafted Word" for his restoration, that the Word should be made flesh, and not merely that it should be made flesh, but that it bear the same kind of flesh. And so God sent His own Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh" that thus the scion or graft might be prepared, so nearly related to us that it might be possi-

ble for us to receive the "engrafted Word" and bring forth fruit after the Divine nature.

Since it was man who was to be saved, and sinful man too, the Son of God became the Son of man, not laying aside His divinity but clothing it with our humanity, that He might be able to reach man where he was. This was the only way in which the Divine nature could come in actual contact with sinful man as a means of salvation, since the unveiled glory of God could result only in destruction to sinners.

Hebrews 12
[29] For our God is a consuming fire.

The Testimony of Prophecy

All this was clearly set forth in the prophecy concerning the person and work of Christ. Thus we read:

Isaiah 11 [RV]
[1] And there shall come forth a shoot of the stock of Jesse, and a branch [or scion] out of His roots shall bear fruit.

Here is presented...

Romans 1 [RV]
[1] ...the Gospel of God...
[3] Concerning His Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

–but is clothed in such language that it is most clearly intended as a partial interpretation of that remarkable phenomenon in nature which we are now studying. But another scripture will give further light upon the subject.

Jeremiah 23 [RV]
[5] Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch [margin: Shoot or Bud], and He shall reign as King and deal wisely;...
[6] ...and this is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord is our righteousness.

The family of David is a...

Isaiah 1
[4] ...sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters,

–but to the same nation the promise was made,

Isaiah 60
[21] Your people also shall be all righteous,

–and inasmuch as this is to be brought about by receiving "the engrafted Word," the Branch (Shoot or Scion) which is to be used in the process of grafting must be "a righteous Branch," since the character of the scion determines the character of the fruit to be borne on the new branch. The Branch was prophesied of, which would be nearly related to the "degenerate plant" so that it could be used in the grafting process, but at the same time infinitely superior in the character of its fruit, so that through it could be accomplished the restoration of the "degenerate plant."

A Righteous Branch

The meaning of this fact of nature, that the scion and the tree must be nearly related botanically, is further brought out in the scripture:

Zechariah 6 [RV]
[12] Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold, the Man whose name is the Branch [margin, Bud]; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord;
[13] Even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne: and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

The tree to be restored was man, and so the Branch (or Scion) must be a man, but in order to "make the tree good"[325] that it might bear good fruit again, it was necessary that the Branch, or

[325] *Matthew* 12:33.

man, should be of an infinitely superior type, even "a righteous Branch," so that the scripture should be fulfilled which says:

Isaiah 53
[11] ...by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.

An Abominable Branch

These same truths are taught, by contrast, in another way. Thus we read of Lucifer, who was created the light-bearer but who through his rebellion became Satan, the adversary:

Isaiah 14
[12] How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!
[13] For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
[14] I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.
[15] Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.
[16] They that see you shall narrowly look upon you, and consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;
[17] That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?
[18] All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.
[19] But you are cast out of your grave like *an abominable branch...*
[20] ...the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

Read also *Ezekiel* 34:26-30, noticing especially verse 29:

Ezekiel 34
[29] And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.

What a contrast is here drawn between Christ, the "righteous Branch," and Satan, the "abominable branch." The one is He who...

Isaiah 40
[29] ...gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength.

The other is he...

Isaiah 14
[12] ...which did weaken the nations.

One is...

Ezekiel 34
[29] ...a plant of renown.

The other...

Isaiah 14
[20] ...shall never be renowned.

The one came...

Luke 19
[10] ...to seek and to save that which was lost.

The other...

1 Peter 5
[8] ...walks about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

The Final Complete Restoration

Thus in the light which the Scripture throws upon it, we may learn the teaching which the Lord designs to impart to us through that really remarkable process, the process of grafting. In it the Gospel of the restoration of man to the image of God and the method by which it is accomplished are most certainly taught. So if any man will regard this process in the natural world in the light which is shed upon it from the Word of God, he can *see* the way in which the degenerate human plant is to be treated and what the results will be. Thus if one will believe the Gospel in grafting, he will be thereby prepared to...

James 1

[21] ...receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.

In the light of what we have learned we may profitably close this study with the following scripture:

Ezekiel 17

[22] Thus says the Lord God; I will also take the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon a high mountain and eminent:

[23] In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.

[24] And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it.

27. The Open Grave

Present Truth, October 13, 1898

IN THE city of Hanover, Germany, there is in one of the churchyards a grave which attracts the attention of hundreds of visitors every year. Pictures of it are to be found for sale in nearly every stationer's shop, and it is known far and wide as "The open grave." The history of it is in brief this:

> More than a hundred years ago a woman was buried there, and the following inscription (whether by her own direction or not, I do not know) was placed on the lowermost stone of the tomb:
>
> "This grave, purchased for eternity, must never be opened."
>
> The grave, as will be seen from the cut, was covered with heavy stones, the top one being a solid block that doubtless weighs not less than a ton, and all the stones were firmly bound together with iron bands.
>
> But no human device can hinder the working of the power of life. Either a seed fell into the grave before it was closed up, or else a shoot from a tree penetrated the grave from beneath, and in obedience to the law of life, proceeded to make its way to the light. Slowly and imperceptibly, but with irresistible power it forced its way between the huge stones, and burst every iron band. Now there is not a single stone left in its original position, although no hand of man has ever presumed to try to move them.



A vigorous birch tree is now growing from the open

grave which was to remain closed to all eternity. The tree is flattened where it comes in contact with the huge covering stone, so that it fills the entire side of the grave, but immediately above the block it assumes the natural, round shape, and is about fifteen inches in diameter. There is in the same churchyard another grave that has been opened in the same manner by a small locust tree, but it does not attract the attention that the first one does, since it has no inscription and no iron clamps. Both however teach the same thing, namely, the power of life.

How easily the voice of God sounding from heaven can rend all the tombs! That voice which at the last day will shake the earth,[326] and open every grave, is but the same voice which in the beginning said,

Genesis 1
[11] Let the earth bring forth grass and trees;

–and although no sound of it is heard, that Word is able, as we have seen to break every bond. That is the power of the resurrection. But the power of the resurrection of the last day is only the power which Jesus Christ, who is risen from the dead, exerts in every believer. He is near to every soul, with all the power of His resurrection life.

Romans 10
[8] The Word is nigh you, even in your mouth, and in your heart; that is, the Word of faith, which we preach;
[9] That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

That Word, which at the last will open every grave, and whose power is shown in the bursting of the iron bands that were designed to keep the Hanover grave closed, is able to burst every bond that would hold any soul down to this earth and its grovelling life. Jesus still comes as of old, anointed with the Holy Spirit,

[326] *Joel* 3:16.

Isaiah 61
[1] ...to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

Who will listen to Him?

Isaiah 55
[3] ...Hear, and your soul shall live.

28. God's Dynamite

Present Truth, October 13, 1898

ONE evening in the spring, as I was taking a walk in a side street of a country village, I noticed little crater-like upheavals in the hard concrete pavement. Stooping down to examine them more closely, I saw that they were caused by little tufts of grass that had forced their way through. The pavement was very hard, and there were no crevices in it, through which the grass could get a start, but the tender blades had come through what was almost solid stone. What a marvel was this! If men had wished to break up the pavement, they would have been obliged to give many heavy blows with huge hammers; but in obedience to God's Word, the grass made its way through without a sound, and unnoticed by any body.

That same Word says to us,

1 Peter 1
[16] Be holy, as I am holy,

–and the commandment has as much power in the one case as in the other.

Why then are not all holy who wish to be? Simply because they do not receive the commandment in the same way that the grass of the field does. When God makes known His commandment

they at once think that they must put it into action, and thereby they prevent its action in them. The grass of the field, on the contrary, does not flatter itself that it has strength. It is content to be simply grass, and so it grows in obedience to the Word because that self-fulfilling Word has free course in it.

Obedience to God's commandments does not consist in our working them, but in allowing them to work us. God's everlasting power and Divinity are just as ready to manifest themselves in us for all that God wishes us to be, as they are in the grass of the field, when we will give God the glory, and will not assume that we are God, and that the power comes from us. God, and not we, is to be glorified in our fruit-bearing. This is the message,

Revelation 14
[7] Fear God, and give glory to Him.

29. God's Beautiful Preachers

Present Truth, October 27, 1898

Isaiah 52

[7] How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace; that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation; that says unto Zion, Your God reigns.

THERE is more than one preacher of this class, for when the Apostle Paul quotes this scripture, he, uses the plural, saying,

Romans 10

[15] It is written, How beautiful are the feet of *them* that preach the Gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good, things!

It is true that the text speaks only of the feet of these preachers, calling them beautiful, while we are talking about God's beautiful preachers; but since the feet are the most humble members of the body, it necessarily follows that if the feet are beautiful, the whole body must be beautiful also. May we know who these beautiful preachers are? Certainly, or else we cannot know the message that they bear. Let us see what the Scriptures have to say about them, and we shall learn something valuable about preaching the Gospel, as well as something of the glory of the Gospel.

In *Romans* 10:13, we have the statement that…

[13] Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Then follow some questions, designed to emphasize the tact that all have had an opportunity to know the Lord, and to call upon Him. Thus:

[14] How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?
[15] And how shall they preach, except they be sent?

All these questions suggest their own answer. But some have been sent, as is shown by what follows:

Romans 10
[15] ...as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

So since some have been sent, it is evident that there are preachers; and since there are preachers, it follows that people have heard; and since they have heard, they have had a chance to believe, and to call upon the name of the Lord.

Passing by the statement that...

[16] They have not all obeyed the Gospel,

–and that...

[17] Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,

–we come to the question,

[18] But I say, Have they not all heard?

Heard what? The Word of the Gospel, of course, for that is the only thing under consideration.

[18] ...Yes, verily,...

–they have all heard the Gospel, but they have not all believed it. Now for the proof that all have heard it:

[18] ...their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Whose words went unto the ends of the world? The words of the beautiful preachers of whom the Apostle has just spoken as preaching the Gospel of peace, and bringing glad tidings of good things.

So far it is all very clear. Now who are these beautiful preachers of the Gospel, whose words have gone unto the ends of the world? The answer is found in the scripture from which the

Apostle has quoted. It is *Psalm* 19:4. It is the bodies which God created to be in the firmament of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, whose…

Psalm 19
[4] …line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

The sun, moon, and stars, and the firmament itself, are the preachers whose feet are so beautiful upon the mountains, as they come preaching the Gospel of peace. And truly their feet are beautiful. Who has not been filled with ecstasy as he has seen the sun lighting up the hilltops, or the soft light of the moon upon the mountains? Beautiful preachers they are indeed.

[1] The heavens declare the glory of God…

Glory is power, for we read in *Romans* 6:4, that…

Romans 6
[4] Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,

–and in *Ephesians* 1:19-20 that the resurrection of Christ was a manifestation of the working of the mighty power of God. Therefore the heavens, in declaring the glory of God, are proclaiming His power.

And the power of God is salvation; for the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and…

2 Peter 1
[3] His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

So the heavens proclaim the salvation of the Lord. Thus, as rendered in the best translations,

Isaiah 52
[10] Jehovah has made bare His holy arm in the sight of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Take notice that this statement directly follows the verse first quoted, about the beautiful messengers of good tidings, publishing salvation.

So the heavenly bodies are God's model preachers. They preach simply shining. That is the way that Jesus himself preached. He was the light of the world. It was the shining of His life that taught men. He is the Light that lights every man that comes into the world, and whosoever follows Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life, even of His life.

Would you be one of God's beautiful preachers? You do not need to be eloquent. It is not actually necessary that you be able to speak at all. You have only to let Christ shine upon you, and to allow God to make your heart His sanctuary, and then He that sits between the cherubim will "shine forth."[327]

Philippians 2
[13] It is God which works in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

The one thing that the world needs, is to see God in His works, that they may learn His ways. Then…

Matthew 5
[16] Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

[327] *Psalm* 80:1.

30. Multiplying the Seed

Present Truth, February 9, 1899

DID you ever think how much is wrapped up in one little seed that you can hold in your hand? Take a grain of wheat, for instance, and think what would come from it if at the proper time it should be put into good ground.

The Roman Governor and great naturalist Pliny tells of a single plant of corn that grew in Africa, with 340 stems, bearing 340 ears,—at least 10,000 grains of corn all springing from one seed!

As many as 12,780 grains have sprung from a single grain of the famous corn of Smyrna, called "the miraculous corn." This was indeed "miraculous corn," but so is every ear of corn that you have ever seen, or that has ever come from the ground. For is it not a wonderful miracle of the power of God that any seed should grow and multiply in this way?

When you hear about Jesus feeding a great multitude of people, more than five thousand, with only five loaves and two fishes, you think this a wonderful miracle, do you not? And perhaps you wish you could have been there to have seen Jesus doing this wonderful work, and to have tasted the bread that was made by His power.

Well, Jesus is doing the very same thing today. You *may* see Him at work, you *may* taste of the bread as He multiplies it for *you* by His power. What makes the little grain of wheat that is sown in the ground in the Spring grow and spring up…

Mark 4

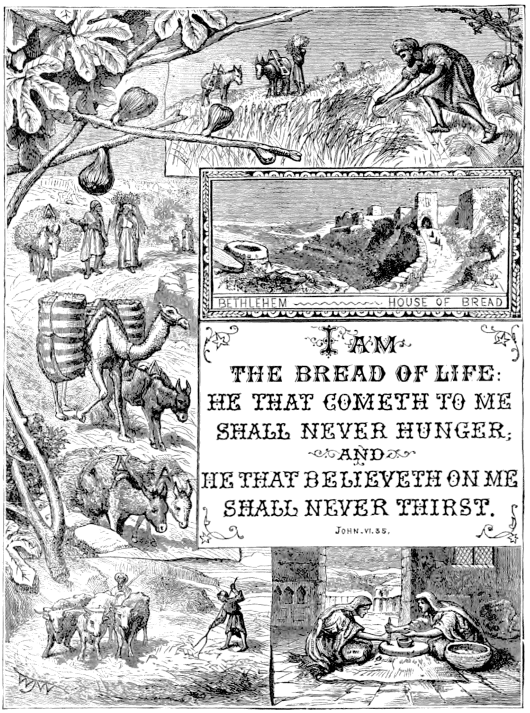
[28] …first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear,

–bringing forth thirty, forty, sixty, and a hundredfold? It is the presence and life of Jesus in the seed,—His power working today just as it did nearly nineteen hundred years ago when He multiplied the loaves.

This is the Lord's usual way of multiplying the bread and feeding the multitude. Then is not the bread, made from the wheat, that you have upon your table every day, just as wonderful as the loaves with which Jesus fed the five thousand. And have you not just as much reason to give thanks to Him for it as they had?

Remember, too, what Jesus said to the people after He had fed them,

John 6
[35] I am the Bread of life.



And this is what He is saying to us in the seed, the corn from which the bread is made with which He feeds us every day. For it is His life in the seed that makes it grow and bring forth fruit, and that gives us new life when we eat it.

So Jesus is feeding you continually with His own life. Think of this every time you eat the food that He gives you, and ask Him to use in His service, to His own glory, all the life and strength that he is giving to you day by day.

31. Water

Present Truth, June 1, 1899

DURING the war of the Rebellion in the United States, after a severe engagement, when the disabled soldiers were being removed from the field, a wounded man lying in the hot sun cried,

"Water, water!"

It was brought to him, but it was warm and muddy, for that was all there was at hand. He took only a sip or two, and then handed the cup back, with the words:

"Oh, for a draft of water from my father's well!"

There are today thirsty souls everywhere—thirsting to death for the water that is in their Father's well, yet they will not take of it and drink.

John 7
[37] If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

John 4
[14] Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; and the water that I shall give him will be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.

May the longing of each heart be that of the woman at the well, who said,

[15] Give me of this water.

32. The Way of Holiness

Present Truth, June 29, 1899

Song of Solomon 2
[11] The winter is past, the rain is over and gone;
[12] The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come...
[13] The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.

Isaiah 61
[11] As the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Psalm 92
[4] For You, Lord, have made me glad through your work: I will triumph in the works of your hands.
[12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
[13] Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.
[14] They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;
[15] To show that the Lord is upright: He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

1 Corinthians 3
[9] You are God's husbandry.

Matthew 15
[13] Every plant, which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up.

John 15
[4] As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me.

IT WILL be seen from these scriptures that God is the source of righteousness and not man. This is according to God's plan. He

never designed that man should be righteous by his own works, but by receiving, in faith, the righteousness of His Creator, allowing God to work in Him to will and to do of His own good pleasure.

Therefore the question is not whether man shall be found righteous in the judgment, but whether the Lord shall be proved to be righteous in all His works.[328] No man can make himself righteous, but he can let the Lord demonstrate in his life that all His works are righteous. But to do this a man must cease from his own works, so that only the works of God are manifest in him. When the Lord has full control of a man's life, because he abides in Him as the branch abides in the vine, then it will always appear…

Psalm 92
15 …that the Lord is upright,…and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

This means that the Lord will be justified in the judgment. But what of the man?

1 John 4
17 [He can] have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.

Such a man is not afraid that the Lord will be condemned in the judgment, and for himself all he needs to know is that he is abiding in the vine. So he is sure of an abundant entrance into…

2 Peter 1
11 …the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

[328] *Psalm* 145:17; *Daniel* 9:14.

33. Common Blessings

Present Truth, September 14, 1899
Original title: Front Page

WHY does the earth bring forth fruits and grains so abundantly, as we see in the harvest of this present year? Is it an accident? Not by any means. It is true, that…

Mark 4
[28] The earth brings forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

But this is only after the man has first cast seed into the ground. There is no accident about it; it is the working out of law. Moreover the earth itself does not take the initiative. If there were no seed in the ground, there would never be any crops. Now,

Luke 8
[11] The seed is the Word of God,

–for in the beginning, when the earth was utterly empty, God said,

Genesis 1
[11] Let the earth bring forth grass the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth and it was so.

God's word is the seed, the source whence every living thing springs. But does not the Saviour say that…

Mark 4
[28] The earth brings forth fruit of herself?

He does, and the word that He uses is most striking. The Greek word is "automatic," so that what He really says is that the earth brings forth fruit *automatically*, or like an automaton. The only other place in the Bible where the word occurs is *Acts* 12:10, in the story of Peter's deliverance from prison. As he and the angel came to the iron gate leading to the city,

Acts 12
[10] ...[it] opened to them of its own accord,

–automatically. Now we know that an automaton works only by virtue of power previously applied to it; so the word which the Saviour uses makes most prominent the fact that God himself is the cause of all growth. It is God, therefore, who works in the earth,

Philippians 2
[13] ...both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Some will say,

> "We knew that before; you did not need to take the trouble to prove that to us."

Yes, so we might all say; yet, as a matter of fact, we have not *known* it; we have but assented to what we have heard, taking it for granted without knowing the reality of it. God would have us...

1 Thessalonians 5
[21] Prove all things.

Now we can see for ourselves that it is God's Word, continually spoken to the earth, that makes the harvest. Let us then come back to the original creation. Why does the earth bring forth food? That is, Why does the Lord cause it to do so? The answer is ready in every mouth: the food grows in order that we may be fed, in order that we may live. Right!

Psalm 104
[13] He waters the hills from His chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your works.
[14] He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that He may bring forth food out of the earth;
[15] And wine that makes glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengthens man's heart.

1 Timothy 6
[17] [God] gives us richly all things to enjoy,

–our daily bread, in order that day by day we may receive new life. But why does He desire that we should live? It is because He has no pleasure in the death of any.

Ezekiel 18
[23] Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? says the Lord God; and not that he should return from his wicked ways, and live?

So these daily blessings that contribute to our life, are for our eternal salvation. All blessings, whatever they may be, come to us only through Christ, and He is sent to bless us in turning us away from our iniquities;[329] for only in righteousness is there life. In the food with which God supplies us day by day, He is bringing to us righteousness.

Psalm 85
[9] Surely salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land.
[10] Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
[11] Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
[12] Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase.
[13] Righteousness shall go before Him; and shall set us in the way of His steps.

The skies pour down righteousness,[330] and thus it is that truth springs out of the earth: thus it is that the Lord gives that which is good. He withholds no good thing.

James 1
[17] Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.

[329] *Acts* 3:26.
[330] *Isaiah* 45:8.



God keeps nothing back that is good. Everything comes down to us. He has reserved nothing for himself; He shares everything —himself, His own life—with His creatures. Thus it is that…

Psalm 85

[13] Righteousness goes before Him, to set us in the way of His steps.

Let us not lightly esteem these daily and annual blessings from the Lord. We sometimes call them "common blessings." That is what they are indeed, for the most common thing for the Lord is to do good to men, and He does it in order that to do good may be the most common thing with us. The ripened grain and the tree bending under the burden of luscious fruit,—the glory of the land,—are evidences that God's salvation is nigh unto us. Shall we not gladly lay hold of it, receiving it even as we receive our daily food from the hands of the great Giver?

34. Saved!

Present Truth, October 5, 1899

WHAT a thrill of joy that word brings to anxious hearts when it announces that one whom death had seemed to claim as its sure prey, has been snatched from its jaws.

A crowd of eager, excited people stand looking up to a window of a burning house, where the face of a friend and relative appears. A brave fireman mounts a ladder, clambers along seemingly inaccessible places, and brings down the imprisoned victim. What a meaning there is in the shout that goes up from the throng, "Saved!" Nobody needs to have it explained.

A man falls overboard from the deck of a steamship, and has disappeared beneath the waves. He comes up, and is making frantic but vain struggles for life. But a sailor has seen him, and plunged in after him. The rescuer reaches the drowning man, and succeeds in supporting him until the ship's boat reaches them, and strong arms draw them both on board. They are saved! How gladly the word is passed along, and how sweet it sounds!

Meet any one of those persons a few days afterward, when the incident of which he was a witness, or in which he may have participated, has already partially faded from his memory, and say to him,

"My dear friend, are you saved?"

–and he will very likely say,

"What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say, Are you saved?"

–you reply. If he does not get angry with you for asking what he deems an impertinent question, he may say,

"I don't know what I need to be saved from; I am in no danger."

Strange, is it not, that the word "saved," or "salvation," when used in connection with Jesus as the Saviour, is regarded by most people as having an altogether different meaning from what it does when used in connection with some disease or impending danger? The reason is that people have been educated to think that Jesus has nothing to do with ordinary affairs of everyday life, and His work, as well as His person, is really regarded by them as more or less mythical. "Spiritual," is the name by which it is commonly designated; but with most the word "spiritual" is considered equivalent to "mythical" or "visionary," and not as indicating anything real. The fact is, however, that while the work of Jesus, the Saviour, like himself, is wholly spiritual, it is the most real thing in the world, and touches human life and experience at every point.

Matthew 1
[21] You shall call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins,

–were the words of the angel Gabriel to Joseph. Who that has the least knowledge of the Bible is not familiar with them? Yes, people are familiar with the *sound* of them; but to too many professed Christians they are little more than a distant echo. So they go about, dimly conscious that *in* some sort of way they need salvation, yet not comprehending the reality of their need, nor the greatness nor the reality of the salvation which is right at their side, yea, even within them waiting their acceptance. Salvation from sin seems altogether an abstract thing to the majority of mankind, including many who pass as Christians.

If men would read the life of Christ in the Gospels until He becomes to them a real, living being, going about doing good, healing the sick, relieving the oppressed, comforting the mourners, and feeding the hungry, and would just believe that He is…

Hebrews 13
[8] …the same yesterday, and today, and for ever,

–as really present with us now as He was in Judea centuries ago, and for the very same purpose, they would take more satisfaction in hearing about His salvation. They would see that it is something that has to do with every detail of everyday life, and they would find the way of salvation. For there is as real joy in the salvation which Jesus brings as in the rescuing of a loved one from imminent death; for that is just what He does; and, moreover, that joy is not a momentary thrill, but a constant, and ever-deepening experience.

Suppose, my friend, you let the phrase, "salvation from sin," which to you has only a technical meaning, drop out of your mind for a moment. Now think of some trouble, some difficulty, some habit that annoys and hinders you, from which you would like to be saved, to be kept. You can understand that, can you not? You are very nervous, starting at every sudden sound or a jar, trembling at any sudden announcement; or you are timid, easily alarmed, and frightened even by things which your good sense tells you are not to be feared; yet you have no control of yourself. You would like to be saved from that condition, would you not? Of course. Listen to the brief statement of and experience that has been repeated in thousands of cases.

Psalm 34
[4] I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

What would you not give for such salvation as that? Well, that is precisely the salvation which the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings.

1 John 4
[18] There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear.

Jesus Christ sweetly sleeping while the winds shrieked and the waves tossed themselves, or standing calm, unmoved, without a tremor, while the angry, howling mob, gnashed on Him, and yelled, "Crucify Him," is an example of the perfect peace that is the possession of every one who fully accepts His salvation.

Psalm 34
[6] This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

Mind, it does not say that the Lord saved him from having trouble, but that He saved him out of them all. What difference does it make how much trouble we have, if we are only saved from it, so that it does not crush or control us?

John 16
[33] These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Is not that practical? Someone will say,

> "But I know many Christians, and they are just as timid as other people, just as easily frightened out of their wits, and they have just as many troubles as others, and are cast down and overcome by them, too. They have just as many sicknesses, and, moreover, are very nervous and irritable, sometimes because of their weakened physical condition."

Very likely, but that does not prove anything against the reality of Christ's salvation. It only shows that these people have not yet learned Christ as they ought to when they profess to follow Him. They are in the school of Christ, but have not made much advancement yet. The Gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation to every one that believes; and the word salvation is unlimited. The power that saves from sin, saved from everything that is in any sense a drawback to the individual. It saves us from sin just by touching us and filling at every point and in every detail of human experience. Learn to recognize Jesus as He reveals His power in all creation, accept Him as the Saviour from the most petty thing that mars your peace, and you will soon be saying,

Psalm 34
[8] O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed [happy] is the man that trusts in Him.

[9] O fear the Lord, you His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him,

–and then…

Romans 6
[14] Sin shall not have dominion over you.

The world is full of sin; everybody and everything is faulty; therefore it is not any art, and requires no great skill, to find fault. Anybody can do that. But to find the good, to seek out and develop it,—that is a marvelous faculty, and must be learned from God himself. His Divine skill and power are shown in finding and developing perfection where a critic would find nothing but faults, and would turn away in disgust.

35. Forewarned—Forearmed

Present Truth, November 30, 1899

THE memorable battle of Arbela, that resulted in the overthrow of the Persian kingdom, is one of the most remarkable of all history. The Persians under Darius numbered over 1,000,000, while the Macedonians under Alexander were only 47,000. The attack of the Macedonians seemed but madness, the odds were so heavy against them; but Alexander knew his strength, and the secret of this self-confidence lay in the fact that, on the eve of the engagement, there fell into his hands full and complete details of the plans of the approaching attack of Darius, and by this foreknowledge, he was enabled so to place his army that the Persian forces were routed, and he gained the victory that made him monarch of all the then known world.

There is no more unequal struggle in all history than that of the man who endeavors to cope with the devil without the help of Jesus Christ. But Christ knows all the wicked plans of the archenemy of souls, and these He has revealed to His children.

1 Thessalonians 5

[4] But you brethren are not in darkness,

–for God has been faithful in giving due warning of any judgments that were to come upon the world, that all who would might escape. Noah preached a coming flood for one hundred and twenty years; Lot was warned of the destruction of Sodom; and the Christians knew years before, of the overthrow of Jerusalem, and so definite was the sign given of the latter event, that when the time came, every Christian within the walls of that doomed city knew it and escaped.

But merely because we are "the children of light"[331]—because we know these things theoretically,—that alone will not save us. Lot's wife knew of the destruction of Sodom, but that did not save

[331] *1 Thessalonians* 5:5.

her from being turned into a pillar of salt; and the Saviour in speaking of what would take place in the end of the world, and the danger there would be of even the elect being deceived and turned out of the way, uses these significant words,

Luke 17
[32] Remember Lot's wife.

What did she do? Simply "looked back,"[332]—that is all, but that meant her destruction. She desired to escape the doom of the city, but while her body was on the plain, her *heart* was in Sodom. There is in this a lesson of a special importance for those who live in the last days, for…

[28] As it was in the days of Lot…
[30] Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

2 Corinthians 6
[17] Come out from among them, my people,

–are the Lord's words to His children,

[17] …and be separate.

There can be no compromise. Some of the Lord and a little of Sodom or Babylon will never save us. The struggle is a fierce one; but with all the secret plans of Satan laid bare, for…

2 Corinthians 2
[11] …we are not ignorant of his devices,

–and with Jesus as our commander and leader, we are ten thousands times more sure of victory, in this conflict, than was Alexander the Great; and he who is faithful to the end, who overcomes, will reap as a reward, a never-ending life in the kingdom of God.[333]

[332] *Genesis* 19:26.
[333] *Matthew* 10:22.

36. Trees of Righteousness

Present Truth, May 24, 1900

THOSE who accept the Gospel are called,

> **Isaiah 61**
> [3] ...trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

Many times in the Bible the righteous are likened to trees, and are said to be trees. A tree unhindered in its growth is one of the most majestic objects in creation. Some trees have doubtless been standing since the flood, more than four thousand years, yet they are fresh and green and growing still. The young shoot is no fresher, no greener, than one of these ancient monarchs, and of course not nearly as strong.

What lesson has this for us? Just this, that the Christian must ever be growing. How long does a tree grow? Just as long as it lives. There is no limit set to the size of a tree. Some kinds of trees never grow as large as other kinds, but every tree, no matter what its kind, is perpetually growing. It never arrives at a stopping place. It never compares itself with some other famous tree, now dead, and says,

> "I am as large as it was, therefore I do not need to grow any more."

Often no one but God can mark the growth from year to year, but it grows nevertheless, content that God knows. So the Christian, rooted and grounded in Christ, must always...

> **2 Peter 3**
> [18] ...grow in grace.

He must know more, and have a larger experience this year than last. He has nothing to do with comparisons between himself and somebody else, but has only to use all the light and moisture that God gives him, and reach out for all there is yet to come.

The plant never shuns the light, but on the contrary eagerly turns towards it, and seeks it. Light is its life, and it rejoices in it. So with the true Christian. He never tries to see how little he can do with, but how much he can get, and he *keeps growing*.

Psalm 92
[12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
[13] Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.
[14] They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.

Psalm 1
[1] Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.
[2] But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night.
[3] And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.

What depth and breadth, what infinity, is suggested by the words, "the fullness of God."[334] Nothing higher could be affirmed of Christ than that…

Colossians 1
[19] It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.

Colossians 2
[9] In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Nothing more than this can be said; and we may spend an eternity in contemplation of it without exhausting it.

All this fullness dwelt in Christ as the representative Man, to show that it in God's pleasure that all men should have His fullness dwelling in them. The Holy Spirit is Christ's personal pres-

[334] *Ephesians* 3:19.

ence; and when we are strengthened with might by this Spirit in the inner man according to the riches of His glory,[335]

Ephesians 3
[16] Christ dwells in our heart by faith, [so that we may]...
[19] ...be filled with all the fullness of God.

Christ has ascended on high, and has shed forth the Spirit, in order that He may...

Ephesians 4
[10] ...fill all things.

John 1
[16] And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

That is not to say that we possess His fullness, but that it is ours to possess. Christ has given us His peace, yet there are thousands who do not even know the meaning of the word. It is theirs to possess, but they do not take it and make use of it. So with the fullness of God: it is given to man, and the case of "the Man Christ Jesus" shows that it is God's pleasure that His fullness should dwell in all men.

Ephesians 4
[7] Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

The true church of Christ, which is composed of men who hear and acknowledge and wholly yield to the Word of the Lord, is...

Ephesians 1
[23] ...the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

But we must not make the mistake of supposing that the fullness of God consists merely in manifestations of power that dazzle the eyes and overawe the mind. It is very evident that there is a wide range in so vast a thing as the fullness of God. God is complete in all His attributes, which include goodness, meekness,

[335] *Ephesians* 3:16.

gentleness, patience, etc. Not only so but it is in these qualities that His greatness consists; therefore we read:

> **Psalm 18**
> [35] You have also given me the shield of your salvation; and your right hand has held me up, and your gentleness has made me great.

The word rendered "gentleness" is the ordinary word for "meekness;" it is God's meekness that makes us great, and so we are exhorted to learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart.[336] Christ is…

> **John 1**
> [14] …full of grace and truth,

–and this was the fullness of the glory of God. Therefore our longing prayer to God is not to be for something great in the eyes of the world, but instead,

> "Lord, give me your fullness of patience, your fullness of meekness and humility, your fullness of longsuffering, your fullness of goodness and grace and truth."

What a blessed wonder that all this fullness of God is ours if we will but accept it. Having that we can be content, for we need nothing more.

[336] *Matthew* 11:29.

37. A Dog's Life

Present Truth, June 7, 1900
Original title: Back Page

ABOUT three weeks ago a woman fifty years old, living in Paris, committed suicide…

…through grief at the death of her little dog,

–and it was only a few weeks before that, that another woman killed herself because her dog had died. In all such cases the persons have really ceased to live before they commit suicide. If they really lived, if they knew what life really is, nothing in the world could lead them to separate from it.

What a sorrowful thing, that so many people's lives are so empty that the loss of a dog leaves nothing more. And yet that is what everybody's life will amount to, who does not accept Christ, in whom all fullness dwells, and who has ascended to heaven,

Ephesians 4
[10] …that He might fill all things.

The life that He gives is so full that the loss of the world and all its treasures cannot empty it, or even diminish it.

38. Supernatural

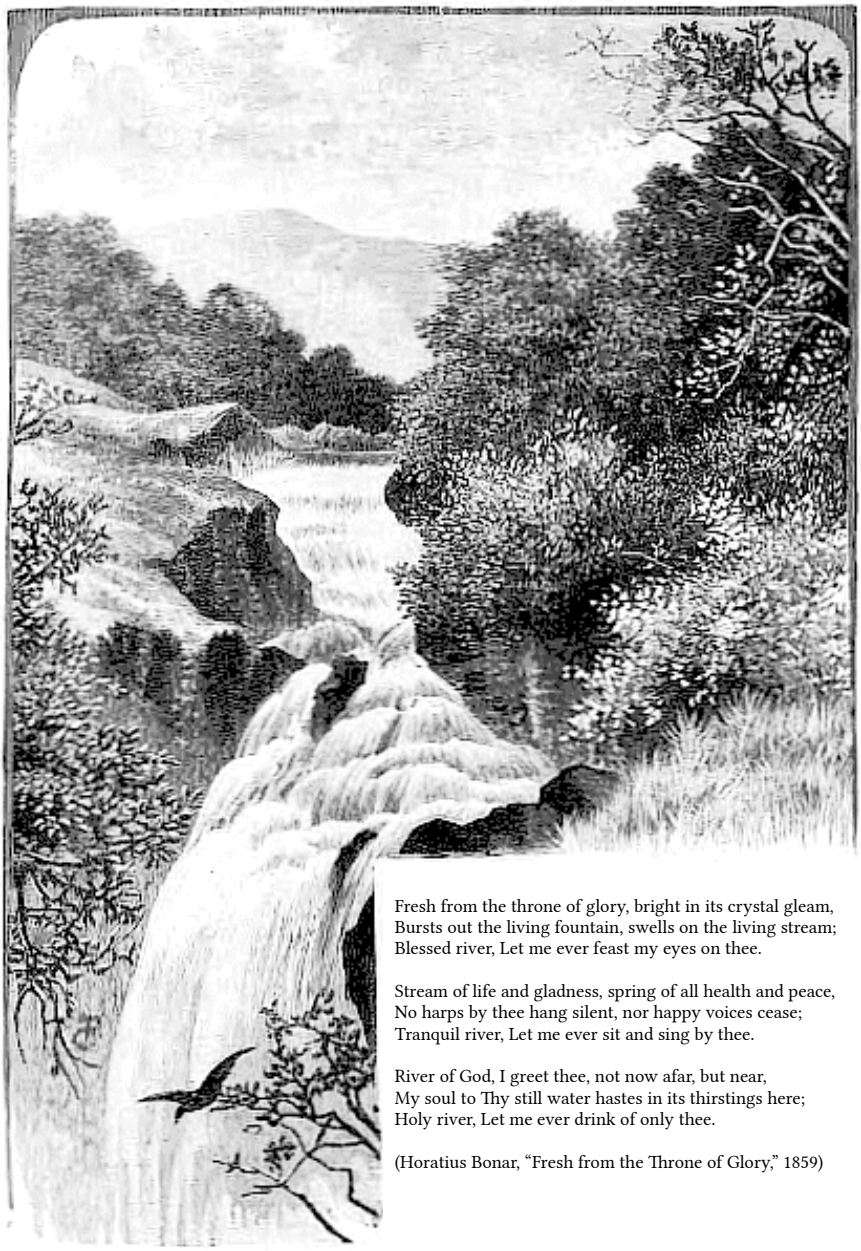
Present Truth, June 14, 1900

ON ACCOUNT of our fallen condition and limited knowledge we have a vocabulary vastly different from what it would have been if we had always known the Lord. In the perfect state there will be no such word as "supernatural;" for that which is commonly called "supernatural" is only the Divinely natural—the real. That which we call natural—namely the very few things that we are familiar with—is almost nothing in comparison with the infinity that is above and beyond the limited range of our senses.

Now that which is most common, that is, that which exists in the greatest profusion, is most certainly in reality the most natural. The trouble is that we are too gross to appreciate it. When we ourselves have become spiritual, partakers of the Divine nature, abiding in God, and so looking at things from His point of view, then the so-called supernatural is to us perfectly natural. It is not that familiarity produces indifference, but that, knowing God, we expect Him to do great things. The grace of God, when received and appreciated, will enlarge and elevate our language as well as our thoughts and our actions.

39. Life in Its Purity

Present Truth, August 9, 1900
Original title: Front Page



Fresh from the throne of glory, bright in its crystal gleam,
Bursts out the living fountain, swells on the living stream;
Blessed river, Let me ever feast my eyes on thee.

Stream of life and gladness, spring of all health and peace,
No harps by thee hang silent, nor happy voices cease;
Tranquil river, Let me ever sit and sing by thee.

River of God, I greet thee, not now afar, but near,
My soul to Thy still water hastes in its thirstings here;
Holy river, Let me ever drink of only thee.

(Horatius Bonar, "Fresh from the Throne of Glory," 1859)

HOW many hundreds of thousands of people have sung the words accompanying this beautiful picture, and still sing them, and will continue to sing them! There is inspiration in them. As you sing them, are they the outpouring of your own heart, or are they mere words that you read from a book, or that you have learned to repeat parrot-like? If it is the latter, then the singing is but empty sound, with no worship in it: if you sing the words with the Spirit and with the understanding,[337]—if they come from your heart, expressing your own feelings,—then the song is as pure worship of God as is the song of the lark, or of the angels in heaven.

Can it be so, that these words are not mere figures of speech? That we may really see the river of God, and sit by it, and drink of its clear water? Most certainly. Whoever worships only figuratively, whether it be in song or prayer or anything else, is still under the old covenant, with the veil still remaining over his heart. When one turns to the Lord, there is a removing of the veil:[338] that which is figurative and unreal passes away, and we have to do only with Divine realities. How strange it is that people will talk about the figurative, shadowy worship of the Jews of old, and will discourse fluently of how the…

> …old dispensation has passed away, and that we no longer worship God under forms and shadows, no longer have a figurative sanctuary,

–and yet will use words in their songs and prayers that they do not expect to be taken literally. It is a sad fact that, although the way into the Holiest is open, few who profess to worship the Lord come really into His temple, to His living throne, where they can see the…

> **Revelation 22**
> [1] …pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

[337] *1 Corinthians* 14:15.
[338] *2 Corinthians* 3:14-16.

There are few who really see God, yet the sight is for all who are purified by living faith; and certainly every one who can see God can see the river of life that proceeds from Him.

Psalm 104
[10] He sends the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.
[11] They give drink to every beast of the field, the wild asses quench their thirst.
[12] By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.
[13] He waters the hills from His chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your works.

Psalm 65
[9] You visit the earth, and water it: You greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water: You prepare them corn, when You have so provided it.
[10] You water the ridges thereof abundantly: You settle the furrows thereof: You make it soft with showers: You bless the springing thereof.
[11] You crown the year with your goodness; and your paths drop fatness.
[12] They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

Read these two passages of Scripture, and you cannot help seeing that the only meaning that there is in them is that the earth is watered from the river of God, the river of water of life, that proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Every day God is pouring out upon the earth the blessings of heaven, blessings direct from himself, and is pouring out himself and His free Spirit in the gift of life, yet people do not know it. They repeat the words that declare it, and yet are unconscious of it. If all the professed people of God but really believed that which they profess, the whole world would be transformed for them, and would in very deed soon become entirely new.

There are things to be seen that these natural eyes of our body cannot discern. With these eyes we cannot see God, for they are but physical, and spiritual things are spiritually discerned;[339] but we are to be spiritual now and here, before we receive spiritual bodies, and so are to be able to discern spiritual things. With our natural eyes we can see the springs of water coming from the rocks in the mountains, or gushing out of the earth in the plain; but when we use the reason that God has given us, we know that the earth is not the real source of that water. Whence does the water come, that we see springing forth so pure and refreshing from the rock? The answer is given in the Bible, and if we really *thought*, we should know it without being told. When the children of Israel were in the desert, and were famishing for water, God told Moses to smite the rock in Horeb, the dry place, and as he did so, water gushed forth and ran like a river. The rock itself had no water, but the Lord stood upon it, and the people…

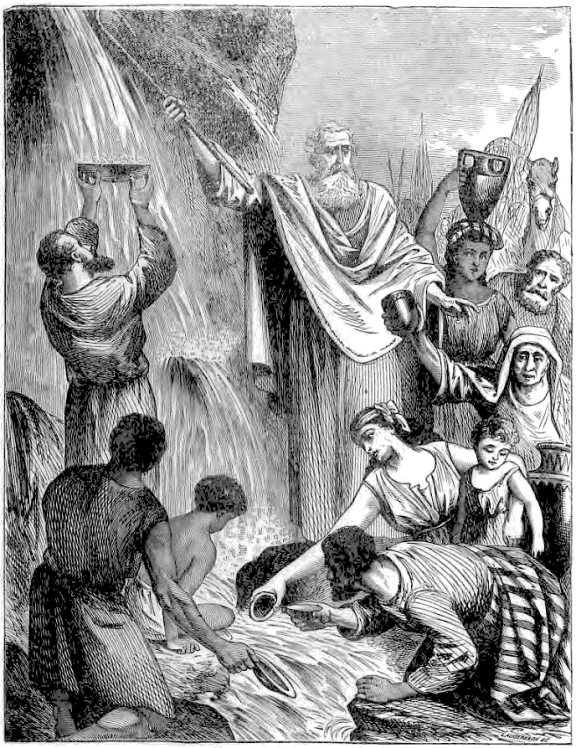
> **1 Corinthians 10**
> [4] …drank of that spiritual Rock that went with them; and that Rock was Christ.

He is the producer of all things. From Him everything comes. The water that we drink day by day comes from Him as directly as does the river of water of life that John saw, and is in reality but the overflow from it. If we believe this simple truth, and know that we drink only of the river of life, we shall have new life day by day, and that daily life will be the life of heaven. Only so can we live pure, Christian lives.

We must consciously receive the life of the Lord, and then we shall allow Him to direct it in His own way. Then will He see to it that our ways are right. But we must remember that the life has been perverted and put to base uses, and that therefore it is necessary for us to be careful that we take the life in its purity,

> …fresh from the throne of glory.[340]

[339] *1 Corinthians* 2:13-14.
[340] *The Review and Herald*, March 31, 1910.



See in the picture how the different persons are eagerly taking the water. Many are scooping it up from the stream that runs along on the ground; but one is not satisfied with that. He is holding his vessel high up, to catch the water just as it issues from the rock, before it comes in contact with the earth. Even so should we do all the time. In the case in the desert there was not room for all at one time to take the water just as it gushed forth; but all can come at one and the same time to the throne of grace, and all can take the life that is given, before it is defiled by the curse.

We cannot afford to be indifferent in this matter. God gives His life to us by various means, and under various forms—in food and drink and light and air, as well as by the Holy Spirit aside from any of these agencies; and in taking these gifts of God we should be most solicitous to receive them directly from His hand. We must see that we get the life in the simplest and purest possible form, before it has been loaded with the curse. Our diligence and care in this respect will indicate and be the measure of our desire to receive the Holy Spirit, which seals us children of the Everlasting Father.

40. Good Trees and Good Fruit

Present Truth, September 13, 1900
Original title: Front Page

THIS is the season of the ripened fruit, when the trees fulfill the promise of spring, and both eye and palate delight in the richness of autumn. Those who are privileged to spend the season in the country have a treat that is beyond all comparison; and even the dwellers in the city can share in the harvest rejoicing. How sad it is that so few are simple enough in their lives to enjoy these bounties of nature to the full.

Why does the Lord let the earth bring forth fruit in abundance? The answer will at once be returned:

> "For people to eat,"

–although unfortunately, many regard it as a luxury which one can well do without, rather than a staple article of diet; but the answer does not tell the whole of the truth; for God has other purposes besides merely keeping people alive on this earth.

In the school of Christ all sciences are summed up in one, namely salvation. There is only one thing for men to learn in this world, and that is, how to use it so as to gain the world to come. He who has not learned this, is utterly ignorant and destitute, even though he be called, "Teacher," and have millions of money; for:

> **Mark 8**
> [36] What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

He who has salvation in Christ, has...

> **Colossians 2**
> [3] ...all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,

–and "unsearchable riches"[341] that can never be diminished.

Since salvation is the one thing needful, it is evident that the fruit-bearing trees are for the purpose of helping to teach us that science, and to enable us to gain its riches. Men are plants, trees, the tillage of the Lord. God has planted us in this world, to be…

Isaiah 61
[3] …trees of righteousness,

–in order that we may be…

Philippians 1
[11] …filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Just as the fruit trees bring forth their beautiful and desirable fruit, so are men to bring forth righteous deeds.

The tree does not exert itself to bear fruit; it simply and naturally is in it. Being a good tree, planted in good soil, and having good care, sunshine, water, etc., it must of necessity yield good fruit.

Matthew 7
[18] A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Can we then live wholly at our ease, and be wholly irresponsible, leaving things to work themselves out? Not by any means. Our part is to yield ourselves to God, and to keep ourselves passive in His hands every moment. Here is an opportunity for the exertion of all the power of God has given as. Do you not know that when a man who cannot swim, is in deep water, it is far more difficult for him to hold himself perfectly still, than it is for the swimmer to bear him to the shore? That will illustrate our part in submitting ourselves to God, to be used by Him to His glory.

[341] *Ephesians* 3:8.

One thing should fill us with joy and courage, and that is that a good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit.

"But I am not good,"

–is the complaint. True; no one is good, except God; but He has give unto us…

2 Peter 1
[4] …exceeding great and precious promises,

–that by them we might be made partakers of His nature.

1 John 1
[9] If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

While we constantly remember our sinfulness and weakness, and confess it to God, He takes it away, and fills us with the fruits of righteousness. Which would you rather do: try to make yourself and others believe that you are without fault, and be corrupt, or acknowledge that you are sinful, with no power to do good, and have God work His perfection in you?

41. Harmonious Discord

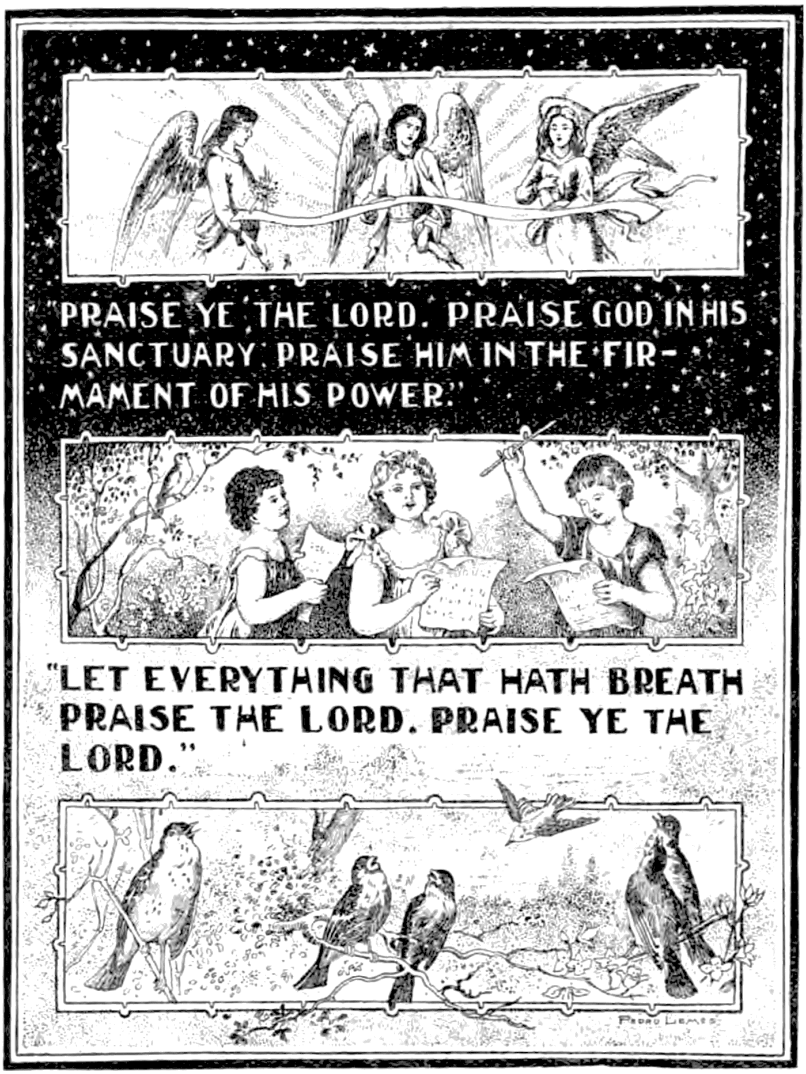
Present Truth, December 20, 1900

A FEW weeks ago I was walking through Finsbury Park, when my attention was drawn to what seemed to be a bird concert in a thicket near by. It was as though a hundred birds were singing in harmony such as can be produced on this earth only by birds, each one pouring forth the fullness of his soul in a flood of melody. It seemed so strange and so delightful to hear on a November afternoon the music of a spring morning, and I went near, to try to see the songsters. As I changed my position, the music suddenly stopped; not a bird was to be seen; but the sounds that before were the sweetest music were now the horrible noise of a locomotive standing outside the station, letting off steam.

There could be no mistake; and I passed on to get out of the range of the shrill, discordant sounds made by the escaping steam, when suddenly they again became transformed into the sweetest bird-notes, and the harmony was entrancing. The notes of the sparrow, the black-bird, and the thrush, together with others, could be distinctly discerned. I stood and listened to the concert for awhile, enjoying it nonetheless because I knew that the throat that produced it was iron, and not flesh and blood. Then as I walked on, the concert was broken up, and only the sibilant steam was heard.

Here was a revelation. I had twice stepped into a place where all the sound waves focused, so that there was harmony where elsewhere there was discord. Then I thought, Thus it is that God can make the wrath of man to praise Him, and can cause us to find joy and comfort in the wildest discord of earth. And, on the other hand, how often when our nerves are jarred by irritating voices and sounds, we might find melody if we were only in the proper position. May it not be that often what seems discord, is the voice of God speaking comfort to us, but we are not soothed by it, because we are not in the focus of His voice?

In You the long-lost note is found
    Which fled from earth's accursed ground.
You are the one and only key
    By which returns all harmony;
For love alone can tune the heart,
    And unison with heaven impart.[342]



[342] *Unknown.*

42. A Dark Outlook

Present Truth, January 3, 1901

NEVER was there a darker time or a more gloomy outlook than when the earth was created.

Genesis 1
[2] The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

"Surely there was not any prospect of a crop,"

–the farmer would say. If people had been there, there would certainly have been many who would doubtingly have asked,

"Who will show us any good?"

Truly might it be said,

"Everything looks dark."

But things were not as black as they seemed.

Psalm 139
[12] The darkness and the light are both alike to [God],

–and He said,

Genesis 1
[3] Let there be light; and there was light.

2 Corinthians 4
[6] [He] commanded the light to shine out of darkness.

Out of the very darkness itself, He brought light. This is written for our comfort, and hope,[343]

[6] For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts; to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

[343] *Romans* 15:4.

The darkness is always past, and the true Light ever shines,[344] to those who know the Lord; for…

Psalm 112
[4] Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness.

Therefore,

Isaiah 60
[1] Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.
[2] For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you.

Colossians 1
[13] [God] has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

So no matter how dark the prospect may be, if we abide in Christ, and allow His works to be manifested in us,

Isaiah 58
[10] …our light shall rise in obscurity, and our darkness shall be as the noonday.

What a blessed Gospel that can make even darkness a light for our feet!

[344] *1 John* 2:8.

43. Wonders of Frost

Present Truth, February 28, 1901

NOWHERE is the absolute wisdom and immeasurable greatness of God in the least of His works more strikingly revealed than in the pure perfection of the snow and ice crystals.

Job 38
[29] Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven who has given it birth?

–was one of the questions which the Lord asked Job out of the whirlwind. And the answer is given:

Job 37
[10] By the breath of the Lord frost is given.

Molded by the Divine breath, upon the perfect form of every crystal is stamped the message,

Matthew 5
[48] Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

44. The Word the Seed

Present Truth, March 28, 1901

Genesis 1

[11] And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

[12] And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind.

THAT which was put into the ground in the beginning to cause the earth to bring forth grass, herbs, and trees, was the Word of God. The Word, therefore, is the real seed, the life of the visible seed.

Every seed that sprouts is a demonstration of the power of that Word to triumph over difficulties, to remove all obstacles, and to give life to the dead. Silently, without observation, the Word of life within the seed operates, the dead, hard shell gives way before it, and the new life manifests itself. Even so,

Luke 17

[21] ...the kingdom of God is within you.

It comes not with observation, but its power is infinite.

45. The Kingdom of God

Present Truth, May 16, 1901

CREATION has but one Lord, and one law.

Psalm 103

[19] The Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all.

It is told of Frederick the Great, of Prussia, that he entered a school, and began to examine the children. He picked up from the desk a piece of stone, and said to the children,

"To what kingdom does this belong?"

They said,

"To the mineral kingdom."

There was a plant there, and he picked it up and said,

"To what kingdom does this belong?"

They said,

"To the vegetable kingdom."

He then said to them,

"To what kingdom do I belong?"

He was the king, and they did not like to say, "To the animal kingdom;" so they said,

"To God's kingdom."

That was correct; and that was the answer they might have given to the other questions as well. Everything is a part of God's kingdom.

There is, then, one law for all the universe, and that is the law of God's life. The life of the Lord is the law for all creation; and the plants, yea, and the animals as well, follow that law; not be-

cause they know how to read, not because there is a law book which they consult to find out how they should grow. No; the life of the Lord is in them, and that is their law.

Matthew 6
[26] Behold the birds of the air.

The Lord said to Job:

Job 39
[26] Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?

Of the ostrich He said:

[17] God has deprived her of wisdom, neither has He imparted to her understanding.

So we see that it is God who imparts understanding even to the birds. It does not come to them by accident.

How do the birds that go south in the autumn know where to go? How do they know they ought to go? How do they know winter is coming? Or, having learned that, how do they know the way there? How do they know the way back again?

"Oh," you say, "they have been there before, and those that have been there before lead the others."

But, mark you, every year the birds that fly south first are the young birds, that have never been there before. It is always the younger birds that lead the way. The birds that are born this year, will next autumn fly south before the old birds start. That is a fact demonstrated by observation. How do they know where to go? Who taught them?

"Oh, that is the law of their nature."

Ah, where did they learn that law? Where is the birds' law book, where are their chart and compass, so that they know the way to get there?



You call it instinct. Very good: call it so, if you please. Then it is evident that instinct is the highest law of man. Read:

Isaiah 11

[1] And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

[2] And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;
[3] And shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.

"Make him quick of understanding;" literally "make him *scent* the fear of the Lord." He will know it by his very nature. The fear of the Lord shall be instinctive with him, and that is the very highest and most perfect form of knowledge.

It is a marvelous thing as one stands on the deck of a steamer, at midnight, to think that through the darkness, and in the fog, that steamer keeps on its way across the trackless ocean, and we come, without varying one particle to the right or to the left, to the very harbor for which we started three thousand miles away. It takes years of hard study, and long practice afterward, to give a man the skill to guide a ship across the ocean; but a bird six months old will make its way across the ocean the first time it tries. When man is of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, he will know what to do the first time, although he never did it before, because God will work in him. He will…

Proverbs 2
[9] …understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity, yea, every good path.

You know that in the new heavens and the new earth, from one Sabbath to another, and from one new moon to another, all flesh shall appear before God to worship. They go up to Jerusalem from the uttermost parts of the earth, and they will not have a chart or compass to guide them; but every person, wherever he may be, will go directly to the place. All will then have instinct, the wisdom of the life of the Spirit of God in them.

In the 1st chapter of *Ezekiel* we have a picture of the throne of God, a living throne, pulsating with the life of God, sending it forth in a stream of life; it is a throne composed of living crea-

tures, and they go to the right, and they come and go like a flash of lightning,

> **Ezekiel 1**
> [20] Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, thither was their spirit to go,

–because the Spirit of life was in them. That is the way it is in God's kingdom, when He is allowed His own way, and reigns supreme. That is the working out of the law of God, the life of God in the creature.

When man, who is the throne of God, has the Spirit of God fully dwelling in Him, that one universal, undivided Spirit thinks God's thought in him, and guides him, just the same as when my brain thinks, my foot moves. My brain thinks, and I move; whithersoever my spirit is to go, thither my foot is to go, because the same spirit is in it. So when we are joined to the Head, then as God thinks, the body will move.

The perfect man is the man who does not think for himself, but lets God do his thinking for him. He is a free man; a free thinker, if you please. It is God's presence that makes a man free. When we get away from God, we come into bondage; only when we hold ourselves as servants of God, are we free. God is to think through our brains, and move through our nerves and muscles, controlling every movement of the body. We yield ourselves voluntarily to God, that He may live in us, using the voluntary muscles just as He does the involuntary muscles; then everything is according to the will of God, all things are of God, and God's life is perfectly manifested. That is the law of God perfectly established in His kingdom. It is the constitution of God. An unwritten law? Nay; a law written on the fleshly tables of the heart, by the Spirit of the living God.[345]

[345] *2 Corinthians* 3:3.

46. Redemption Through Creation

Present Truth, November 20, 1902

ALL the way from Egypt to Canaan, God was giving Object Lessons to His people in the wilderness. He did mighty and wonderful works right before their eyes, to teach them of His power that was working for them in all creation. The pillar of cloud revealed Him who…

Isaiah 40
[22] …stretches out the heavens like a curtain.

The pillar of fire showed that it was He who has…

Psalm 8 [RV]
[1] …set His glory upon the heavens…

–that they may declare it in all the earth. The dividing of the sea showed the power of the Creator, who holds the waters in His hand,

Job 38
[10] …and set bars and doors,
[11] And said, Thus far shall you come, but no further;
And here shall your proud waves be stayed.

47. The Christmas Sheaf

Present Truth, December 19, 1901



THE scene presented in our picture is a common one in Norway. In that northland the winters are very long and severe, and for months the snow lies deep on the ground. The country is mountainous, like Switzerland, but much more rugged, for the mountains are rocky, and but a very small portion of the land is suitable for cultivation. Nevertheless the Norwegian farmers re-

member their friends and neighbors, the birds, and in harvest provide a Christmas dinner for them. The harvest may be scanty, but a generous sheaf of grain, or a bundle of grass well filled with seeds, is laid aside; at Christmas time it is fastened to a pole set up on the barn or some other building, and the few birds that have not flown to a warmer climate gather to it and enjoy a feast. Even in midsummer one can see the remnants of this winter feast, for the bundle of straw, thoroughly picked, remains until it is replaced by a new one, at the following Christmas season.

It is a beautiful custom, and shows us what care God has for the small creatures which to most people seem so insignificant and so worthless.

> "But," someone will say, "it is the kind-hearted Norwegian, and not God, who thus provides a winter meal for the hungry birds."

Ah, do you not know that there is not a kindly thought in the heart of any soul on earth, that is not placed there by the great Father of all? Do you not know that every gentle deed is but a manifestation of the life of Him who is love itself?

> **James 1**
> [17] Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

If it were not for God who gives the seed, and waters it, the Norwegian farmers would have nothing to divide with the birds; and if it were not for the love which led Him to give himself for us, they would not feel any desire to share their small store with their feathered neighbors.

There is no necessity for this Norwegian custom in our country, where the fields are always green, and the birds can find plenty of seeds and berries in the entire winter; but there are creatures of more value than many sparrows, to whom we can give a portion of that which God has bestowed on us. He gave himself for us, in

order that, and having Him, we might have something to give to others.

Is it not wonderful that the great God of the universe is willing to take us, as it were, into partnership with himself, making us His representatives, and the agents of His lovingkindness? Since this is His purpose for us, let us not reject His glorious offer, by thinking only upon ourselves. Let us now, if we have not already done so, begin to learn…

2 Corinthians 8

[9] …the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

48. The Message of the Spring

Present Truth, March 27, 1902

WHY do we never doubt, no matter how backward the season, nor how long and tedious the delay, the ultimate springing forth and unfolding of the hidden life in nature? It is because we know that life is there, in power that no adverse conditions can ultimately control. We know that the apparent death of winter is not death indeed; it has been hallowed into sleep by the power of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life of all things.

Matthew 9
[24] Not dead, but sleeping,

–He proclaims over the seemingly lifeless earth; and…

John 11
[40] If you will believe, you shall see the glory of God,

–in the restoration of all things. The curse which blights the earth; withering the flowers, stripping the trees, and casting all nature into this death-like sleep, shall not for ever hold it in bondage. Its cruel chains have been burst asunder by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Every spring season is a parable telling that the sealed stone of His earthly prison has been rolled away, and the Tree of Life has sprung forth anew, to…

Isaiah 27
[6] …blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit.

In "the Gospel according to the Winter," we read of death and darkness—the story of the frost. But "the Gospel according to the Spring" follows with the renewal of light and life—the story of the Resurrection; the triumphant assurance that…

1 Corinthians 15
[54] Death is swallowed up in victory!

It is the Gospel of hope. By it we are…

1 Peter 1
[3] ...begotten again unto a lively hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Why then should we despair or grieve, though the marks of the curse may be never so apparent in our bodies; though he who has the power of death holds us with the cords of our sins, or with the death-like grip of disease? Christ has the keys of death and the grave,[346] that are able to set us free, and He says,

Hosea 13
[14] O death, I will be your plagues; O grave, I will be your destruction.

The decree has gone forth; death's doom is writ; and we believe we shall see the glory of God in our emancipation. The power of His life is even now, though unseen, working deliverance for us, and seeming delay will but emphasize the transformation.

Hosea 6
[3] His going forth as the morning.

Isaiah 25
[8] He will swallow up death in victory, [He] will wipe away the tears from off all faces.

This is the message of the brave snowdrop, hopeful crocus, and joyous daffodil, and of the buds now everywhere swelling and bursting with the life that they cannot contain.

The spring is also a promise of the final complete restoration of the whole earth through the all-conquering life of the Creator. When He thus makes all things new,[347] her...

Isaiah 51
[3] ...wilderness [will be] like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord.

[346] *Revelation* 1:18.
[347] *Revelation* 21:5.

Isaiah 35
[1] The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them,
and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Come, for creation groans,
  Impatient of your stay,
Worn-out by these long years of ill,
  These ages of delay.

Come, spoil the strong man's house,
  Bind him and cast him thence:
Show Yourself stronger than the strong,
  Yourself Omnipotence.

Come, Lord, and take away
  The curse, the sin, the stain;
And make this blighted world of ours
  Your own fair world again.[348]

[348] Horatius Bonar, Hymn: *Come, Lord, and Tarry Not*, 1846.

49. All Are Your Servants

Present Truth, May 1, 1902

ALL things serve those who serve the Lord. This is really but another way of saying that:

Romans 8
[28] All things work together for good to them that love God.

A striking illustration of this is given in the account of Peter's deliverance from prison, which is the basis of the article on page 275.[349] We read that the outer, iron gate…

Acts 12
[10] …opened to them of his own accord.

Not only in every living thing, but even in the unorganized, inanimate creation, God's life is present and manifested in the fact that it holds together.[350] The same God that makes our bodies of the dust move,

Acts 17
[29] For in Him we live, and move,

–can make any portion of matter move at His will. Man is a servant, but was made to be ruler over all the rest of God's creation.

Luke 17
[21] The kingdom of God is within,

–and when a man has a complete mastery over the matter composing his own flesh, he is lord over all, and all things serve him.

1 Corinthians 3
[21] All things are yours,

–when you are Christ's.

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[349] PP Editor's note: This article, "A Captive Set at Liberty," (Acts 12:1-19) is found in the collection *Paul and the Early Church*.
[350] See *Romans* 1:20; *Colossians* 1:16-17.

50. A Full Heart

Present Truth, May 15, 1902

Acts 14

[17] He left not himself without witness, in that He did good...filling our hearts with food and gladness.

DID you ever hear anybody say that his heart was full of joy? Have you never felt so yourself? It is a very common expression. But you are not so familiar with the idea of a heart filled with food; yet you are familiar with the *fact*, even more so than with the fullness of joy, but unless your heart had always been filled with food you would not have lived.

It will be well worth your while to think of this thing, and familiarize yourself with the idea. Paul says that in God's witness to himself, He gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons,

[17] ...filling our hearts with food and gladness.

We have accepted the food as a matter of course, yet have often refused to be glad; while the gift of the food, bearing as it does the life of the crucified and risen Lord, ought to be a source of constant joy; for every breath that we breathe, every morsel of food we eat, every drop of water we drink, is God's assurance of pardon and acceptance. It is the glad news of salvation.

A friend wrote to us that the statement in a recent number of *Present Truth* that the blood that filled the body of the poor woman who touched the Lord, flowed from Him to her, "needs some explaining." We cannot explain the mystery of God in the flesh, for it is the mystery of life; but the *fact* needs no more explanation than that we live.

The woman's case was simply this: She was constantly losing blood, and so was dying. She said that if she could but touch the Lord she should be healed, and it was even so. As soon as she touched Him she was healed of that plague—made whole—filled

with new, fresh life. She received that which before she lacked, namely life-blood.

All can readily see that she received new life; and all that she received came from the Lord; for as she felt herself made whole, He felt power go out of Him. His fullness supplied her lack. But what she lacked was life,—real life, blood,—and that was what she received. No human eye saw the transfer; but it was made, nevertheless, and the new blood that she received came from the Lord.

Blood is not necessarily always red in color, neither is it always visible. The blood of a tree—the sap—is clear and white. The blood of the grape is not always red; sometimes it is white; yet when we drink it, and it goes almost directly into our blood vessels, it is red. There are living creatures whose blood is colorless. This does not explain the case of the woman; but it is said that in order to emphasize the fact that the blood can exist under various forms. Blood is life, no matter what its form or appearance, or even if it has no form, and is invisible. It may exist as pure spirit, and it was thus that it flowed from Christ to the woman.

1 John 5
[8] There are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one.

Every miracle that Jesus performed was for the purpose of teaching us God's way; it was to make a see what God is constantly doing. He turned water into wine, in order that we may know that all the fruit of the vine is from Him. He fed the multitude with bread, in order that they and we might see that the bread that we eat day by day comes directly from His hand, yea, from himself, for all who have eyes could see that day in the desert, as the bread grew and multiplied in the hands of Jesus, that they were feeding from Him. Jesus was that day demonstrating that His flesh meat indeed, and making the people experience the reality of it.

Acts 14
[17] ...filling our hearts with food.

A strange expression, is it not? And yet when we stop to think of it, it seems perfectly natural. You say that our hearts are filled with blood. True enough; but where does the blood come from? We take it in at every meal, and with every breath. People think of the food as going to the stomach. So it does, but not for the stomach's own benefit. The stomach and other digestive organs simply break the food up, so it may be absorbed into the body. They pass it on to the heart, which in turn passes it on to the whole body—bone, grain, and muscle. The food that we eat, goes in the form of blood to every tissue in the body.

That day in the wilderness Jesus filled the hearts of the people with food that came from His very being. That is what He is doing every day for us. So the two miracles—the feeding of the five thousand, and the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, make plain to us the fact that the blood that nourishes our bodies is His life flowing through us.

His life is salvation, and salvation is joy and gladness. When we remember that His life has power to overcome all sin, then we know that there is not the slightest need for us to fall under any temptation, for the power is in us, filling us, that is abundantly able to resist it. The disciples after Pentecost…

Acts 2
[46] …did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

We may also, for with each meal God gives us the joy of His salvation.

The Apostle John, after telling of the manifestation of the life that was from the beginning, and that is given to us, continues:

1 John 1
[4] And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

Part of God's witness to himself is that He fills our hearts with gladness. We are not to depend upon a feeling of gladness, as evidence of our acceptance; but to lay hold of the life by faith, allow-

ing the joy of it to fill us. Does God satisfy your mouth with good things?[351] Then let your heart be correspondingly full of gladness.

Colossians 3
[15] Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

Yes, *let it.*

> O Lord, my soul rejoiceth in Thee,
> My tongue Thy goodness is telling;
> I've found Thy love so precious to me,
> My heart with its rapture is swelling.
>
> Wonderful love! O Wonderful love!
> I'll sing of its fullness for ever;
> I've found the way that leadeth above,
> The way to the life-giving river.[352]

[351] *Psalm* 103:5.
[352] Fanny Crosby, *Wonderful Love.*

51. Natural Miracles

Present Truth, June 26, 1902
Original title: Back Page

GOD provided food for Jacob and his family in Canaan, and when that failed, He sent them into Egypt and fed them with the corn that Joseph had stored there. Then Israel went into the desert where there was no food, and God gave them bread from heaven to eat.

God gave the corn that grew from the ground as truly, and by as miraculous power, as He gave the manna, and the water from the rock. Men who can see that nature is only God working, will also be able to see, back of all providences, the ability of God to give direct.

The man who sees that it is the Almighty power of God that takes the water from the ground and changes it into wine in a vine, ought also to be able to believe that God can do the same thing in a vessel if need be.

52. A Well-Developed Tree

Present Truth, October 16, 1902
Original title: Back Page

THERE is something majestic in the appearance of a well-developed tree; and everybody must have felt the restfulness that there is in the forest, where the trees stand closely together in their native soil. As one has said:

> "They seem so to belong to the place where they are, and their life seems so steadfast; they know what to expect, and go through each years' work so steadily."

Well, we need not envy them, nor repine at our lot; for they are examples of God's purpose for us.

Psalm 92
[12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
[13] Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God.

God gives His Spirit freely to His people,

Isaiah 61
[3] ...that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified;

–and He says,

Isaiah 65
[22] As the days of a tree are the days of my people.

53. Gospel Liberty

Present Truth, December 4, 1902

GOSPEL liberty is the liberty that God gives men through the Gospel. It expresses God's idea of freedom.

- It is the freedom seen in nature and in all the works of God's hands.
- It is the freedom of the winds, blowing where they list.
- It is the freedom of the flowers, scattered everywhere through wood and meadow.
- It is the freedom of the birds, soaring unrestrained through the heavens.
- It is the freedom of the sunbeam, shooting from its parent orb and playing on cloud and mountain top.
- It is the freedom of the celestial orbs, sweeping ceaselessly on through infinite space.

This is the freedom that flows out from the great Creator through all His works. It is sin that has produced what is narrow and contracted and circumscribed,—that has erected boundary lines, and made man stingy and niggardly. But sin is to be removed, and then perfect liberty will be realized once more in every part of creation. Even now this freedom may be tasted, by having sin removed from the heart. To enjoy this freedom through eternity is the glorious privilege now offered in the Gospel to all men. Who that claims to love liberty can let this opportunity pass unimproved?

54. The Power That Works in Us

Present Truth, February 26, 1903

LOOKING upon a leafless tree in midwinter, and thinking upon the mysterious change soon to take place in it,—that in a little while the leaves would shoot forth, and the flowers and fruit appear,—the humble monk known as "Brother Lawrence" gained a sense of the presence, providence, and power of God, such as he never before experienced, and never afterward lost. The few letters that he left behind him, in which he told his experiences, have awakened a deep interest. He said that…

> This view perfectly set him loose from the world, and kindled in him such a love for God, that he could not tell whether it had increased during the more than forty years he had lived since.

In the sanctifying power of the holy presence thus revealed to him, he lived henceforth, until the convent kitchen where he performed the humble duties of a cook,

> …became as another garden of Eden, and every day as one of the days of heaven upon earth.

Thus does the voice of God speak to the soul of man, if he will but give ear, revealing His eternal power and Godhead in…

Romans 1

[20] …the things that are made.

All things, even in the inanimate creation, show His power and His wisdom; but that which in nature most reveals "the real presence," is the constant variation of its phenomena according to the seasons. The bursting forth of the spring life in all its fresh beauty; the rich glory of the summer fullness; the perfection and fruitfulness of autumn; even the apparent inactivity and sleep of winter, declare Him near, for…

Job 37

[10] By the breath of God frost is given,

–and it is His voice that…

Psalm 29 [RV]
[9] …strips the forests bare.

> The rolling year
> Is full of You. Forth in the pleasing spring
> Your beauty walks, your tenderness and love;…
> Then comes your glory in the summer months,
> With light and heat refulgent; then your sun
> Shoots full perfection through the swelling year;…
> Your bounty smiles in autumn unconfined,
> And spreads a common feast for all that lives.[353]

The Word which brought forth the trees of Eden, and developed them into perfect beauty, has never ceased to sound through the earth, and…

Psalm 19
[3] There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

Every sprouting seed and swelling bud is a vibration; every leaf a whisper; every blossom an echo; and every seed-pod a prophecy as well as a fulfillment of the Almighty Word which in the beginning clothed the earth with verdure, and filled it with life.

After the rest of winter, the life seems to burst forth with renewed vigor, and a choir of living, growing things make His voice to be heard through the earth. After the silence of night, the morning song of the birds, faint at first, but swelling to a full chorus, proclaims the dawn. So after the silence and sleep of nature through winter's night, the dawn of the new year is heralded and ushered in with a multitude of voices all proclaiming the one word of creation—the Gospel of the power of God to renew and give by His life.

The first note in this psalm of nature comes from the brave little snowdrop. Awaking early, while the ground is still hard and bare.

[353] James Thomson, "A Hymn," from *The Seasons*, 1730.

The trees leafless and apparently dead, and the winds chill, it smiles upon the dull world, and calls forth answering smiles of hope from the beholders. Emblem of courage, its fairy bells seem to ring up its sleeping sisters to arise and by the power of the Word within them bring the spring for which they are waiting. And soon the crocus and the daffodil respond and join the strain, the violet adds its shy, sweet mote, followed by the anemone and others in their turn, and the spring chorus resounds through the renewed earth.

That the plants influence and encourage each other by their growth, is shown to be an actual fact in the following paragraph from *Flashlights on Nature:*

> In early spring, when the ground just teems with sprouting seeds and swelling buds, with growing bulbs or shooting tubers, the temperature of the soil is sensibly raised; and this very heat, evolved by germination, becomes itself in time a cause of more germination; each seed and root and bulb and sucker helps to warm and start all the others. Spring largely depends upon the warmth thus produced. The earth during this orgy of growth, is warmer by a good deal than the air about it; warmer even than it is in summer weather—indeed were it not for the number of plants that thus start growing at once, growth would be almost impossible in very cold countries. Like roosting fowls, they warm one another.

Let the spring message of hope, courage, and good cheer strengthen our hearts for quiet and confident waiting upon God, which will result in His doing for us…

> **Ephesians 3**
> [20] …exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according *to the power that works in us.*

We may learn from the plants to "warm one another" by the growth of grace in our hearts through the power working in us. Then shall we be His witnesses, "signs and wonders," an encour-

agement and strength to others to submit to the working of the same almighty Word, which is able to make us…

Hebrews 13
[21] …perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight.

55. A Lesson from a Mushroom

Present Truth, June 4, 1903

The *Evening News* of May 18th contained the following interesting item:

> A curious instance of the wonderful force exerted by growing vegetation is related in this week's *Gardeners' Magazine*. A few weeks ago some half-hardy annuals were sown in a frame in a garden at Beckenham. Some days afterward signs of cracking were observed in the brickwork, and gradually a block, weighing in the aggregate one and a half cwt., was pushed out of position. After cutting out several bricks a mass of mushrooms was found, three pounds three ounces in weight, growing in the center of the wall.

Everybody knows the fragile nature of mushrooms. A very light touch is all that is needed to break a piece of the top, or to break the entire top off, and even the stalk seems to be composed of little particles set one upon another, with nothing whatever to bind them together. Yet this tender plant was bearing more than fifty-two times its own weight, and lifting it out of its place. Even this, however, does not express the full measure of strength exhibited; for it must be remembered that the one and a half hundred weight of brickwork was fast in the wall, so that if a man had wanted to dislodge it he would have had to strike it with a hammer or ax many times with great force. Yet the cluster of

mushrooms accomplished the task with the greatest ease, and without a sound. How could it do it?

The answer is plain to all who have eyes to behold God in His works. Nothing has any force in itself.

Psalm 62
[11] Power pertains unto God.

Romans 13
[1] There is no power but of God.

The power by which everything grows is the power of "the Spirit of life."[354] It is the power of the Word which in the beginning said,

Genesis 1
[11] Let the earth bring forth grass.

In the case before us we have a striking illustration of the statement that God's word is…

Jeremiah 23
[29] …like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces.

When God has said that a thing shall be, nothing can hinder it. And it makes no difference how frail the agent through whom the Word works. It is the Word and not the thing, that does the work; therefore the most wonderful things can be accomplished through the weakest things. The weaker the agent, the more striking the manifestation of God's power, and the more plainly can we see that it is God alone who does the work. These things are brought to our notice in order that we may learn to trust in God's power, without taking the weakness of our bodies into account.

A mushroom has not much likeness to a great building; yet in the growth of these mushrooms we have a picture of the building of Solomon's temple. No sound was heard in the moving of that weight of brickwork; in like manner the mighty structure that

[354] *Romans* 8:2.

Solomon reared for the worship of God came together without sound of ax or hammer. And the likeness is carried still farther; for when the temple was to be rebuilt, the people, who were poor and weak, were encouraged by these words:

Zechariah 4
[6] Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.
[7] Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

That is always the way with God's buildings. Our bodies are His temples, and they grow in the same way, by His Spirit that dwells in us. Thus we are built up for God's eternal habitation. The mushroom bearing its heavy load shows us how, when God works in us…

Philippians 2
[13] …both to will and to do of His good pleasure,

–we can do all things; and however severe the temptation or heavy the burden, He provides with it the…

1 Corinthians 10
[13] …way to escape, that [we] may be able to bear it.

XII. Come, Let Us Reason Together

Miscellaneous Gospel Articles

1892 – 1903

1. Every Man His Own Saviour

Advent Review, February 2 & 9, 1892
Alternate title: Scientific Morality

Advent Review, February 2, 1892

A LITTLE BOOK of 150 pages, entitled the *Supreme Passions of Man*, published by the "Little Blue Book Company," Battle Creek, Michigan, has recently been placed in my hands, being recommended as an excellent book for circulation among, and by, Seventh-day Adventists. Its object is thus stated by the author in his preface:

> This book, which touches as science, religion, morality, medicine, etc., is meant to disseminate knowledge among all classes concerning the laws of nature under which passions arise, and by which they may be ruled.

The reason, doubtless, why it was thought that Seventh-day Adventists would be glad to help circulate the book, is that it professes to teach morality, and has much to say about the necessity of right habits of eating and drinking; and it is known that this people are greatly interested in what is called "health reform."

That any Seventh-day Adventist who honors the word of God, and whose faith in it is well instructed, could, after reading the book referred to, assist by any means in its circulation, is almost incredible. Therefore the object in briefly reviewing it, is not specially for the purpose of putting any on their guard against this particular book, but to use it as an illustration of a principle,—to show the inevitable result of "scientific" religion, that is, morality whose sole support is human wisdom and human strength. The book will be extensively quoted in the following review, but only as a text; and in this case the text will doubtless be longer than the sermon; for the application will be quite obvious. The quotations will abundantly show that the proper title of the book is not that which it bears, but the one at the head of this article.

The first point that will claim our attention is that what is generally known as "science," is in direct and open antagonism to true Christianity: that they are irreconcilable; and that whenever "science" professes that it is in perfect accord with religion, it simply substitutes itself for the true religion. The quotations that follow from this supposedly "scientific" book confirm this declaration. Having spoken of certain appetites and passions, the author says:

> Christianity has classed these passions among sins, and has in vain sought to subjugate them by spiritual efforts, appeals to reason and the emotions through gospel teachings, little dreaming that Christianity itself has unknowingly nurtured the evil from the outset, by its methods of living.[355]

The reader will notice that here a profession of Christianity is confounded with Christianity itself. This appears all through the book, and is most natural, because "science" must always utterly fail to comprehend true religion.

1 Corinthians 1
[21] ...the world by wisdom knew not God,

–and it never can. But again:

> The church speaks of these things, but seems to have failed to grasp their full importance and significance. It is with the deepest reverence, and not with a spirit of censure or disrespect, that the writer approaches the policy of Christendom in this matter. What more could have been expected? Science had to reveal the truth of the natural laws involved in the question at hand, before man [either in or out of the church] could consult them. It is therefore a question of slow progress. Medical science itself, which should lead on this subject, has been rather slow in seeing the bearing of the union of cells in man. . . . How could the medical world lead in the science of morals, when it is tardy in the science of medicine?[356]

[355] Page 54.
[356] Page 86.

On the very next page we read of…

> …the signal inefficacy of glorious religion to subject the passions of mankind to the will, under exclusively religious impulse.

This ignores, as unworthy of consideration by a "scientific mind," the great roll of men,

> **Hebrews 11**
> [33] Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, etc.

How was it possible that…

> **Acts 4**
> [13] …unlearned and ignorant men,

–should have been able to subdue the passions of the flesh, especially in an age when medical science had not revealed the truth of the natural laws involved in the question? True, the apostle Paul says that…

> **Galatians 5**
> [24] They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its passions and lusts,

–but modern science votes Paul a fraud. That this "scientific" book positively denies the possibility of there having been in the past any such righteous people as the Bible tells of, is seen by the following:

> It is no reflection on religious denominations and Christians in general to say that preaching most be aided by science before mankind can hope for the best resells in the morality of the people: for religion is, as proven by the sacred writings, expected to draw from science all the facts it may to advance the cause of righteousness.[357]

Both of these statements are in direct contradiction of the words of Paul, who says:

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[357] Page 100.

1 Corinthians 1

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.
18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.
20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?
21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.
22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:
23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;
24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 2

1 And I, brethren. when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.
2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.
4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:
5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.
6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:
7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
9 But as it is written, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither

have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.
[10] But God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God.
[11] For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God.
[12] Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.
[13] Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
[14] But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

So instead of its being proved by scripture that preachers are expected to draw from "science," it is proved not only that the gospel does not stand in need of its aid, but that it is a positive hindrance to the gospel. This does not mean that the revelations of God in nature are to be slighted; but there is a vast difference between them and what passes as "science."

Our author, however, who would have it understood that his title "M. D.," stands for *doctor of morals* as well as doctor of medicine, is not content with denying power to Christianity, but he even denies the power of God himself. On page 83 he pronounces it an error on the part of the church to hold that man…

> …in case of sanity, has full, untrammeled power to love, revere, trust, have faith, reject evil, control passions,. . . . by the grace of God operating in a mysterious, miraculous manner.

That may commend itself as eminently proper to a "scientific" mind, but the Christian mind can but regard it as not far removed from either blasphemy or atheism.

But let us read more of the dictum of "science":

> Religion bases its moral precepts on faith in spiritual laws: science bases them on knowledge of the natural laws. Science is therefore armed to fight the pernicious habits rooted in the flesh: it not only knows the symptoms, but the causes of moral diseases, and can prevent and cure them through the laws of nature.
>
> Religion is familiar with the symptoms chiefly: its remedies alone, as now prescribed, no matter how constant and energetic, seem to be able only to palliate; there is no positive evidence that they can cure radically, root and branch.[358]

Jesus Christ says:

> **John 15**
> [3] Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Of Zacharias and Elizabeth it is said that…

> **Luke 1**
> [6] …they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Paul said:

> **Acts 20**
> [32] And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

And Peter bears witness that God dealt with the Gentiles as with the Jews,

> **Acts 15**
> [9] …purifying their hearts by faith.

It needs no more than these texts to show that the acceptance of "scientific" morality is the positive contradiction of the Bible. According to the extracts last made from the little book before us, there is no excuse for the existence of religion, with its merely palliative measures, since science has come into the field fully

[358] Pages 96, 99.

armed and equipped and able to eradicate moral disease to the last fiber. That Christianity is considered by science as utterly useless, is shown by the following extract from the "scientific" work before us:

> Christianity, then, ignoring the laws of nature meant to regulate life in all its phases, cannot be expected ever to save the world from passions or from the vices arising from violations of these same laws and of the consequent degeneration that follows.[359]

This assumes that Christianity ignores the laws of life, which is not the case. It shows that the author has not the slightest idea of what Christianity is. When we examine the idea that the "scientific" mind has of Christianity, we shall not wonder so much at the positions taken. On pages 88, 89 the author endeavors to tell us what religion is. Speaking of certain things which religion has been able, without the aid of science, to find out are wrong, he says:

> But the efforts to demonstrate the unlawfulness of certain things in marriage, from a purely spiritual basis, must invoke the aid of persuasive influences on the emotional part of man, such as vivid descriptions of the hideousness of sin, the insult to a sublime God represented in the form and with the sensibilities of man, threatening of punishment. etc. etc.
>
> Unfortunately, emotion is a temporary feeling: however acute and fervent it may be, it lasts but a short time at best. It may leave an impression constantly reminding one of the cause or causes which produced it, but this impression in itself is incompetent to exact forever the fulfillment of whatever good resolutions may have been formed. In order that they may bear fruit at all, the emotions must be frequently or constantly revived, as is done by periodical preaching, revivals, missions in the churches, etc.
>
> But again: that emotions, which may be more or less easily aroused at the beginning, gradually become less susceptible as

[359] Page 96.

time passes, and sermon after sermon is heard, till sometimes they fail altogether to respond. The ordinary mind becomes callous to purely spiritual discourses, however healthful they may be; they fail to leave a lasting impression upon it; they afford its limited comprehension too little food for thought and reasoning…The natural laws are neglected too much. We are asked to have faith and to believe, but the mind may be utterly incapable of this without some impression by logic, something it can understand and grasp, some indication to the heart, of the ways and means of belief.

All these endeavors are most worthy and are needed, but they are insufficient to keep mankind constantly in purity.[360]

The Christian who reads this article needs not a word to show him that what is here described is not the gospel at all. The gospel does not consist in mere words. Says Paul:

Romans 1
[16] I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

The religion of Jesus Christ is not emotion nor resolutions. Christianity is not the result of good resolutions made under the influence of pathetic appeals. It is the working of the power of God, which is foolishness to those who do not believe. Only those who believe can understand. And they cannot explain; they can only declare the fact. For Christianity is a stupendous fact. The gospel of Jesus Christ is as powerful to the man in the solitude of his study, or even the desert, as it is to the man who is listening to the prayers and praises of the sanctuary. It does not depend on the feeling, but often shows its working the most clearly when the individual has no sense of feeling. It does not depend on the person's knowledge, but its glory is that it is free and efficacious to the ignorant and poor.

Such a religion as that set forth in the last citation could, of course, never be expected to save the world, not even a single in-

[360] Page 88-89.

dividual. But the religion of the Bible is able to do all that it professes to do to save them that believe. The Bible does not lead us to expect that all the world will be saved. It warns us that…

2 Timothy 3
[13] …evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived,

–and that at the end it will be as it was in the days of Noah:

Matthew 24
[37] But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
[38] For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,
[39] And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

But every one who from the heart believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved with a perfect and an everlasting salvation.

But this is perhaps sufficient on this line. The object of these quotations is not to arraign the author of the book for his ideas, which he has a perfect right to hold, but to show that "science" and the Bible cannot walk together; to show that "science" not only ignores the Bible, but that it contemptuously rejects it; and to put Christians on their guard against its insidious pretensions to be the promoter of morality; to repeat, in short, the words of the apostle Paul:

Colossians 2
[8] Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

We have already seen that "science," superciliously sets religion aside as utterly incompetent to save a man from vice. With a quietly contemptuous side-glance, it listens to the inspired statement that the holy Scriptures are able to make a man wise and perfect:

2 Timothy 3

[15] And that from a child you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

[17] That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Science may admit that Paul was right, according to his standard of morality, but the poor man was unfortunate enough to live in an age when science itself had not discovered the true basis of passion, because it did not understand the nature of the union of the cells, and therefore could not reveal the method of care to the church. He himself, therefore, according to this book, must have been an immoral man; for he depended only on the Lord Jesus Christ, and…

> Christianity is not sufficient to control the vice of impurity.[361]

As for the other apostles, who had not the advantages of even as much science as Paul had, they must have been utterly incompetent to deal at all with questions of morality. This seems irreverent, it is irreverent. But it is only the necessary conclusion of the arrogant pretensions of "science."

But let us now read further, and see how it is that science enables the man to drive out passions, root and branch. We are told that in every animal organism…

> …what is known as the cell is in every one the basis of the fabric.[362]
>
> By cell is meant, in biology, the little elementary organisms or individuals grouped to form the whole of the body. They are living beings, endowed with an individuality, and capable of doing, more or less perfectly, for themselves, under the impulses of their own energies or forces.[363]

[361] Page 93.
[362] Page 11.
[363] Page 12.

> Man's life is only the expression of the life of each cell individually, and of all of them collectively.[364]
>
> Man is simply a gigantic mass of practically analogous tiny cells joined in a harmonious "re-public."[365]
>
> The condition of the cells is expressed to the public by the acts of the man. Man's character is largely the reflection of the behavior of the cells composing his body.[366]

Now we have the thing in a nutshell. The author continues:

> This suggests many far-reaching possibilities and results, on the part of an individual in whom the component cells have been warped in their properties and purposes. Does it not bring to mind the possibility of controlling abnormal excitability and passion, by keeping the cells always is a normal condition?[367]

It ought not to be difficult for anybody who gives the matter a few minutes' thought to see very much force in the Scripture statement that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for the above is folly even to human sight.

Notice: the man is composed of cells; he is simply the product of the individual and collective life and character of the cells composing his body; passions are simply an abnormal condition of the cells;[368] therefore all that one has to do to banish all passion is to keep his cells in a normal condition. In other words, if you want to overcome evil desires, just don't have any. Simple enough, isn't it? It did not need a scientist to reveal that to the world; for men have been working on that line for nearly six thousand years, with, however, no results. They have tried to overcome passion by keeping themselves all right, but they found out that that was all the trouble there was. They couldn't keep

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[364] *Ibid.*
[365] Page 13.
[366] Page 21.
[367] Page 21.
[368] Page 55.

themselves in a normal condition. But we shall have occasion to recur to this later. On page 29 we read:

> It cannot be denied that natural nutrition, *i.e.*, simple, moderate diet, is the soul of endurance and morality.

Our first parents were placed in the garden of Eden, where there was…

> **Genesis 2**
> [9] …every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.

To them the Lord said:

> **Genesis 1**
> [29] Behold, I have given you every herb-bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: to you it shall be for meat.

They had "natural nutrition" of the most perfect kind; yet they sinned, and by that sin "brought death into the world, and all our woe."[369] Here again, we find "science" in direct conflict with the Bible. This, of course, does not trouble the author: for he says that the declarations of science must be received,

> …however much they may shatter long-cherished notions, and conflict, apparently, with Bible history as it is understood.[370]

But the Christian will not care to trust his soul's welfare in the hands of a moral physician whose prescriptions directly contradict the plainest statements of the Bible.

Advent Review, February 9, 1892

But now to refer again to the extract quoted above from page 91. We are there told that the hope of the man whose cells have been warped is to keep them in a normal condition. But with what power is he to do that? Why, with those same warped cells. That is, those cells are to straighten themselves out. Thus: Man is the

[369] Milton, *Paradise Lost.*
[370] Page 100.

product of the cells composing his organism; evil propensities in him are simply the result of an abnormal condition of the cells; those evils will he swept away root and branch, if he only keeps his cells in a normal condition; but whatever the man does is only the visible manifestation of what the invisible cells do; therefore the keeping of the cells in order devolves upon the disordered cells themselves.

- The abnormal cells must simply get themselves into a normal condition again.
- The sick must heal themselves by their own inherent power.
- The cripple must cure his lameness simply by walking straight.

But we will read the thing a little more plainly expressed:

> When the grace of God operates, it is not by what we cell miracles but through natural laws, which are God's laws.[371]

Contrast this with *Ephesians* 2:8-10, and *Titus* 3:8, 7:

Ephesians 2
8 For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

Titus 3
8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that you affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.
7 That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

But we quote again:

[371] Page 86.

> It is no wonder that men less intimate [than physicians] with the laws of nature, should fail to grasp the significance of cellular endowments in multicellular beings, and should even invoke miraculous influence to accomplish that which natural powers may, and are expected to, accomplish. The laws of nature are miraculous enough in themselves, and are sufficient to do well everything that mankind may accomplish in the world for the propagation, preservation, and salvation of his kind. Study them well, and you will find that they contain all the elements to grace. When we beg for miraculous aid to accomplish any object in life for which God has provided natural laws, we ask the Almighty to reverse his laws and rule for our special benefit.[372]

Surely this statement alone proves the fitness of the title that we have given the book, namely, "Every Man His Own Saviour." That is all that it is. No one who should become a convert to the doctrine set forth in the above, could ever pray to the Lord again, unless his prayer should be like that of the Pharisee:[373]

> "God, I thank You that I am not like other men are. I understand the chemistry of passion, and am therefore able to keep myself in a perfectly normal condition."

In the same line as the above, read the following:

> Practices of the flesh, and their frightful train of vices and crimes, can be rooted from the world, and the heart of man made as pure as the diamond, if the forces at our command are brought into play.[374]

Does the reader see the logic of all this? If you have not given it special thought, you will see it at once when your attention is called to it. It is, first, that man is inherently good; that his natural condition is a state of freedom from all sin and vice. Because, if the abnormal cells are to purify themselves, and manufacture virtuous deeds by themselves, they must do it from what is in them;

[372] Page 87.
[373] *Luke* 18:11.
[374] Page 104.

therefore that so-called evil is really only undeveloped good. The good is inherent in the human body, but the environment has not been favorable for its development. Indeed, our author assumes that a large part of the world has this perfection not simply latent, but fully developed. On page 73 he says:

> Ah girls! if you would only frown instead of smile on all vicious habits of boys, you alone would purify the world.

But what says the Scripture in regard to the nature of humanity? Let us read:

> **Mark 7**
> [21] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murders, thefts, covetousness,
> [22] ...an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness;
> [23] All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

From what class of men do these things come? From all men, from mankind, both male and female. These things are the very nature of men. Indeed they are the man himself. For, read the following:

> **Galatians 5**
> [19] Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
> [20] Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
> [21] Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

These are "the works of the flesh." They are the nature of every person who is born into the world. That no possible exception is made, is shown by the apostle in another place, where, after rehearsing this same list of sins, he exclaims,

Romans 2
[1] Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are that judges; for wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you that judge do the same things.

Romans 1
[28] And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
[29] Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
[30] Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
[31] Without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
[32] Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

So we see that, according to the scripture, man is inherently bad, instead of good. This is the testimony of One who…

John 2
[25] …needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.

The evil, which is the natural condition of mankind, from the ultimate cell to the perfectly developed individual, is something that the microscope cannot discover. That is the reason why "science" ignores it.

The second logical and necessary conclusion from the foregoing quotations from the little book, is that each individual cell, and consequently every man, has life as an inherent quality. They teach that man is self-existent, with power to perpetuate his existence, and to evolve good out of his own inherent force; in short, that man is God. Read again the quotation from page 87, and then read the following, and it will not be necessary even to draw connections:

> They [the cells] are living beings endow with "an individuality," and capable of doing, more or less perfectly, for themselves under the impulses of their own individual energies or forces.[375]
>
> Each cell has life, and each must be properly nourished, in order that the life of the whole body may be properly and healthfully sustained. For this purpose the labors of the cells of the community have been specialized, as we see by the functions given to the different organs. . . . By this specialization of labor, *resulting from evolution* the cells have been assigned certain duties to perform, in the respective accomplishment of which they have become experts.[376]
>
> The cells of the tissues of the body have individual life activities.[377]
>
> All the capacities of the organism are limited. True, they may be taxed occasionally beyond their natural activities, and respond by drawing *on inherent reserve force lodged in them.*[378]
>
> In a word, every organ is a distinct aggregation of cells, grouped for special functions; and the seat of government of the grand republic which the cells of all these organs form—the body as a whole—is the brain.[379]

On page 85 the brain is declared to be the congress, making the laws for the republic. It is said to be...

> ...the only seat of government, where countless living cells direct and control the whole cellular community of the body.

Speaking on page 47 of a body that has been impoverished by alcohol, the author says:

> If occasion arises, such a body may commit what humanity abhors and calls a crime,—seduction, fornication, rape, adultery, or murder, perhaps,—under a fit of passion which a calm, stern, pos-

[375] Page 12.
[376] Page 17.
[377] Page 90.
[378] Page 32.
[379] Page 16.

itive, set of brain cells could ward off or subdue, if, under such a good ruling power, it appeared at all.

And on page 47 we read of…

> …the nerve cells whose duty it is to keep the community in uprightness.

But let us have two more selections:

> Thus, the microscopic citizens of the wondrous world called man, are constantly engaged in internal warfare. Too often, alas! the dominion is wrested from the *righteous congress temporarily* or forever, and only nominal power remains as a vestige of what was once a complete governmental authority vested in the nervous system.[380]

But the normal body is thus described:

> The cells of the various organs respond freely to the dictates of the *all-wise governing cells* of the nervous system, and they perform their duties well.[381]

The italics in the above quoted paragraphs are mine. The sum of all this is simply that man is amenable to no power outside of himself; that he is his own lawgiver, judge, and saviour, and that he exists by his own inherent power. It puts man absolutely in the place of God. Just notice: the Scriptures tell us that Christ is of God…

> **1 Corinthians 1**
> [30] …made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

But the "scientific" gospel is that the cells in man, having inherent life and energy (self-existence) are presided over by "all-wise governing cells" (wisdom); that this is a "righteous congress" (righteousness); and that man has in himself all the means of grace that are needed for the "preservation and salvation of his

[380] Page 103.
[381] Page 25.

kind" (sanctification and redemption). These views are not peculiar to our author. He is simply stating the principles of "scientific religion." They are not original with him. Whenever you find "science" teaching morality, you will find the same things, more or less plainly expressed. From the *Golden Gate*, a Spiritualist paper published in San Francisco, California, I quote the following:

> The spirits also teach us that there is no atonement or remission for sin except through growth: that as we sow, so also must we reap. They have not found God, and never will, except as they find him in their own souls.[382]

Again:

> When the truth was made known to me that "God is life, love, truth intelligence, substance, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, and there is no evil," it became glorified in myself as a part of that God.

J. W. Colville, in a lecture delivered in Oakland, California, June 19, 1886, and reported in the *Golden Gate*, said:

> There can be no heaven unless there be a perfect reconciliation between the impulses of man's highest soul sad his outward life; there can be no heaven until your individual life is guided by the divine within you, that ever points out to you the perfect way.

Hon. J. B. Hall, in a lecture reported in the *Banner of Light* of February 6, 1864, said:

> I believe that man is amenable to no law not written upon his own nature, no matter by whom it is given. . . . By his own nature must be tried—by his own acts he must stand or fall. True, man must give an account to God for all his deeds: but how? Solely by giving account to his own nature—to himself.

In a paper entitled *Lucifer*, published at Valley Falls, Kansas, in an article on "Marriage and Free Love," we find the following clear exposition of scientific morality:

[382] July 2, 1887.

> I acknowledge the presence of a power which we call nature, and whatever nature approves, I encourage, and whatever nature punishes, I try to avoid, such rewards and punishments being measured by the increase or decrease of personal happiness.

Spiritualism is simply scientific morality logically carried out. True, the great idea of Spiritualism is that man has inherent immortality, but this is simply the logical result of the idea that he has the power of righteousness in himself. Man is thought to have life in himself because he is thought to have righteousness in himself. He cannot die, because he is too good. There is not a spiritualistic book that was ever published that did not take the same scientific ground that the author of "The Supreme Passions of Man" takes. The statement of the case varies, but the points are identical. The book is as straight Spiritualism as any devotee of the "Spiritual Philosophy" could desire.

And now to call attention specially to the pernicious character of the book; for, although it professes to teach morality, and I doubt not that the author is sincere in his purpose, the general acceptance of its doctrines could result in nothing else but the grossest immorality.

For one thing, it sets forth a double, or rather, a false standard of morality. The Bible knows but one standard of righteousness, and that is the life of Jesus Christ, as an exemplification of the spiritual law. The righteousness which men are exhorted to seek, without which they cannot be saved, is the righteousness of God.

> **Matthew 6**
> [33] But seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Of this there are no degrees of comparison. There is no double standard; it is only positive, absolute goodness. Men may say that the attainment of this righteousness by men is impossible, but only because they do not know the power of God. It is impossible of attainment by man's effort, but is inherent in the life of Christ, which is freely given to those who hunger and thirst after it.

Matthew 5
[6] Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

But the author of this book recognizes the existence of…

> …men who, though not saints, live righteously.[383]

This is the basis of the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory, a place made necessary by the supposed existence of men who are too good to be sent to hell, and not good enough to go to heaven.

On pages 103-104 of the book under consideration, we find the following:

> The actual counter-force of passions, then, consist of all that contributes to keep before the cells of the governing power a picture of that perfect condition in which public sentiment [itself created by education, religion. home influence, etc.] would have mankind all that impresses the mind of the desirability and necessity of moral integrity in order to be honored among men, and classed with the noble, the refined, and the just.

Again, speaking especially of drunkenness:

> What shall we do? Will the problem solve itself under the growing public sentiment, impressing upon man that he cannot afford to get drunk! This is a decidedly powerful force for good, but as long as the sentiment only censures drunkenness as such, and not the use of any and all intoxicants, so long there will be drunkards.[384]
>
> Public sentiment must also censure intoxicants as a whole, if prompt and decisive results are wanted.[385]

Such a standard of morals is compatible with the grossest immorality. The man who gauges his conduct by public sentiment has simply to do those sins that do not appear prominently to the public gaze. But public sentiment itself encourages and applauds

[383] Page 73.
[384] Page 125.
[385] Page 126.

many things that the Bible condemns as abominations. The idea of all natural religion is that only those things that appear to the outward sense are sin. But read also the list of sins given in *Galatians* 5:

Galatians 5
[19] Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
[20] Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
[21] Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Here we find that envy, wrath, variance, emulations, strife, etc., are classed with drunkenness, murder, and adultery. If there is any difference between them, only the God of heaven and earth can detect it. In the list given by the Saviour, in *Mark* 7, we find that evil thoughts are as bad as adulteries, fornication, and blasphemy:

Mark 7
[21] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,
[22] Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:
[23] All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Public sentiment encourages and applauds pride; but God regards it as an abomination. Therefore, taking God's standard, which is the only standard of right, we find that the "scientific" standard of morality is immorality itself.

But further: the morality which this book teaches is that which comes from man himself.

- It takes it for granted that man is inherently good, and would exhibit goodness, but for his environment, etc.

- It teaches that knowledge is power, and that the man who understands the latest speculations of "science" is fully armed against all vice, and that nobody else is.
- It says that chemistry explains the forces which make passions possible, and that its laws must be taken into account in any attempt to rule our inclinations.[386]

That is, all that a man needs is knowledge, and such knowledge as he can get by his own unaided intellect, utterly ignoring the wisdom which God gives in His word. Unfortunately for the world, this is no new thing. We read of the heathen that they became…

Romans 1
[21] …vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
[22] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
[23] And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

And in the verses following we have a perfect picture of the heathen world. When those verses are read, let it not be forgotten for a moment that this horrible condition of things came solely as the result of the teaching of scientific morality such as we have in this book. And all the time that those things were being done, those people who were the most highly cultured of any people who ever lived, were talking very prettily about "morality" and "virtue." So beautiful are some of these discourses, that they form part of the college course for young men today. The men of whom those things are spoken, are the men to whom the "scientists" of today are indebted, not only for the basis of much of their professed "science," but for the very names "science," and "philosophy." Yet their "science," instead of making them virtuous, was itself the direct cause of the depth of vice into which they sunk. And so it will be again.

[386] See page 60.

Now why was this? and why is it stated that the result of this teaching, if logically and strictly carried out, can be nothing else but licentiousness of the worst kind? Simply because the nature of man is corrupt. Science ignores the fall, and the natural depravity of humanity, but they are both facts. Not only are the thoughts of man evil naturally, but his inherent weakness makes it impossible for him to do even the good that he knows. Therefore, whatever teaching leads him to trust in himself for righteousness, leads him to trust for righteousness in that which is grossly corrupt. Out of evil only evil can come.

Luke 6
45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

When "science" has led men to think that they know everything, and that all the means of grace lie in themselves, then the Devil will have full control. For this…

1 Timothy 6
20 …science falsely, so-called,

–is the…

Colossians 2
8 …philosophy and vain deceit,

–against which the apostle warns us, as being…

8 …after the rudiments of the world.

And the inventor of the whole system is the Devil, who is the…

2 Corinthians 4
4 …god of this world.

Let it be understood that in this review there is no arraignment of what is called the health reform. Right habits of eating and drinking are not depreciated. But this book does not at all touch the subject of right living. Right habits are not a means to an end,

but are a result to be gained only by the gospel, as are all other right habits. The morbid appetites which are said to lead to drunkenness and licentiousness are as impossible of control as are the passions themselves. The Bible makes full provision for everything necessary in the line of living, and what is more and better, it provides the power of living, along with the knowledge of what is right.

The great mistake of "science" is the assumption that what the world needs is knowledge. The fact is, that what it needs is power. There is no man in the world who does not know that he ought to do better than he does do, and who does not want, at times, to do better; but he does not know how to do the thing. He is utterly helpless.

Romans 7
15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.
16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.
17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.
18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.
19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.
20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.
21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.
22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:
23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Every man's experience confirms this, until he gets so completely swallowed up in self-contemplation and self-glorification that he imagines that he is absolutely perfect, as God himself. From the references in this article to "science," it may be gathered

it is not counted as of much worth. The "science" set forth in this book is indeed of little worth. The writer of this review makes no pretension of being a scientist, but he has no hesitation in saying that the teachings of this book are most unscientific. Not but that they might meet the approval of a "scientific" association. But science means simply *knowledge*, and that which is not true, cannot be truly known; therefore this book is not true science, because it is in direct and constant contradiction of the Bible—the book of truth. He who knows only a few things, but knows them for the truth, has vastly more scientific knowledge than he who "knows" many things that are not true, or who turns into a lie the truths which he does know.

The gospel of Jesus Christ gives man not only knowledge but power. Christ is of God…

1 Corinthians 1
[30] …made onto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

The gospel promises to men deliverance from all the evils that beset them, not only of those that they know and feel, but also of thousands that they know nothing about. And it does not deceive men with false promises.

2 Corinthians 1
[20] All the promises of God in Christ are yea and amen, unto the glory of God by us.

Thousands of men who never heard the word "science," have demonstrated the truth of the offers of the gospel. Men who have struggled in vain for the mastery of themselves, have found perfect deliverance in Christ. Yes, men have exhausted every possible combination of dieting, living in the most abstemious manner, upon the most healthful food, nay, even going to the verge of starvation in order to eradicate the passions of the flesh, but all in vain. The flesh was there, and the evil was inherent in the flesh.

The only way
that it could be eradicated
was by dying.

This some of them did by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in exchange for the sinful life, they got the perfect life of Christ, so that they could truly say,

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

There are many in the world today who will never understand "the chemistry of passion," but who know to the full the baleful power of it, and who daily thank God that the Christianity of Christ does give absolute and complete deliverance from every form of it. To such, especially in view of the fact that the nearer we come to the end, the more plausible will Satan make his substitute for true morality appear, we would most earnestly commend the language of the apostle Paul:

Colossians 2
[6] As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him:
[7] Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.
[8] Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
[9] For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.
[10] And YOU ARE COMPLETE IN HIM, which is the head of all principality and power.

2. The Life More Than Meat

Present Truth, May 9, 1895

THE Gospel is God's good message to save men from sin. It is good tidings to the poor because it teaches them of the inheritance "reserved in heaven"[387] for them, and brings to them the foretaste of the inheritance in a mind at peace with God, and contentment with such things as they may have in this world. Whether abounding or suffering need, there is still the joy of salvation from sin. The modern tendency to make the Gospel consist of a mere scheme for getting more of the things of this world is only Satan's device to rob men of the joy that the true Gospel has for all, rich or poor, free or bond. Against this tendency the Chairman of the Baptist Union entered a protest in his annual address. He said:

> There is a widespread conviction or sentiment that nothing more is needed for the redemption of society than a rearrangement of social conditions; salvation will be wrought by science and sanitation; the heart will be cleansed by an external application; lusts and envies, and hatreds, will cease when the body's cravings are satisfied.
>
> On the top of these vain dreams there comes the clamor for a social gospel, though what that phrase means it is not always easy to define. The preacher is to put into the background the eternal truths that he may cater for temporal wants. He is "to forsake the Word of God and serve tables;" he is to forget the soul's hunger in speaking for the necessities of the body. He is to resign the prophet's functions for the more popular arts of the demagogue.
>
> We are told even that if Christ were to come again He would come as a social reformer, as the champion of the labor party; to multiply loaves and double wages.
>
> And our answer to all this is that, if Christ were to come again, He would come as He came before, to deliver men from the

[387] **1 Peter 1**: [4] To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you.

bondage of the devil and to save people from their sins, whether poor people or rich people.

He would be compassionate now, as He was then, to the sufferings, hunger, ignorance, and wants of the toiling, groaning multitude. He would appeal to those who love Him to busy themselves in relieving every kind of human need.

But His great work would still be to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and of judgment to come, to prove to men that the main cause of their misery is not in things external, but in their enmity to God and the evil of their own hearts, and to lift them up by faith, repentance, and regeneration to a new and happier life.

And we cannot and dare not preach any other gospel. Our work is moral and not political. Our weapons are spiritual, not carnal.

3. Eternal Youth

Present Truth, June 13, 1895

EVERYTHING that is of eternal value keeps living and fresh. It cannot grow old; it is never lost in that which is buried by the hand of time. Decay and ruin are signs of the presence of sin. Where sin is, there sooner or later must come a burial.

Earth has many burial grounds of the works and devices of man—works that could not endure for the wickedness of their makers—where lie interred many a form of sin and error. But the uncovered monuments of antiquity disclose no buried truth and purity and beauty that can add to the adornment of character or make life more worth living. These exist because God exists, just as light must exist where there is a sun; and the character that is all truth and purity and beauty can therefore know no death. It can never grow old; it can never lose its freshness and beauty.

Therefore the way to keep young and to retain the freshness and beauty of youth, is to be separate from all sin. Sinful flesh must of necessity incline toward decay and the grave; but God will in His appointed time clothe the sinless character with sinless flesh, and then all eternity can never take away from us our youth.

4. The Ladder and the Tower

Present Truth, August 8, 1895

CHRISTIANITY needs no human support. The ladder that Jacob saw in his dream, when he fled from his home, reached from earth to heaven.[388] It could not be supported upon earth, but was let down by the Lord from heaven, and its support was in heaven. That ladder represented Christianity. Christ himself is the ladder let down from God to fallen man, by which he may ascend to God, and upon which descend and ascend the angels.

There was an attempt which men made to mount up to heaven by that which had human support, which was represented by the tower of Babel.[389] But it came to nothing. It served only to illustrate the folly of the idea which it embodied. It was broken off midway, and ended in confusion.

The two represent two gospels; the one the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the other, the man-made "gospel," supported by human laws, human efforts and resolutions, and which teaches that heaven can be attained by works.

Jesus Christ had no support from man; the powers of earth were all against Him, and at the most critical hour of all even His own disciples forsook Him. Yet He triumphed gloriously; for with Him was the power of God. Even had men given Him their support, it would have availed nothing against the powers of hell,—the devil and his host,—which opposed Him. Only the power of God could carry the work of salvation forward to a successful termination.

It is sad that men should be much more occupied today with building towers of Babel than with setting their own feet and inducing others around them to set their feet, upon the ladder let down from God. Yet such is the case. The old idea still prevails that men can build up a way of righteousness—a way to heaven—

[388] *Genesis* 28:12.
[389] *Genesis* 11:4-9.

by human enactments. The individual enacts a moral code for himself which he is resolved to maintain in his life, and through the machinery of civil government certain men are allowed to enact moral codes for other men, which must be obeyed by the latter without even the help of a good resolution. So the work progresses and the tower ascends, until the short limit of human wisdom and power is attained; then confusion comes and the work stops, a monument to the folly of its builders.

The ladder that reaches down from the highest heaven is strong enough to save a world. It is as strong as God himself. The weakness is not in it, but in the man whom it is designed to save. It will protect them, but it needs none of their "protection." No man can destroy it; the whole power of Satan's confederacy of evil cannot move it a hair's breadth from its place, for it is held there by an omnipotent power. It reaches from the highest heaven to the lowest vales of earth, that "whosoever will" may mount upon it up to the throne of God. And there it will remain till the work of God for man is done.

Christianity is perfect. God's moral code is perfect, and is, through Christ, perfectly adapted to the weakness of human flesh. Let it be our care to put on and keep on the perfect garment of righteousness given us in Christ, in which not a thread of human manufacture is woven; and to lift Him up, that others also may look to Him, and find life.

5. Despair

Present Truth, March 5, 1896

THE military system of Europe, with its mechanical crushing out of personal freedom and its drilling to take life, leads those who are swept into it to put little value upon their own lives, if we may judge by statistics which show that the proportion of suicides is far higher in the army than in civil life.

Late statistics show that from 1881 to 1893 no fewer than 105,327 persons in Germany violently terminated their own existence. In all countries, it is true, the rate of suicides is increasing. It is one of Satan's ways of making sure of his harvest. He lures men away from God and hope, and then leaves them to despair as a reward for serving him.

The only bright and hopeful thing in this world is the true Light that shines for all who will walk in it.

6. What Militarism Does

Present Truth, March 26, 1896

THE true nature of the spirit of militarism is little suspected by many whose thoughts and lives are under its influence. It must be so, else kindly people could not speak as lightly as they do of the accidents and horrors of war. As an illustration of the spirit which militarism engenders even outside of the ranks of active fighters, and as a suggestion of the need that exists for the preaching of the Gospel of peace in all circles, take the following report of an interview with one of the nursing sisters who accompanied the Ashanti expedition:

> "It must have been a relief to have no fighting?"
>
> "It was the bitterest disappointment to the soldiers. At first the hope of fight kept them from feeling the effects of the climate, but the sick list became very heavy when the depressing certainty of a 'bloodless' victory was faced. And the sisters, too, wanted a few broken bones to bind up! Almost to the last the soldiers hoped an attempt would be made by the natives to rescue King Prempeh. But after the Sacred River was passed their spirits went down to zero—in spite of the climate."

Those who express such ideas, and the world is full of the spirit, do not need denunciation, but they do need the Gospel.

7. God's Foreknowledge

Present Truth, April 9, 1896

MANY refuse to take the gift of salvation, making the excuse that God knows whether they will be lost or saved, and so no choice of theirs can alter their destiny. But in that attitude they do the very thing they profess they are not doing—they choose not to be saved, and frustrate the grace of God.[390] The only way in which men can be lost is to refuse to let the Lord save them, as…

> **2 Peter 3**
> [9] [He is] not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

If a man were famishing, and I should set food before him, it would be no excuse for his refusing it to plead that I knew or did not know he would accept it. I knew he was hungry, and offered the food and even pressed him to take it; but he refused it because I knew he wouldn't take it! Even if I could have foreknowledge of his extraordinary behavior my knowledge would not be responsible for the failure to save the man's life, but his own refusal to eat.

God knows whether or not a man will accept the bread of heaven. But He constantly presses all men to eat of it. He tells them how good it is to awaken a desire for it, and He even plants the desire for good in every heart; so that in order not to be drawn round the Lord's table men must fight against Him. All may eat, He invites all, and if one does not eat it is because he, of his own choice, refuses to take what God presses upon him.

[390] *Galatians* 2:21.

8. The Man with a Grievance

Present Truth, April 23, 1896

WE ALL meet him now and then. He has a carefully compiled list of slights and grievances. Other peoples' faults are as personal affronts, whether they affect him directly or not, so fully has he become the embodiment of the aggrieved. Sometimes we cannot escape hearing portions of the list, and as his fond fancy lingers over details we seem to remember having heard the same thing years before. But the man with a grievance has a good memory—for small things, and a vivid imagination, which strengthens the evidence as the story is retold.

But it is of no use to suggest that imagination is a factor in the matter; it is all so real that he can appeal to his sincerity with perfect assurance, and the list has been so often repeated that he honestly believes it all. He lives by calling upon it. But what a death is the life! It is the law of nature that the vulture that lives on carrion becomes an unclean bird, and the mind that lives on grievances, real or imaginary, and on the sins of others, becomes a hold of evil and unhealthy thoughts. And the vision sees things distorted and inverted.

Whenever we meet an extreme example of this, we ought to learn a lesson; for this is what we are by nature.

> **Titus 3**
> [3] We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.
> [4] But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared...

–something better to think about was revealed. Yet the self is of sin, and sensitiveness which is sin. As Professor Drummond says, sensitiveness is "conceit with a hair-trigger," and is sprung on the slightest occasions if self is not continually crucified. Let us remember, then, that the feeling of sensitiveness is but the signal

that self is not dead, and take warning before we, too, have a grievance.

9. His Way of Saying It

Present Truth, April 23, 1896

IT IS a freak of human nature to ascribe very unworthy motives to those who disagree with us, says the *Review and Herald*. Differences of opinion frequently lead to violent animosities, when there is really no ground for such animosities at all. It is related that a celebrated Frenchman, having been recently assailed with great bitterness by a French professor, quietly remarked:

> I fancy he must be vexed. He called me a Jacobin, rebel, plagiarist, thief, poisoner, forger, leper, madman, impostor, libeler, a grimacing rag-picker. I gather what he wants to say. He means that he and I are not of the same opinion, and that is his only way of putting it.

There is in this little instance a very gentle reproof to many of us who are prone to attribute ulterior motives to those who hold differing opinions from our own.

10. The Child-Mirror

Present Truth, April 30, 1896

IN THE *National Review* is a paper on the sayings of children, showing the quaint philosophy of childhood. The writer says:

> Very charming in this way are the half disclosures of the natural egoism of the first attempt at politeness and kindness. A wee maiden who was enjoying a swing, cast a half pitiful glance at her unlucky comrade who was standing and looking on with big and admiring eyes, and observed,
>
> "I wish I wasn't so fond of swinging, then I would get out and let you swing."

With this may be compared the following *mal apropos.*[391] A little girl on taking her toy from another child who was playing with it said, by way of explanation,

> "You know we can't both enjoy it."

Grown-up selfishness may see itself as in a mirror here. Though experience and pride may teach the adult not to avow the selfishness so frankly, how often he uses the same infantile logic to excuse his faults. Thus one excuses his irritation by pleading an irritable disposition; it is "his way." But this is precisely the difficulty. Like the child who thought she wished to let her playmate swing, many people say they wish they were rid of bad habits and yet cling to them. The fact is, we can do as we wish. If we wish to drop the sin that besets us, there is strength enough from heaven to enable us to be free. If we cling to the sin and selfishness it is because we love it. It is important that we should recognize this fact. The Lord is no more deceived by the reasoning with which we are prone to satisfy conscience for having our own way than we are by the transparent excuses of these very natural little girls.

[391] *Mal apropos:* at an awkward or improper time or place; inopportune; inappropriate.

11. Christianity Is a Promise

Present Truth, May 14, 1896

PAGANISM is a threat, Christianity is a promise. Paganism is essentially pessimistic; Christianity is essentially optimistic. The heathen knows no future, has no assured hope; but the Christian is a man with more than a hope,—with a Gospel, with a faith, with an inheritance unfailing and eternal. This Gospel, this faith, this inheritance is offered…

Isaiah 55
[1] …without money and without price.

Revelation 22
[17] Whosoever will, let him come and take it.

Why then should he who knows the Christian promises, remain in heathen fear, trembling under the threats of Satan instead of rejoicing in the promises of Christ?

12. Patience

Present Truth, June 25, 1896

Revelation 14
[12] Here is the patience of the saints.

WHAT a remarkable expression, in all its possible significance. "Patience of the saints!" When we realize that:

Romans 8
[28] All things work together for good to them that love God,

–we may begin to appreciate the infinite possibilities of achievement and attainment possible to the patience of the saints. When patience has had its perfect work then it will surely be seen that patient waiters are no losers. Patience is the handmaid of faith, and to faith nothing is impossible.

13. Formosan Idolatry

Present Truth, July 9, 1896

A TRAVELER who writes of Formosa says of the religious life of the people:

> Many of the Chinese, especially the women, are devout worshipers; many others are skeptical, and the majority are careless. Idolatry has a powerful hold on their minds, but it is only when reverses and troubles come that the average man will resort to the temple. They believe the gods have power to help or to injure them, but so long as things go well they are careless about their devotions.

Human nature is alike the world over. Many in more enlightened lands reserve their thoughts of God merely for accidents and emergencies, having no more idea of spiritual worship than the idolatrous Formosan.

14. To Prevent Disappointment

Present Truth, August 6, 1896

THE surest way to prevent being disappointed in this life, is to have small expectations, and not to make large demands on our fellow-men. The humble man, who does not think that other people were made for the purpose of serving him, but rather that he is servant of all, will, instead of meeting disappointments, be continually surprised and astonished at the kindness and good-will he receives. On the other hand, the man who expects the most from the Lord, and who, depending on God's promises, makes the largest demands upon Him, will never be disappointed; for God gives…

Ephesians 3

[20] …exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think,

–and never forsakes those who put their trust in Him.

Psalm 9

[10] And they that know your name will put their trust in You: for You, Lord, have not forsaken them that seek You.

And a humble man, with the lowest opinion of his own worth, is just a man who can and will confidently make the largest demands on God, for…

Psalm 138

[6] …[God] has respect unto the lowly.

And He who inhabits eternity dwells with the humble and the contrite ones.

Isaiah 57

[15] For thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Therefore the humble man is the only truly happy man on earth. He is always contented, for all his desires are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God's house.

> He that is down need fear no fall,
> He that is low, no pride;
> He that is humble ever shall
> Have God to be his guide.[392]

15. The Adversary, the Devil

Present Truth, September 3, 1896

HOW much it must please the enemy of souls to have men conclude that he does not exist. No better device could he invent to put men off their guard and work his way in them unconsciously to themselves. The notion that the adversary is a mere principle of evil rests on that old method of interpretation which Origen introduced into the Church in the early centuries, by which it was maintained that the Bible does not mean what it says, but that some hidden mystic sense must be found in it.

As we view the controversy between Christ and Satan we learn the terrible reality of the latter's existence and devices.

> **John 8**
> [44] [He] abode not in the truth,

–said Jesus, showing that at one time he had been "in the truth." Then came that "war in heaven," in which Michael and His angels expelled Satan and his host.

> **Revelation 12**
> [7] And there was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

[392] John Bunyan (1628-1688).

[8] And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.
[9] And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

And then Jesus…

Luke 10
[18] …beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,

–cast out with his sympathizers,

Jude
[6] …the angels which kept not their first estate,

–into the earth, which has been the scene of the conflict ever since men joined the rebellion against God. These fallen angels are those "spirits of devils, working miracles,"[393] which go forth into all the world leading men to destruction:

Revelation 16
[14] For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

And probably no miracle of deception could be better calculated to advance his interest, then that by which Satan—notwithstanding the evidence of his workings—blinds the eyes of those who do not believe the testimony of the Lord, so that they may even deny his very existence.

2 Corinthians 2
[11] [But] we are not ignorant of his devices,

–said the apostle. Just now has he come down…

Revelation 12
[12] …in great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.

[393] *Revelation* 16:14.

Thank God the time for his working…

2 Thessalonians 2
[9] …with all power and signs and lying wonders…

–is to be short. But if it is a short time for him, so it is also for all the world.

1 Corinthians 7
[29] The time is short.

2 Corinthians 4
[4] The god of this world,

Ephesians 2
[2] …the prince of the power of the air,

–knows it, and is working as never before. So, too ought we to know it, and work as never before. And the hope in the conflict is that it is between Christ and Satan. The battle is His, and by His faith and the word of His testimony the victory is won.

James 4
[7] Resist the devil, and he will flee.

16. Profession and Practice

Present Truth, January 14, 1897

PROFESSION is one thing, and quite essential,—but it is not practice. Practice should accompany profession, even as light the sun. But in daily experience of life the two are so often found asunder that even those who think before they speak are apt to say, without apparent hastiness, that profession and practice are two different things. Their only difference should be that one is the accompaniment and resultant of the other,—where the one is there the other should always be, and there should never be any conflict between them.

That the world is acknowledged to have come to that pass that few are expected really to practice what they preach, is, actually, when one thinks of it, almost equal to a virtual verdict of insanity against the whole human race. It certainly is an unsound and unhealthy state of mind and morals which makes it possible for such an anomalous condition to exist.

The creature which continues to eat when it is already surfeited, or fasts when food is placed before it, mistaking the sensation of surfeit for hunger, and of hunger for surfeit, has no more reversed the natural order of things than has the man who acknowledges and professes truth and righteousness, and practices falsehood and unrighteousness.

The trouble with such men is that in a greater or lesser degree the devil has entered into them. When the devils entered into the Gergesenian swine they rushed madly down the peaceful seaside slope, on which they had previously been reasonably and comfortably feeding, and were drowned. The act was totally inexplicable except by the madness of the sudden possession which had overtaken them.

The course of those who hear the Gospel and will not listen to it, who understand and believe the truth and will not live in it, who know there is a God and will not obey Him; who profess and

preach righteousness, but live and practice folly and all manner of evil; the course of these is only explicable by the fact that they have admitted Satan into their hearts and lives, and he is leading them to destruction no less sure than that which befell the swine,[394] and one in which their suffering and shame will be proportionately greater in the same degree that they are higher in the scale of being and endowed with intelligence and responsibility.

17. Wasting His Time

Present Truth, February 11, 1897

THERE is often deep philosophy in the sayings of childhood. The other night a little four-year-old told the Lord in her prayer that she knew that Satan was trying to get her to do wrong all the time, and she wanted the Lord to help her to waste his time.

The trouble is that the devil's time is not wasted as much as it ought to be. Older people know by sad experience only too well that very often his time, from his standpoint, is very well spent. But God can frustrate his every effort. The one who hides in the Lord is saved, and the enemy is only wasting his time in trying to carry the fortress by assault.

[394] *Matthew* 8:32.

18. A Mind at Rest

Present Truth, July 1, 1897

THE one who shuts the Lord out of his life, in order that his mind may not be troubled with questions of duty and conscience, little realizes that God alone can keep the mind at rest.

Isaiah 26
[3] You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You: because he trusts in You.

19. Earth Dwellers

Present Truth, September 16, 1897

THE Bible definition of the word *heathen* is that he is one who knows not God. The word means literally, in the old Anglo-Saxon, "a dweller on the heath, a countryman."

The word *pagan* has a similar signification in the Latin original. In common use this original meaning is lost in these words, but it is strictly true of the heathen or pagan, in the Bible sense, that he is an "earth-dweller." His life, his hopes, his efforts are here.

The Christian is a pilgrim and a stranger here,[395] and his citizenship is in heaven,[396] he is not seeking to build upon an earthly foundation, but his affections are set on things above.[397]

[395] *1 Peter* 2:11.
[396] *Philippians* 3:20; *2 Corinthians* 5:20.
[397] *Colossians* 3:2.

20. What's in a Name?

Present Truth, March 2, 1899

FEW people realize what wonders can be accomplished—in the imagination—by a mere change of name. The story is told of a rascal who proposed to a simple-minded neighbor that they would go and *steal* a horse. No, indeed; the man would hear nothing of any such proceeding. He was an honest man; he would not steal, not he. Then the wily fellow proposed to him that they go and *filch* a horse. The other didn't quite like the word; it had a suspicious sound; no, he wouldn't filch for anything.

> "Well, then," said the rascal who didn't try to persuade himself that he was anything else, "let's go and *nim* a horse."

To this the other readily agreed, and they proceeded to take to themselves a horse belonging to another man. But they didn't steal it; oh no! they only *nimmed* [398] it.

Unto this day the United States of America poses before the world as the pattern of all the national virtues. It would never enter upon a war of conquest, like "the effete monarchies of the Old World." It is true a good section of the United States once belonged to Mexico, and was acquired at the close of a war in which the latter country was defeated; but then the territory was bought and paid for. To be sure, Mexico was not offering the land for sale, and didn't want to sell; but that made no difference; the United States wanted to buy, and Mexico was not in a condition to refuse. She had to sell out, or else suffer. It was better to sell than to have the property go for nothing, so the bargain was completed. The United States came into virtuous possession of a valuable lot of territory, and continued to read homilies to the wicked nations of the Old World, which would persist in the old way of waging wars of conquest.

[398] Nimmed: "to steal or pilfer."

At last came the philanthropic war with Spain. The United States had no enmity to the Spaniards, but killed them nevertheless. It was done for the good of the people. The war was entered into with the most disinterested motives, so we are assured, and at its close the United States Government, greatly to the surprise of all the people, found themselves in possession of all the Spanish territory in the West Indies, and of some islands in the Pacific Ocean. These possessions were modestly accepted as the reward of virtue. How could they neglect what Providence had so unexpectedly given them to protect? Thus reasoned the religious press. And so the honor of the country is maintained. Who said anything about wars of conquest?

But now comes a little hitch. The inhabitants of the Philippine Islands were fighting against the Spanish yoke, because they thought themselves capable of self-government, when the United States stepped in and claimed possession. Now the Filipinos object to the United States rule as vigorously as they did to Spanish rule. Will the United States prove false to its traditions, and now enter upon a war of conquest, for the possession of the Philippines? Not by any means. Never shall an American school boy read in his history that his country did such a medieval deed. President McKinley said in his recent message to Congress:

> It will be the duty of the commander of the forces to announce and proclaim in the most public manner that we come not as invaders or conquerors, but as friends.
>
> All persons who, either by active aid or by honest submission, cooperate with the Government of the United States to give effect to these beneficent purposes will receive the reward of its support and protection. All others will be brought within the lawful rule we have assumed with firmness, if need be, but without severity, so far as possible.

Finally, the assurance is given that:

> The mission of the United States is one of *benevolent assimilation.*

What a nice-sounding term that is! The inhabitants of the Philippines are not to be conquered, but *benevolently assimilated*. To be sure they object to being assimilated by the United States, and a distinguished citizen of that country has declared that…

> The Philippine people have long passed that stage in development when civilized nations have a right to appropriate them and their territories, and govern them against their will;

–but that makes no difference. Suppose the lamb does object to be eaten by the lion? What can so silly an animal know of what is good for it, in comparison with the king of beasts. Besides, the lion doesn't have any ill-will to the lamb; his object toward it is only one of "benevolent assimilation." To be sure the lamb disappears in the process, but the lion has gained by the benevolent action. So what if the Philippine people are all destroyed in the process of "benevolent assimilation;" their land will still be left, and that will be sufficient solace to the United States for its disinterested benevolence.

It is with just such cant phrases that many people will seal their own eternal ruin. A *form* of godliness, nay, even the *name*, without the power thereof, will be accepted by thousands as an equivalent for the genuine article. Men deify names. Call Sunday the Sabbath, and with the majority of people it is the same as if it were such. By and by Satan, who is transformed into an angel of light, will come professing to be Christ, and thousands will accept him as such, and will share his destruction.

> **Isaiah 5**
> [20] Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness.

Only one name is given under heaven, whereby salvation may be obtained, and that is the name of Jesus. That name saves, because it is the very life of Him who bears it. There is in it nothing of fraud or deceit. Beware of being deceived with names. Sin and oppression are iniquity, no matter what they are called. A profes-

sion of virtue will count for nothing if wickedness is practiced under it.

Galatians 6
[7] Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

21. Confessing Christ

Present Truth, April 27, 1899

THE Saviour promises to those who overcome that He will confess their names before His Father and before His angels.

Revelation 3
[5] He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.

This does not mean merely that in the judgment the Saviour will acknowledge that He knows the man whose name is called, but He will answer to the name as to His own. He has fully identified himself with His people, so that they stand as His representatives on earth, and He appears for them in heaven. They are to be so entirely one with Him that His name can fitly rest upon them, and He will not be ashamed to bear theirs.

Matthew 10
[32] Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

We would think naturally that Christ would be ashamed to have us bearing His name before our fellows, but if we are not ashamed to confess Him, He will see that there is no cause for shame.

Hebrews 2
[11] He is not ashamed to call them brethren…

–whom He sanctifies, and…

Romans 9
[33] Whosoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed.

Psalm 71
[1] In You, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

If we had undertaken presumptuously to set forth the character of God, we might well fear to be put to shame, but it is God who has chosen to reveal himself in us, and He will justify the putting of His name upon us.

Isaiah 43
[12] You are my witnesses, says the Lord, that I am God.
[21] This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.

22. Choosing

Present Truth, July 6, 1899

MEN were created free moral agents, with the power and privilege of choice; and God calls upon them to choose between right and wrong, life and death.

Joshua 24
[15] Choose you this day whom you will serve.

Deuteronomy 30
[19] Choose life that both you and your seed may live.

There is nothing arbitrary about it—every one is left free to choose as he sees fit, but it makes a great difference what that choice is, for on it hang eternal consequences.

When Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage,[399] he made a choice that he afterward regretted; and even though he sought it with tears, there was no place found for repentance.[400]

When the strife between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot became so great that a separation was necessary, Lot was given the first choice; and because the plain of Jordan was "well watered," he chose that, and...

Genesis 13
[12] ...pitched his tent toward Sodom.

His choice was a selfish one, to satisfy present desires; and for a time it appeared outwardly that it was a wise one, so far as worldly success was concerned, but in the end it proved to be the very worst he could have made, as he lost all of his worldly possessions, and escaped from the doomed city only with his life.

Not so with Moses. Although heir to the throne of Egypt, with every possible worldly prospect before him,

[399] *Genesis* 25:29-34.
[400] *Hebrews* 12:17.

Hebrews 11
[24] He…refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
[25] Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;
[26] Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Ah, there is the secret. It is to look beyond the present. The wise man said,

Ecclesiastes 11
[9] Walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know, that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

So many today are choosing this world, the pleasures and benefits that it can give, but the choice is a poor one, for all the world can give is only transitory and unsatisfactory. But he who chooses the world to come, like Mary,

Luke 10
[42] …has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away.

23. The Ideal vs. the Real

Present Truth, October 19, 1899

WE HEAR very much about the necessity of having high ideals, and especially of living up to the highest ideal of Christianity. It is all meant well, but it is all wrong, because the highest ideal that any man can have is infinitely below the real; and he who does not attain to the real, reaches nothing. A few texts of Scripture will show us that this is the truth.

The *ideal*, which has come to be almost a synonym for perfection, is, as anybody can see by the word itself, only one's *idea* or conception of what is good. Now the Lord says,

> **Isaiah 55**
> [8] My thoughts are not your thoughts.
> [9] For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Also read,

> **1 Corinthians 3**
> [20] The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain [or empty].

The thoughts of the wisest men are but emptiness because…

> **Psalm 39**
> [5] …every man at his best state is altogether vanity.

Then though our ideal be our highest thought, and the highest thought of which we are capable, it is infinitely below what God designs for us. He who strives only after his ideal, seeks only emptiness. If he attains to his ideal, he becomes, at best, a self-satisfied Pharisee.

Someone will say,

> "But if we have no fixed mark to reach, then we cannot know when we have attained to perfection, nor can we at any time tell how much advancement we have made."

Most certainly not. When Christ says,

Matthew 25
[23] Well done, good and faithful servant,

–and proceeds to tell each what good he has done, none will be so surprised as the faithful servant himself.[401] When Moses came down from the mount, where he had been in communion with God, he…

Exodus 34
[29] …wist not that the skin of his face shown.

No one can conceive of greater works than Christ did, yet He has said that those who truly believe on Him shall do greater works than His.[402]

Christ is reality. Everything real is but a manifestation of His fullness—some revelation of himself.

Colossians 1
[19] It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.

Whatever does not come from Him,—whatever is not the outgrowth of His life, even though it be man's highest ideal,—is but emptiness and unreality. Having Him, we have everything, and without Him we have nothing, and are nothing. Great as is God's gift in Christ, anything less than that in its fullness, is nothing at all.

God proposes to do for us…

Ephesians 3
[20] …exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

He will do this for us, simply because nothing less than this will be sufficient. From this alone we see that whoever has only his ideal before him is groping in darkness and grasping nothing. What are we then to do? Simply to place ourselves in the hands

[401] See *Matthew* 25:34-39.
[402] *John* 14:12.

of the Lord, for Him to do with us as He will. His thoughts toward us are wonderful and very deep. We cannot fathom them. The possibilities for every human being are infinitely above the comprehension of the human mind. Our part is to have our gaze fixed upon, not our ideal, but the ever-unfolding goodness and greatness of the Lord, and His part is to work in us His perfection.

Thus we shall be satisfied, not with ourselves, but with Christ. Self will be completely lost to sight, and we shall glory only in the knowledge of the Lord. And we shall be truly satisfied, even though we be deprived of that which was our highest ideal of goodness and happiness; for when we know Him, and that all fullness, all reality, exists in Him, and only in Him, that is rest. We know that He who has begun a good work in us will perfect it against the day of His coming.

One thing more. We must not be misled into thinking that Christianity consists in having high conceptions of God. It is not our conception of God, but what He is, that saves us. It is from forming conceptions of God, and following them, that men become heathen. They are simply following their own thoughts, and imagine that they are following God. They substitute themselves for God. There is a great deal of this heathenism in the world.

The perfect state, that which goes on ever to greater perfection, is that in which the Spirit of God has complete possession of us, so that God alone thinks in us, and at each step in advance we see Him as He is. This is not an ideal condition, but it is one that is possible and real. It is as easy to attain to as it is to live, if we but know how to live, which is to die, that Christ may live in us.

24. The Only Way

Present Truth, November 16, 1899

"Could not God have devised some other way to save man?"

WHO has not heard this foolish question asked? Yet foolish though it be, it must be answered, because it indicates an entire lack of comprehension of the nature and greatness of the Gospel of salvation; and that ignorance must be helped, in order that the questioner may lay hold of the hope set before him.

The question is foolish, in that it does not become people who are in deadly peril, to stand and argue over the means provided for their rescue. Here is a man in deep water, and he cannot swim. He is in danger of drowning; indeed, he will drown if help does not come. Now a rope is thrown to him, but instead of grasping it, he begins to question,

> "Is this the only rope that has been provided for the saving of the drowning? Could not some other mode of rescue have been hit upon? Why could it not have been just as well to throw out a plank?"

Before the man could have time to finish all his questions, he would go down.

The question is the more foolish, because it is not asked with any thought that the means of salvation that God has provided are not sufficient to save mankind. If there were danger that the board over which a man must pass from a burning building to safety might break, and let him fall into the street far below, there would be excuse for examining it carefully. But the question is asked merely to satisfy an idle curiosity, which, as before said, ill becomes a lost person.

The question implies that salvation is not a very good thing. The one who asks it seems to think that almost any man can carry about in his head three or four schemes for saving men, each of them about as good as the one that God has provided; and

here again is it dishonoring to God. Infinite wisdom has provided only one way of salvation, but finite man would plan half a dozen.

But to come to the question itself. Here is the fact: Speaking of the Name of Jesus, in which the former lame man stood before the Council a perfectly sound man, the Apostle Peter said,

Acts 4
[12] Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

This being the case, it is useless to look further, or to speculate about what might have been. We may and should, however, consider the way of salvation, because it is plainly set forth before us; and when this is done there must be an end of all speculation. God has set forth Jesus…

Romans 3
[25] …to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed.
[24] [We are] justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

This is the way, and the only way that has been provided. Could there have been another way?

Who is this Jesus? The answer to this question will settle the other one.

Matthew 22
[42] What think you of Christ? whose Son is He?

Romans 1
[3] [He] was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,
[4] [but] declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Ephesians 1
[7] [He] in whom we have redemption through His blood,

Colossians 1
[15] ...[is] the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation;
[16] For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him;
[17] And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

What do you think? Could there have been any other way? is there anything outside of Him?

John 1
[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
[2] The same was in the beginning with God.
[3] All things were made by Him, and without [that is, apart from] Him was not anything made that was made.
[4] In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

That which fallen man needs is life; and he can get it only from Him who is life, and who alone has life to bestow. Angels are created beings, living by the power of Christ, just the same as men, and therefore one of them or all of them could no more bring salvation to mankind than any man could.

1 John 3
[16] Hereby perceive we the love of God because He laid down His life for us.

God has purchased the church...

Acts 20
[28] ...with His own blood.

He is the only God, and the living God, therefore He says,

Isaiah 5
[4] What could have been done more for my vineyard that I have not done in it?

When God himself can find nothing else to do for men, it is useless for men to seek further.

One thing more. God must be just, at the same time that He is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.[403]

John 3
[18] He that believes not is condemned.

But none could justly be condemned, if there was a possible way of salvation, that had been left untried. The way which God sets forth is a tried way, and He has ventured His reputation and His life upon it. There will not be found in the Judgment of the last day a single mouth opened in criticism of God, but all will admit that He is just, and that He has done all that could be done for the salvation of man. The provision is ample enough for all, and…

2 Corinthians 6
[2] Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

Therefore make haste, and…

1 Timothy 6
[12] …lay hold on eternal life.

[403] **Romans 3**: [26] To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.

25. Our Father's House

Present Truth, July 5, 1900

Isaiah 66 [RV]
[1] Thus says the Lord: The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what manner of house will you build unto me? and what place shall be my rest?
[2] For all these things has my hand made, and so all these things came to be, says the Lord; but to this man I will look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembles at my Word.

Acts 7
[46] [David] found favor with God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.
[47] But Solomon built Him a house.
[48] Howbeit the Most High dwells not in temples made with hands, as said the prophet,
[49] Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool; what house will you build me? says the Lord; or what is the place of my rest?
[50] Has not my hand made all these things?

THESE words, spoken by Stephen full of the Spirit when he was on trial, charged with speaking blasphemous words against the temple, were considered by the Jewish rulers to be the sum of unpardonable blasphemy; yet in his prayer at the dedication of the first temple, which was one of the most beautiful buildings ever made by man, Solomon had said, as the Jews had read the words thousands of times:

1 Kings 8
[27] But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built.

Where then does God live? where is His home?

Jeremiah 23
[23] Am I a God at hand, says the Lord, and not a God far off?
[24] Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill all things? says the Lord.

Psalm 139
[7] Whither shall I go from your Spirit? or where shall I flee from your presence?
[8] If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.
[9] If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
[10] Even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

Heaven and earth are both within our Father's house; for it is not possible that His throne and His footstool should be outside of His house; therefore we see that the whole boundless universe is God's dwelling place, and every spot and every portion of space, is holy because of His presence.

In view of this, how much more forcible and comprehensive are the words of Christ:

John 14
[2] In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
[3] And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

We know of the New Jerusalem which is to be the capital of Christ's dominions, and with the presence of which this little earth is to be honored; but the scriptures already quoted preclude the idea that the New Jerusalem itself can fulfill the words of Christ. God's house is the universe, and the redeemed are to be given the freedom of it, to roam through it at will, as well as to…

Revelation 14
[4] …follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes,

–and to be perfectly at home in any of the innumerable shining mansions which awaken our admiration and awe on a cloudless night. Truly it is "a large place"[404] into which God brings His redeemed captives.

[404] *Psalm* 18:19; 118:5; *Hosea* 4:16.

But wonderful as this is, there is something yet more wonderful. It is indicated in the last part of the verses quoted at the beginning. After making what house man can build for the God who has the earth for His footstool,—only a very small part of the furniture of His house,—the Lord says:

Isaiah 66
[2] ...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembles at my word.

Isaiah 57
[15] For thus says the High and Lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

Marvelous! Incomprehensible! The God whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain makes a humble mortal His dwelling place!

Ecclesiastes 3 [RV, margin]
[11] He has made everything beautiful in its time; also He has set eternity in their heart, yet so that man cannot find out the work that God has done from the beginning even to the end.

If we read *John* 14:23, knowing that the word "abode," in the last part of the verse, is the same word in the Greek as that rendered "mansions" in the second verse, it will appear more striking than ever before. Thus:

John 14
[23] If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our mansion in him.

What infinite possibilities this opens up before man! We can pass by for the present the glory and beauty with which God will adorn His dwelling place, and think only of the wisdom and understanding that is indicated in the promise,

2 Corinthians 6
[16] I will dwell in them.

We read that…

1 Kings 4
[29] God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and *largeness of heart*, even as the sand that is on the seashore.
[31] And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men.

This was because in his youthful piety he yielded himself wholly to the Lord. What "largeness of heart" there must be when the God who fills the universe makes the human heart His mansion, so that through the Spirit the man is…

Ephesians 3
[19] …filled with all the fullness of God.

He puts the universe into every true believer's heart.

Acts 7
[48] The Most High dwells not in temples made with hands;

2 Corinthians 6
[16] …for you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them.

A temple not made with hands, for…

Job 33
[4] The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life.

Coming to Christ, the Living Stone, we are…

1 Peter 2
[5] …built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Let no one become critical and give place to unbelieving questions as to how God can be our dwelling-place, and at the same time dwell in us; how He can contain the universe, and yet dwell in all His fullness in each person's heart, bringing eternity and

the universe there. Leave the working out of the problem to God, and let us enjoy the blessedness of the fact.

1 John 4
[16] He that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.

We need not carry this subject further at this time. If we let the truth here set forth fasten itself in our minds, it will furnish rich food for meditation. To recognize God in our own bodies, to know His presence there continually, cannot but work a revolution in our lives. Life becomes a sacred treasure to be preserved with the utmost care, and our own body, as well as every other human body, is regarded as a holy thing, to be treated with the highest reverence. The fact that we are the proper dwelling-place of God, and that holiness becomes His house, must give us serious thought as to how we have treated His temple.

1 Corinthians 3
[17] If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

But we have all defiled the temple, for…

Isaiah 64
[6] We are all as an unclean thing, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Are we then all doomed to destruction? No; for there is a…

Zechariah 13
[1] …fountain opened…for sin and for uncleanness;

–and of this cleansing of the sanctuary of God we shall, God willing, speak at another time.[405]

[405] There was one article that appeared about a year later which covered this topic. It is from May 23, 1901, and titled, "Jesus Our High Priest in Heaven." This article is included in the forthcoming book of collected articles, *Paul and the Early Church.*

26. Peace

Present Truth, August 23, 1900

PEACE cannot be purchased at any price; neither can it be obtained by fighting for it. The most that one can gain by any arrangements that are entered into for the sake of peace, is a cessation of hostilities; but it is not peace.

Peace must come from the heart as naturally as the perfume comes from the flower, as the result of the life of the Lord within. When the peace of God rules in the heart, it must necessarily be manifest in the life. And, like the perfume of the flower, this true peace will be experienced and manifested regardless of the surroundings.

The mind and heart kept by the peace of God through Christ Jesus,[406] cannot be affected by the captiousness or strife of others. The flower gives forth its fragrance on the dung-heap in the city just as much as in the bed of moss in the quiet forest.

[406] *Philippians* 4:7.

27. A Story of True Love

Present Truth, September 20, 1900

IT BEGINS with the time when the foundations of the earth were laid, when God spoke, and it was, when…

Genesis 1
[31] God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good;

–and,

Job 38
[7] The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

That was the wedding song, celebrating the union of God and His creation; for since the world to come will be only the restoration of the world that was, it could be said as truly then as ever that…

Isaiah 54
[5] Your Maker is your husband;…the God of the whole earth shall He be called.

As the woman was taken from the man, to be his wife, it was but the continuation of God's order, that His spouse should be the entire new creation which proceeded from Him. The earth and its inhabitants were joined to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 11
[2] I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.
[3] But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

This shows us plainly that Eve was created the bride of the Lord. But it was not Eve alone, but all men in her; for when God

made man, He made him male and female, and called their name man.[407] In Adam all the generations of mankind were created.

The creation is the manifestation of the love of God. In it He gave His life; for it is His offspring; and His life is love.

Jeremiah 31
[3] The Lord appeared of old unto me, saying, I have loved you with an everlasting love.

In everything that He has made, His everlasting power and Divinity—His own Being—are clearly seen.[408] Man in Eden, with the delight of God in him, and his land married, formed the perfect picture of the bliss of true love.

The Marriage Covenant Broken

But into this Eden the tempter came. By his subtlety he seduced man from his allegiance to his Lord. He did this by instilling doubts into their mind. Doubt is the death of love, and as soon as the first pair began to doubt God's love, the bond of union was broken. By his artful wiles, the tempter succeeded in beguiling them away from their Maker and rightful Husband, and inducing them to yield themselves wholly to him. Here was the first adultery, which has bred a host of evils. It…

> Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden.[409]

James 4
[4] You adulteresses! know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James 1
[14] Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

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[407] *Genesis* 5:1-2.
[408] *Romans* 1:20.
[409] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book 1.

[15] Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished brings forth death.

That in the first sin man committed adultery, is evident from this: It was the attraction of the world that led them astray, for in the yielding to the temptation that was presented, we see the power of…

1 John 2
[16] …the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,

–which constitute the world. The pride of life was appealed to in the words,

Genesis 3
[5] You shall be like God;
[6] And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

Thus they became wholly joined to the world, which is adultery. The former perfect union between Adam and his Maker, wherein they were "one flesh,"—for the Word was made flesh in the beginning when man was created,—was completely broken, and a new union with Satan and sin was entered into. Then men began to walk…

Ephesians 2
[2] …according to the course this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.

God's Faithful Love

Then began the long career of marital infidelity. But God did not break His covenant, which is everlasting, nor did He cast off the unfaithful bride.

2 Timothy 2
[13] If we believe not, yet He abides faithful; He cannot deny himself.

The faithful one had left His house; but instead of saying,

> "Let her go; she went of her own free will, and can come back when she gets ready,"

–or, worse still,

> "She has rejected me, and I will have nothing more to do with her,"

–He came to seek the erring one, and to beg her to come back. There is nothing more humiliating than for a man to beg for reconciliation with one who has willfully turned away from him, despising his love, and publicly putting him to shame; yet that is just what the Lord did. Read the 3rd chapter of *Jeremiah*, and the whole of the book of *Hosea*. He says:

Jeremiah 3
[12] Return you backsliding Israel, says the Lord; and I will not cause my anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, says the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever.
[13] Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have transgressed against the Lord your God, and have scattered your ways to the strangers under every green tree, and you have not obeyed my voice, says the Lord.
[14] Turn, O backsliding children, says the Lord; for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

Dying Broken-Hearted for Love

But the love of God is not merely in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. He gave the utmost proof of His everlasting love that could possibly be given:

Titus 2
[14] He gave himself for us.

Life for Him was not worth living without the loved one, and so in His effort to reclaim her He humbled himself to death, even the death of the cross.

John 1
[11] He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not.

They would not believe in His protestation of love, and they laughed Him to scorn. He was made the sport of the drunkards, and they that sat in the gate mocked Him. The very worst indignity was heaped upon Him, and spitting in the face was added to blows. Even this did not shake…

Ephesians 3
[19] …the love of Christ which passes knowledge,

–but it broke His heart, and He died literally broken-hearted, for love of those who were all unworthy of love. In those blows and in that spitting we all had a part, for…

Isaiah 53
[6] All we like sheep have gone astray.

When He was…

[3] …despised and rejected of men,

and…

Isaiah 50
[6] …hid not His face from shame and spitting,

we denied Him, and…

Isaiah 53
[3] …hid as it were our faces from Him.

And it was for us, for love of us, that…

Hebrews 12
[2] [He] endured the cross.

Drawn by the Power of Love

And He is not dead in vain.

John 12
[32] I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Jeremiah 31
[3] I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you.

That exhibition of love has broken down the enmity, the middle wall of partition that we had built between us and Him, and as we gaze upon His cross, we say,

> Love so amazing, so Divine
> Shall have my life, my soul, my all,[410]

–and we give ourselves to Him, even as He gave himself to us.

The Marriage Forbidden

But behold! There is an obstacle in the way. Just as, ravished by His love, we say,

> "Lord, I am yours,"

–forth steps "the old man," "the body of sin" and says,

> "I forbid the banns;[411] this marriage cannot take place."

And why not, pray?

> "For the reason that this woman is my wife; I am married to her, and I can bring the law to witness to the fact."

Romans 7
[1] Know you not that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

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[410] Isaac Watts, Hymn: *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, 1707.
[411] *Banns:* public announcements made in a Christian church, traditionally for three consecutive Sundays, declaring a couple's intention to marry, allowing anyone with a lawful objection to come forward before the wedding takes place.

[2] For the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives...
[3] So then if, while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress.

What a complicated case! The woman (we ourselves) is already an adulteress, because she is living in unlawful union with the lust of the flesh; and she cannot go back to her lawful husband as long as the old man of sin lives; because the law will not allow any such double union. What shall be done?

Death the Only Way of Escape

There is only one way out of the difficulty, and that method is so drastic that it looks like the end of everything. It is nothing else than death. The woman is a criminal, and worthy of death; for death is still the punishment of adultery. If we could only get rid of this seducer, whose presence is now hateful, since he is seen to be nothing but a death's head, we could be married to Him whom our soul loves.

Ah, but that is not so easy a matter. Marriage means the union of two, so that they become "one flesh," and just that intimate relation we sustain to the body of sin. Every fiber of our being is linked to sin, and sin is our own lord and master. Our wound is incurable; the disease is in the blood. So close and vital is the union between us and the body of death that it cannot be broken except by death. We are inseparably joined together until death us do part. When the body of sin dies,—the unlawful husband,—we must die too.

Well, why not? We must die anyhow, for we are but united to a body of death. Its embraces have infected us with the poison of death, and the fruit of the union is death. The question is,

> "Shall we wait until we are forced to die, against our will? or shall we, like our rightful Lord, lay down our life voluntarily, that we may take it again?"

We choose the latter. Since we are united to death, and our life is nothing else but a living death, why not die at once? Let the separation from sin be effected, even though it wrench every nerve and fiber of our being, and drain our heart's blood. We choose rather to die with Him whose love is life, than to live with him whose love is hatred, sin, and death.

United in Death

Romans 6

[3] Know you not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death?

But death in Christ does not end all; for He laid down His life only to take it again.

[4] Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
[5] For if we have been planted in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.
[6] Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
[8] Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.

The Seducer Destroyed

But what about the old man of sin? Ah, Christ is not the minister of sin. He loves us well enough to die for us, and since His love is life, it delivers us from death, and raises us up, that we may live with Him; but do not for a moment think that He who does this to win us back to our rightful union with Him, will do the same for our seducer, who must necessarily die when we do, since He is bound up with our flesh. No; we were crucified with Christ, and buried with Him,

Romans 6

[6] ...that the body of sin *might be destroyed.*

It will never again have a resurrection without our consent—never as long as we abide in Christ;

Romans 6
[7] For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Dead to the Law

Romans 7
[4] Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another, even to Him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Mind, it does not say that the law is dead; far from it; it is the law that has put us to death as criminals.

Galatians 2
[19] I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

A dead law could not put anybody to death. It was the law that gave me the knowledge of my sinful condition,

Romans 3
[20] ...for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

By I knew that I was living in adultery, and therefore doomed to death. I consented unto the law, that it is good, and delivered myself up, to receive the death penalty. But I died with Christ, and not alone, so that I have a resurrection in Him.

Galatians 2
[20] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

The person who committed the sin is dead, and another has taken his place, and therefore I am...

Romans 7
[6] ...delivered from the law,

–inasmuch as I am dead to that wherein I was held, namely, sin. The same law which before condemned me as an adulteress, now witnesses to my lawful union with Christ. It reckons me, the sinner, a dead man; and as long as I reckon myself likewise to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God, and yield myself unto God, as one that is alive from the dead, it will not condemn me, for…

Romans 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.
[2] For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Alive Unto God

Being now married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, we…

Romans 7
[4] …bring forth fruit unto God.

The fruit is unto holiness, and…

Romans 5
[22] …the end everlasting life.

Now we are in harmony with God, and so in harmony with all His perfect creation. His law—His life—fills us, and directs our movements. We are one with Him, and He is the head of the body. The love that drew us holds us. The cords of love drew us to Him, and we are bound to Him by the ties that bound Him to the cross. His goodness brought us to repentance, and the contemplation of it keeps us faithful.

Yea, we are kept by His faith.

Galatians 2
[20] The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Think of it!

2 Timothy 2
[13] If we believe not, He abides faithful: He cannot deny himself.

He was faithful in all our wandering from Him.

1 John 3
[5] In Him is no sin.

Now being one with Him, we live not by anything that pertains to ourselves, but by Him.

2 Corinthians 5
[17] Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
[18] And all things are of God, who has reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ.

So we live by His faith, and therefore as long as we abide in Him, we are as secure from sin as He himself.

The New Creation

The new creation has begun, even while we are in this tabernacle, for…

2 Corinthians 4
[11] …the life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Romans 8
[8] They that are in the flesh cannot please God.
[9] But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Since "all things are become new," we experience the joy, the blessedness, and the power of the world to come. The Spirit is the first-fruits of our inheritance. We are thenceforth to live (not merely is it our duty so to live, but the grace and strength thereto are given to us) as we shall continue to live in the new earth.

The only difference between the condition now and in the future world is this: Then we shall live perfect lives, free from sin, having no temptations, no sinful flesh, nothing to contend with; whereas now we live the selfsame life in spite of all these difficulties. We live in the flesh as though the flesh were dead and buried,

and we had already received the resurrection body. This glorious freedom is possible only by our death with Him who is the resurrection and the life. But it is possible:

1 John 2
[6] He that says he abides in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.

Do you say that this is a hard saying? Oh say not so; it is a glorious saying. It is the good and joyful news of salvation. It is the proclamation of emancipation from the bondage of corruption, and the deliverance into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. How can it be hard to live that life of righteousness, when it is no more I, but Christ, that lives in me?

What marvelous love, and what a transforming power it has! It changes us into the Divine image. And it is…

Song 8
[6] …stronger than death,

–since it has conquered death. Our union with Christ was effected in death. It was at the worst state that sin and Satan can reduce men to, that we were united to Him in love; therefore…

Romans 8
[38] I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,
[39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Have you this persuasion?

28. Sudden Impulses to Sin

Present Truth, September 20, 1900

SEVEN years imprisonment with hard labor seems like a severe punishment for a "sudden impulse;" but that is what the man received who was moved by a sudden impulse to take £50,000 in bank notes that lay exposed to view in a room in Parr's bank. His advocate made this plea in his behalf, together with the fact that he had returned the most of the notes; but the judge did not regard it.

The truth is that a man who has always lived an upright life is never moved by a sudden impulse to steal. These sudden uncontrollable impulses to sin, to which we have all been more or less subject in some form or other, come from the sin that is working within, and which is our master. Outward sets of sin do not come spontaneously from a previously good person.

James 1

[15] Lust, when it has conceived, brings forth sin.

Matthew 12

[35] A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil.

What everybody needs to learn, and what children should specially be trained in, is to be controlled by principle, and not by blind impulse. Whoever is submitted to the Spirit of God, will have sudden impulses to do a good act when an emergency calls for prompt action, but no sudden temptation will cause such a one to swerve from the right.

29. The Only Way of Atonement

Present Truth, November 15, 1900

THE papers tell us that the counsel of the young man who made the attempt on the life of the Prince of Wales last summer, are hoping to obtain an "act of mercy" for their client on the ground that he has...

> "...expressed the determination to atone for the past by good behavior for the future."

We have nothing to say against any act of mercy, but take occasion to warn our readers against the too common idea that some amount of good behavior will atone for past misdeeds.

- Abstaining from stealing for the rest of one's life will not atone for a theft committed today.
- A lie cannot be wiped out by any amount of subsequent truth-telling.

An act once done is done for ever, and will for ever remain a blot upon the life until an entirely new life is obtained. Here is what the Lord says to every one who thinks that he can atone for his own misdeeds:

> **Job 40**
> [9] Have you an arm like God? or can you thunder with a voice like Him?
> [10] Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency; and array yourself with glory and beauty.
> [11] Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.
> [12] Look on every one that is proud and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.
> [13] Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.
> [14] Then will I confess unto you that your own right hand can save you.

There is only one way:

Leviticus 17
[11] It is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

1 John 1
[7] If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Christ's life in the place of ours makes full and complete atonement.

30. The Certainty of Hope

Present Truth, November 29, 1900

VERY few of the thousands who daily express themselves as hoping for this or that, realize what hope really is. How often we hear of disappointed hopes, of "hopes dashed to the ground," of people who hoped for certain things, but did not get them; and even while telling of their "hope" for some desired thing, some will express the fear that they will be disappointed. Such ones know not what hope really is, and are deluding themselves with false hopes.

There is nothing true but God, for Christ, the revelation of God, is "the truth." He is also the reality, the fullness, of everything that is, because He is the life—the whole of life. He is, and without Him there is nothing. There is but one true God, and but one true love, "the love of God," because…

1 John 4
[16] God is love.

So there is but one rightful Lord; but one faith—"the faith of Jesus;" and but one real hope,—the hope of our calling in God.[412] This hope does not disappoint. That is the force of the expression,

Romans 5
[5] Hope makes not ashamed.

Real hope does not deceive us; we are not made ashamed by being obliged to admit that we have not received that of which we spoke so confidently. Often have we been embarrassed when we have been asked where a certain thing is, which we have with bright anticipation spoken about expecting to receive. We were disappointed, and would be glad to have the matter forgotten. We feel perhaps a little ashamed of our former enthusiasm, and do not like to have it mentioned. But nothing of this sort happens

[412] *Ephesians* 4:4-7.

when we have "the blessed hope"[413] which comes with the experience of justification by faith.

Why is this? What is the reason that hope—all hope that is hope indeed—"makes not ashamed"? The reason is given:

Romans 5
[5] ...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

True hope has its origin in true love—the love of God,—because love...

1 Corinthians 13
[7] ...hopes all things.

1 John 4
[7] Love is of God,...
[8] ...for God is love;

–therefore love is as enduring and unchanging as God himself. He is...

Psalm 90
[2] ...from everlasting to everlasting,

–and...

Jeremiah 31
[3] The Lord has appeared of old time unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love.

It must be evident to all that hope that is based upon such love can never disappoint one.

John 3
[16] God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This was promised to Abraham, and the promise was confirmed by an oath,—God swearing by himself,—for our sakes, that...

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[413] *Titus* 2:13.

Hebrews 6
[18] ...we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us:
[19] Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil;
[20] Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

All things are assured to us in Christ, and only in Him.[414] There is nothing in this world or the world to come that we can have except through His cross. So the so-called hope for anything that is not to be found in Him is sure to meet with disappointment; and the hope for everything that is in Him, and that can be had with Him, is as sure of fulfillment, as that He lives.

Even this is not all; for hope is so very real that we truly have the thing hoped for. Thus: God's work was finished from the foundation of the world, and Christ was given before that.[415] On the cross He said,

John 19
[30] It is finished.

Infinite and everlasting love has bestowed everything. God asks:

Isaiah 5
[4] What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it.

All heaven has already been poured out in the gift of Christ, so that all that we can possibly hope for we already have in Him. We...

Romans 5
[2] ...rejoice in hope of the glory of God,

–and Christ in us is...

[414] *Romans* 8:32.
[415] *Hebrews* 4:3; *1 Peter* 1:19-20.

Colossians 1
[27] ...the hope of glory.

He is the brightness of the Father's glory,[416] and the glory that was given Him He has given us;[417] therefore having Him we have all things. He is the same today that He is in eternity; therefore all the joys of eternity are ours in Him today.

This is the "lively hope," the living hope, that we have by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.[418] There is no element of doubt or uncertainty in it. The Christian's hope is no vague longing after something in the dim and uncertain future, but a firm grasp of that which is, as well as is to come. This is not simply "the larger hope," but the largest hope, for we are taught to believe that God's mercy is upon us according as we hope in Him.[419] Then let abiding hope abound, that joy may be full.

[416] *Hebrews* 1:3.
[417] *John* 17:22.
[418] *1 Peter* 1:3.
[419] *Psalm* 33:22.

31. An Abiding New Year

Present Truth, January 3, 1901
A Greeting on January 1, 1901

"A Happy New Year!"

THESE are the words that will be on all lips today. And mingled with the greeting, and suggested by it, will be thoughts of the new century on which we are now entering.

But is it indeed a *new* year to you? It may be; for God has said:

Revelation 21
[5] Behold, I make *all things new.*

But that which He makes new can never become old. So if this be to us really the beginning of a new year, the passing days will not wear out the blessing, but the experience of newness, of freshness, will be to us an ever present reality.

> O timely happy, timely wise,
> Hearts that with rising morn arise;
> Eyes that the beam celestial view,
> Which evermore makes all things new.[420]

"But how is it that all things are to be thus made and kept ever new?" you ask.

A most important question, truly, and he who knows the answer, knows the whole secret of life, of health, of everlasting youth. Here is the answer:

2 Corinthians 5
[17] If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature:* old things are passed away, behold, *all things are become new.*

Ah, here is the secret, here is the mystery, summed up in one word, *Christ:*

[17] If any man be *in Christ.*

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[420] John Keble, *The Christian Year*, "Morning," 1827.

For Christ is "the Beginning,"[421] so "if any man be in Christ," he is always "in the beginning," and life for him is forever new, forever beginning, forever fresh. Such a one can know no decay, no change, except…

Psalm 84
[7] …from strength to strength,

2 Corinthians 3
[18] …from glory to glory!

Time passes, and all that belongs to time is carried away in its swiftly flowing stream.

> Time, like an ever rolling stream,
> Bears all its sons away.[422]

But "if any man be in Christ," he is no longer the son of time; for Christ "inhabits eternity,"[423] and His name is "I AM." Eternity passes not; it *is*. And he who is in Christ dwells in eternity. By the "power of and endless life"[424] imparted to us, we become the children of the Eternal One, and "in Him *we are*."[425] Then time that bears its sons away cannot touch us, cannot stamp upon us the ever-deepening traces that mark us for its own, until, with all…

Hebrews 8
[13] …that which decays and waxes old, [we are] ready to vanish away.

"If any man be in Christ" the stream of eternity, which is "the power of an endless life," flows through him, and washes away all the rubbish left by the stream of time, until, instead of vanishing away,

2 Corinthians 5
[4] …mortality is swallowed up of life;

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[421] *Revelation* 1:8, 21:6, 22:13.
[422] Isaac Watts, *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*, 1719.
[423] *Isaiah* 57:15.
[424] *Hebrews* 7:16.
[425] *Colossians* 2:10 RV.

1 Corinthians 15
54 ...death is swallowed up in victory!

Psalm 46
4 There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of
God,
The holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.
5 God is in the midst of her; *she shall not be moved.*

Then let us this New Year be sure that we begin at the beginning, and...

Genesis 1
1 In the beginning,—God.

Not this New Year's day only, but every day let us remember that...

Psalm 87
7 ...all my springs are in You.

Let every undertaking be begun, continued and finished in Him, for all that cannot be so done must belong to those old things that are "passed away" "if any man be in Christ."

And not only let everything be begun in Him, but let us be quite sure that He is the beginning of it,—that is, that the very suggestion of all that we undertake may come from Him alone; that it may be the impulse of His Holy Spirit guiding our minds, His power controlling our wills and using all our members to do His own sweet and holy will. Then we can go in no way but...

Ezekiel 1
20 ...whithersoever the Spirit is to go;

–and this is always the right way, and...

Hebrews 10
20 ...a *new* and *living* way.

For the Way of God is Christ,

John 14
[6] ...the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

He is the...

Proverbs 4
[18] ...path of the just, which shines more and more unto the perfect day,

–the Light of the world, whose, beams celestial evermore make all things new.

This glorious Sun of Righteousness is shining upon us this New Year's morning. May our hearts so fully turn to Him, that in His heavenly beams all old things may for ever pass away, and all things become and continue for ever new.

32. Personal Remarks

Present Truth, February 21, 1901

DON'T be a croaker. Don't always be looking for the worst side of things, nor even looking at it when it presents itself. Don't talk discouragement, even if you feel discouraged, and don't ever say anything that would tend to make others discouraged. That is to say, if you cannot help lift the load, don't think that it is your duty to sit on it and add your weight to that which anybody else must lift. It is hard enough for others to have to lift the part that you ought to pick up, are neglecting, without having to carry you too.

A despondent person is of no earthly use in the world, and the only thing for him to do is to get out—not of the world, but—of his discouraged state. This is the easiest thing in the world to do, if you will but look at the Light of Life. When the wise men saw the star that was leading them to Jesus,

Matthew 2
[10] ...they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

Even so we, though now we see Him not, believing must necessarily...

1 Peter 1
[8] ...rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The God of hope will...

Romans 15
[13] ...fill you with all joy and peace in believing.

If you had a friend with a deformity, you would not always be reminding him of it. You would not say,

"It seems to me your leg is a little crookeder today than usual,"

–or,

"I believe the hump on your back is getting more prominent."

You could not be so cruel as to remind him of his blemish, for you would know that such references would have a most painful and depressing effect on him. Neither if the case were less serious, and your friend were merely ugly in appearance, would you be so thoughtless and impolite as to say,

"You are looking uglier today than the last time I saw you,"

–or,

"That mole on your check is getting larger and blacker."

Then why should anybody comment on his friend's appearance healthwise? It certainly is no less impolite or discouraging, to say,

"How ill you are looking!"

"You are certainly not looking so well today as usual;"

"You are getting pale and thin,"

–and similar familiar expressions. They are often very annoying, and they never tend to encourage and strengthen the subject of them.

It is true that there are people who think it is quite the thing to "enjoy poor health," who are pleased to be the center of interest, even if the remarks are to their discredit; but such vanity ought not to be encouraged. We may not say that it is always a sin for a person to be ill, but it certainly is never anything to one's credit, or to be proud of. If we can help a person out of his feeble condition, then it is allowable to speak to him of it, just as in the Spirit of Christ we may mention, in the most private way possible, any defect in his character, in order to help him to remedy it; but not otherwise.

A cheerful, encouraging word is often the best medicine that can be administered to a person who is really ill, and it is always a help. You can surely find some encouraging feature to speak about in any case.

Philippians 4
[8] ...if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things;

–and speak only the things that are calculated to edify.

33. Humanity Lifted Up in Christ

Present Truth, April 11, 1901
Original title: Back Page

WHEN one comes in contact with some of one's fellow-creatures, and sees their grossness and corruption, their low sensuality, their sordid selfishness, and the petty meanness and fiendish cruelty of which they are capable, one blushes for the human race, and is almost ashamed of being a man, especially when one remembers that no man commits any sin that is not common to all human flesh.

But when, still looking at fallen man,

Hebrews 2
[9] ...we see Jesus...

–bearing all this load of shameful sin and pitiable weakness, yet remaining...

Hebrews 7
[26] ...holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens,

–and grasp the thought that...

Psalm 113
[7] He lifts the poor out of the dust,

–even out of the mire and filth of the pit, to set them among princes, and that this exalted Being is "*the* Man," we cannot but rejoice in the thought of being associated with Him, and glory in the cross of Christ which creates us men indeed.

34. A Living Sacrifice

Present Truth, June 20, 1901

Romans 12

[1] I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

THIS is something entirely different from the sacrifices offered by the Jews of old, or on heathen altars. Theirs were dead sacrifices—the flesh and blood of dead animals; ours is a living sacrifice; only one, in contradistinction to their many—our own body yielded to Christ as His own rightful body.

But what means this, that we are to offer our bodies a living sacrifice?

It means that He who has accepted us in the Beloved,[426] and who provides the one perfect sacrifice, invests us with the life of that Sacrifice when we accept Him. Christ through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God[427]—a living sacrifice. Slain from "the foundation of the world,"[428] He yet lived; always a sacrifice,

Hebrews 7

[25] He ever lives.

Continually giving, it pleases the Father that in Him all fullness shall dwell[429]—always on the altar, yet never consumed; His life-stream, flows constantly, yet is never diminished.

Now when we know that our body was prepared for Christ,[430] in which He should do the Father's will, and offer an acceptable sacrifice, and give ourselves to Him, so that we can say,

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[426] *Ephesians* 1:6.
[427] *Hebrews* 9:14.
[428] *Revelation* 13:8.
[429] *Colossians* 2:9.
[430] *Hebrews* 10:5.

Galatians 2
[20] I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me,

–it is evident that we are offering to God the sacrifice which He himself provided; and this being so, all the life of that incorruptible sacrifice is ours.

He died, that we might not die. He laid down His life, that He might take it again,[431] and take us with it. So the fact that His Spirit exhorts us to offer our bodies a *living* sacrifice, proves that He has provided us the life wherewith to do it. The exhortation is itself the promise of life. Our business is to learn the way of life. There is life for the body—every body—that is wholly subject to the ways of the Lord. We were by nature the children of wrath;[432] but:

1 Thessalonians 5
[9] God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[431] *John* 10:17.
[432] *Ephesians* 2:3.

35. Avoiding Insult

Present Truth, August 1, 1901
Original title: Back Page

DID you never notice that those who take the most pains to resent insults and slights, are the ones who are oftenest insulted and slighted? The man who carries weapons, is the man who is assaulted; while the man who never carries them never has any use for them. The lesson is obvious: if you would never be insulted, never look for injury, and never have any thought of resentment.

36. Ruffled Feelings

Present Truth, October 17, 1901

SOME people are always imagining that others are thinking of them, and making remarks about them. They cannot see two or more persons talking together without imagining that they are being criticized. The reason is twofold:

1. They are conscious of defect meriting criticism, and
2. They know that under similar circumstances they would criticize others.

But,

1 Corinthians 13
[5] Love thinks no evil.

And therefore the one who loves, never has his feelings ruffled.

37. What It Costs

Present Truth, November 7, 1901

> "Does the Lord require me to give this up? Can I not be saved if I do not?"

HAVE you not often heard such questions? Perhaps you yourself have had similar thoughts. There is among many people a feeling that God is exacting; that He requires too much of us, and that He ought to be satisfied with less. Indeed, if people would analyze their thoughts they would find an idea that God is really benefiting himself at their expense.

That this idea is actually held, is shown by the words of Elihu to Job:

> **Job 35**
> [2] You said, My righteousness is more than God's?
> [3] For you said, What advantage will it be unto you? and, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin?
> [4] I will answer you, and your companions with you.
> [5] Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds which are higher than you.
> [6] If you sin, what do you against Him? or if your transgressions be multiplied, what do you unto Him?
> [7] If you be righteous, what do you give Him? or what does He receive of your hand?
> [8] Your wickedness may hurt a man as you are; and your righteousness may profit the son of man.

This thought, often unexpressed and half-unconscious, is nothing else than the reverberation of the subtle temptation by which the serpent caused the fall of Eve. With a contemptuous sarcasm he asked the question,

> **Genesis 3**
> [1] Has God really said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

And then followed up this insinuations against God's justice by boldly saying that there was no harm in eating from the forbidden tree:

> **Genesis 3**
> [5] For God does know that in the day you eat thereof you shall be as gods.

Thus He made her believe that it was unjust for God to require her to abstain from eating the fruit of that tree; that she was really being abused; and that God was profiting by their abstinence.

What now is the real truth in the case? Just this: that whenever we give up anything in obedience to God, we profit greatly at His expense. We talk about sacrifice, and what it costs us, foolishly forgetful of the fact that it is the Lord who has made the sacrifice, and the only real one that ever has been or can be made. Do you know what it costs the Lord every time you give up an evil habit? Nothing less than His life. You think it will cost you your life, or at least all that life is worth, to give up that darling practice, yet in doing so you will find life in such rich measure and so full of joy as you never knew before, but it cost Christ's heart's blood to enable you to do it. Ah, never again let the shadow of the thought enter your mind, that God is causing huge inconvenience to gratify himself. He is, on the contrary, giving you happiness that the cost of His own life.

In this lies our strength, and the assurance that nothing is impossible to us. God is really asking us to *receive* something, instead of to give up. He asks us to receive His life, in which there is no shade of evil, and which is the very essence and fullness of light, and joy, and peace in order that we may be delivered from that which is to us darkness, sorrow, misery, and death. And the fact that our deliverance from the bondage of evil habits costs the Lord His life, is the assurance of deliverance; for His life has proved victorious over every temptation. Then instead of murmuring about what we are required to give up, let us give to God for His unspeakable gift.

Psalm 116
[12] What shall I render unto the lord for all His benefits toward me?
[13] I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

38. A Word to the Unsaved

Present Truth, November 28, 1901

A YOUNG MAN writes to us, and incidentally mentions that he is "unsaved." The statement raises some questions, which we present for the benefit of others who may be in the same situation.

You say that you are unsaved; that shows that you recognize that you are in danger, nay, in actual distress; for one needs saving only from that which is injurious or destructive.

If you know that you are unsaved, you know that you need salvation; then why are you not saved? how can you rest content in an unsafe condition, as though it were to be accepted as a matter of course? Knowing your own condition, how can you help at least crying out:

> "What must I do to be saved?"[433]

Is your apathy the indifference of despair? Have you concluded that there is no salvation for you? Then be quickly undeceived;

Luke 19
[10] ...for the Son of man is come to seek to save that which was lost.

[433] *Acts* 16:30.

John 3
[17] God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

1 Thessalonians 5
[9] For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

His desire is that all men should be saved, and therefore He…

2 Peter 3
[9] …is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

So He cries:

Isaiah 65
[22] Look unto me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth.

It is God, the Creator and upholder of all things, who says this, and He is abundantly able to do all that He offers. You admit that you are unsaved, that is, lost; then why not accept salvation that is so freely offered?

You ask how you shall accept it; and God tells you:

Isaiah 45
[22] Look unto me, and be you saved.

John 3
[14] As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
[15] That whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Now when fiery serpent's plagued the children of Israel, the Lord said the Moses:

Numbers 21
[8] Make a fiery serpent; and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looks upon it, shall live.

So,

There's life in a look at the Crucified One;[434]

–but the look must not be momentary. We must keep on looking, and by beholding we become changed.[435] You do not know where to look? Look up; look everywhere; for Jesus has ascended that He might fill all things.[436] When you can see Him everywhere, you will know that you are always in His presence; and no one can sin while consciously standing in the presence of the Lord.

39. The Old and the New

Present Truth, January 2, 1902

FROM every side sounds the wish which we from the heart utter for all our readers,

"A Happy New Year!"

From many a church spire, bells "ring out the old," and "ring in the new;" but the hearts that have so merrily responded will in most cases as has so often happened in the past, soon forget the new, joyous impulses that the new year aroused, and the life will settle into its accustomed groove, no better for the awakening, but a little less responsive than before, because of good resolutions made and disregarded. Now just because our wish is sincere, we add to our greeting a few words that may, if heeded, enable each one to keep the newness and freshness all through the year.

God is the God of eternity. He is unchanged from everlasting to everlasting, and…

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[434] Amelia M. Hull, *There Is Life in a Look at the Crucified One.*
[435] *2 Corinthians* 3:18.
[436] *Ephesians* 4:10.

Acts 17
[28] In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

But eternity means constant newness, as is shown by the fact that God is unchangeable. We see "change and decay" in all around; but God remains absolute perfection. Therefore all who by faith abide in Him, dwelling with Him in eternity, must be continually renewed.[437] Continual renewing means unchanged newness.

It is no fancy or hyperbole, to speak of dwelling with God in eternity;

Isaiah 57
[15] For thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

If He who inhabits eternity dwells with us, we must certainly dwell with Him in eternity.

Revelation 21
[5] He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new.

This will be said before very long of the heavens and the earth; but even now God is performing this work for all who by faith consciously abide in Him. So we are enabled to says,

Psalm 103
[2] Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits;
[3] Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases;
[4] Who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
[5] Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Happiness is always subjective, not objective. That is, it always depends upon the individual himself, and not on something external. If a person is to have a happy new year, he must himself be

[437] *2 Corinthians* 4:16.

happy; and he will be happy if he remains ever new. This is not only possible, but it is God's design for us all; for…

2 Corinthians 5
[17] If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new;
[18] And all things are of God.

The life of Christ is given us, to be…

2 Corinthians 4
[11] …made manifest in our mortal flesh,

–so that even…

[16] …though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

Lamentations 3
[22] It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.
[23] They are new every morning.

So since He crowns us with His loving-kindness and tender mercies, it is evident that if we receive them as from Him, and recognize the purpose for which He gives them, we shall be new every morning. Thus will each new day be in reality to us the beginning of a happy new year.

This is the true ringing out of the old, and the ringing in of the new. It is the putting off of…

Ephesians 4
[22] …the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,
[23] …[being] renewed in the spirit of your mind,

–and putting on…

[24] …the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

This "old man" that is to be put off, and the "old things" that pass away in Christ, are only comparatively old: they are old, not

because of priority of existence, but because of decay; the "new man" and the things which of God become new to us, were "from the beginning." The "new commandment," that we love one another,[438] is…

1 John 2
7 …the old commandment which you heard from the beginning.

Only "that which was from the beginning,"[439]—Christ, the Word of life,—is everlasting and always new; for He is "the Beginning,"[440] and He is…

Hebrews 13
8 …the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

Therefore,

1 John 2
28 Abide in Him!

Isaiah 26
4 Trust you in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;

–and…

Isaiah 40
31 They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength.

[438] *1 John* 3:11.
[439] *1 John* 1:1.
[440] *Revelation* 1:8.

40. Disgrace, Grace, and Glory

Present Truth, March 13, 1902

AMONG the Romans the cross was the symbol of shame, and to suffer death by the cross was so ignominious that no Roman citizen, whatever his crime, was subjected to it. Yet Christ, having been nailed to it, has imparted a glory to it that will shine through eternity. It is the sign, as it gives the reality, of the eternal glory, and will be the science and the song of the redeemed in eternal ages.

"Yes; I know that,"

–every professed Christian will say. Do you? Then why did I hear you disconsolately bewailing your low estate, your insignificance, your meager opportunities, and your general uselessness? Or is it only theoretically that you know it, and not practically?

The glorified cross means that…

1 Corinthians 1
[27] God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty;
[28] And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are.

But that does not mean that they are to remain foolish and weak and base. Far from it.

1 Samuel 2
[8] He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

Psalm 68
[12] Though you have lien among the pots, yet shall you be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

God's grace added to disgrace gives glory.

41. Free and Dependent

Present Truth, April 17, 1902

THE most independent person in the world is the little child that is absolutely and confidently dependent upon his father for everything. It has no care, and knows no fear, and is under no obligation to anybody. It has everything it wants, and has it as its own by right.

Even so it is with the man who knows and implicitly trusts his heavenly Father. The man most completely independent of this world and all in it, is the man who is consciously the most helplessly dependent on God.

42. Choice of Ancestors

Present Truth, May 8, 1902

THE example set by Jean in the following story, told in the *Classmate*, is a good one to follow, but we would go farther back than she did in our own search of ancestors. A part of the genealogy of every man now living is recorded in the 1st chapter of *Luke:*

Luke 1
36 ...Noah,...
37 ...which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,
38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was *the son of God.*

That...

No legacy of sin annuls
Heredity from God,[441]

–was demonstrated by Jesus Christ, who came...

Romans 8
3 ...in the likeness of sinful flesh,

–yet revealed nothing but the Divine image.

"Heredity makes me feel so helpless," said a little girl the other day; "for I can't help what my ancestors have been, and I have to accept the disposition and the qualities handed down to me. It doesn't leave me any choice, as far as I can see, as to what I can do and be."

Her friend, a bright-faced young woman of the same age, looked at her quizzically.

"Why, Dorothy, you've lots of choice in the matter. I reasoned that out for myself long ago, and I'll prove it to you. How many ancestors have you in, say six generations back."

[441] Lydia A. C. Ward, Poem: *Heredity.*

"Dear me. What a sum in mental arithmetic!" said Dorothy. "Let me see—two, then four, then eight, then sixteen, then thirty-two, then sixty-four—wait till I add up—why, one hundred and twenty-eight, I suppose. I had no idea how spreading a family tree was."

"That's just it," replied Jean with a twinkle. "Out of one hundred and twenty-eight ancestors, one can get a good range of choice. I used to be discouraged about heredity until I counted them up, and then I felt that there was safety in numbers. They couldn't all be disagreeable, lazy and ill-tempered you see."

"Of course not," said Dorothy, "but—"

"But then," went on Jean, "if they weren't all full of bad qualities, some of them had to be nice, kind, upright, hard-working, useful men and women, don't you see? So I went over the list and picked out the good ones; and then I said to myself every day, I am a descendant from all these good men and women, and I inherit their dispositions and qualities to some extent, and I'm going to develop my inheritance. Sometimes it was a little hard when grandfather's quick temper was boiling up in me, to remember that great-grandmother was the most amiable woman possible, and that I was her descendant as much as his; but I knew it was true, and so I kept my mind fixed upon it. Out of my four great-grandfathers, as far I can find out, two were very industrious, and two were extremely lazy. I don't see why heredity wouldn't make me just as industrious as lazy, and so I choose to remember the two ancestors that worked, and I try to forget the two who shirked. O, there's a choice in ancestors, and one has a perfect right to make it."

Dorothy smiled, "It's a new idea, Jean," she said, "but I must say it is helpful as to the heredity problem. I have been looking at the question the wrong way. Now I'll try your way. I am going home to count up and classify my hundred and twenty-eight forbears, or as many as I can find track of; and then I shall follow your example and make my choice among them."

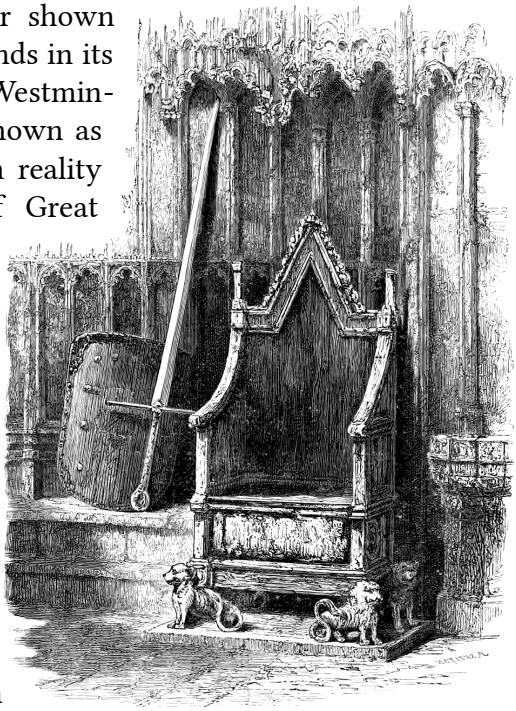
"You'll find a saint somewhere in the line," said Jean. "There always is one. My trouble about ancestors isn't that they've handed me down so many bad qualities, but they've been so good that I

can't live up to my inheritance. Heredity is responsibility, my dear Dorothy, when you come to study it."

43. The Throne and the King

Present Truth, July 3, 1902

THE Coronation Chair shown on this page, as it stands in its place against the wall in Westminster Abbey, though not known as the king's throne, does in reality stand for the throne of Great Britain, hence upon it all monarchs have been crowned since Edward I.



The Kingship of Man

Of it we need not speak further here, its history is very well known, and is easily accessible to all; what we are especially concerned with is the greater, more real, and everlasting throne on which the Lord elevates all who follow Him, no matter how lowly their origin:

1 Samuel 2

[8] He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

It has repeatedly been shown in these columns that God made man to be king. He crowned him with glory and honor, and put him over the works of His hand, putting everything under his feet, in subjection to him.[442] Men have lost their kinship,

Romans 3
[23] For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;

–but God's only begotten Son has come into man's place that He might bring many sons back to glory;[443] and it is evident that in bring them to glory He restores the lost dominion, and places them upon the throne. The promise of Jesus is,

Revelation 3
[21] To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in His throne.

Now let us read how "the Man Christ Jesus,"[444] "the firstborn among many brethren,"[445] was elevated to His position…

Hebrews 1
[3] …on the right hand of the Majesty on high,

1 Peter 3
[22] …angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.

We read the Scripture in full. It begins with the Apostle Paul's prayer for us,—

Ephesians 1
[17] That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him:

[442] *Psalm* 8:4-8.
[443] *Hebrews* 2:10.
[444] *1 Timothy* 2:5.
[445] *Romans* 8:29.

[18] The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
[19] And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,
[20] Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,
[21] Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
[22] And has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church,
[23] Which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

It was by the resurrection from the dead that Jesus was raised to the throne of God; but the resurrection is included in the death of the cross; for Paul, who preached "Jesus, and the resurrection,"[446] rigidly confined himself to Christ and Him crucified;[447] and Jesus laid down His life only to take it again.[448] Therefore we are justified in saying that it was the cross that elevated Jesus to His high position. This is corroborated by the words which Jesus used in describing the manner of death that He should die:

John 12
[32] And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Not merely did the cross elevate Jesus to the throne of God, but the cross was itself the throne. There were no accidents in Christ's life. All that…

Acts 4
[27] Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel…

[446] *Acts* 17:18.
[447] *1 Corinthians* 2:2.
[448] *John* 10:17.

–did to Him was no more than what God's hand and counsel had…

Acts 4
[28] …determined before to be done;

–and therefore the placing of a crown upon His head, and an inscription above it, calling Him king, exactly indicated the rank which He held on the cross. It was a cruel mockery that the crown was placed on the head of Jesus was made of thorns, but it indicated a truth which those who did it did not understand,—that the cross is the throne of God, and the thorny way is the way of glory.

God's Throne

If we recall the figures and descriptions of God's throne, we shall see the cross of Jesus fills all the conditions. Let us take a hasty glance at some of them. The thing for which the ancient tabernacle, and afterward the temple, were especially built, was the ark in which were the tables of the law. This ark symbolized God's throne, for God said to Moses:

Exodus 25
[22] There will I meet with you, and there I will commune with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give you in commandment unto the children of Israel.

God dwells between the cherubim.[449]

Again, Mount Sinai, the place of the law, was God's sanctuary when He came down upon it with all His angels.[450] From that mountain flowed forth, even while it was the embodiment of God's law, a stream of living water for the people. Even so it is with God's throne in heaven,[451] which is a living throne.[452] This

[449] *Psalm* 130:1.
[450] See *Psalm* 68:17.
[451] *Revelation* 20:1.
[452] See *Ezekiel* 1.

stream came from Christ, the Rock, the living Stone,[453] from whom the…

Revelation 22
[1] …pure river of water of life, clear as crystal [springs];

–for the Lamb slain is in the midst of the throne.[454] We see that God's throne contains the living law on living stones, and sends forth a stream of life. All this we see in Christ and Him crucified. In His heart was God's law,[455] and from it flowed the blood and water which, uniting, formed one stream of life.[456]

Jesus is still the crucified One. It is no mere figure of speech, therefore, when sinners are invited to "come to the cross;" for in obeying the exhortation to…

Hebrews 4
[16] …come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,

–we do literally come to the cross of Jesus. From this we learn that the good old hymn so often sung,

> Nearer my God to Thee,
> Nearer to Thee;
> E'en though it be a cross
> That raises me;[457]

–expresses the truth, but not the whole truth. It seems to imply that one may get near to God in some other way than by the cross, and that the cross is the way of last resort, whereas it is the only way.

Ephesians 2
[13] In Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

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[453] *1 Corinthians* 10:4.
[454] *Revelation* 5:6.
[455] *Psalm* 40:8.
[456] *John* 19:34; *1 John* 5:7-8.
[457] Sarah Flower Adams, *Nearer, My God, to Thee*, 1841.

It is by the blood of Jesus that we have boldness to enter into the holiest,[458] into the secret dwelling place of the Most High.[459] So we may amend the hymn, and sing with glad submission:

> Nearer my God, to Thee,
> Nearer to Thee;
> *Although* it is the cross
> That raises me.

Thank God, the cross does place us upon the throne of God, by the side of Jesus Christ; for…

> **Ephesians 2**
> [1] You has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;
> [3] …and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.
> [4] But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,
> [5] Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are you saved),
> [6] And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

God says of His anointed,

> **Psalm 132**
> [18] His enemies will I clothe with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

Contrary to all human calculation, the "root out of a dry ground"[460] blossoms and buds, and fills the face of the world with fruit; the crown of thorns blossoms as the rose. Every drop of blood drawn by its sharpness is a fadeless flower, and the dry, unsightly instrument of torture becomes…

> **1 Peter 5**
> [4] …a crown of glory that fades not away.

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[458] *Hebrews* 10:19.
[459] *Psalm* 91:1.
[460] *Isaiah* 53:2.

From all this it appears that the child of God is always on the throne, and can always give to God, who…

2 Corinthians 2
[14] …always causes us to triumph in Christ.

Nothing, not even a defeat at the hands of our enemy, can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Though sin cover us with shame, we may know that all sin and shame are on the cross, and that the cross is the throne, and so out of defeat we win in victory. At these two extremities of His life, both of which were times of absolute helplessness,

1. When he was wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger, and
2. When He hung on the cross,

–Jesus Christ rightly received the homage due a king; for He was the King. Both the manger-cradle of weakness and the cross of shame, are the throne for the conqueror. The victor over sin is king.

The King a Servant

The King of kings is…

Hebrews 13
[20] …the great Shepherd of the sheep.

It is written of the prophet concerning Bethlehem:

Micah 5
[2] Out of you shall come forth a Governor,
Which shall be Shepherd to my people Israel.

The king is the one who feeds the people and his authority is in proportion to the power to serve. It is not usually so in this world, but so it ought to be. Jesus said:

Matthew 20
[25] The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

[26] But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;
[27] And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:
[28] Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

In proof of this, Jesus, in immediate connection with His being lifted up upon the cross,

John 13
[3] ...knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God;

–and that He was Master and Lord, washed the feet of His disciples.[461] Not only so, but He tells us that when He reigns supreme in the kingdom of glory, and all His faithful followers have been gathered to Him,

Luke 12
[37] He shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

The King of kings serves as waiter! There we have proof that the greatest king on earth is the one who does most for his fellow-creatures.

And now just one glance into the future. We read of the New Jerusalem that the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him.[462] Of the innumerable company which have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, we are told,

Revelation 7
[15] Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.

[461] *John* 13:4-17.
[462] *Revelation* 22:3.

A comparison with the parables in the 25th of *Matthew* and the 19th of *Luke* shows that they have entered into the joy of their Lord,—the joy of giving,—and are made rulers over many things, each one having authority according to his ability to serve. God takes His faithful servants and associates them with himself in the government of the universe, making them ministers of His life; and this shows what is of right our privilege and occupation here, for Christ said,

> **John 7**
> 38 He that believes on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

And this, again, shows that believers,—all who are loosed from their sins by the blood of Jesus Christ,—are even now kings and priests and the God.[463]

[463] *Revelation* 1:5-6.

44. Making Peace

Present Truth, July 31, 1902

A COMMON exhortation to sinners is to *make their peace* with God; and a question often asked is,

"Have you made your peace with God?"

Ours would be sad condition, if we were under the necessity of making peace; for we could find no answer to the question,

Micah 6
[6] Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?
[7] Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Nothing that we could offer would suffice to make peace.

We may be glad that it is not necessary to make peace. Peace has already been made by God himself, who has never been at war with mankind.

1 Thessalonians 5
[23] [He is] the very God of peace,

–always at peace. He has sent a message to us,

Acts 10
[36] ...preaching peace by Jesus Christ, [who] is Lord of all.

Ephesians 2
[14] For He is our peace,

–by whom the enmity is destroyed.

Colossians 1
[19] It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell;
[20] And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto himself.

So Jesus says,

John 14
[27] Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

Then what have we to do? Simply to appropriate the peace that is given,—to keep the peace. Our peace—the peace of all mankind —has been made with God, by God himself; and the question to be asked is,

"Have you accepted peace?"

–or,

"Are you keeping the peace?"

It is a bad thing to be found fighting after peace has been declared. Don't do it any more. Surrender your ways and your thoughts to the Lord, and…

Philippians 4
[7] The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

45. The Atonement

Present Truth, August 21, 1902
Original title: Back Page

SOMEBODY asked us the other day,

"Do you believe in the atonement?"

Our reply was,

"We don't believe in anything else."

There is nothing else to believe in. Christ is the Author and Finisher of faith;[464] there is no other object of faith; and belief in Christ is belief in the atonement, for He is set forth for no other purpose than to atone for sin.

People talk about "the doctrine of the atonement," as if it were one of many Christian doctrines. That is a most mistaken notion. The atonement is not a dogma; it is the actual salvation of sinners from sin, by the fullness of the life of God in Christ.

[464] *Hebrews* 12:2.

46. An Invitation from the King

Present Truth, September 4, 1902
Original title: Back Page

AN INVITATION from the king is a command that nullifies all previous engagements.

We issue invitations to our friends, and sometimes they excuse themselves on the ground of inconvenience or previous engagements; but not one ever heard of anybody making such an excuse to royalty. If a statesman should refuse the king's invitation—command—to dine with him, that would end his political career.

This is an object lesson to us. God's invitations, the privileges that He accords to us, are commands, and we cannot lightly ignore them. If we are content with anything less than the way of life,—the perfection of life which He makes known to us,—if we excuse ourselves because of previous engagements or inconvenience, that puts us outside of His Government.

But God is longsuffering and kind; we have made many excuses, but our career in His kingdom is not yet ended. He still makes the message known, and gives freely to us. More than all this, He gives us that privilege of letting the world know what its glorious privileges are.

47. Making the Most of Life

Present Truth, January 8, 1903

IT IS a common saying of people who live chiefly for pleasure, that they believe in making the most of life. So they think, but their actions show that they are grossly deceived. As a matter of fact they are making the least of life—spending it and getting rid of it as fast as possible.

God has given us this little span of life, in order that we may decide from it if we should like to have it continued throughout eternity; and yet most people are as reckless of it as though it were of no consequence. If we always remembered that our present life is but a section of the eternity which may be ours if we wish it so, we shall constantly study how literally to make the most of it,—how to make it last the longest, and to be the richest in blessing to others.

48. The Peace of God

Present Truth, February 12, 1903
Original title: Back Page

AT ONE of Dr. Torrey's recent revival meetings in London, he related the following, which he heard from Mr. Charles Inglis. The latter was once asked by a stranger,

> "Have you peace with God?"
>
> "Oh," replied Mr. Inglis, "I have something better than that."
>
> "Indeed!" said his questioner, "what could be better than peace with God?"
>
> "The Peace of God," said Mr. Inglis.

And the other agreed that the peace of God was even better than peace with God.

> "But," continued Mr. Inglis, "I have something better even than that. I have *the God of peace*."

If you have Him you have everything; and if you…

Colossians 3
[15] Let the peace of God rule in your heart,

2 Corinthians 13
[11] [then] the God of love and peace shall be with you.

