

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLV, July, 1951)

Two Givers

Who little gives, knows not the joy of living:
His shrunken soul the bliss of heaven foregoes
For earthly gain; and daily harder grows
His task,—the task of little giving.

Who gives his all, and gives with spirit willing,—
Yea, gives himself, and mourns "a gift so slight,"—
Shall find in sacrifice supreme delight,
A heavenly joy the emptied vessel filling.

—Selected

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

IF YOU HAVE SINNED

It is a serious thing, and not to be regarded lightly. My first word, like John's, would be, "These things I write unto you *that ye may not sin.*" But that is not the last word, thank God; for John goes on to say, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins. . ." (John 2:1, 2.)

There is a difference in sins. The Bible speaks of *great* sins a man may commit, which implies that some other sins are of a minor character. But we are not always able to estimate the relative gravity of our offenses. Some sins may seem small to us because they are common and habitual; in God's sight they are great. In any case the least sin is not small in God's sight; and if unforgiven would make salvation impossible. And there are great sins. "There is a sin unto death," John says. "All unrighteousness is sin. And there is a sin not unto death" (1 John 5:16, 17). Of this we shall have something to say further on.

WHAT NEXT?

Say then, that you have sinned—perhaps a great sin: what now will you do? It is a critical time. You may take a wrong step and go down into indifference and fatal, final hardening. Or you may be forgiven and humbly rejoice in His mercy and His forgiving love. It depends on the attitude you take, and what you do about it. First of all the facts must be faced. Do not minimize your guilt. Do not put yourself off with excuses. When you deal with God you must above all things be honest. You must come as you are, without pretense or any attempt at concealment. There is nothing hid from

His sight, and "all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Now, "if we confess our sins," says John again, "he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Will you believe that? "I acknowledged my sin unto thee," said David, "and mine iniquity did I not hide. I said I will confess my transgressions unto Jehovah; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (Ps. 32:5). "Is it enough," you may ask, "to confess my sin to God?" Yes—for forgiveness it is. For sin is always and primarily against God (Ps. 51:4). But if God's honor, or the demands of righteousness, calls for confession before men or to men, granting you are sincere in the matter, you will not fail to make things right in this regard. If your sin was a public one, you must confess it publicly. If by your sin someone was injured and by your confession the wrong can be righted, you must confess it to the parties concerned. If it was between you and God alone, to Him alone you need confess—though even then it is good and helpful to confess to faithful brethren also. (James 5:16.)

THE BASIS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

You may have noticed the recurrence of the word "righteous," in the passages above quoted. "He is faithful and *righteous* to forgive us our sins." And, "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ *the righteous*." So David also: "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of *thy righteousness*" (where we might have expected the word "mercy"). Or, again, when pleading for forgiveness, "In thy faithfulness answer me, and in *thy righteousness*" (Ps. 51:14; 143:1, 2). Now righteousness means justice; and is it justice we want? God forbid. Yet God is just and cannot be otherwise. Where then does His righteousness come in, in forgiving the sinner? John tells us: "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation [the atoning sacrifice] for our sins . . ." God gave His All, His Best, when He gave His Son to die for our sins. And He did it that He "might be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). Now He can forgive righteously.

"THAT HE MIGHT BE FEARED"

"There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared," said the psalmist. The forgiveness of God fills us with a holy fear. All through the Old Testament God inculcated the lesson that sin is a terrible thing, and that it calls for blood, and that only the death of the poor victim at the altar could avail to meet its guilt. But those Old Testament sacrifices did only foreshadow the real truth: "for it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." It required a truer sacrifice—the blood of One who was the dearest, the purest, the most precious and beloved, the Son of His love, and His awful death upon the Cross, to lift that debt. "He is the propitiation for our sins."

"My sins, my sins, my Savior,
Their guilt I never knew

Till with thee in the desert
 I near thy passion drew;
 Till with thee in the garden
 I heard thy pleading pray'r,
 And saw the blood-drops falling,
 That told thy sorrow there."

Now come, my brother, and gladly receive that forgiveness which was there bought for thee—rejoice and be glad—but rejoice with trembling. It is free, no fee, to you—free yet not cheap. "There is forgiveness with thee *that thou mayest be feared*" (Ps. 130:4).

"CAST NOT AWAY YOUR BOLDNESS"

But to go back to our first question—you have sinned. Now one great danger is that you may get discouraged and think there is no use of starting over. "No use" is the devil's word. When you hear that, or it is suggested to your mind he is behind it. God says there is use. "Cast not away therefore your boldness which hath great recompense of reward." Whatever may have happened—cast not away your boldness (Heb. 3:6, 14). We are not left without hope and without help. John says, "If any sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins."

"Five bleeding wounds he bears
 Received on Calvary,
 They pour effectual pray'rs
 Before that throne for me:
 Forgive him, O forgive they cry,
 Nor let that ransomed sinner die."

"Having then a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been tempted in all points even as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in the time of need" (Heb. 4:14-16).

DOUBTS AND FEARS

It seems hard for us small-minded mortals to believe in the free, whole-hearted, disinterested love of God, and His full and free forgiveness. We feel there just must be some sort of hitch in it—it can't be just so good and free as that. And often after we have penitently sought the Lord's forgiveness, we still carry the load of guilt around with us, and with it a haunting fear. Perhaps we didn't fulfil all the "conditions"? Our repentance was not perfect? Or maybe we were not sincere enough? And so on. Often the preacher adds to these doubts and fears. Anxious to uphold the high standards, he represents salvation as if it were placed on top of a greased pole, and exhorts his hearers to climb for it. That makes unhappy Christian lives. Moreover it is impossible to live right with a bad or unsatisfied conscience. The forgiveness of sins is the very foundation of the Christian life. We can have it by faith, and faith takes

the Lord at His word. "But I have sinned and asked for forgiveness so often—I fear the Lord doesn't think I mean it," says one. A man once remarked that the passage that tells us to forgive seventy times seven, (Matt. 18:22) is the hardest in the Bible. "I think it is the sweetest in the Bible," another answered. "How can you say that?" replied the first man. "Well, do you think the Lord wants us to be better than He is? If He tells me to forgive seventy times seven, will not He do so, too? I can go to Him time and time again, and He will forgive me again." That is not the best way, but it is even so; and we sometimes need that encouragement. However He not only forgives, but is able also "to break the power of cancelled sin, and set the prisoner free." "Unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by his blood . . ." (Rev. 1:5.)

THE SIN UNTO DEATH

But there is the sin unto death, of which John speaks—how do I know that I may not have committed that? The passage is this:

"If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this do I say that he should make request. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin unto death." (1 John 5:16, 17.)

You will notice that John speaks *about* those who sin unto death, not *to* them. As for such they are not accessible to admonition. They are hardened, defiant, unapproachable. "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance." Their state is described in Heb. 6:4-8. They may end up in a paroxysm of bitter remorse like Judas, but until then they are utterly impervious to the appeal of God. What is that sin? It is the renunciation, in the face of all light and truth, of Jesus Christ, and the siding with His enemies, the sin of one who has "trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace." (Heb. 10:29.) Is that your case, my brother? The very fact that you fear and are concerned shows that it is not.

To a convicted sinner his sin seems mountain-high, inexcusable, unforgivable. For such is the word, "Come now and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow: though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. 1:18.) The blood of Christ is adequate even for this. David in his plea for mercy for his frightful transgression, says, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than the snow." Might this be? Surely—for the Spirit of God did indite those words. (2 Sam. 23:2.) And to all sinful souls the Lord says, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud all thy transgressions: return unto me for I have redeemed thee." (Isa. 44:22.) "Repent ye therefore and turn again that your sins may be blotted out—utterly, entirely cancelled, as though they had never been. Then with love and joy start out to live for Him who did this for you. The fact that you do so is the proof that you have not committed "the sin unto death."

A CHURCH MILITANT

Appeasement and compromise are ugly words in government circles, but they are far worse in the spiritual circle. The Lord wants a church militant with armor gleaming, engaging right and wrong with zeal and determination, standing firmly for the right, and uncompromisingly against the wrong. "England expects every man to do his duty," is a battle cry of the men under the British flag. God expects every man to do his duty, should be the battle cry of the church of the Living God. There is no place for appeasers, compromisers, shirkers, and traitors in the army of the "Captain of our Salvation." It is put on the whole armor of God, draw the sword of the Spirit, and to the work let us go, on our knees in prayer, and on our feet ready to do service for the Lord and Savior, unto death if need be. And as we see the day approaching we pray the Lord to arouse His people everywhere lest that day come upon them as a thief in the night.—A. K. Ramsey.

Lexington, Ky.: "We closed our Daily Vacation Bible School last Friday, June 22. In the two weeks we had an enrollment of 175, with an average attendance of 102. There were seven baptisms during the DVBS and a mother and a daughter took membership with us last Sunday, nine responses; in fact, we have had 11 responses during the month of June. Brother Harold Preston was the headmaster of our Daily Vacation School, and Brother Frank Gill did a creditable work in his teaching service."—H. N. Rutherford.

Orell Overman began preaching in a revival at Waterford, Ky., on July 2. J. F. Stinnette is minister of this congregation.

The church at Pendleton, Kentucky, has been in an outdoor meeting, beginning July 2, with James Hardison assisting the local minister, Coy Campbell. Some have been going out from Louisville to assist in the singing.

Camp Taylor, Ormsby, and Shawnee congregations in Louisville have recently conducted Vacation Bible Schools. An average of over 50 attended at Shawnee and at Ormsby. Though the Camp Taylor aver-

age went under fifty, they report a good school, mainly of smaller children this year.

As we prepare these notes Brother Willis Allen is in a meeting at Amite, La., working with Brother A. K. Ramsey, minister in that field.

Read June Word and Work for details of the Kavanaugh Camps. Junior Camp begins with the Sunday evening meal, July 15, and the Senior Camp with the evening meal, July 22. Hall C. Crowder, Box 101, Gallatin, Tennessee, is Camp Director. Make application to him, sending a deposit of \$5 which will apply on Camp expenses. Applicants will be accepted up until time the Camp begins in each case. We hope Brother Boll conducts a class in the Senior Camp.

ARE YOU LISTENING?

The announcer, N. Wilson Burks, the singers, and speakers have been very faithful in bringing messages over Words of Life from week to week on Saturday mornings at 9:30. Are you listening? This program is reaching an audience extending 100 miles and over out from Louisville. You'll enjoy it; also it is a good program for your friends to hear. Brother Boll is numbered among our summer speakers. (WG-RC. 79 on your dial.)

Brother Ernest Lyon will be the evangelist in a two-weeks meeting at the East Jefferson Church, Louisville, starting the first Sunday in August. James Hardison is minister there. Local song director, Marvin Scott, will have charge of the singing.

"Attendance at the nightly vacation Bible school at the Highland Church, Louisville, averaged between 69 and 70 besides visitors."—E. E. Lyon.

SELLERSBURG HOME PICNIC

Perhaps from three to four hundred attended the picnic given at the Sellersburg Children's Home on July 4. A bountiful dinner was spread at the noon hour with fried chicken predominating. The children sang, recited memory work from the Scriptures, and led in prayers at the after-lunch program. Also several ministers brought short messages and greetings over the speaker hooked up for the outdoor service. Fifteen congregations an-

swered to the roll call at that time. Many of the visitors enjoyed games of soft ball, volley ball, and horse shoe in the afternoon, as a result of which many of the men turned into Indians! The children sold about \$50 worth of refreshments during the day, realizing some spending money to be used at the summer camp. Around \$100 in all was left by the happy visitors. This was not planned as a day to collect money for the home, but this was a picnic sponsored by the Home for our enjoyment; we were guests and they our gracious hosts. Children, we hope you invite us to your party again next year!

Incidentally we learned that we have a \$75,000 investment, besides 23 precious children, at the Children's Home, and a debt of only \$6,000 remaining. How many are saving nickels and dimes in the Home banks to be given in at Christmas time?

A BUSY MINISTER

Your publisher spent Saturday night, June 30, with Brother Elmer Ringer and family of Tell City, Indiana. During the day he had officiated at three weddings, two of them church weddings, and had conducted a funeral and had a baptismal service. During the year thus far in his local work at Tell City and around, he has baptized about fifteen. The work is doing well at both Tell City and Lily Dale, a rural congregation a few miles out. Preston Winchell is the minister at Lily Dale.

In the Cherry Street, New Albany, Ind., meeting, with Howard Marsh as evangelist, four were baptized and one came otherwise. Just before the meeting Bob Morrow assisted Brother Kranz and local forces in a vacation Bible school. Brother Marsh is scheduled to begin a gospel meeting at Pleasant Grove church, near Linton, Indiana, on July 10.

Brother Boll says: "Had good meetings at Abilene and at Wichita Falls, Texas. At Abilene we had one baptism and two otherwise. At Wichita Falls three came for baptism. I preached 50 times in 27 days in the Texas trip." Brother Boll also did more writing than usual in spite of his much preach-

ing, without being conscious of any undue physical strain.

Annual Meeting at Portland

Brother Boll will preach again this year in the annual Portland tent meeting on the church grounds. This two-weeks or longer meeting will begin Sunday, July 8. Many from churches in the city and around will want to attend.

Dallas, Texas: "Our meeting at Fair Park was blessed of God with good interest from the very beginning; attendance held up throughout the entire week. The Lord added two to our number on Sunday the parents of one of our most faithful members. Another feature of the meeting was the fine singing by the Mt. Auburn chorus and our own radio chorus. The splendid cooperation of the Mt. Auburn church helped much to encourage the meeting and fellowship. The faithfulness of our young people during the effort is to be greatly commended."—Frank M. Mullins (the Evangelist in this meeting.)

New Orleans, La.: For the information of your readers, we have just enjoyed a glorious revival in New Orleans. Brother Carl Kitzmiller preached for us from May 6 through May 13. Crowds were unusually large, including many visitors each night. The congregation was stirred greatly. Four were baptized and one more placed membership. We thank the Lord for using Bro. Kitzmiller in such a mighty way.

"Brother Francis Holdeman, minister of the Church of Christ in Boothville, Louisiana, informs us that the Church of Christ there now has a fine piece of ground for erecting a building. This land was given by Brother and Sister Leon Buras in memory of their son who was killed in the last war. A building fund is being accumulated with the hope of some day erecting a building there."—Richard Ramsey.

NEWS FROM FLORIDA

"During the past month we have enjoyed visits at Woodstock from several preacher brethren. Brother Mayeux and family met with us once and he brought us a wonderful message. Brother Robert Boyd spoke once at Woodstock while in

this area for the Maxville meeting and Bro. Brady Green spoke on a Wednesday night while returning from the Greenville meeting. We had hoped to make contact with Bro. Chambers as he passed through these parts going north from Ft. Lauderdale, but were unable. It makes it easy on me that we are located along the path that these brethren take; all I have to do is make request for the sermon and my work is done. We appreciate their words very much, also the radio messages that Bro. Boyd and Green recorded for us.

"There have been two restorations this month, one of these also placed membership at Woodstock. Bro. Johnnie Adams brought a fine series of messages at the Raiford Road Church out at MacClenney during their meeting. I am not sure of the results but I remember that there was at least one response for primary obedience. Bro. Robert Boyd's meeting was rich in spiritual teaching. He also spoke on a Sunday afternoon at Raiford Road. The Southside congregation seems to be doing very well. They have raised enough money now, I believe, to make a down payment on their building lot. Land in that area is extremely high and they have a real problem.

"We're making big plans to be in Louisville, Ky., for the meeting this Sept. Hope to see many others there this year. It's one of the best tonics I know of for a fellow that has the blues about the local church problems that he faces all year. It is truly a real revival."—Dan Richardson.

Crowley, La.: "The ministry of the Word by Brother H. L. Olmstead for two weeks in Crowley was a season of refreshing from the Lord. The presentation of the truth was able in power, Christian in spirit. Attendance for the new (in location) work here was good and held up consistently.

"Brother Ivy Istre of Jennings and Gabriel Istre of Crowley were the able and willing song-leaders. Our own force used their cars to advantage in bringing in the people. Many of us enjoyed the services in Jennings, too."—N. B. Wright.

Portland Christian School, Louisville, Ky., is planning to feed the

boarding students at the school cafeteria the coming school year, and they are looking for some woman who is capable of planning the meals and managing this work. For further particulars write to Tona Covey, 2210 Portland Ave., Louisville 12, Kentucky.

Word and Work Book Room

Those who wish to visit the Word and Work Book Room should come from 9 to 12 week-day mornings. In the afternoons the Book Room will be open by appointment. Call Cypress 6651 for afternoon appointment. The Word and Work telephone number is Arlington 8966.

Boyd Writes Quarterly Lessons

For several quarters now J. Edward Boyd has been relieving Bro. Boll by writing the W. W. Quarterly lessons. When Brother Boyd began to write it was arranged that his copy would go to Brother Boll before being turned over to the printer. Brother Boyd's work is so good in thought and so well written that Brother Boll seldom adds a word or makes a change. Boll states that Boyd always seems to make just the right comment, just as he would want to put it. Those of you who have been using the quarterly perhaps have not detected a change from the concise, to-the-point, deeply spiritual approach that has always characterized the Word and Work Lesson Quarterly.

Gallatin, Tenn.: "I have just returned from three meetings: Crowley and Jennings in Louisiana and Mt. Auburn in Dallas, Texas. I preached 46 times and had 43 responses to the invitation. Bernard Wright, minister at Crowley, Ivy Istre, minister at Jennings, Robert Boyd, minister at Mt. Auburn, all are good, friendly, efficient yoke-fellows. I found many spiritually minded Christians and congregations with a program of activities. There were new buildings at Crowley and Mt. Auburn, and fine singing groups at each place. I was on Radio twice in Dallas.

Spoke here at Gallatin, Sunday, with one baptism and one restored who placed membership. Brother Crowder reports 8 responses at Hapeville, Ga. I begin at Nelsonville, Ky., July 23.—H. L. Olmstead.

“AFTER THEE O GOD”

Edwin Raymond Anderson

Time after time, I have found my mind and heart going back to that innermost confession of the Psalmist, both with gratitude for the wholesomeness of his own heart, together with conviction for the lack which I feel all too keenly for my own heart. “As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?” (Psalm 42:1, 2). I feel it all too keenly, beloved. My heart is not like the hart. I may long after wisdom-books, when here is a conviction about an inner longing after that which is figured under the quiet of “water Brooks.”

And we miss very much when we mistake this for merely a word of “devotional” reading. Some of us have too long, and too late, classified everything in the Book of Psalms under that category. A good deal of so-called “devotional reading,” has a very subtle way of becoming “demotional,” because of the tragic manner in which it is allowed to evaporate into pious uncreality, covered with the gloss of the sanctuary, when under the driving hand of the Holy Spirit of God, it is meant to flame with convicting application to a richer and deeper kind of life and meaning. Here we face the hunger of the Psalmist. The Spirit paints that hunger, that it may “catch the spark,” within our own hearts, both for praise and for testing. Here is the holy hunger; that sort of hunger which surely passioned the heart and life of the apostle when he cried, “That I may know HIM.” It is the kind of hunger that is meant to search out so many of the seemingly “well-fed fundamentalists” in our midst: for here is a hunger that drives beyond all teaching and doctrine and laboring and serving, to fasten itself whole-square upon the Precious Person of the Lord, for what He is in Himself—alone and apart from all else.

It might seem easy to pen it. But it is always more difficult and convicting to take it up with a true “ploughing-under” of the heart—there needs to be a true hunger for the Lord of the Word and the Word of the Lord. We need that spiritual kind of restlessness which will be satisfied with nothing else or less. We need a deeper consciousness of the need of longer, holier sessions in the “school of the water-brooks,” where the things, always missed in the melange of motion, shall have place and room for their own peculiar manner of speaking. We need to seek the Lord for Himself alone. As dear brother McChyne used to put it, “Christ, for Christ’s sake alone.” We need to seek the Word, in deeper measure than even studying its doctrines and precepts, and certainly in deeper measure than scanning the sacred lines for the securing of sermon-texts! We need to seek the Word in deeper measure, I say, that it shall come to truly “seek us out,” and speak to our inmost heart-of-hearts, as lines of love from the precious Lover of our souls. Such is the hunger that makes both the Lord of the Word, and the Word of the Lord, dearer, nearer, and far more real!

Alas, such a hunger may seem strange and out-dated to the

"advanced many" in our midst. For this speaks of taking time out from other things; and these are always ready to remind of the necessity of "redeeming the time for the days are evil," and they are always ready to sing, "work for the night is coming." Well, may the Lord bless them for the zeal and drive! But yet I feel that it cannot be a whole blessing. There simply has to be room for deeper things, lest we lose vital contact with headquarters. And too, let it be remembered that this is not a natural hunger and thirsting, but a deeper work, wrought alone and wholly of the Holy Spirit of God.

Such hunger is true honor to His person and His Word. Such thirst is the testimony of a heart that has entered the "Graduate school" of things spiritual, and realized that far beyond all of laborings, there must be "time out" for communion and meditation. A good deal of the seemingly tragic superficiality of Christian Work, finds its root and answer here. There are rallies and drives and programs, much moving about, but withal, many are left to cry with the Greeks of Gospel days, "Sir, we would see Jesus." But then, in the time and way of God, there comes a single heart here and there, who meets that cry, bearing so clear an identification with the living Lord, that it cannot be gainsaid nor denied.

And so, cometh this closing question, beloved: Is thy heart like the hart's? Oh! to personally enter into that which surely filled the heart of the Psalmist in his glad confession, and thus to find HIM, anew and afresh, in ways and seasons hitherto undreamed of!

A BAD CONDITION AND THE REMEDY

By Brother Barnabus

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, 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 Jehovah" (Amos 9:11).

It is the fashion now for preachers to entertain their hearers with literary essays with a religious flavor, enlivened by bits of humor and anecdotes. They use so many illustrations, (culled from books for that purpose) that it is readily discerned that much more attention has been given to the book of illustrations than to the "Book of books."

Today one may visit many a church, hungering for the word of God and come away as hungry as he went. This is such a common experience that one wonders if Amos's prophecy is now being fulfilled.

There is a great need now for ministers who were called of God to preach. Too many have entered the ministry as a mere profession, just as others become doctors or lawyers for a livelihood. Such ones are like the prophets of whom the Lord said, "I sent them not, yet they ran."

We need ministers who will speak out with authority as did the prophets of old who said, "Hear the word of Jehovah," "Thus saith Jehovah," etc. We need ministers who will earnestly and prayerfully seek to know the mind of God who will then faithfully declare the

same to the hearers. We need ministers who will seek the anointing of God's Spirit that they may have power and unction, as they transmit God's message. Only thus does God's word reach human hearts in its supernatural and convicting power.

Under such preaching no sinner can feel complacent and the Christian will always be edified.

There are many good brethren whom we regard as sound in doctrine, who are exceedingly careful to declare the "whole counsel of God," as they understand it who, notwithstanding, lack power and fruitfulness in their ministry. Their meetings bring poor results and conversions are few. And yet, they are men of ability, properly educated and they speak with force and logic.

On the other hand, there are others of far lesser natural or scholastic attainment who have almost uniform success in their meetings. They meet with good interest, the church is edified and sinners are converted. And this is the rule rather than the exception. May we know the reason for this difference?

There are two clues provided in the scriptures. One is the teaching that the "letter killeth." That is, the letter alone has this effect. More is needed than just the preaching of sound doctrine. The messenger needs the enabling power of God's Spirit to work through him and give him unction. He will never receive this power and blessing by formal and perfunctory prayer. It is obtained freely from the Lord but there are conditions to be met. The one condition that includes all others is that one must be emptied of self. If God is to come into the man, room must be made for Him. The more room provided, the more of Him we have.

It is true that in these times it is harder to interest people in the things of God. This does not mean that the task is too great for us. It simply means we need more of God's Power and God has more of it to give. This leads to the other clue provided in the scriptures. It is the teaching on the place and importance of prayer. Paul asked that prayer be made for him. He needed it for utterance and boldness in declaring the Gospel (Eph. 6:19, 20).

The apostles linked the ministry of the word with prayer. For them the two were inseparable. They said, "We will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).

A minister may fail by relying too much on things which are good and proper in their place—such things as education and even Bible knowledge. Prayer brings spiritual understanding of the Bible as nothing else can. And by prayer the power to use it is obtained.

The prayer-closet is the battleground where victories are won by both the preacher and the congregation. If the preacher is lax in his use of this closet his work will suffer defeat. If the church fails to hold up his hands both he and the church will suffer defeat. They need to do for him that which Aaron and Hur did for Moses (See Ex. 17:10-13).

Revivals may be more rare in these Laodicean days but they are still possible. The sad condition of which we have written can be changed, and will be changed, if God's people will continue

steadfastly in prayer. For it still remains true that "Prayer changes things." And this because God "Is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

TWO MASTER WORKS OF GOD

J. R. Clark

The Book of Ephesians falls into two natural divisions. The first three chapters are doctrinal, setting forth *The Christian Calling*; the other chapters, four to six, are practical, portraying *The Christian Walk*.

In Ephesians we see God's masterpiece of new creation, for indeed God is the Master artist: He is the Master of masters. He it is who paints the landscape, the grass, the trees, the flowers, the lakes, the rivers, the beautiful sunset. And He is also the Master sculptor. God does not work with canvas and brush; He deals with realities, with life itself. He it is who furnishes the models for the artists of earth.

Ephesians 2:10 is a remarkable verse: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." A strong word in this verse is "*workmanship*." In the original Greek this word is "*poiema*," which means literally, "a thing of his making; handiwork." This unusual word appears only two times in the New Testament: here in Ephesians 2:10 and in Romans 1:20. In Ephesians 2:10 it refers to Christians, to the new creation of God; and in Romans 1:20 the word is translated "the things that are made," referring to the natural creation: "For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse." In these two passages we see two master works of God, creation and new creation.

The first chapter of Genesis supplies us with details of natural creation, the first great work of God. The first verse says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And in the next verse the picture that strikes our mental vision is a scene of waste and void, as if a great catastrophe had struck the work of God. It reads, "And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." But the Spirit of God was brooding upon this ugly scene: "and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." In the glow of this light, as it were, He made the firmament above; He caused the dry land to appear, which He called Earth; next came vegetation, then the light-holders, the sun, moon and stars; the fish, birds, beasts, and finally, after a solemn consultation, in which God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," God created man in His own image. Man is God's masterpiece of original creation. Behold him: upright, intelligent, with the power of locomotion and speech, with the power of choice, with world consciousness and

God-consciousness—*created in the image of God*, the king of the universe, destined to spend eternity somewhere forever.

Shakespeare says:

“What a piece of work is man
How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty!
In form and moving, how like an angel,
In apprehension how like a God.”

The Psalmist David exclaims: “I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well.” And again, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

However the first creation is only a type and shadow of the higher creation portrayed in Ephesians 2:10, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.” Here we ascend from the natural to the spiritual. When Christ came to this earth He found a moral and spiritual state of *waste and void*. As it were, God stood on the scene of universal failure and ruin and said, “Let there be light.” In commenting on this light of the Gospel brought to man through Jesus Christ, Paul says in 2 Cor. 4:6, “Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Either by suggestion or word we see here all the processes of original creation: waste and void, the Spirit of God brooding, the light shining, and the new creation of God.

“Wherefore if any man is in Christ,” says Paul, “he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.” (The margin reads, “there is a new creation.”) (2 Cor. 5:17.) In Galatians 6:15, “For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature” (mg., “new creation”).

The process of this new creation, which indeed is God's greatest masterpiece, is set forth in Col. 2:12, 13, “Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses;” Buried in baptism, raised through faith in the *working of God*. Man hears the Gospel, believes, and expresses that faith in baptism and in connection therewith *God works* and makes the sinner a new creature, imparting to him the Holy Spirit. To this agree the words of Romans 6:4: “We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.”

Here is something amidst all the perplexing problems of earth that really matters. Merely to quit a few things or to do a few things does not make one a Christian. It is not a mere fix-up or repair job that man needs. But what man needs is a brand new self; he needs to become a new creature. For his life is all wrong to the core; it is

on the wrong foundation, and it issues from a corrupt fountain. For "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be" (Rom. 8:7). As Jesus said to Nicodemus, so we say to the sinner today, "Ye must be born again."

In this rich book of Ephesians Paul introduces and uses five times a phrase that is not found elsewhere in the Bible. This new phrase is "in the heavenly places" (or "heavenlies"). Here Paul says is every spiritual blessing. Here is where Christ sits and where He made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. Thus as in the original creation there were heavens so in the new creation we have the heavenlies, representing our high position in Christ. O, the wonders of these heavens in the new creation of God! As we train our vision on this new creation we behold the Son of God sitting in all His beauty; the saints reflecting his glory, and myriads of spiritual blessings in reach of the children of God.

FEEDING THE FLOCK

(An Admonition to Preachers and Teachers)

Richard Ramsey

Those who truly love the Lord cannot help but grieve over the lack of love among the people of God. When one goes to church hungering for a warm heartfilling message of love, and finds instead a cold sermon, as if a man had to drag his way through a certain set of points he had down in his outline, that one goes home feeling that he has gone to church in vain. Or when he goes yearning for fellowship, and finds instead frigid handshakes and indifferent stares; when he goes seeking the stirring of the Spirit and finds instead a stereotyped pattern of ritual; when he goes wanting to drink in the water of life, and finds instead the bitter waters of jealousy and strife; when he comes seeking to find unity and peace, and finds instead division and argument—*vea*, when these disallusionments come into the life of the devout Christian, he feels cheated out of his birthright, without even so much as a bowl of pottage to his use.

And who is to blame? If the flock of the Lord does not find the green pastures and the still waters, who is to blame? Who indeed, but the shepherds, the pastors and leaders of the flock. Oh that the Lord might raise up more consecrated, sacrificing, diligent, faithful shepherds to tend his sheep, to guard his flock! Oh that the shepherds would spend more time feeding the flock and less time in meaningless wanderings over barren hills. What the flock of the Lord needs today is the pure milk of the word of God; may every God-fearing preacher today in the pulpit give to the people such a feast of spiritual things that no soul shall go away hungry. And so may we fulfil our Lord's words when he said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

"The wages of sin are always paid: if there is any delay in settlement, compound interest is added."—Marcus Dods,

FREEDOM AND BONDAGE

Galatians 5:1-15

R. H. B.

"For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

Freedom is a precious thing, and costly. And it must be guarded and cherished accordingly. Hardly had these Galatians been delivered from the hard bondage of heathenism, when, alas, they were in danger of falling again into the bondage of Judaism. The strongest language the apostle could use was not too strong to warn them against such a relapse. Christ set us free for freedom and not to bring us again under a yoke of bondage. These Judaizers pretending to lead them into fuller Christianity were not messengers of Christ at all, but enemies seeking to overthrow Christ's work. Paul, speaking of the same class as those who were busy in Galatia, says "Such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ." (2 Cor. 11:13.) Against these they must watch. "Eternal vigilance" is ever the price of liberty. Stand fast in the freedom with which Christ has set you free.

In some respects the bondage of law appeals to the flesh more than the freedom of the gospel. "It is far easier," says Adolph Harnack, "to live under any authority, even the hardest, than in the freedom of the good." Freedom is strenuous. It calls for thought, for principle, for heart-searchings, for decisions. Freedom stands in self-control as opposed to outside control. The slave's life is easy in some respects. He is told what to do; and when he has done that, he is done. His master sees to all the problems of life for him. All he has to do is to follow orders. There are not a few Christians who would thank you to tell them exactly how much Bible reading they are expected to do every day, how many times a day they are to pray, exactly how much of their money they are to give, how much of Christian work they are to do, and exactly what work; also what they must not do—in short to have a rule and code of precepts which they are to perform, by which to keep out of hell and go to heaven. But the free Christian must ever seek the mind of his Lord: he must judge what is well-pleasing to Him, must study and think what love would do; and he cannot be content with the mere right and wrong: he must exceed those bounds; in short, he must follow Jesus. He can never sit down and say "I have done enough." Also he is apt to have "growing pains." As dear old Brother Harding used to say about *giving*, for instance, "You begin by wondering how much of your money you ought to give to the Lord, and wind up wondering how much of the Lord's money you should keep for yourself." The free Christian can't settle down for repose. The inward call is ever onward, upward. He must press on to perfection. Forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forward to the things that are before, he must press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Is it any wonder that fleshly men are bewitched by the way of the law? Is it any wonder that many Christians are just law-keep-

ers, caring only to do what they call "their duty," and to let well enough alone? But the Lord has set us *free*. His one word is, "I have loved you—will you love me?" And, "You belong to Me, and I belong to you: your interests are my interests, my interests are your interests, for all eternity. Now go and do accordingly." Well, there is no end to that, you might say. I'd rather know some definite things I must do. This liberty of Christ's is too all-engrossing. Yes, verily, so it is.

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my all."

Is that too much? Would you rather go back to the law? Well, that law will never satisfy you; it can only condemn. You would be severed from Christ; you would have abandoned grace—and what hope could you have? Yes, He wants your whole life and your whole heart. He gave himself for you, and He wants *you*, and will never be satisfied till he has you, even you, and all that you have and are. Is it too much? Such is the yoke of freedom, wherewith Christ has set you free.

"Behold, I Paul say unto you that if ye receive circumcision Christ will profit you nothing. Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." (Gal. 5:2, 3.) In being circumcised he has become a Jew, a member of the fleshly nation, and has assumed the obligations of that state. Henceforth his only hope (which is no hope) would lie in his fulfilling of all the requirements of the law (Rom. 10:5). His salvation depends on that now. If he fails, there is the curse (Gal. 3:10). He must build up a righteousness of his own for himself (Phil. 3:9). For he cannot hold to Christ with one hand, and to the principle of the law with the other. There is no mixing of grace with works (Rom. 11:6). "Ye are severed from Christ; ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace" (Gal. 5:4).

But of the Christian Paul says, "For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness" (v. 5). A question may arise here as to the meaning of "the hope of righteousness." Is it the hope of being righteous at some future day? Or is there a hope that is ours because of the righteousness which we now have in Christ Jesus? Undoubtedly the latter. True there is imperfection cleaving to the children of God in this earth-life; and we shall not be like Him until He is manifested and we see Him as He is (1 John 3:1-3). But here and now the Christian stands in righteousness—a righteousness which is reckoned to him by faith in Christ (Rom. 3:22, 24; 4:5). Having this standing before God we confidently look forward to the glory that shall be revealed to usward (Rom. 5:1, 2; 8:18f). The Christian's hope is in the coming of Christ. Until then the course of his Christian life is summed up in these few weighty words: "faith working by love." And back of this is the Spirit who worketh in us both to will and to work for God's good pleasure.

Again in verse 13 Paul reverts to the matter of Christian freedom, "Ye brethren were called for freedom," he says. But liberty is not license. Free from the law and all its bondage they truly are. But a higher inward principle, which freely fulfils the law's demands (Rom. 8:4) comes in. It is the law of Christ, the law of love (Gal. 6:2), no longer to bite and devour one another nor to use their freedom for mutual destruction. James Montgomery, the sweet singer of the Moravians caught the spirit of this in his hymn of experience:

"They walked with God in faith and love
But failed with one another:
While sternly for the faith they strove
Brother fell out with brother.
But He in whom they put their trust,
Who knew their frames that they were dust,
Pitied and healed their weakness.

"He found them in the house of pray'r
With one accord assembled,
And so revealed His presence there—
They wept with joy and trembled.
One cup they drank, one bread they brake,
One baptism shared, one word they spake,
Forgiving and forgiven.

"Then forth they went with tongues of flame,
In one blest theme delighting—
The love of Jesus and His Name,
God's children all uniting.
This love our theme and watchword still,
The law of love let us fulfill—
And love as we are loved."

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

Acts 16:16-34

J. Edward Boyd

OPPOSITION TO THE GOSPEL. Satan employed two methods of opposition against the gospel at Philippi. The first was patronage; the second was persecution. A slave girl, demon-possessed, a fortune-teller who brought much profit to her owners, for many days continued to follow Paul and his company, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God who proclaim unto you the way of salvation." Paul was much disturbed about it. But why? She was telling the truth, wasn't she? And Paul and his company were thus getting a great deal of free advertising, were they not? And it doesn't matter (so it is often said) from what source truth comes, just so it is proclaimed. But it does sometimes matter a great deal. The devil is never more dangerous than when he is speaking truth. By that means he can gain the confidence of his intended victims and thus

prepare them for subsequent deceptions. "What that fortune-teller, (or spirit medium) told me was true." Of course! But what does it prove? Demons told the truth about Jesus; but He commanded them to be silent. He would accept no testimony from such a source. Though true, it would discredit Him to do so. Even as Paul saw the peril in the situation at Philippi; and in the name of Jesus he cast the demon out. With its departure went also the slave girl's psychic power. We can depend upon it: all such dealers in the occult, whether fortune-tellers, clairvoyants, palmists, spiritist mediums, etc., are either rank imposters or under the influence of evil spirits. Christians should let them severely alone.

Defeated in his attempt to ally himself with the preachers of the gospel and thus later to weaken their testimony, Satan quickly resorted to persecution. In this he used the slave-owners, the multitude, and the magistrates. The callousness of the owners of the slave-girl is note-worthy. There was no thought of her welfare; she was only a piece of property which had suddenly lost its value. There was no joy because she had been blessed; there was only rage in their hearts because "their hope of gain was gone." There was on their part no confession of sin and pleading for mercy, although they had fresh and startling evidence that these men were indeed servants of the Most High God, teaching the way of salvation; there were instead cries of fury and false accusations before the magistrates. Thus greed of gain blinds the soul to spiritual realities. But their real grievance was not brought to light. The charge of disturbing the peace and advocating unlawful customs would have greater weight with the legal authorities. This is a device that is not unknown in our times, even among church members! There seems to have been no orderly trial, but rather a passionate outburst against Paul and Silas. They were subjected to a brutal beating and thrown into prison; and, as additional torture, they were put into the inner prison and their feet fastened in stocks.

CONVERSION OF THE JAILER. The prisoners in the Philippian jail had a strange experience that night. From that inner cell came sounds of praying and singing. How long it continued we do not know; but it was going on about midnight. But what did those two men in that cell have to sing about? With bodies bruised and bleeding from the cruel blows and feet fast in the stocks they were suffering torture. But while their bodies were imprisoned, their spirits were free and joyful in the Lord Jesus. So the prisoners were listening; but the jailer, hardened as he no doubt was to such brutal deeds as had taken place on the preceding day, was soundly sleeping. Putting men in prison and leaving them to suffer was all in the day's work for him. But that night he was to have the greatest experience of his life. Suddenly there came the earthquake; the prison doors were thrown open and every prisoner's fetters were unfastened. When the jailer awoke and saw that the prison doors were open, he naturally supposed that all the inmates had escaped. He was responsible to the authorities for their safe keeping? The penalty for failure was death. Why wait for the executioner? Why not get it over with

at once? He drew his sword; and at that instant the voice of the apostle Paul came to him loud and clear through the midnight air: "Do thyself no harm; we are all here."

Suddenly the jailer realized that these men whom he had put in the inner cell were not ordinary prisoners. He trembled in their presence; he fell down before them; he brought them out of the jail; he addressed them with a term of supreme respect (the word translated "Sirs" in verse 30 is the same as that rendered "Lord" in verse 31); he appealed to them to tell him how to be saved. Another heart had been opened to give heed to the things which were spoken by Paul! Whatever he had heard of these men, of their mission in Philippi, or of their message, he had been wholly indifferent, perhaps antagonistic; but now he was deeply concerned. Paul's answer was brief, but comprehensive. "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." But how could he believe? "How shall they believe in Him Whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14.) So "they spake the Word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house." For faith comes by hearing the Word. (Rom. 10:17.) Results quickly followed. "The same hour of the night"—no waiting for dawn—"he washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his immediately." Back in the jailer's house there was great joy, as he continued to attend to the physical needs of Paul and Silas. Their previous sufferings had been richly rewarded; they had afforded opportunity to bring salvation to this family.

There are some questions that almost invariably arise in connection with the story of the jailer's conversion. Was Paul's answer complete and sufficient? "Believe on the Lord Jesus, *and thou shalt be saved.*" But on Pentecost Peter said, "Repent ye and be baptized . . . unto the remission of your sins." (Acts 2:38.) There is no real discrepancy between the two answers, when we understand all that is involved in the expression "Believe on the Lord Jesus." It does not mean merely to give mental assent to certain facts about Jesus. That is the sort of faith that demons have—the faith that, standing alone, is dead. (James 2:19, 26.) Paul didn't mean that kind of faith. To believe on the Lord Jesus is to put one's trust in Him, to put one's case in His hands, to commit one's life to Him. When a man does that, he receives salvation. But at what point? And what does baptism have to do with it? It is the manifestation—the expression—of this faith, an act of obedience by which one demonstrates his trust in the Lord, as did the man born blind when he washed his eyes in the pool of Siloam. (John 9.) Can one be said to have that faith, if he deliberately refuses to obey this command of the Lord? The meaning of believing on the Lord Jesus is unfolded as we continue the story. The jailer's repentance is seen in his change of attitude toward Paul and Silas: He washed their stripes . . . and set food before them." He and all his were baptized immediately. Just as it was with the Ethiopian Eunuch and with Saul of Tarsus (Acts 8:39; 9:18, 19), so it was with them: it was after their baptism that they had a great rejoicing, having believed in God."

‘FAITH OF OUR FATHERS’

E. L. J.

We pointed out last month that if Lard (who wrote the following essay in 1864) was merely spinning out a religious “theory” in the present-day low grade meaning of a speculative human hypothesis—then we have no right to honor him as a great and faithful teacher. On the other hand, if it was his honest purpose to present, in a humble, orderly, gathered, and connected manner, the teaching of God’s word on this subject—that and only that, without admixture of mere human opinion (as we think it was)—then he was a teacher of “the premillennial view” as certainly as any man now living; and we have no right to withhold the hand of fellowship from the living while we extend it graciously—to the dead!

But now at length the reader has the famous article before him. Let him mark carefully, especially from the lines that we have italicized, how the author constantly, earnestly draws attention only to *what God has said* on this disputed subject.

Moses E. Lard On The Millennium

(Concluded)

Of all the subjects of the New Testament, not one possesses a deeper interest for the Christian than the Millennium. . . . None will say that it has received an attention disproportionate to its importance. . . . I am anxious that the earnest attention of the brotherhood shall be turned to it. . . . There is not among us, so far as I know, a single elaborate article in print on the subject; and I have never heard a discourse on it, nor even so much as heard of one being attempted. This silence, I believe, we may well afford to break; and when once broken, I have strong hope that good will result. . . .

On one point . . . I have no theory to advance: namely, when the millennium will commence. . . . Without, then, making any effort to fix the time when the millennium is to begin, we shall now proceed to speak: 1. of the events, which, in our opinion, are immediately to precede it, 2. Of the millennium itself proper, 3. Of the events which are to follow it.

[Lard now quotes Tregelles’ translation of Rev. 19:11-21, and proceeds:]

The millennium, with its closely antecedent and closely subsequent events, were all scenes shown in vision to the Apostle John in Patmos. . . . As to the sense in which we expect to take these sections, a few words are thought necessary. The disposition, so long and so widely prevalent, to convert difficult or disagreeable Scriptures into mere figures of speech and to make them mean anything or nothing, as may happen to suit the whim of the writer, has been the source of incalculable mischief and error. . . . Neither do we mean to say that it contains no passages which are to be interpreted figuratively. . . . We simply mean to express the belief

that a more literal method of interpretation than the one in general use is both applicable to the Book of Revelation, and necessary to elicit its true meaning. . . . We shall assume that the main thread of thought is literally expressed; in other words, that it lies upon the surface in the most obvious meaning of the language used: and that it is not to be sought in some enigmatical or fancied sense thereof. . . . The sections to be treated will be construed much as we interpret the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. . . .

Against whom will Christ wage his war? . . . 'The nations of the earth' or the wicked of the human family. . . . I conclude that, in the end of the present state, Christ will make war on the entire wicked portion of the human family, *and that in the conflict they will all die.* I mean ordinary or natural death. . . . Amen, 'Be it so,' is said and the work of death is complete. . . . It lasts not a day, not even an hour. This conclusion seems to be necessarily implied in the fact that the wicked all die by a word, which being instantly spoken, instantly does its work. . . .

Just before the millennium then, all the wicked die, and die instantly. . . . The whole earth now rests and praises the Lord.

The time is now come to speak of the millennium proper: and first as to the meaning of the word. The term, as many of our readers well know, is derived from the Latin, *mille*, a thousand, and *annus*, a year. It hence means a thousand years. And although it is not found in the New Testament, yet the expression "a thousand years" is, and this expression and the terms are used to denote the same thing. These thousand years, however, are not a thousand ordinary years, but a thousand glorious years to which Christians, from the earliest ages of the church, have been looking forward with the deepest solicitude. These thousand years of sinless and painless bliss, constitute the millennium. Such is the meaning of the term, and such is the period it denotes.

The millennium will commence in the precise instant in which Satan is bound and locked up in prison. The battle in which all the wicked die, will end. Immediately thereafter, Satan will be seized, and bound for a thousand years. This binding will consist in divesting him completely of all power over the human family. At the moment when he falls, the moment when his great bad power is wrested from him, at that moment the millennium will be inaugurated. From that time it will stretch forward and include, in our opinion, a period of a thousand years precisely. It will not consist of an indefinite number of years, or be merely a long time; but of a thousand years, neither more or less. Of the events which are further to characterize its commencement we shall now speak more particularly.

1. All the living saints will be changed. . . . "Behold, I show you a mystery," says Paul, "we shall not all sleep, *but we shall all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." This is the change which is to take place at the commencement of the millen-

nium. It will consist in putting off these mortal bodies, and in putting on those glorious spiritual bodies which await the finally faithful. By it the Christian will be rendered perfect, as perfect as he will ever be throughout eternity. After this he will be the subject of no further change, except such as may consist of a continual increase of knowledge.

2. The sleeping saints will be raised. *Of the truth of this* all who have written and spoken on the millennium seem not satisfied; for some have taken the ground that only a part of the just will be raised. The martyrs only, they say, will be raised at the beginning of the millennium; and all the rest of the pious will remain in their graves till the end of the thousand years, and then be raised. In proof of this they cite the following passages: (Here is quoted Rev. 20:4, 5. Authorized Version.)

Had we no facts or circumstances besides those contained in this passage to shed any light on the first resurrection, then might we conclude that it will be only partial. But, even in that case, I believe the conclusion would be only probable, and that in a low degree. Now, I submit the following translation of the passage as not a whit inferior to that of Tregelles, except, possibly, in the matter of the supplement in the first clause; and some supplement is certainly necessary to enable the verse to make sense:

“And I saw thrones and they (the saints) sat upon them, and judgment was given them: and I saw the souls of those that were beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, and because of the Word of God; and I saw those that had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received the mark upon their foreheads and on their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” According to this rendering, of those who lived and reigned with Christ the thousand years, John saw two classes marked by very different characteristics: 1. “Those who were beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, and because of the Word of God.” This class clearly includes the martyrs, but excludes all others. 2. “Those that had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received the mark upon their foreheads, and on their hands.” This class just as clearly excludes the martyrs, but as certainly includes all others. Therefore, the two classes include *all the saints*, whether martyrs or not. And this, *we think to be the truth*; that is, that all who sleep in Jesus will rise at the commencement of the millennium.

But in further proof of a partial resurrection of the just, this passage is cited: “And the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. But the “rest of the dead” here named are not part of the righteous dead. They are the wicked dead. The idea is this: All the righteous dead will be raised at the commencement of the millennium, but the rest of the dead, who are the wicked dead, will not be raised until the end thereof.

Again: when the apostle says, “The dead in Christ shall rise first,” the expression, “The dead in Christ,” is incapable of being made to include only the martyrs. It clearly includes all the righteous

dead. And further, while the expression, "shall rise first," means that the righteous dead shall first rise, and that then immediately the righteous living shall be changed, it also implies that all who rise will rise at the same time. I hence conclude that whenever one of the dead in Christ rises, all the rest will rise at the same instant.

As further *proof of this conclusion* I quote the following: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at at His coming." In this passage a particular event is alluded to and called "Christ's coming." When this event happens, those that are Christ's are to rise from the dead. Now, it seems clear that the expression, "They that are Christ's" includes all who are His, and not merely a part, as the martyrs. Indeed, we feel confident that this is its meaning.

But it is most evident that others besides the martyrs are to share the honors of the millennium. Certainly those of the saints who remain alive to that time and are then changed will share them. Now, if these, who of course are not martyrs, share the honors of the millennium with the martyrs, then why not all who are not martyrs? And this would include all the pious dead. We can see but one answer to this question. To put a strong case: let us suppose two men, precisely equal in a moral point of view, and precisely equal in the estimation of our Heavenly Father. These men live on up into the last day before the commencement of the millennium. In the morning of that day one of them sickens and dies. He is no martyr; hence he sleeps on through the millennium to its end. The other lives on through the day to the moment when the millennium begins; he is then changed, and reigns with Christ a thousand years. Is there reason in, or reason for, the difference? I confess I cannot see it; hence I do not believe the difference will exist. On the contrary, I not only believe that all the saints who are alive at the coming of Christ will then be changed, but also that all who sleep, not one excepted, will then be raised and also changed. So that all the ransomed children of God shall meet, in time now coming, on the margin of the empty tomb, and there greet each other. Proud day! It makes me wild to think of it. My kin lie sleeping, sleeping in the ground. My brethren sleep there, brethren loved is life itself is loved. The forest trees stand over them, and night lies dark on their bed. The grave worm is in their flesh, and no voice of friendship is heard to cheer them in that silent world. They have been, many of them, long absent; yet how often in the restless night, when the spirit is troubled, and dreams troop through the brain, do they return. The maternal face looks on us again, sisterly voices send a strange sweet thrill through the soul, such, it may be, as the disembodied spirit alone knows truly. If such be the feeling which the mere phantom excites, what must be the joy which the reality shall induce? But we shall not be undutiful and fret for that day, except as it is the Father's will to hasten it. * * * *

3. The actual personal and literal reappearance of the Saviour. We confidently expect this even to take place in the commence-

ment of the millennium. *That Christ is to revisit the earth one day, as literally as he left it, is what we think no Bible student can deny without, in the act, avowing a principle, which, if sound, at once extinguishes the truth of Christianity.* * * * "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:13-17.) Here the descent of the Lord is described in language as unfigurative as that in which the resurrection of the dead is described. If we take the one event literally, so also must we take the other. The whole piece of information was communicated to comfort the disciples; besides, it is upon a subject of great intricacy to them. It is hardly natural, therefore, to suppose that it has been expressed in other than in very plain language. Certain of the disciples are represented as being alive, as remaining *to the coming of the Lord*; then the dead arise, the living are changed, and all are caught up together with the Lord in the air. *This does not sound like anything else than a strictly literal detail of facts. Accordingly, I can not look upon it in any other light, I hence conclude that Christ will literally come in person at the commencement of the millennium, and literally remain here on earth during the entire thousand years.*

Such are a few of the great events which are to mark the commencement of the millennium. We feel overwhelmed with their significance and importance. So marvellous are they, and so deeply do they involve our happiness, that we are shy to believe them. Our very fear that they may not be true increases our incredulity and causes us to distrust them. We hesitate to commit ourselves even to our own faith, lest in the end we should be made sick at heart by disappointment. Yet, *if the Word of God assert these things, then we shall not be disappointed.* Does it then teach them? This question settled, and we may wait in confidence.

It does not appear, *from the record before us*, that any change will take place in the earth itself at the commencement of the millennium. It seems that it is to remain in all respects as it is now till the end of that time. Then, and not till then, will the new heavens and the new earth appear. Here, at least, the narrative seems to locate that great change. Now this jars not a little on our feelings. We are so accustomed to associate the resurrection of the just and the new earth together, that we find it difficult to separate them. Not only so, but we have half learned to feel that the new earth is necessary to the new body, and that we can not be happy in this, without that. The shortest thought, however, should satisfy us that this feeling is ill founded. That the new earth will be, in some way, necessary to the perfection of our happiness, we may correctly infer from the fact that God is going to provide it. We must, however, think it necessary rather on the score that he is going to provide sumptuously and even gorgeously for our happiness, then on the

ground that no measure thereof can exist without it. This earth at present may not be a very desirable home, and we are not in a condition to affirm that it is. Still, where does the defect lie? Not so much in the earth surely as it is in us. When we are changed we shall the less need a change in the earth. We have a fancy, it is but a fancy, that it will then be a pretty respectable home. When our bodies cease to be what they are now, we shall not so much need the earth to be what it is now. Its heat cannot affect us injuriously then, neither its cold. These do not that we know of affect angels' bodies, if they have any, when visiting the earth. As little will they affect those spiritual bodies for which we look. From the influence of poisonous miasmas we shall be wholly free. We cannot sicken, nor otherwise suffer. With sin, with death, with the infirmities of the body, all that makes this world bitter will pass away. When such is the case, we can well afford to be content with the present earth till the time comes to change it. As long as the wicked dead lie in it, it seems not to be the purpose of the Heavenly Father to disturb it. Not until they arise will it be touched. The dust of the dead, though they be the wicked dead, must not be disquieted to provide a home even for the millennial saints. The bed of God's unransomed children is sacred in His sight. For those degenerate ashes he has a mournful regard. Their deep and awful repose he will not break till the time of the waking comes. That time will not be till the thousand years are past. Thus long, then, must those who shall be accounted worthy of a part in the first resurrection wait before they enter into the full measure of their honors. * * *

We come next to the events which are to succeed it. This will bring us to the close of all earthly scenes. * * * [Lard here speaks of the loosing of Satan, the deception of the nations, resurrection of the wicked, another battle, Satan cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, etc.] * * * It appears, then, that no change will take place in the earth at the commencement of the millennium; nor at its end, until the last great battle is fought and the judgment is ended, and the wicked cast away. * * * The notion, so very prevalent, that the Christian's future home lies away in some immeasurably distant region, is only a vulgar error. No foundation whatever exists for it. God built this earth for man and he does not intend to be defeated in his purpose. * * * The earth in its renewed form will be man's everlasting dwelling place. * * * Here amid the splendors of that grand fane shall they spend the cycles of eternity."—Opening editorial, *Lard's Quarterly*, Vol. II, pp. 1-21, Lexington, Ky., Oct. 1864.

"Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Thus the doing of your work shall be no miracle. But you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come to you by the grace of God."—Phillips Brooks.