

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XL, January, 1946)

REVOLVING YEARS

Our few revolving years,
How swift they glide away;
How short the term of life appears
When past — but as a day!—

A dark and cloudy day,
Clouded by grief and sin;
A host of enemies without,
Distressing fears within.

Lord, through another year
If thou permit our stay,
With diligence may we pursue
The true and living way.

—*The Gospel Messenger.*

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

HIDING FROM GOD

It is an old game—and as futile is it is old, for no man has ever won at it—this thing of hiding from God. Adam was the first to hide himself from God, “among the trees of the garden.” And ever since through all the ages have sinful men and women followed their forefather’s attempt to hide from God, and with no better success than Adam had. “Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? saith Jehovah. Do not I fill the heaven and the earth?” (Jer. 23:24.) “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? (asks the psalmist) Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me, and the light about me shall be night—even the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.” (Ps. 139:7-12.)

VARIOUS HIDING PLACES

But men will evermore try to hide themselves from God. The hiding places are many and various. There is Job’s “wicked man” who would simply shut his eyes—precisely like the famous bird who is reputed to stick its head in the sand (though that is probably a slander on the poor ostrich)—that wicked man says to God, “Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways” (Job 21:14)—in other words, “Let me alone: I don’t want to see or hear or think.”

Or, again, there is the fool who saith in his heart, "There is no God." (Ps. 14:1.) That is but his particular method of hiding his soul from the Almighty. Others take the road of forgetfulness. In the whirl of pleasure they lose the remembrance of God, and find a sort of relief from the thought of Him. Or perhaps they plunge into depths of sin and defilement and imagine that in their guilty distance they are entirely done with God and quite cut off from Him—like the Prodigal Son who gathered all together and took his journey into a *far country*. Others again bury themselves in work, in worldly business and busy-ness; whether it be common money-getting or in some loftier enterprise, and are so engrossed with their work that there is no room left for God in all their thoughts. Stranger still—some hide themselves under cover of religion and in a multitude of "good works." Some try to lose themselves in a crowd; others seek to evade Him in solitudes; some would screen themselves behind names and claims and spurious pretensions. Some substitute false gods, gods of their own making and imagining, in order to be rid of the true God. Many are the devious ways which men employ to hide themselves from God. Someone has said that if there were a fairly comfortable place in hell, people would prefer it to being in heaven with God. The wonder arises—why is all this? Why all this open or covered antagonism—why this universal and determined endeavor to hide from God?

REASONS MEN SEEK TO HIDE

The first reason, of course, is that which prompted Adam to conceal himself among the trees of the Garden—the sense of sin, the guilty conscience. With the thought of God comes the sense of responsibility, and the well-grounded fear of condemnation. Moreover, God is light, and sin has no affinity for the light. "This is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil; for everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved." (John 3:19, 20.)

The second great reason is that they don't know God. They know something about Him, and often secretly, like the demons, they believe and tremble. Or they see Him as a tyrant, as an "austere man" who would rob them of freedom and lay a heavy yoke of servitude upon them; who would strip them of all they enjoy and hold dear. They flee from Him, "lest having Him they must have nought besides." They know not God. Manifestly the Prodigal Son did not know his father—no, not even when he made his last resolve to go back and ask for the place of a hired servant in his father's house. If he thought his father would take him back on that principle, he certainly did not know his father. Not till he felt his father's embrace and welcome-kiss, and was clothed in the best robe and sat again at his father's table did it begin to dawn on him who and what his father was. This is the sinner's blight, the evil by which the Prince of Darkness clouds the minds of the unbelieving.

PURSUED BY LOVINGKINDNESS

If that veil were lifted the sinner would find in God all that his soul desires — forgiveness and mercy and cleansing and plenteous redemption — and the sum of every good thing. He might even come to realize that all the time he was hiding from God, God was seeking him and pursuing him with loving-kindness, if by any means through God's goodness he might be led to repentance. Certainly those who hide themselves from God will not be hid in the day of judgment. How much better it is to trust in His mercy and to come to Him now and to say frankly with His servant of old, "Search me O Lord and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting." God sent His Son, His chief beloved, to seek us and to call us out of our hiding places and to bring us back to Himself. For He knows that we cannot do without Him; and in Him only can we find that rest and peace and satisfaction for which our spirit craves. In many devious ways man flees and seeks to shelter himself from God, and through all his sufferings and failures God still follows him up if by any means He might at last overtake him. As said Francis Thompson in his remarkable poem, "The Hound of Heaven"

"I fled Him down the nights and down the days;

I fled Him down the arches of the years,

I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways

Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears

I hid from Him, and under running laughter.

. . . From those strong Feet that followed, followed after."

And in bitter experience the fugitive finds that

"All things betray thee who betrayest Me";

and

"Lo, all things fly thee, for thou flyest Me!"

And, he goes on to say

"Strange, piteous, futile thing!

Wherefore should any set thee love apart?

Seeing that none but I makes much of naught (He said),

And human love needs human meriting:

How hast thou merited—

Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?

Alack, thou knowest not

How little worthy of any love thou art!

Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,

Save Me, save only me?"

When at last the stubborn heart has yielded to the grace and mercy of God, the last word is,

"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,

I am He whom thou seekest!

Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

And so it is. Not by fleeing from God, not by hiding from Him, but by surrender to His love and light comes the rest and safety which our souls desire.

NEWS AND NOTES

A letter from Wm. J. Campbell of Davis City, Iowa, informs us of various activities in his section of the country. A protracted effort in his home congregation at Davis City, Iowa, closed December 2. He held a meeting at Pleasanton, Iowa, early in December, and has brought Gospel messages at Leon, and Osceola, Iowa, and other points since. Those interested in an extended Bible study course this winter should contact Brother Campbell at once.

Brother W. S. Hoar of Linton, Indiana, recently returned from a visit to northern Missouri and southern Iowa. He was in a meeting with a congregation near Brimson, Missouri, while there.

An Orphan Home Planned

Plans for an orphan home in the Sellersburg, Indiana, community is taking shape. Representatives of the churches in Louisville met with the elders of the church at Sellersburg on Monday, January 7, and found that all were in common accord regarding the project. The desire is to purchase a small farm near Sellersburg and make a start in a modest way. It is thought that eight or ten thousand dollars will be needed at once to make a start. The Sellersburg elders suggest that a canvass be taken to ascertain funds immediately available from interested churches and individuals. For the present, interested ones may contact Howard Marsh, Sellersburg, Indiana.

A Call for Prayer

Sizeable amounts are coming in for the expanded Christian school venture, which is to have its center in the Louisville area. First, it is planned to modernize the present Portland Christian School. Next, it is hoped that a suitable site can be secured and a building erected to house a Christian High School and Junior College to accommodate in a more general way, in these days of apostasy, those who desire education under Christian teachers.

This is a big venture and is still in the formative stage, especially in view of the much funds needed before more definite steps can be taken.

Let us unite our prayers in behalf of this noble purpose, to the end that every step forward may be taken by faith, as God opens the way and makes us able. "Except Jehovah build the house they labor in vain who build it." Let us pray for consecrated and capable teachers, for pupils eager for such training, and for funds to proceed. How many who see the need of such a work will join in a great prayer circle to accomplish it for the glory of God and for the blessing of our youth?

1945 Bound Volume Ready

Those who wish a 1945 bound volume of the Word and Work should contact us at once, as they are now ready for delivery and as we have a limited supply. The twelve Word and Works and four Quarterlies for the year are neatly bound in maroon cloth and fully indexed. For a copy of the index see the December Word and Work. The price is \$1.50. We also have a few 1944 volumes left at the same price.

Your Need and Ours

We have quite a few American Standard version Bibles and Testaments on hand. The Bibles for the most part are in Burgeois, Onyx, and Minion types, and bound in genuine leather or Morocco. We also have some church and student Bibles in black cloth. The Testaments are for the purse or pocket, with various prints. Perhaps you need a Bible or Testament and we need the business to take care of year end responsibilities. These all sell at regular retail prices. You may either drop in at our office or send for more detailed information.

Weak congregations in or near Louisville that need preaching help may contact E. L. Jorgenson, 1061 Everett Ave., Louisville 4, and he may be able to secure a man to answer your needs from student preachers and others available for such work.

Every Sunday Morning

Our WGRC radio time beginning each Sunday morning at 7:45 is now lengthened from ten to fifteen minutes. Those who arise before

this hour will wish to listen. We suggest that others who are accustomed to a longer rest Sunday mornings, start the day right by tuning in on this program. Then you can make it to Bible school and church, thus giving the Lord the right of way on His day. These radio messages are carefully prepared, presenting in condensed form matter that is equal to a much longer pulpit sermon.

E. L. Jorgenson continues to give fine messages over WAVE on Wednesday afternoons at 1:45. This is a courtesy extended to him by a religious organization in Louisville.

Thirteenth Annual Song Tour

The compiler of the Alphabetical Hymnal, "Great Songs of The Church" will make the usual, annual Western Singing Tour in February—or early March this year—whenever the travel congestion is eased a bit, and as the Lord may lead.

Numerous invitations, both new and "standing," both on the Coast and en route, are in and coming in.

Of some thousands of Churches of Christ that have now adopted his hymnal, the compiler has visited, first and last, some three or four hundred congregations. Never has he left any church less united than it was before. On the other hand, the blessed unifying effects of singing together in great numbers has been felt in many places. A paragraph quoted from last year's announcement may be in order now:

"The compiler has made it a practice all these years to go wherever invited, on or near the line of travel, without regard to local conditions or prospects of remuneration—though most churches visited have offered voluntary gifts, small or large, against the expenses of the trip. He never mentions money for any purpose, never makes money on the tour, and never advertises the hymnal in the meetings—in fact, goes only where the book has already been adopted."

Lexington, Ky.: "We have had good services at Cramer and Hanover Church lately, with one baptism and four for membership. I baptized a young lady in the Ohio River, near Sugar Creek Church, Warsaw, Ky., on November 20. We had a fine service with that good

old congregation on the night of November 20. Brother Nick Marsh from the Salem Church, near Cynthiana, Ky., has preached at Sugar Creek the first Sundays in November and December. Brother I. E. Stephenson of Glencoe, Ky., continues to minister at this church. He has been a faithful help through the years."—H. N. Rutherford.

Chattanooga, Tenn.: "Brother Frank Mullins held McCallie Ave. Church a splendid meeting, November 12-22. We enjoyed him and his messages. He did all good who heard him. The church was strengthened and encouraged, and two were influenced to renew their fellowship with the Lord. One week before the meeting a mother and her four sons came to the Lord, and were all baptized the same day. Good interest and good fellowship prevail in the church."—E. H. Hoover.

Who Has \$60?

For a long time the Word and Work office has been crowded for space, and especially since the recent addition of two or three thousand new names to the list.

Now, fortunately, a good adjoining room, equipped with desk, table and chairs, has become available at about \$5 per month or \$60 for the year.

Since the Word and Work office operates always on a mere cost basis (including no more than "living wage" and salaries to the office workers) we have thought that some one might read this notice who would be glad to underwrite this new expense item, either a once-for-all gift, or by a pledge of \$60 for the year 1946. This figure of \$5 per month is of course only nominal, and far below the actual rental value of the space. This is possible only because the entire building in which we are housed is held for religious use, with no profit to the owner. Please communicate with the office direct, or with me.—E. L. Jorgenson.

Johnson City, Tenn.: "Carl Kitzmiller, one of our young men who has dedicated his life to the preaching of the Gospel, spoke for us Sunday morning, Dec. 30. His love for the simplicity that is in Christ, coupled with a deeper-than-usual

spiritual insight, was indeed refreshing. Brother Kitzmiller is a student at Harding College, and we are looking forward to having him here to work on this field during the summer months.

"Two responded to the invitation at the Locust St. church on the last Sunday morning of 1945. One came to confess unfaithfulness, and one to transfer membership. Our Sunday School attendance for 1945 shows an 8½% increase over 1944.

"A group of our folk visited the Glenwood church at an afternoon service Dec. 30, and assisted in the song service. Bro. Lee Pinkston preaches at Glenwood."—Robert B. Boyd.

Zahn's Golden Wedding

Brother and Sister R. A. Zahn of the Rowan Street church, Louisville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on January 1st, with "open house." It is putting it all too mildly to say that they greatly appreciated the calls of the many friends who came in person, as well as those who could not call, but sent their greeting. It was a very enjoyable affair.

The live little mission church at this point, though a bit out of the

way of access, is in a needy section.—Mrs. L. B. Holloway.

"Words cannot express our appreciation for your kindness, consideration and loving care, shown by the lovely celebration of our golden anniversary. May God bless you and keep you."—The Zahns.

Houston, Texas: "As I think of the goodness of God to me, and then take a retrospective view of the years of my life, I am constrained to say, as Jacob of old, 'Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life.' There are so many things that I might and could have done, which were left undone; so many opportunities that I could have taken advantage of that would have enabled me to do more good, but at the time I couldn't see them, and they passed, and cannot be recalled.

"I am sure of this one thing. If I have the privilege of meeting and accompanying you and all the saints to meet the Lord in the clouds, to be ever with Him, it will not be because of any merit I possess, but by the wonderful grace of our heavenly Father. Pray for me that I may appreciate His grace more."—W. H. Crain.

N. B. PEAKE

I met Brother Noble the first time at his mother's home in Louisville, something over 40 years ago, when he was a little less than half as old as he was when he finished his journey in November, 1945. But it was only during the last four or five years of his life that he resided in Louisville. During that short time we came to know him and esteem him for his faith, his zeal, his humility, his dependableness, and, in short, for his true Christian character. He was always interested in the work of the Lord; always eager to learn, and to make use of the truth he learned; always willing and ready to do what he could in Christ's service. Among other activities he had a very especial interest in giving the gospel to the Jews. For several years he was an esteemed helper in the Jefferson Street church of this city—a lovely congregation, built up and ministered to chiefly by Brother A. C. Reader, one of the elders of Portland Ave. church. There Brother Peake taught a Sunday School class; also filled the place of treasurer faithfully and efficiently for that congregation. On Sunday nights he attended the meetings of the Portland Ave. church, as long as his health and strength permitted. An illness of several months afflicted his bodily frame, gradually growing worse until the end came. During those days the Lord was his refuge and strength, and God's word the fount of his comfort and peace. Little else did he talk about. I can see him yet as with deep earnestness he quoted the precious words of promise in John 14:1-3, and the light of eternal life shone up on his pale, wan face. So pass the servants of the Lord! And no one who witnessed Brother Peake's declining days and his departure but would think of the words of the old prophet: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like unto his."

R. H. B.

NOAH, HEIR OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

S. C.

There is a righteousness to which a man attains in that measure in which he meets the requirements of moral law. Noah had attained to a measure of that, and because he walked by faith, his was a higher degree of attainment than his generation. That was in nowise to his disadvantage when the crisis arose. By reason thereof he was rightly inclined, properly disposed. Being then "warned of God concerning things unseen as yet," he "built an ark to the saving of his house." This he did "by faith," says the apostle to the Hebrews. By this "he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." This righteousness to which he became heir is the righteousness of God which is ours by divine reckoning when we believe, "the righteousness which is according to faith."

"Eight souls were saved through water," says Peter. Noah was saved through water. But he was saved through building the ark God blue-printed for him. Yes, he was saved by the ark. Back of it all, however, was Noah's faith. "By faith" he built the ark. Warned, he was, of God, and he took God at His word. It would not be easy to find a better definition of faith. Noah is held up to us as an example of faith.

Peter finds an analogy here to Christian baptism. "Which after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism." (1 Peter 3:21.) No, the flood waters did not save Noah; neither do the baptismal waters save any now. The building of the ark did not save Noah, nor the entering in, nor, indeed, the ark. The ark was not essential — *not on the Godward side*. God could have delivered in some other way. But the building of the ark was essential to Noah's obedience, which obedience was essential to his effectively believing God. It was his faith in action Godward. That is what saving faith is in all ages. So likewise baptism is essential to obedience to the Savior; and obedience is essential to faith, and this He has commanded at this point, the initial stage. In either case, Noah's or ours, the *whole of the action* is ascribed to faith, and the salvation is of God. Thus did Noah "become heir to the righteousness which is according to faith." "He prepared an ark to the saving of his house." "The like figure whereunto doth baptism now save you; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer (the quest, margin says "appeal") of a good conscience toward God." "By grace have ye been saved through faith . . . not of works, lest any man should glory." By grace was Noah saved (not only physically, but "became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith") through faith . . . and not of works. Had Noah trusted to his works, the good life which he lived and the works of righteousness which he did, he had perished with the rest. His work of building the ark as God commanded was work in an entirely different sense. It was, indeed, his repudiation of his own works, a proof that he put no trust in them. So is the baptism of the one turning to the Lord Jesus; it is a repudiation of the old life and its doings, a

proof that no trust is placed in "works of righteousness which we did ourselves," (Titus 3:5). Fear not, Noah, that by the externals coming forth at God's command you will thereby detract from the preciousness of the truth that "salvation is of the Lord," "by grace through faith." Fear not, trembling soul, that by being "baptized, calling on the name of the Lord," you will thereby detract from that same precious truth. Go right on, ("Why tarriest thou?") and be baptized the same hour of the night, or the same hour of the day. Then go on your way rejoicing in the "newness of life," which is yours in Him, rejoicing, "having believed in God." (Acts 8:39; 16:34.)

REVELATION

J. H. McCaleb

A broad statement usually is subject to some exceptions. Experience has proven that fact. As a result we become a bit wary and on our guard when some one proposes too general a proposition.

A favorite religious statement that takes in a lot of latitude is the one that proposes that only the revealed things in the Bible be read and studied, and that things unrevealed be left strictly alone. But, what is revealed, and what is not revealed?

When I was in the first grade there were a great many facts unrevealed to me then that later became revealed. This same condition prevailed all the way through my school life. And now that formal school days are over there is still a continuing stream of revelation. Unless we have closed our minds we should be learning until the last days of our lives.

And so with the Bible. There is no end to the truth that we can learn from its pages. Blessed is the man who meditates upon this law day and night.

It appears that too many of us are in the first grade of Bible learning and are satisfied to stay there. It is natural, therefore, that second, third, fourth, fifth-grade learning should seem to the first grader as unrevealed. One cannot judge another's capacity to learn nor can he determine whether he has a desire to learn. Maybe some have learned to the fullness of their capacity, but that should not hold back and retard another honest soul from finding all the truth that he can.

There are some things the Bible states are unrevealed. One is the time of the Lord's coming. Setting dates has long been a habit in some circles, but the Bible says that only God knows the time. There are other matters, however, on which the Bible sheds some light and the light becomes brighter the more we study.

No one man can specify to the world what is revealed and what is not revealed. That kind of action soon ends in religious despotism. It is the kind of dictatorship that prohibits a man from reading his own Bible and meditating on it day and night.

Don't cease looking for additional revelation. "Seek and ye shall find."

WHOM SHALL WE PLEASE?

Dennis L. Allen

In the fifth chapter of Genesis we read of a man who never tasted death. He was spared from suffering its pangs for the simple reason that he walked with God. For 365 years Enoch lived upon the earth, and then one day he disappeared—"he was not; for God took him." Thousands of others lived with him upon the earth at that time, but he alone was translated, because, as the Hebrew writer says, "before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God." There is real food for thought here. Can a man enter into such a relationship with God that he will receive blessings that others do not possess? Such is the definite teaching of God's word. Did not the Psalmist say: "Delight thyself also in Jehovah; and he will give thee the desires of thy heart"? (Ps. 37:4.)

Everyone of us is primarily concerned about pleasing someone even if it is only ourselves. *Whom* we are most concerned about pleasing is determined to a great extent by our philosophy of life. The man who sees no purpose in life beyond self-gratification will strive to please himself above all others, but even those who do see higher purposes in actual practice, many times, live in an habitual state of self-reference. They are willing to serve God if it is pleasant and convenient and will work to their advantage. But how few have really settled it in their hearts that the main object of their lives will be to please God above all others! For unless we do settle it in our hearts we will find ourselves off the track most of the time regardless of good intentions and desires.

There are those who would like to please God and enjoy His favor and blessings, but they do not know how to please Him. And certain it is that we cannot please God unless we know Him and know the things which are His delight. Man by his own intuition or reasoning can never know the things which are well-pleasing to God. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8, 9.)

Many today in their worship and service to God give little thought to what God has said would please Him, but arrange their worship according to their own pleasure or well-established tradition, and carry on the work of spreading the Gospel in any way that seems good to them or that seems to get results. It is a human tendency to feel that what pleases us must please God, His word to the contrary notwithstanding.

God is never pleased with human religion. At the time of Amos the prophet, the children of Israel were living in ease, moral corruption, and prosperity, secure in their own strength, but they were still very religious. They carried on elaborate religious ceremonies and sacrifices, and rested complacently in the fact that they were the chosen people of God. But their worship was an abomination to Jehovah because they were living in sin and luxury, oppressing the

poor, unmindful of the word of Jehovah and the impending judgment. Through the prophet Amos he declared to them: "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as water, and righteousness as a mighty stream." (Amos 5:21-24.)

The Pharisees in Jesus' time proudly kept the letter of the law, tithing mint, anise, and cummin, fasting and praying long prayers, offering sacrifices and keeping the feasts, yet the Lord called them hypocrites, whited sepulchres, and warned the people that unless their righteousness exceeded that of their religious leaders they could not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. As long as their hearts were corrupt, the outward observances could be nothing but an abomination to Him. Those who would please Jehovah must hearken unto *all* that He has said.

It is also necessary to think as He thinks. This involves a surrender of our will to His, because we cannot know His will until we surrender to Him. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged." (1 Cor. 2:14.) Again Paul says: "For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:18.) The things which men set great store by are of no value to Him. "But God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God." (1 Cor. 1:27-29.)

If, then, we would please God we must give up our own wisdom and reasoning and by faith accept His. This involves a full acceptance of His Son, Jesus Christ. No man can ever hope to please God as long as He rejects the Savior of men. To reject Christ is to reject God who sent Him. To accept Him is to accept also the perfect example of One who pleased the Father in all things. He alone has lived upon the earth in perfect harmony with the will of the Father. With that purpose Christ came into the world, for He said: "I do always the things that are pleasing to Him." (John 8:29.) Every day and every moment His life was lived in the light of this purpose—to do the Father's will. Because He did so live, the Father was with Him continually. Those who follow His steps may likewise enjoy the presence of God in their lives.

There are also some very definite things that can hinder us from pleasing Him. In Hebrews 11:6 we read: "And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Without faith we cannot come to God, but even after we

do come in faith we find unbelief continually creeping in. It may manifest itself in many different ways—the tendency to tone down His promises to our rational conceptions, the spirit that would discount certain passages of Scripture since they could not be literal according to our conceptions, a failure to teach the things that may be unpopular. These are some indications of unbelief.

The faith that pleases God is the faith that accepts His word as it is indeed the word of God and not of men. It recognizes that word as the supreme authority and accepts God's promises at face value, believing that what He has promised He is able also to perform. The faith that pleases Him also walks in the light as it is revealed, and does not run before Him or go beyond the things written.

Entanglements with the world are also displeasing to God and hinder our service to Him. Paul gave these words of exhortation to Timothy: "No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier." (2 Tim. 2:4.) Christians are soldiers of Christ, engaging in a warfare that will not cease until He returns. The pleasures and cares of the world, the bondage of sin, unequal yoking together with unbelievers can all become a means of entanglement. It is not easy to keep free. How many Christians today have their hands tied and their testimony dulled by such entanglements! If Christ is the Lord of our lives and it is our supreme duty to please Him, we must sever our connections with all men, organizations, creeds, or anything else that would hinder our service to Him. If our loyalty to Him seems to curb our freedom and narrow us, we can be assured that it is a bondage that will result in a true and safe freedom. The ribbons of steel which form the tracks for the locomotive curb its freedom, but that very bondage keeps it from destruction of itself and others. There is true freedom and safety in our bondage to Him. Most Christians' spiritual lives can be likened either to a river or a swamp. A swamp spreads out over everything but it gets nowhere. The river is confined to a channel, which restraint makes it possible for it to reach its destination. Many Christians have so many different interests, purposes, involvements, and cross currents in their lives that no guiding purpose can be seen. They want to please God but there is also their business interests to consider, their social obligations, their families, and especially their own personal convenience. But we cannot please God and ourselves at the same time. Neither can we please the world and the Lord. When Peter and the other apostles were brought before the Jewish council because of their testimony in behalf of Jesus, they boldly said: "We must obey God rather than men." And the apostle Paul said: "But even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God who proveth our hearts." (1 Thess. 2:4.)

What a change it would make in our lives, and what unforeseen blessings might be ours if we would make it the central purpose of our lives to please above all others the God of heaven, our Creator and the bestower of every good and perfect gift. Those who delight in pleasing Him He delights to bless.

"BE STRONG IN THE LORD"

H. E. Beck

The apostle Paul warned the Galatian churches against needless fainting. In the sixth chapter and the ninth verse he admonishes them as follows: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." Fainting is a characteristic of the last days. Luke, in his Gospel, records a prophetic utterance of Christ, saying, "And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:25-28.) The prevailing political and social conditions contribute to this dejected and languid attitude. The uncertainty of the future, the increasing opposition toward the things that are just and right, the apostasy of those considered strong in the faith; these things, and many others are responsible for the saddened spirits of many believers.

What does fainting reveal about the believer? First, it reveals he must have grown weary in well doing. He has, along with a host of others, concluded that there is no use in trying to do right. That no one seems to want to do right—so why should he? That they who try to do right are always in the minority; generally ridiculed, and so often misunderstood. "Ye were running well; who hindered you that ye should not obey the truth?" Paul questioned the Galatians. Could it be that you have already obtained the prize in the Christian race? Could it be that nothing is to be gained by doing right? Certainly not; everything is to be gained by pressing on and doing right. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as their labor was not vain in the Lord.

Then, it may reveal that he has compared the obstacles, the cares, the problems of this life with his own power and found himself utterly incapable of handling them. Like Israel, he has compared his present strength with the 'giants and walled cities of Canaan.' Our constant difficulty and frequent failures are caused by our inability to direct our own steps. It is a step in the right direction when a person realizes that he is helpless and in desperate need. Then, by committing his way unto the Lord and trusting His wisdom and power, he finds that his way becomes easy and his burden light. Instead of looking to our weakness, let us compare God's strength with the obstacles and trust Him to throw down the walls and vanquish the enemy. Our God is a Mighty Fortress of Strength.

It may be that the believer is unfamiliar with God's peculiar method of teaching. Joseph must learn through banishment and slavery. Moses must be taught on the quiet side of the mount. Jonah must learn by being thrown into the raging sea and swallowed

by a fish prepared of God. God is not limited in His methods of teaching and preparing His servants. After analyzing our lives and beholding our needs, He may choose to teach us a necessary lesson by a season of illness, or by a failure in our business, or by the death of a loved one. In the final analysis, we discover that the sorrows, the pains, the tribulations of life contribute largely to the building of character.

Fainting may indicate a disorder in the believer's spiritual nature. He may be spiritually sick. The strain caused by disputing leaders and preachers may weaken and weary the babe in Christ. That age-long malady of sin may be responsible. If sin as causing a believer to faint let it be understood this is not caused by an inefficacious sacrifice; but by malignant unbelief; failure to appropriate the blood of Christ to his life. The dreary soul may be starving for spiritual nourishment. As this wide-spread famine rages, destroying soul after soul, the calamity becomes the more disastrous when we realize there is no scarcity of spiritual food. As the prodigal son, these are seeking satisfaction by feasting on the husks of the far country. Because of their faulty sense of values they cast their pearls to the swine. By all means a spiritual tonic is needed! An earnest and sincere prayer of contrition, a humble heart-searching in the light of God's Word, a diligent, but careful re-reading of His glorious promises; these will revitalize and quicken our souls.

Let us now observe why the believer should not faint. His well-doing shall be rewarded, eventually, if he remains faithful and steadfast. The laborer must face his master for his remuneration. This reward, if our finite minds could comprehend, or, if our faith would penetrate the veil of mist, would be sufficient to insure against careless fainting. The continual flow of strength which is available to the Christian, would prevent this relaxation of efforts. The overcomer will be raptured from the earth when Jesus comes and the church, His bride, shall be glorified and taken home to mansions he has prepared. Eternal blessedness shall be her lot. But to faint means to be overcome; and the loss of our coveted reward.

The courage and steadfastness of the believer inspires and animates others. Unconscious to us, others are watching our zeal and interest, our neglect and complacency. Abraham must be strong because Lot needs to lean upon him. Moses is a stay for the nation of Israel. If we faint we may be sure that more lives than our own will be affected.

Whom then will God use if he cannot use those who profess and wear His name? If we grow weary or if we relax our efforts and fail to sow and reap the fruit of righteousness, who will teach men that life can be rich and beautiful? Who will seek and lead the lost to Christ? God needs men and women who are willing to deny themselves; deny themselves those things that only pervert their lives. They who recognize their part in the drama of life and will play it whole-heartedly for God are living abundantly. God has a purpose for each one of us. He can and wants to use us in His great plan of salvation. Brethren, faint not in well-doing!

THOUGHTS WORTH WHILE

D. H. F.

"I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH"

In Life and Letters of William Lyon Phelps, Dr. Phelps says: "President Dwight of Yale said, 'It has always been my experience that the teachers who are religious never mention it in the classroom, whereas those who are antagonistic to religion are always talking about it to the students.'"

What a terrible and tragic thing to say of Christians? Is that "keeping the faith"?

HOW FAR ARE YOU HONEST?

Are people generally inclined to be honest? I like to think so. Sometimes, however, I receive quite a shock, as for instance when I read about a fire that broke out in a department store in a large city. All of the charge slips for that day were destroyed. A full-page advertisement in each of the papers the next day explained to the public that fact, and requested all who had bought goods to report their purchases. Although the daily average of charge purchases in that store numbered three thousand, only one person responded, a man who had purchased a pair of gloves. Many clerks remembered large sales that they had made, but the store had no proof, and therefore had to stand the loss. Is it any wonder that the proprietor of that store has taken rather a pessimistic view of the average person's conscience? To be honest in every transaction is one way in which I can proclaim the fact that I am a Christian.—W. S. Abernathy.

A LAWYER'S DIFFICULTY

A brilliant lawyer in New York City, some time ago, spoke to a prominent minister of that city, asking him if he really believed that Christ rose from the dead. The minister replied that he did, and asked the privilege of presenting the proof to the lawyer. The lawyer took the material offered in proof away and studied it. He returned to the minister and said: "I am convinced that Jesus really did rise from the dead. But—," he then added, "I'm no nearer being a Christian than I was before. I thought the difficulty was with my head. I find that it is really with my heart."—*Sunday School Times*.

COVETOUSNESS

A story is told of Abraham Lincoln. A Springfield neighbor was drawn to his door one day by the crying of children. When he got there he saw Lincoln passing by with his two sons, both crying lustily. "What is the matter with the boys?" asked the man. "Just what is the matter with the whole world!" answered Lincoln. "I have three walnuts, and each boy wants two." Surely this spirit is still abroad today. We all need to learn more earnestly that covetousness and greed are sins which bring only trouble and pain.—*Christian Herald*.

THE SAFETY ZONE

An old minister who was preaching on a village green in England, had lived on the American prairies. He had a fascination for my boyish ears as he told of a prairie fire. He described the way the Indians saved their wigwams from the blaze by setting fire on the dry grass immediately adjoining the settlement. "The fire cannot come," he cried, "where the fire has already been."

That is why I call you to the Cross of Christ. Judgment has already fallen there and can never come again. He who takes his stand at the Cross is safe evermore. He is in God's safety zone.—F. W. Boreham.

JUSTICE OR MERCY?

A Negro, on trial for a criminal offense, stood trembling before the judge. "Don't be afraid," he was told; "you'll get justice." "I know, Judge," replied the offender, "but that's just what I don't want."

Is that not our exact position before God? We do not want justice; we want mercy. "In the course of justice, none of us should see salvation." So we pray with Habakkuk, "O Lord . . . in wrath remember mercy."—*Open Windows*.

WHAT IF THE BIBLE WERE GONE!

A certain man dreamed that he went to consult his Bible and found every page blank. In amazement he rushed to his neighbor's house, aroused him from sleep, and asked to see his Bible, but when he brought the Book they found it also blank. In great consternation they sought other Bibles, with the same result! Then they said, "We will go to the libraries and from great books we will gather the quotations of Scripture, and thus remake our Bible." But when they examined all the books upon the shelves of the libraries, they found that wherever a quotation of Scripture had been, that part of the page was blank. When the man awoke, his brow was cold, yet covered with perspiration, so great had been his agony during the dream.

Oh, how dark this world would be without the Bible! Man would be like a rudderless ship adrift in mid-ocean.—*King's Business*.

THE DRUNKARD'S VOTE

Some years ago in a village of western New York on election morning, a habitual drunkard went to the polls. He asked for a prohibition ballot, and a liquor seller got him one, supposing a joke was on hand. Folding it as best he could with trembling hands, the blear-eyed, ragged, unkempt man went to the ballot box and registered his wish. Then they began to scoff and sneer at the drunkard who had cast his temperance vote. "A pretty temperance voter you are," said one. "Why, if there was a bottle of whiskey yonder there at the top of the liberty pole and if you could have the whiskey by climbing it at the risk of your life, you know you'd climb." And then the drunkard straightened himself and answered, "Know it! Oh, yes, I know it. And I know another thing, gentlemen, if the whiskey wasn't there, I wouldn't climb."—*New Century Leader*.

ON SECOND THESSALONIANS

R. H. B.

"Second Thessalonians" followed very quickly upon the heels of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. If we ask why, the answer generally given is that the brethren at Thessalonica had become unduly excited over the prospect of Christ's return from heaven; that serious disorders had broken out in consequence; that some of them had actually quit their daily work on the ground that Christ might come any day—and that Paul therefore hastened to correct their wrong notion, and to calm their excitement. This explanation seems so plausible and satisfactory that it has been very generally accepted. In many commentaries, in expository writings and sermons this view is widely held and exploited. But there is not the slightest proof or foundation for all this remarkable theory. It is a pure assumption, and presents a striking example of the old vice of "jumping at conclusions." What really was the urgent motive and reason for the writing of this second epistle to the Thessalonians we shall see.

After a salutation, almost exactly like that in the first epistle, Paul proceeds to *comfort* the Thessalonian brethren. This special endeavor to comfort and reassure the brethren (vs. 3-7) is significant. Plainly *something* had come up to trouble and distress these brethren. What was it? Why does Paul so fervently commend them for their faith and love, and tell them how he even boasts of them and holds them up as an example to other churches in regard to their faith and patience amid all their persecutions and afflictions? (2 Thess. 1:3, 4.) Why does he so earnestly point out the significance of their present sufferings and afflictions—that they are a sure token of the great promise in store for them? (V. 5.) He speaks of the Day of the Lord, the Day of Wrath and Vengeance, when the Lord shall be revealed in flaming fire, "rendering vengeance to them that know not God and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus," and assures them that when that Day comes the tables will be turned: that those who now afflict shall then be recompensed by affliction; but you, who are now afflicted shall have rest. In that Day Christ's saints who now suffer shall be seen in glory, the object of wonder and amazement to all that behold them. (V. 10.)

For Christ "shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believe"—and you too, you Thessalonians, shall be of that company, for "our testimony unto you was believed." (Comp. Col. 3:4.) And on the strength of this Paul utters the beautiful and consoling prayer of verses 11, 12.

Now for all this there certainly was a reason. The Thessalonian church must have *needed* this comfort and assurance, and the information concerning the great Day of Vengeance. And therein lies the clue as to the purpose of this letter.

* * *

In 2 Thess. 2 Paul enters upon the real heart of their difficulty:
"Now we beseech you brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end

that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand." (2 Thess. 2:1, 2.)

Here then the reason of their distress comes out: clearly, in some way—either by (spurious) prophetic utterance, or by wrong teaching, or on the authority of an epistle purporting to have come from Paul—they had been made to believe that the day of the Lord (a term which always designates the Day of vengeance and of wrath and retribution) had already broken in upon them. (For was it not to come as a thief? 1 Thess. 5:2). And the afflictions through which they were going (they had been made to believe) were the foretaste and beginnings of that wrath. That explains the whole matter and the reason for Paul's writing, and all that Paul writes to them in this epistle.

The text of both the King James* and the American Revised Version here says that the day of the Lord "is just at hand." But the Greek text shows that the error which Paul sought to remove from their minds was that that Day had already broken in upon them. The American Standard Revised Version (than which, on the whole, there is no better and more faithful translation) — here followed the King James Version too much. The *English Revised Version* more accurately gives this translation: "that the day of the Lord is now present." (For the Greek word *enistemi* means "to be present," always, and everywhere in the New Testament. See Rom. 8:38; 1 Cor. 3:22; 7:26; Gal. 1:4; 2 Tim. 3:1; Heb. 9:9.) Other translations (except the Roman Catholic version) translate accordingly.

Baptist Translation: "As that the day of the Lord is present."

Conybeare and Howson: "That the day of the Lord is come"—(with a footnote: "Literally 'is present.' So the verb is always used in the N. T.")

Young's Bible Translation: "As that the day of Christ had arrived."

Moffat: "That the Day of the Lord is already here."

Goodspeed: "That the Day of the Lord has already come."

Rotherham: "As that the day of the Lord has set in."

Weymouth: "That the day of the Lord is already here."

"*Twentieth Century*": "That the Day of the Master is here."

Alford's "Greek Testament" (a Critical Commentary on the Greek Text of the New Testament) says,

"St. Paul could not so have written [i. e. as denying that the day of the Lord is at hand], nor could the Spirit have so spoken by him. The teaching of the Apostles was, and of the Holy Spirit in all ages has been, that the day of the Lord is at hand. But these Thessalonians imagined it to be already come, and accordingly were deserting their pursuits

*The King James rendering "the day of Christ is just at hand" is without authority. The "day of Christ" is not the same as "the Day of the Lord." The latter is a term brought over from the Old Testament, and always refers to the Day of Vengeance, Wrath, and Retribution. The expression "the day of Christ" (or "of our Lord Jesus Christ") occurs six times; always in reference to Christ's own people, and never designates the Day of Wrath. See 1 Cor. 1:8; 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16.

in life, and falling into other irregularities, as if the day of grace were closed. So Chrysostom plainly, "The devil, when he could not persuade them that the announcement of things future were false, took another way, and having suborned certain pestilent fellows, endeavored to deceive by persuading them that those great and glorious events had an end. At one time they said that the resurrection is past: but in this case they said that the judgment was come, and the presence of Christ, etc. . . . And what was worst of all, some of them repeated sayings of Paul to this effect, some feigned epistles as having been written by him."

So, likewise, the Expositor's Greek Testament, a later work of the same kind, has this to say,

"enesteken [the day of the Lord] 'were already present.' The cry was, *ho kurios par esti* [the Lord has come, or, is present]. The final period [according to these false teachers] had already begun, and the Thessalonians were probably referred to their sufferings as a proof of this."

The matter is of some importance. To have said that the day of the Lord was not anywhere near, (as the King James and Amer. Rev. Version implies) would have given ground to sinners to "put far off the evil day"; and would also have given some show of excuse for misguided believers to say (like the unfaithful servant of Luke 12:45) "My lord delayeth his coming." But the correct translation puts an altogether different face on the matter. If these Thessalonians had been made to believe that the Day of Wrath had broken in upon them unawares, we can understand why they would have been "Shaken from their mind" and "troubled." The prospect of *Christ's coming* would not have so troubled and upset them. The coming of Christ was their hope (Tit. 2:13) and their comfort (1 Thess. 4:18); for their expectation was that He would deliver them from the wrath to come (1 Thess. 1:10) and would bring them salvation (1 Thess. 5:9, 10), and that they would be removed out of the sphere of the coming wrath and taken up to Himself. (1 Thess. 4:16, 17.) This happy event obviously would have to take place *before* the "Day of the Lord" breaks in upon the guilty world. It may be some wonder to us how the Thessalonians could have been led to believe that they had missed the "salvation," and deceived into thinking that the day of wrath had come upon them; but manifestly that was what had happened. The whole of this second epistle to the Thessalonians is designed therefore to remove that false impression, to dispel their fear, and to comfort their hearts. And Paul does not do that by putting the coming of the Lord far away into the future (as some think) but by correcting their mistake as to the Day of the Lord, and reassuring them as to their standing and acceptedness before God. The Day of the Lord (Paul tells them) cannot come except the falling away (the great "apostasy") come first, and the Man of Sin be revealed. That alone should be enough to convince them that the Day of the Lord had not already come. (And hadn't he told them that, even when he was yet with them? 2 Thess. 2:5.)

At this point it may be well to call attention to a common misunderstanding, which, among other things, has caused confusion and misconception in regard to this passage. It is generally assumed

that *the coming of Christ* and *the Day of the Lord* are synonymous and co-extensive, referring to one and the same event. If that were the case, how could the Thessalonians have thought that the Day of the Lord had come upon them? (Perhaps that was the thought that prompted the translators to put "the day of the Lord is just at hand," where the true text said, "The day of the Lord is now present".) For if the coming of Christ (the "parousia") were one and the same event as the Day of the Lord, how could any false teacher have made them believe that the Day of the Lord was already present? But, is it not said that in the Day of the Lord Christ will be revealed in flaming fire with the angels of His power, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel? And is not that the coming of Christ? Very true. That is one feature of it, and is included under the "parousia." But *before* this event, the Lord descends and takes up His own, who shall "meet the Lord in the air," and who thenceforth are "forever with the Lord." This, the first act of the great final drama, is that deliverance from the coming wrath, and that "salvation," of which Paul had spoken to them in the first epistle (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9, 10; comp. Heb. 9:28.) That was the hope and promise given those Christians, and that was what they feared they had missed. If the Day of the Lord had come upon them, then they must in some way also have missed that "gathering together unto Him," and been left behind to face that wrath. According to the promise they should have been safely with Jesus when that day of wrath came; but now (as somebody had told them) the day of wrath had come, and they had not been taken up to "live together with Him." (1 Thess. 5:10.) That was the one cause of their distress. It was due partly to ignorance, partly to this falsehood, which was foisted upon them by some pretended prophetic utterance, or a (forged) epistle purporting to have come from Paul. All this misconception Paul clears away. In the "Parousia" (the "coming" or "presence") of the Lord, the first feature is that which is described in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. That has no reference to the world; it concerns only Christ's own. When He comes in His glory to judge and to execute "the vengeance that is written" (and that is the Day of the Lord)—His saints are *with Him* (for from the moment they are caught up, they are "for ever with the Lord" 1 Thess. 4:17). When He comes in His glory they also are manifested with Him in glory. (Col. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:10.) When He comes to judge, they are associated with Him in judgment (1 Cor. 6:2). When He sits down in His throne (Matt. 25:31) they sit down with Him (Rev. 3:21). If He rules the nations with a rod of iron and breaks them to pieces as a potter's vessel, they participate with Him. (Rev. 2:26, 27.)

How long will the taking up of the saints (1 Thess. 4:16, 17) precede His coming in glory with them? We are not told. The event of 1 Thess. 4:16, 17 is undated. We are not told that signs must necessarily precede *that*. And it is for that event that Christians look and wait. We are not waiting for the Beast of Rev. 13, or the rise of Antichrist: we wait for the Lord. That there will be an

interval of time between His coming to receive His saints unto Himself, and His coming *with them* to judge and execute the wrath of God can be shown from the fact that certain transactions must take place during that space. But regardless of that point—this is clear, that the Christian's hope (and it *is* a HOPE) is centered on the event of 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; and that they are not to face the judgment of the Day of Wrath.

(To be continued)

BEN'S BUDGET

Ben. J. Elston

A good, able, old minister of the Word said to a younger and less able one, "A man who preaches the Gospel *ought to study a great deal.*" How true! Paul thus advised Timothy (2 Tim. 2:15). It is not rash to suppose Timothy *needed* the exhortation. Has it ever been lost on any one? How many have not duly heeded it! Mingle it with sincere prayer and a fully surrendered heart and will. Then let the proclamation and teaching come from a transparently humble heart. At best too much error and weakness will appear. Let well-seasoned *facts* concerning Jesus be 'confidently affirmed.' Present as carefully the commands He gave, binding till the age end. No trifling here. Then, as well as you can gather them into your own soul, marshal the promises, "precious and exceeding great." These are the *enablers* to help the obedient, responsive ones to 'escape the corruption that is in the world by lust.'

You may early learn to tell this story well. Study will make it better, sweeter, safer till life closes the obligation to keep on calling.

SISTER W. C. ESTES

Sister W. C. Estes went home to be with her Lord Oct. 29. She was 83 years of age having been in the Lord for three score years and ten, even since a lassie in her teens. She was with us in faithful service at Cramer and Hanover almost from the first establishment of the congregation. She was truly a worthy woman and worthy to be praised. She grew to a ripe old age gracefully. Earthly grace and beauty are deceitful and vain, but Sister Estes retained the Christian graces of kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, together with a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of the Lord of great price. We are praying that the aged husband and two sons and son's children will consider the issue of her beautiful life and imitate her faith, attaining unto her hope and ours, laid up for us in the heavens.

Lexington, Ky.

H. N. Rutherford.

THE ADVERSARY

"The Adversary is very much opposed to your giving thought or consideration to eternity. He wants you to think in terms of this world, as though you are to live forever in your present state. He is very well pleased with the 'earth dwellers,' but he is a constant adversary to the sojourners and pilgrims."—Ivy J. Istre, in the *Friendly Visitor*.

“FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”

E. L. J.

Our “precious reprints” for January are chosen from those offered to the readers of *Truth Advance* in the Aug.-Sept. issue (1945) of that journal. The editor, Stanford Chambers, gave over that entire issue to such reprints, together with a few well-said paragraphs from his own pen, and his notes between the quotes. The whole constitutes a very great and useful labor — almost an “opus” on the subject.

Though most of the extracts chosen this month appeared in the *Word and Work* many years ago, and though many of the authors quoted are scheduled for much fuller representation in future issues (from material in our collection) — yet these extracts, compacted and succinct, should prove immediately useful in this present form. The “next voice,” therefore, will be that of Stanford Chambers; and after that, the names, one by one, as they are displayed:

My farm training and the plain, simple way of life, has ever been a cause for great gratitude. It developed a love of freedom. The sign, “Keep off the grass,” was never encountered till middle teens, rarely then. Its application to “the green pastures” of Holy Writ never encountered until a much later date. Freedom within those pastures was ever considered a Christian’s new-birthright. “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good,” one’s duty and privilege. “Study to show thyself approved unto God,” was ever imperative, a fixed aim. “All is yours,” whether the sermon on the mount or the prophecy on the mount; whether the Book of Acts or the Book of Revelation. The importance of working, watching, praying, preparing for the undated return of our Lord has been an underscored responsibility.

There is such a thing as heresy, yet to label a thing heresy does not make it so; on the other hand, a doctrine may pass as altogether orthodox in certain circles and yet not be the truth. The charge of “heresy” has been found quite convenient as a weapon against the truth itself, and is very generally resorted to when the opposer is conscious of his argument falling short of its purpose. Christianity itself has been subject to the keen edge of his weapon through all the centuries since Pentecost. Both the heretic and the heresy are surely to be refused. An error, however, is not necessarily heresy, though every error is injurious in one way or another. To be forever opposing even error is not all there is of virtue; yet may we ever be admonished to “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” “Thy word is truth.”

“Pre,” “Post,” or “Anti”

Here are three prefixes for the term millennial, derived from the word millennium, meaning a thousand years. (It is like our word “century” for hundred years. Neither the word century nor the word millennium is in our English Bible, but hundred years is, likewise thousand years. The right to use the one term is the right to

use the other). So people are either "pre-millennial," "Post-millennial," or "anti-millennial." This last term has been shortened to "a-millennial" [meaning non or un-millennial]. Yes, you are one or the other, just as you are an immersionist or an affusionist regarding the matter of baptism. By "the millennium" is meant, in the controversies that are on, "the thousand years" of the twentieth chapter of Revelation.

If one is looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus before the millennium he is "pre-millennial." If he is looking for the millennium before His coming he is "post-millennial." If he denies that there will be "a millennium" he is "a-millennial." If Jesus is coming again, it will be before the millennium or after the millennium, or else there is no millennium. What is the truth on this subject to which so much space is being devoted in these days, *especially by the negative?*

A fair seeker for the truth on any matter is just as willing that it be the one way as the other, as God wills or reveals. The writer finds no Scripture which puts the coming of Christ *after* the millennium. All the exhortations and admonitions (and they are almost without number) are to watchfulness and readiness. "Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand," says James. He may come at any time. "No one knoweth the day nor the hour." All such admonitions disallow our placing the millennium between us and His coming. How then could one be a "post-millennialist"? Finding in Holy Writ both the millennium (or "the thousand years") and the Coming Again, how could one be "a-millennial?" How be otherwise than "pre-millennial?"

"WHERE DID YOU LEARN IT?"

I cannot recollect who first called my attention to the Revelation passage concerning "the thousand years." Perhaps no one did. I began as soon as I came to Christ to read His Testament through. Before ever being called a preacher I remember making use of this passage in trying to save a "good moral man" who was boasting that in the resurrection he would "stand up as tall as the rest." I turned to Rev. 20:5 and showed him that unless he repented he would not stand up with true children of God at all; that "the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years should be finished." Thus read the Bible to me at that early age. Not long after that a preacher declared that the millennium was already on. Evidence was the peace sentiment, the settling of labor disputes and other problems by arbitration, etc. I could not agree. Not long after came another proclaiming that Satan was bound already. That to me was news! I wished to know when. He said, at Pentecost. I cited 1 Peter 5:8 as stating a fact long after Pentecost. I recall these occurrences as proof that I was "pre-millennial" while yet a boy, though never having heard such a term for it. And this is true of many.

The first human writing I ever read on prophetic lines was by George Campbell. I could not find warrant for his year-for-a-day theory nor for his date-setting. Time soon swept away his dates and disproved his theory, yet I never heard him called a heretic. Nor was

J. L. Martin called a heretic, mistaken though it turned out that he was on "The Voice of Seven Thunders" and other voices of Revelation. Surely he made an honest effort to understand "what the prophets have spoken." And who would deny that that was more commendable than to discourage the study of such a vast portion of God's book as His prophets occupy, telling the people that it was never meant that unfulfilled prophecy should be understood. Jesus said, commenting on Daniel, "Let him that readeth understand." (Matt. 24:15.) Even Daniel, then, is understandable.

MOSES E. LARD

I cannot recall definitely when I first read Lard (on Romans), but there seemed nothing strange to me in such a statement as, e.g., "At His coming the holy dead will be raised, the righteous living will be changed, and the millennium will have set in." So had my Bible spoken to me. All know that much more to the same effect could be quoted from Lard. This is enough to show that without question he was premillennial. Order of events: the Lord's coming, resurrection of "those that are Christ's at his coming," and His ushering in of the millennium. No one denies Lard was pre-millennial.

T. W. BRENTS

It was while in the Nashville Bible School that I first saw the writings of Dr. Brents. His statement on Rev. 20, "If it does not express a literal reign with Christ for a literal thousand years, we know not what assemblage of words would be capable of expressing that thought," seemed to me but the natural thing to say on the passage. No one could say such a thing today and not be set down as pre-millennial. Such was T. W. Brents, of course.

HARDING AND LIPSCOMB

These men were not speculators. They were free and not bound; neither were they appeasers. Never were they found declaring themselves in such a way as to preclude or discourage full and free investigation of any Bible question. Such was the freedom they fought for and maintained right well in their day.

Lipscomb repeatedly declared that he had not made thorough study of prophecy, yet on matters on which he had reached conviction he unhesitatingly came out; and his comment on Acts 3:21, 22, for instance, is quite revealing: "Heaven must receive Him until 'the times of restoration of all things.' Then 'the restoration of all things' must be when Jesus returns again to earth—the restoration of all things to their original relation to God. . . . When Jesus comes again, the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and all things in the world be restored to harmonious relation with God, the supreme Ruler of the universe." Pre-millennial teaching: no 'post-millennialist' or 'a-millennialist' are ever found saying such a thing.

Harding, without reservation, taught (e.g., on the parables of the talents and the pounds) that the faithful are to be made rulers when Jesus returns, and about this matter he was enthusiastic.

HARDING

But we have found some who question that J. A. Harding ever taught that Jesus is to come before the millennium. Here is a quotation which should dispel such doubts. If not, more can be given. After commenting on the Revelation passage he says, "These facts point clearly to this period of a thousand years as the Sabbath rest that remains for the people of God . . . this glorious thousand years with which time ends, during which all the saints of all the ages will reign with Christ in perfect freedom from the temptation to sin. That this millennial reign will be on earth is clearly indicated by the fact that at the beginning of it Christ and His saints are on the earth, and so are they at the end of it. Compare Rev. 19:11-21 with Rev. 20:1-10. Read also 1 Cor. 15:20-28; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 2:7-9; Matt. 24:29-31."—Editorial in *The Way*, Oct. 1903.

That Stone, Barclay, Creath, Scott and other pioneers could be similarly quoted will not be denied. Let the reader bear in mind that we are not just here concerned as to whether these men were right or wrong; what we are saying is that the men called "pioneers" taught the things which in our day are being pronounced by some (who have become articulate) as "heresy." Certainly, that which is called "The Restoration Movement" was born pre-millennial. If the teaching was not heresy then, neither is it heresy now. If they are heretics who thus teach now, so were they heretics who taught so then—they whose names appear above. Those being marked to-day find in the teaching of "the pioneers" every point of doctrine to which present day markers object.

DANIEL SOMMER

From my boyhood I read Daniel Sommer and heard him. His book "Questions, Answers and Remarks" dates back to the beginning of our century. On Revelation we read: "What shall we say to those who declare that Christ will not come again till at the end of the Millennial Age? (So declare all post-millennialists.—S. C.) We may say, 'Ye do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.' All such by implication deny that the resurrection mentioned in 1 Cor. 15:12-54 and 1 Thess. 4:13-17 means 'the first resurrection' . . . Then when John declares, in contradistinction from the righteous dead, 'But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished,' the testimony on this subject is complete" . . .

All these references we have previously given; others as well. Our point in quoting representative men is not to prove what we teach, for the Scriptures are our sole authority; but to show that they do greatly err who make out that the teaching that Christ's coming is to precede the millennium is a new and strange teaching, and therefore heresy. The teaching is not only as old as the so-called "Restoration Movement," but as old as Christianity itself. The early church was set in an attitude of waiting and hoping for His return, and in that expectancy and hope they purified themselves. Under the power of inspired, apostolic Gospel preaching "they turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, who delivereth us from the wrath to come."