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Casting Our Cares upon the Lord

“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

—*I Peter 5:7*

THE CARES OF THE BILLIONS of people living on earth at this time are many. Heightening this is the fact that we live in a world today which has become more complicated and distracting to the mind and soul than that of any previous generation. Sometimes these conditions can seem overwhelming to the human spirit, even to those who claim to be followers of Christ.

Yet, we must consider the fact that God is, most assuredly, not unaware of these conditions, and to those who put their faith and trust in him, he is ever near to assist and help. Concerning those who implicitly rely on the Heavenly Father for grace and strength, the psalmist says, “God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.”—Ps. 46:5

The sentiments of our opening text are often found as a motto in Christian homes, serving as a reminder of God’s constant care. The Apostle Peter was able to give us these words of encouragement

because of his experiences, from which he learned valuable lessons with regard to the matter of leaving his burdens with the Lord. Thus, he instructs us also to rid ourselves of unnecessary cares and, instead, to place them in the hands of our all-wise and loving Heavenly Father.

PETER'S EXPERIENCES

The Apostle Peter has often been viewed as impetuous and impulsive. At one time, he wanted matters his own way and was very willful in carrying out his ideas. In doing so, he burdened himself unnecessarily with many kinds of cares. Yet, when Peter had a conviction, he pursued it relentlessly and worried considerably about making it a reality. This was true about his belief that Jesus was the Messiah.

When Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" it was Peter who quickly responded, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Because of his answer, Jesus told Peter that he was blessed, stating that "flesh and blood" had not revealed it to him but that the Father in heaven had given him this insight.—Matt. 16:15-17

However, Peter was an anxious man. He could not comprehend why Jesus spoke of suffering if he was Israel's Messiah. Above all, he could not understand that Jesus had to go to Jerusalem to die. The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon the disciples to give them an appreciation of these things. Thus, such statements by Jesus worried Peter. In turning these thoughts over in his mind he finally gave vent to his concern, and said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." (Matt. 16:22) Peter became even more perplexed when

Jesus rebuked him with the words, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."—Matt. 16:23

It might also appear that Peter lacked courage, because he denied Jesus three times. Yet, while the other disciples fled after their Master's arrest, Peter trailed the mob and the soldiers who had taken him into custody. In answer to why he did not also flee, it has been suggested that Peter had not given up hope of seeing Jesus acclaimed as the Messiah, and thus he sought an opportunity to turn matters in that direction.

There is no doubt that Peter was eager to fight for our Lord. It is assumed that it was Peter who said to Jesus, "Behold, here are two swords," as recorded in Luke 22:36-38. The occasion was when Jesus told his disciples that a sword should be purchased. When they came with two swords, Jesus replied, "It is enough." His purpose in having them take the swords was to show that when taken captive he would not offer resistance, even though he had the means to do so. Peter evidently had one of these swords and sought to use it in defense of his Master. He swung it and cut off the ear of a servant of the high priest. "Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear." (John 18:10) Peter wanted to fight for the Messiah and was perplexed by our Lord's willing submission to the authorities.

Several hours earlier, at the time of the last supper, when Jesus established the memorial of his death, he said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift

you as wheat.” (Luke 22:31) Satan’s attacks are subtle and are directed at the mind. His strategy in this instance was to confuse Peter’s mind with anxious thought and to convince him that his actions were right. Satan confused him with other opinions, resulting in more anxiety, and by doing so, he was almost able to sift him as wheat. However, Peter had a fully loyal heart, and by the grace of God, finally was successful in casting all his anxiety upon the Lord. He came to the realization that God’s providences in his life would ultimately prevail.

FAITH DID NOT FAIL

Jesus had prayed that Peter’s faith would not fail, and it did not. (Luke 22:32) Peter had resisted the devil by being steadfast in the faith, even with limited understanding. Hence, later he was able to strengthen his brethren by writing: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” (I Pet. 5:6-9) *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott* translation of verse 7, our opening text, indicates previous action on our part. It says, “Having cast all your anxiety upon him ... ,” suggesting that we are to begin doing this as soon as we enter the way of Christ.

Peter was thorough. He not only learned to cast upon the Heavenly Father all his anxieties relating to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, but

he also turned over to God all his fears and anxious thoughts as to what was to befall him personally. In so doing, he was humbled and fully ready to suffer for Christ. A few verses earlier, he shares with us what he had learned in this regard: “When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”—I Pet. 5:4,5

This “care” that Peter tells us to cast upon the Lord is a translation of the Greek word *merimna*, which denotes anxiety, to the point of distraction. In Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount this Greek word is translated “thought” in the *King James Version*: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; ... nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” (Matt. 6:25) A better translation begins this verse, “For this cause, I say unto you: Be not anxious for your life.”—*Rotherham Emphasized Bible*

CASTING AWAY ANXIETY

In this marvelous sermon, Jesus directed his listeners, and us, as readers, to God’s creation and nature, such as the birds and flowers, seeking to teach us reliance upon God. What simple, direct lessons are found in God’s natural realm! “Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single

hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”—Matt. 6:26-34, *English Standard Version*

Anxious worry in any form causes impairment, both physical and spiritual, as well as distraction, making us easier targets for Satan’s attacks. In the Parable of the Sower, the seed that fell among thorns was choked by the cares [*merimna*, anxieties] of this world as well as by the riches of this life. (Matt. 13:22) On another occasion Jesus, in warning his disciples about the day of the Lord, again referred to the anxieties of life: “But take heed to yourselves, lest your souls be weighed down with self-indulgence and drunkenness or the anxieties of this life, and that day come upon you, suddenly.”—Luke 21:34, *Weymouth New Testament*

Luke’s Gospel account also tells of a visit Jesus made to the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Martha was overly busy in her task of entertaining our Lord, while Mary sat listening at the Master’s

feet. Finally, Martha could contain herself no longer and said, “Master, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do all the waiting? Tell her to assist me. Martha, Martha, replied Jesus, you are anxious and worried about a multitude of things; and yet only one thing is really necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion and she shall not be deprived of it.”—Luke 10:38-42, *Weymouth*

The usual lesson associated with this incident is that we should prefer obtaining spiritual food and should seek it over and above other duties. This is true. However, if we should carry this thought to an extreme, no one would do the serving. Perhaps the real lesson is not in the choice that Martha had made—to serve—but rather, concerning the agitated state of mind she developed. The gentle chiding of Jesus called attention to the “good part” and that she should not be overanxious about the necessary duties of life.

DECEITFULNESS OF MAMMON

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus associated anxiety with that of serving mammon, or the riches and wealth of this world. “No man can serve two masters: ... Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matt. 6:24) Men serve mammon because of self-concern, selfishness, or even fear. In his sermon Jesus was introducing the people to a new “master,” one they could rely upon and trust—his Father in heaven. This new master would take care of them. They were not to devote their lives to the “mammon” of earthly gain and selfishness as their master. Rather, they were told: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”—Matt. 6:33

This was not an easy lesson for the disciples of Jesus' day to learn, nor is it for us. Mammon has always been an untrustworthy master. Generally, as long as there is a profit for a business concern to which one is giving his service, he has a job. As soon as profits cease, he is not needed, and his job is lost. When we analyze the philosophy much of the world lives by, including the "survival of the fittest," it is little wonder that so many people worry themselves to the extreme. On the contrary, Jesus tried to convey to his disciples and us the idea that we should have confidence and trust in God. We are not to be like the seed that fell among thorns, failing to seek first his righteousness, but permitting anxious cares of this life to stunt growth and make spiritual fruitage impossible.

Another "master" closely associated with anxiety is fear. Satan has succeeded in making the people of the world very fearful. There are many kinds of fears—fear of want; fear of distress; fear of not being successful; fear of illness; and fear of death. We, as God's people, are to learn how to overcome this fear, even as Paul wrote to Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (II Tim. 1:7) By placing our trust in God, it is possible for us to overcome the fears that plague the world around us.

FAITH AND TRUST, NOT CARELESSNESS

Is there any way in which anxiety can be considered permissible? Certainly, anxiety about material things for ourselves is wrong. We should strive to be unselfish, not more selfish. Truly unselfish anxiety might be directed toward the things of the Lord,

our service to him, or our relationship with him and our brethren. Yet, even in this God does not want us to be overanxious.

We also must not go to the opposite extreme of thinking that God wants us to be careless. This thought might be derived from Philippians 4:6 which, as translated in the *King James Version*, states: "Be careful for nothing." This rendering implies being careless or giving no thought. A better translation reads, "Do not be over-anxious about anything." (*Weymouth*) Other Scriptures also make it clear that we are not to be careless. For example, the Apostle Paul says, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." (Rom. 12:11) Solomon said, "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster."—Prov. 18:9

We are also told by the Apostle Paul, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (I Tim. 5:8) Is it possible for a Christian to work in providing for his own, and for needful things of others, and in doing so not to be serving mammon? The answer is yes. The evil associated with serving mammon is not money itself, but the love, desire and ambition for money, riches and wealth. The Christian, in earning his daily bread, is doing so to the praise, honor, and glory of God, and not for the love of money. He is a steward of the Lord's goods and must not be careless. In fact, he must be the most careful of persons, because there are many snares and pitfalls which are set by his three opponents: the flesh, the world, and the devil.

If we cannot completely avoid anxiety, let us try to channel it to the right things. The Apostle Paul tells us how this can be done. In II Corinthians 11:23-27 he enumerates all his sufferings for Christ and adds: “Apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.” (vs. 28, *ESV*) Here we have *merimna* used in a favorable way. Having anxiety for the people of God is proper. The Apostle Paul says that such anxiety toward one another would prevent divisions in the body of Christ. “That there might be no disunion in the body, but that all the members might entertain the same anxious care [*merimna*] for one another’s welfare.” (I Cor. 12:25, *Weymouth*) Furthermore, proper concern for each other in the body of Christ would lead to the strengthening of the bonds of love. “Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” (vs. 26) Hence, if we must have anxiety, let it be for the people of God.

GOD DESIRES TO HELP

Notwithstanding those times and circumstances when anxiety might be considered proper, the best advice is that which is given by Peter and Paul. Cast “all your care” upon God, and be anxious “for nothing.” (I Pet. 5:7; Phil. 4:6) Anxiety of any kind, therefore, should be avoided as much as possible, even by consecrated Christians. The burden is too much to bear, and all of us are weak in our imperfect human frames. Hence, starting early in our Christian lives, we are to cast our cares upon the Lord, because only he is able to bear these cares for us.

In the context of Philippians, chapter four, we also read, “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.” (vs. 4) These words are a proper setting for the thoughts expressed by the apostle in this chapter. If the Lord’s people, having the advance knowledge of the joyful times ahead for all people in Christ’s Messianic kingdom, should be sad in these troublous days, who then can be joyful? Indeed, there are times when we too must mourn, but at other times we should bring good cheer and encouragement to all we meet.

Notice, too, that the Lord, through the Apostle Paul, does not admonish us to be anxious about nothing without giving us advice as to how to make this a reality. In the remaining words of verse 6 he supplies us with the practical approach to its accomplishment. “But in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” The apostle says “every thing.” Whatever the problem causing our anxiety—whether one of our brethren, or a family member, or personal failings, or a matter at home or at our place of employment, whether big or small—we are foolish to bear these burdens alone.

If we have not done so already, we must learn how to unburden our hearts in prayer to the Lord. This is an absolute necessity, or else we can break under the strain of heavy burdens by unnecessarily trying to carry them alone. When we try to carry a burden alone, one of two possibilities exists. One is that we are forgetful of the knowledge that God cares and is willing to relieve the burden. The other is that we lack confidence in the Lord’s ability

to carry the load. Both of these situations give evidence of a lack of faith.

WATCH AND PRAY

Many times these scriptural promises of help and assistance from God fail to console the Christian because fulfillment does not occur in the precise manner or time expected. It is necessary to watch and pray, and as we unburden our hearts before the Lord we will find in time that these words are fulfilled. “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”—Rom. 8:28

Most assuredly, there are matters in our lives, and there are events in the world, which could cause us much anxiety. We live in a very troubled and perplexed world, full of fear and foreboding concerning the times which lie ahead. Are we fearful? Is anxiety troubling our mind and spirit? Let us not become panic-stricken, but realize that our Almighty Creator and his Son are in full charge of all things, both in the world around us and in our personal affairs. In these days, we may not always be able to avoid disconcerting cares and worries, but we should know how to relieve the burden. Take them to God in prayer. May the words of Peter lie in our hearts as we face the experiences of life, that we might thus cast all our anxious cares upon the Lord, knowing with certainty that he cares for us. ■

“To Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

—Ephesians 3:20,21, *New American Standard Bible*

God's Justice

Key Verses: “*Glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.*”
—Romans 2:10,11

Selected Scripture:
Romans 2:1-11

TODAY'S LESSON UNDER-scores the fact that no matter how morally upright any individual considers himself to be, because of his inherent sinful nature he is often blind to the same vices in his own character for which he is condemning others when they manifest similar misconduct.

The Apostle Paul gave us these words: “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?”—Rom. 2:1-3

In view of the foregoing, however, God's goodness, forbearance and long suffering are evidences of his great mercy, and an appreciation of this matter should lead sinners to repentance. (vs. 4) God will determine the fate of all sinners in a future day of judgment. (John 5:28,29) At that time, the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9) When mankind returns from the grave, they will not be permitted to practice evil during God's kingdom. They will be given an ample

amount of time to be educated as to God's laws and to make progress in coming into harmony with righteousness. Those few who prove to be incorrigible after such a generous opportunity will fail their trial and forever be destroyed.—Isa. 65:20; Rev. 20:3,7-14

Devoted Christians are now experiencing a judgment day during their lifetime if they have been followers of Jesus Christ during this Gospel Age. These now have the hope of embracing a High Calling which will result in their receiving a heavenly reward if they faithfully follow Christ—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:21; Phil. 3:13,14) As members of Christ's church they will have the privilege of helping to uplift the human family during the world's future judgment day of one thousand years. How thankful mankind will be when they realize God's merciful plan for their recovery from sin and death, and the offer of everlasting life for those who will prove to be obedient to his will.

Our Key Verses remind us that God is not a respecter of persons, and that during that future reign of righteousness on earth, mankind will receive the opportunity for earthly blessings in a perfect society. This applies to the Jews, who as a whole rejected Christ as their Savior during his earthly ministry, and Gentiles who were not invited to such privileges until Israel's special period of favor ended.

During God's kingdom under the administration of Christ and his church, everyone will then learn to appreciate the prospect of attaining everlasting life. Nevertheless, obedience and righteous conduct will be required for this to occur. "It shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23) How thankful mankind will be when they learn to appreciate the wisdom, justice, love and power of our most gracious and benevolent Heavenly Father. ■

Giving Generously

Key Verse: “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”
—II Corinthians 8:9

Selected Scripture:
II Corinthians
8:7-15

abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints.”—II Cor. 8:1-4, *Revised Version*

The believers in Macedonia, though poor, were especially appreciated by Paul because they devoted their lives to God’s service. As an outgrowth of their consecration, they placed their trust in the apostle to distribute funds they had collected to assist the poor saints in Jerusalem.—vs. 5

As Titus was the bearer of this epistle, Paul desired that he would encourage the brethren in Corinth to

ONE EVIDENCE OF SPIRITUAL development among the followers of Christ is that of manifesting generosity towards others in need. During the time of the Early Church, Paul wrote to the brethren in Corinth regarding the spirit of sacrifice exhibited by the believers in the churches of Macedonia.

“Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the

manifest a similar spirit of benevolence and sincerity towards Christian believers in Jerusalem.—vs. 6

Our Key Verse, although penned during the first century, has applicability for all the consecrated followers of the Master throughout this Gospel Age. Jesus willingly left his exalted position in the heavenly realm, and came to earth. Throughout his earthly ministry as Christ, he laid down his human life in sacrifice by humbling himself, even to the death of the cross, in order to purchase the dying race of mankind according to the Heavenly Father's will.

Although circumstances may differ today among brethren, consecrated followers of Christ should look for opportunities to serve believers in whatever way possible according to their ability. In some instances, we will be reminded to write to or visit an isolated brother or sister we may have neglected for a time, while being caught up in perhaps doing other things throughout the year. We can strive to be more attentive and make special efforts to fulfill requests for prayers given in testimonies. Recalling some of the specific trials some of the Lord's dear ones are experiencing, we will want to bring them into remembrance, as we petition the Lord to give them more grace and strength. Perhaps we can volunteer for an ecclesia service or to assist some of the brethren in certain ways which we may not have done before, trying to be of service in some of the tasks that we may have left for someone else to do.

A very important aspect of the New Creature's growth and development is an increased manifestation of kindness toward the brethren and to the entire world of mankind. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." "Brethren, ... support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."—Gal. 6:10; I Thess. 5:14,15 ■

Loving and Just Behavior

Key Verse: “*Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*”
—*Romans 12:9*

Selected Scripture:
Romans 12:9-21

living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”—Rom. 12:1,2

The manner in which this can be achieved is by having our attitude changed from a focus upon earthly concerns into spiritual mindedness by the influence of God’s Holy Spirit. This act of consecration implies renouncing sinful propensities in favor of righteousness and a desire to do the Heavenly Father’s will. Beyond this, however, faithfulness in actively sacrificing human aims and ambitions ultimately will lead to the transformation of our nature from human to the divine.

Although individually many believers have responded

IN THIS STUDY, PAUL exhorts believers to reflect upon God’s many mercies towards them. As a logical outgrowth of such favor, followers of Christ should gladly devote their energies fully towards doing the Heavenly Father’s will.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a

to the invitation of this heavenly calling, as we work out our salvation we are reminded there is both unity and diversity within the body of Christ. Additionally, there are various gifts and talents that are possessed by each consecrated believer that should be used for the mutual edification of all the saints.—vss. 4-8

Our Key Verse illustrates an important character trait as an evidence that we are being transformed. It mentions the spirit of genuine love that we should have for our brethren, as well as an intense opposition towards anything sinful or impure in our motives, thoughts and actions.

Much of the balance of this chapter describes attributes that we as consecrated believers must develop. These qualities must be maintained throughout our earthly sojourn as we relate to those both within and outside of our fellowship.—vss. 10-21

We are to manifest a lifestyle of holy behavior in accordance with our commitment to follow Christ. “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” (John 17:17) Not only did Jesus pray for those who were present with him his last night on earth, but his petition was on behalf of all the members of the church to this very day. The sanctification given by God is a process that is directly related to our study of and feeding upon righteous principles contained in the Bible.

It has been the divine purpose to select a class from among mankind who will lead lives of holiness in preparation for the bestowing of future blessings on the human family. God has set forth the required standards of conduct deemed suitable for our exaltation to a ruling position in his kingdom under the direction of Jesus Christ.

May the spirit of this exhortation abide in our hearts as an encouragement to be faithful to our calling. “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—I Thess. 5:23 ■

Putting on the New Man

Key Verse: *“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.”*
—*Colossians 3:12*

Selected Scripture:
Colossians 3:5-17

OUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

is predicated upon a fundamental truth. “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” (Heb. 2:9) Additionally, believers who have been baptized into Christ’s death have surrendered their wills to the Heavenly Father. These have the

prospect that carrying out a life of full consecration will result in their resurrection to the divine nature, and participation in blessing the human family during God’s kingdom of righteousness.—Rom. 6:3-6

As believers who have devoted our lives to following in Christ’s footsteps, we are admonished to set our minds upon spiritual pursuits. From God’s standpoint our old will is dead, and we have relinquished any hope of the earthly resurrection which the world in general will experience. An added privilege for us is the hope of attaining glory, honor and immortality.—Rom. 2:7; Col. 3:1-4

In order to achieve this spiritual inheritance, however, we must be consistent in our efforts, through the power

of the Holy Spirit, to eradicate the sinful defilements and selfish inclinations which we and all members of the human race inherited from birth. We are to wage an unceasing warfare against the works of the flesh as well as all other tendencies toward worldliness and impurity.—Gal. 5:17-21; Col. 3:3-9

On the other hand, we are to have the mind of Christ controlling our actions as we put on the new man that has as its chief endeavor the doing of God's righteous will. Additionally, any identifications based upon race, nationality, ethnicity or culture which are associated with our former status, have no part in our present standing as New Creatures.—Col. 3:10,11

Our Key Verse addresses the fact that it is not sufficient that we merely acquire an intellectual knowledge of God's truth. We also are required to put on such graces as mercy, kindness, meekness and longsuffering, which are further evidences of having a new mind.

The head of the body is Christ. Its members are composed of those who are willing to be directed by him, just as the human body is controlled by the head, where the brain is in charge and the various body members respond to its direction. To the degree that the human mind is functioning properly, the actions of its various body parts will operate in an appropriate manner.

Even though the "one" body has many different members, it will possess one spirit or mindset reflected within every member of the church. The standard for knowing whether this exists in each believer might be determined by applying the following criterion: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2:5

How blessed we are to appreciate God's merciful provision in permitting us to have those experiences that will make us a part of his divine family. We will praise him forever as his goodness continues to be manifest throughout eternity. ■

Being Made “Able Ministers”

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant]; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”
—II Corinthians 3:6

THE MAIN THEME OF II Corinthians, chapters 3 through 6, is based on a background of God’s dealing with Israel when he entered into covenant relationship with them, with Moses serving as mediator of that covenant. Thus we have the Apostle Paul presenting one of the important lessons of the Old Testament, and making his inspired application of its meaning in connection with the outworking of God’s great plan of reconciliation on behalf of the whole world of mankind.

As this beautiful theme begins, Paul says that we are “manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” (II Cor. 3:3) Here the apostle takes us back to the time when God wrote his law on tables of stone. He indicates that these tables of stone picture what he describes as

the “epistle of Christ,” written by the Holy Spirit in “fleshy tables of the heart.”

By this application, Paul is putting himself and all the true followers of Jesus in a tremendously important place in God’s arrangements—that the body members of Christ are to occupy the same relationship to the New Covenant as the tables of stone did toward Israel’s Law Covenant. It is this realization that causes him to observe, “And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.”—vss. 4,5

Then, in our theme text, Paul says that we have been made “able ministers of the new testament [Greek: covenant].” In verse 7 he refers to the former Law Covenant as being a “ministration of death, written and engraven in stones.” This second reference to the tables of stone leaves no doubt as to the comparison Paul is making between the methods by which the two covenants are mediated.

The Law Covenant was not designed to be a “ministration of death,” but the reverse. In Romans 7:10, Paul says that it was “ordained to life.” That is, it was designed to give life, and would have done so, but for the fact that the people could not live up to its requirements. Because of this, Paul and every other sincere Israelite who tried to keep the Law, found it to be “unto death.” It was this ministration of death that was engraved on tables of stone.

In contrast with this, Paul explains in our theme text that the “spirit giveth life.” Here he is saying that the writing of God’s law in the “fleshy tables” of our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit is for the purpose of giving life. If the Law Covenant had

given life it would have been by virtue of the full obedience of the people to the commandments engraved on the literal tables of stone. By writing his law in the “tables” of our hearts, God will, through the Christ, Head and body, give life to all who accept and obey the terms of the New Covenant. It is thus that “the spirit giveth life.”

THE HOPE OF GLORY

Paul continues to draw lessons from the experiences of Israel in preparation for the giving of the Law Covenant. He refers to the shining countenance of Moses as he came down the mount bearing the tables of stone, explaining that the law “engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away.” (II Cor. 3:7) Contrasting this to the New Covenant, Paul continues, “How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.”—vss. 8-12

The glory “which remaineth” Paul declares to be but a hope at the present time. In Romans 8:24, he writes, “Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” This glorious ministration of the New Covenant for which we hope is a “glory that excelleth.” It is the same glory

referred to in the next chapter, where Paul writes, “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—II Cor. 4:17,18

NOW IN PREPARATION

Paul states that the glory associated with the giving of the tables of stone caused Moses to “put a vail over his face” when he came down from Mount Sinai. (II Cor. 3:13) The apostle comes back to this thought a few verses later, contrasting it with the condition of the footstep followers of Christ at the present time. “We all, with open [Greek: unveiled] face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”—vs. 18

Here Paul is explaining that the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts in writing therein the “epistle of Christ” is also changing us into the Lord’s image, progressively, from “glory to glory.” We first realize that this explanation by Paul places us, as the followers of Jesus, not in the camp of Israel, but with Moses when he went into the presence of the Lord, for it was then that his face was unveiled. (Exod. 34:29-35) The glory of the Lord as reflected on the face of Moses was hidden from the Israelites. However, that glory is seen by us. Because it is, like the tables of stone on which the Law was written during that earlier display of God’s glory, we, by the Spirit or power of God, are having his Law written in the table of our hearts.

It is by virtue of this that we are being “changed.” This word, as used in II Corinthians 3:18, is translated from the Greek word *metamorphoo*, which means “to transform.” Indeed, we are not changed literally, as Moses was, so that his face shone brightly. We note how Paul covers this point. He says that we behold the glory of the Lord “as in a glass,” or mirror. God’s glory, made up of the combined attributes of his character, is reflected to us through the mirror of his written Word. Under this influence, and by yielding wholeheartedly to it, we are being transformed “into the same image.”

In many respects, the world today is like Israel of old. Paul writes that the Gospel is hidden from those lost in the ways of sin, then states the cause of this. “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (II Cor. 4:3,4) By contrast, concerning the effect of the Gospel in the hearts of those who do believe and obey its precepts, the apostle continues, “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”—vs. 6

This is simply a more comprehensive explanation of the manner in which the Holy Spirit is writing God’s law in the tables of our hearts, for the Holy Spirit operates through the light of God’s truth. Jesus referred to it as the “Spirit of truth.” (John 14:16,17; 16:13) Notice what takes place as a result of this effulgence of light which God causes to shine into our hearts—it gives the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

The Gospel of Christ which has shined into our hearts is but an enlargement upon the message proclaimed to Moses. As in his case the message reflected the glory of the Lord, so now it gives “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.” As then the glory of the Lord was reflected with great brightness on the face of Moses, so now we see the shining face of the example of Jesus Christ, the living Word, and the glory of the Heavenly Father which is reflected therein.

EARTHEN VESSELS

Paul continues, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” (II Cor. 4:7) The “earthen vessels” here referred to are descriptive of our human bodies. The “treasure” they contain is the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God.” This treasure is, in reality, a new mind, the mind of Christ, the mind of the New Creature. (Rom. 12:2; I Cor. 2:16; II Cor. 5:17) To understand the expression, “earthen vessels,” we turn back again to the Old Testament.

In Exodus 24:1-8, we are given a summary of Moses receiving the “words of the LORD,” and of the inauguration of the Law Covenant. As part of this, burnt offerings and peace offerings were sacrificed on behalf of the people. Half of the blood from these offerings, which Moses referred to as the “blood of the covenant,” was first collected in basins. These were likely made of some type of earthen material, and are what Paul evidently had in mind when he spoke of the treasure we have in “earthen vessels.”

Thus we have a further explanation by Paul of the manner in which the New Covenant will become

operative, and which blends with the one he has drawn with respect to the tables of the Law. The question arises, however, as to how we could be as “earthen vessels” to receive the treasure of the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Since Jesus is involved in this question, let us turn to him for the answer.

Jesus said to his disciples, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” Those who followed the Master for the loaves and the fishes were offended by this statement. His disciples “murmured at it,” and Jesus explained to them, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”—John 6:26,53,61,63

Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that when they received and obeyed his teachings—“the words that I speak”—it was the equivalent of eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Jesus’ words constitute the Gospel, the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God” revealed to us. Part of that Gospel is our need of Jesus’ redeeming grace, and our acceptance of the merit of his sacrificed life. Our full acceptance of his “words,” therefore, demonstrated by our complete dedication to the divine will, means the receiving of life, or that which was symbolized by his blood.—Rom. 5:8,9; Tit. 3:5-7

Hence we see that the spirit of truth is not only writing the law of God in the tables of our hearts, but it also has conveyed to us, in our present “earthen vessels,” the life-giving power of the blood of Christ. As it was the blood which Moses collected in the basins that was used to sprinkle the people when

the Law Covenant was inaugurated, so the body members of Christ, as ministers “of reconciliation,” will have the privilege and honor of participating with Jesus, the “mediator of the new covenant,” for the purpose of blessing all the families of the earth.—II Cor. 5:18,19; Heb. 12:24; Gen. 12:3; 22:18

A SACRIFICIAL MINISTRY

After explaining that we have this treasure in earthen vessels, Paul continues, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.”—II Cor. 4:8-11

We note that Paul repeats the assertion that the life of Jesus is manifest in our mortal flesh, our earthen vessels. There is another aspect of this, however, which is that we are also being “delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake” and are “bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” This is Paul’s way of expressing the important truth of God’s plan stated by Jesus, that if we expect to get life from him, we must first die with him: “Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”—Matt. 16:25

Every consecrated follower of the Master is “planted together in the likeness of his death.” (Rom. 6:5) They all must die with him in order to live with him. They must suffer with him if they would reign with him. They must present their

bodies a “living sacrifice.” (II Tim. 2:11,12; Rom. 8:17;12:1) Symbolically speaking, there also must be an altar on which that sacrifice can be offered. It was undoubtedly this that the Lord foreshadowed by the altar which Moses built, on which were offered sacrifices pertaining to the inauguration of the Law Covenant.—Exod. 24:4

We are assured that in presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, the offering will be “holy and acceptable.” (Rom. 12:1) This can only be through the merit of the blood of Christ—the blood which also ensured the eventual establishment of the New Covenant. Symbolically speaking, Jesus’ blood, representing his perfect life poured out, is the basis upon which we are provided an “altar” deemed pleasing to God. Thus, we are made acceptable to be joint-sacrificers with Jesus.

The Apostle Peter affirms the present sacrificial ministry of the body of Christ, which precedes the ministry of glory associated with the inauguration of the New Covenant. He says that through the prophets the Holy Spirit testified concerning the “sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow,” and he makes it clear that the body members of Christ participate in this foretold suffering and glory. (I Pet. 1:11; 4:12,13) Through faithfulness in this ministry of suffering we prove our worthiness of appearing with Christ, the greater Moses, in glory.

Paul, writing further on the matter, says, “So then death worketh in us, but life in you.” (II Cor. 4:12) Thus far in this lesson the apostle has said only that the work of writing the epistle of Christ in the tables of our hearts is being accomplished by the Holy Spirit, in that God has shined in our hearts,

giving us the knowledge of the glory of God. Now Paul is indicating that this also involves our ministry to one another, exemplified by the sacrificial “death” which was working in him, in order to work “life” in those to whom he ministered.

The Scriptures indeed reveal the great privilege we have of laying down our lives for the brethren, and of building one another up in our most holy faith. (I John 3:16; Jude 1:20) This preparatory work is, in fact, indicated also to be a ministry of reconciliation. It is not the future ministry of reconciliation when the world in general will be reconciled to God under the terms of the New Covenant. Rather, it is the preparatory reconciliation of those who will prove worthy to participate with Jesus in that future work.

What a reasonable arrangement this is! By our submission to the molding influences of the Holy Spirit through the Truth, we are being transformed into the character likeness of our Lord, and being changed into that aspect of his glory. We are also being prepared, however, to participate in the future glory of Christ, as suggested by his titles of King, Judge, Mediator and High Priest.

How can we be found worthy to be a ruler unless we submit to God’s righteous authority now? How could we be future judges of the world unless we now learn to apply the laws of God in our own lives, and in our dealings with one another? What better way could there be of proving worthy to serve with Jesus in the future work of reconciliation as Mediator and High Priest, than by now being willing to lay down our lives in the smaller work of being sympathetic and merciful to fellow members of his body?

MARVELOUS GRACE

After calling these precious truths to our attention, Paul exhorts, "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." (II Cor. 6:1) Wondrous grace it is that has come to us through Christ. It is grace that makes us acceptable to offer sacrifice now, and, if faithful, to be glorified to serve with Christ our Head as Mediator of the New Covenant.—Eph. 2:5-8

To emphasize how much we would lose should we receive this grace of God in vain, Paul quotes from an Old Testament prophecy which outlines some of the privileges involved. "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."—II Cor. 6:2

The prophecy from which Paul quotes is Isaiah 49:8,9. The portion cited by the apostle is an assurance of the Lord's help in this time when the sacrificial ministry prior to the New Covenant is being carried out, as represented in the "better sacrifices" of the present age. (Heb. 9:23) Paul's partial quote from Isaiah, however, does more than assure us of divine help and that our sufficiency is of God, for by it we see that the entire prophecy applies to the body members of Christ.

Let us quote the full prophecy: "Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness,

Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.”

GIVEN AS A COVENANT

When Paul quoted from this prophecy he was merely continuing his theme concerning those whom he describes as “able ministers” of the New Covenant. He has shown that as ministers they are likened to the tables of stone on which Moses presented the Law Covenant to the people of Israel. In carrying out this thought to its full application, he cites God’s promise that those who are coworkers with Christ now, and are faithful in the present ministry of sacrifice, will, when the kingdom is established, be given as a covenant for the people.

More than that, when these able ministers are given as a covenant for the people, they will “establish the earth,” and will cause the people to inherit the “desolate heritages.” Moreover, they will say to the prisoners of death, “Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves.” Here is described a life-giving work of restoring the dead world to life, even raising the dead, and giving all an opportunity to inherit what were formerly desolate heritages of sin, suffering and death, but which will no longer be desolate under the righteous rule of Christ.

This coincides with Jesus’ Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. He opens that parable with the statement, “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.” (Matt. 25:31) These “angels” are Christ’s body members, those who will be co-rulers and judges with him, and able ministers of the New Covenant. Their hope of glory will have

merged into reality, for the “glory that excelleth” will have come upon them.

Then will begin the work of uplifting and blessing all people, here presented under the trial, or probation aspect of the work of the next age. The point we wish particularly to notice is that those who then prove worthy will have their lost earthly inheritance restored to them, and will receive life. (Matt. 25:34) Those who are given as a “covenant of the people” will have it in their power to give life to all who prove worthy of it. (Isa. 42:6) Christ, through the sacrifice of his perfect humanity, provided this life. The merit of his shed blood made our sacrifice acceptable so that we might be exalted to glory with him. (I Pet. 2:5) That life, received through obedience to his words, and by reflecting his character image, will then be symbolically “sprinkled ... on the people,” that they may also receive life by accepting it as a gift from God through Christ, and by obeying the laws of the kingdom.—Exod. 24:8

Surely the ministry of the Spirit will thus prove to be a glorious ministry of life. The provision of Christ’s blood will do for the people what the Law Covenant could not do, because there was no life-giving efficacy in the blood of the animal offerings with which the people were sprinkled. Let us realize the glorious part we have in this ministry, which will give life to the people under the New Covenant arrangements. May we, by God’s grace, and through faithfulness unto death, prove worthy to appear with him in glory and share that blessed future work of reconciling the world to God, which Jesus made possible by his own death as man’s Redeemer. ■

Fleshly Anger and Righteous Indignation

*“Cease from anger,
and forsake wrath:
fret not thyself in
any wise to
do evil.”*
—*Psalm 37:8*

FLESHLY ANGER HAS ITS

expression manifested daily in our own country and throughout the world. Shocking events make the headlines, and the news media regularly provides graphic coverage of violence visited upon people. In many countries there is carnage that affects vast numbers of people. Many are imprisoned or even killed because of religious or political beliefs that differ with those in power. In our own land, as well as elsewhere, we find rebelliousness and distrust by one group against another.

Even between children and parents, manifestations of fleshly anger are often apparent. Consider, for example, a small child who wanders away from her mother in a store. In two-year-old fashion, she begins to finger the bright packages of candies only to hear a penetrating shout by her parent that she

should not touch those. In such a case, though a wrong behavior was being corrected, the voice of authority perhaps caused much more notice than the child's actions would have brought. If, additionally, corporal punishment is administered in public as a result of parental anger, the child becomes mad, feels mistreated and humiliated. According to some psychologists, we are told that such treatment might well have injurious results to the youngster in the long-term.

Another illustration that might nurture anger in a child is the feeling that he or she is being treated differently than others. Consider the child who brings gifts to everyone else's birthday parties, but when she has her own her mother tells her friends not to bring presents. The explanation given by the parent that "I don't want your friends to feel obligated," does little to satisfy the sense of disappointment and resentment which the youngster would feel during what should be a happy occasion.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON ANGER

Regardless of who the person is that displays anger, it can be a destructive force which produces numerous harmful consequences to self and others. Manifestations of its existence and effects go back to early human history. Following the expulsion from the Garden of Eden because of disobedience, Adam still worshipped God and taught his sons, Cain and Abel, to offer sacrifices that would manifest their devotion.

On one such occasion the brothers were working in the field. Abel made an offering of a lamb, which pleased the Heavenly Father. Cain made an offering

of grains and produce from the field, but God did not find that offering acceptable. Cain then became angry and jealous. He subsequently quarreled with his brother and finally struck and killed him. This uncontrolled rage in Cain led him to commit the unspeakable act of murder. (Gen. 4:1-8; Heb. 11:4; I John 3:12) There are other examples in the Scriptures where unjustified anger was demonstrated.

NAAMAN'S EXAMPLE

Naaman was the captain of Benhadad's Syrian army, and he contracted the disease of leprosy. In Naaman's home there was an Israelitish girl who waited upon his wife. She had been brought out of the land of Israel as a captive, but she remembered well the Prophet Elisha. She told Naaman's wife that if her husband could see the prophet in Samaria his leprosy might be healed. The king learned what the maid had said, and he told Naaman to go to Samaria with a letter to King Jehoram of Israel, although it failed to mention Elisha. It merely said that he had sent Naaman to Jehoram to be cured of leprosy. Jehoram was concerned, however, because he knew that he could not cure leprosy and feared a trap. Elisha heard of the matter and Jehoram's distress, and he sent a message saying, "Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." Thus, Naaman went to the house of Elisha and stood at the door, but the prophet merely sent a messenger who told Naaman what he should do.—II Kings 5:1-10

The instructions were: go to the Jordan River, wash seven times, and the leprosy would be gone. At this point Naaman became angry. Elisha had not

even bothered to come out and pray to his God in Naaman's presence. If it were just a matter of washing in a river, there were a lot of better rivers in Syria. The account states: "Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper." Naaman was afflicted with pride and was insulted that Elisha did not greet him personally. He protested in a rage that all he was told was to wash in the Jordan River seven times to cure his leprosy. It was only after his servants persuaded him to heed the prophet's instruction that he was healed.—II Kings 5:11-14

BALAAM'S RAGE

During their approach to the Promised Land, the Israelites traveled through Moab. The king of this territory, Balak, thought that they came to make war against him, so he sent for a man named Balaam, who was reputed to have power from God. King Balak promised Balaam silver and gold if he would curse the Israelites. Because Balaam loved the thought of riches he was willing to do this. He rose early the next morning and saddled his donkey to go with the princes of Moab to meet the Israelites. God's displeasure came upon Balaam, however, and he sent an angel to stand before him with a drawn sword in his hand. Balaam could not see the angel, but the donkey saw him, and he turned out of his way. Balaam angrily struck the donkey to make it go back. The angel went on further and again stood in Balaam's path. When the donkey reached that place, it pressed close to a wall to get by, but that

hurt Balaam's foot, and he struck the animal again.
—Num. 22:1-27

Balaam was angry because he could not control his donkey to travel through a narrow pass. He wanted the silver and gold promised him if he would curse Israel as King Balak requested. The animal could see the angel of the Lord holding a sword to slay Balaam if he proceeded further, so it refused to move forward. After the donkey was given the power to speak words of rebuke to Balaam for the beatings it received at his hands, Balaam was allowed to see the angel with the sword drawn to kill him if he continued in his act of unrighteousness.—vss. 28-31

CURRENT MANIFESTATIONS OF ANGER

In today's society, unjustifiable anger is found in schools, the workplace, at home, and among other social relationships. This has resulted in the creation of a huge array of professional services that deal with anger management and counseling. Anger, as well as all destructive behaviors and habits, is a byproduct of sin. However, the various emotional health practitioners would have no clients if they espoused such a philosophy. In suggesting possible causes of anger, a therapist might suggest low self-esteem, rejection, physical or mental disorders, poor social relationships, false accusations of wrongdoing, and misreading the meaning of events in one's life and becoming offended.

TRANSFORMATION AMONG TRUE CHRISTIANS

Among consecrated believers, faithfulness in walking as the Master walked will result in a life that is totally opposed to sinful practices such as fleshly anger. The change that comes upon us once we devote

ourselves to the doing of the Heavenly Father's will is due to the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. It is described as being transformed, which when fully carried out, will not only result in our change from sinfulness to righteousness in thought and conduct, but ultimately, we will be changed from the human to the divine nature if we are faithful unto death.—Rom. 6:3-6; 12:1,2; Rev. 2:10

The Bible indicates it is God's will for Christians to overcome anger and other sinful traits: "Now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And be thankful."—Col. 3:8-15, *Revised Standard Version*

OVERCOMING SINFUL PROPENSITIES

Those who have devoted their lives to following the Master will find that, because of human frailties, it will be impossible to consistently perform every aspect of these requirements. Nevertheless, it is possible for us to manifest perfection of intention and be acceptable to the Father: "For it is God

which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”—Phil. 2:13

This work of God in us is accomplished in various ways. He has given us the Holy Spirit that enables us to overcome the inclinations of the old nature. He has given Scriptures for us to study and to understand what his desire is for us. His providence shapes our affairs through needed disciplines and encouragements. We have a family of brethren with whom we can share our experiences and learn from each other. God has given us the privilege of prayer to succor and sustain us. He has provided precious promises and the assurance that he will never leave us nor forsake us. When we are faint, we receive strength from our Advocate in our difficulties. Forgiveness is promised us when we repent of our trespasses and strive to be more watchful of our actions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HEART

Cain’s anger led to the murder of Abel. Could those who are spirit-begotten ever have fleshly anger or murderous thoughts in their hearts against others? Jesus gave a definition of adultery which was even beyond the physical act, and which involved having an improper desire in one’s heart towards another. (Matt. 5:28) Likewise, without the physical act of murder, it is possible that the spirit of murder could be found within believers if they are not diligent in maintaining heart purity. The Apostle John said, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer:

and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love, ... because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”—I John 3:14-16

DANGERS FROM NOT RESISTING SIN

If we harbor feelings of animosity toward anyone, we must wage an aggressive warfare against such a disposition lest it consume us. Paul admonishes us: “Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal. 5:19-21, *New Revised Standard Version*) That warning is addressed to New Creatures in Christ and demonstrates that all works of the flesh, including anger, must be eliminated, because the continuation in such an evil course would bar us from attaining the heavenly kingdom.

We are to remember, as the apostle suggests, that we have this new nature in “earthen vessels.” (II Cor. 4:7) The earthen vessel has practically all of its blemishes and fallen tendencies still as powerful as ever, except as the new mind has these under its mastery and control. However, if that control should be released even for a moment, the result would be the reviving of the old nature. We may be sure that our Adversary is alert and fully realizes the situation. He will do all in his power to put us off guard, even to the extent of endeavoring to make

“white appear black” and “black appear white” before our judgment. The Lord very graciously shields us from temptations more than we are able to bear. (I Cor. 10:13) Nevertheless, it is possible for us at times to be overcome, not only in the infancy of our new nature, but also in its further development. In fact, our testing may be permitted to grow more severe as we near the close of our earthly sojourn. We must not object to this, as it is exactly what we should expect.

We offer the following quote: “The Apostle, following this line of thought, declares, ‘I keep my body under,’ and again he says, ‘Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth’—your earthly ambitions, will, etc., everything in yourself that would tend toward envy, hatred, anger and strife—put these to death. Allow the new nature to have full sway and control in every thought, in every word, in every deed. And watch to this end; watch your thoughts, watch your words, watch your conduct. Many can watch their conduct who find it difficult to scrutinize and properly weigh their thoughts and their words. Truly the Apostle intimates that out of the heart proceeds envy, bitterness, evil speaking, backbiting and strife; unless they are in the heart the mouth cannot utter them, for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh.” —Reprints, p. 4217

RESPONDING TO PERSONAL ATTACKS

The matter of not reacting in anger provides a severe test to believers when they are unjustifiably treated in an evil manner. Jesus said, “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you,

and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”—Matt. 5:11,12

All of us occasionally receive ill-treatment at the hands of others. When we do what is right and are slandered because of it, do we feel blessed and joyful, or angry? If ever there was an individual on earth who not even once was deserving of an unkind word or action, it was Jesus Christ. Yet, he was opposed and slandered, but he never responded in a manner demonstrating personal anger against those who hated him without a cause. He suffered for righteousness' sake and left an example for all believers to follow. The Apostle Peter wrote in this regard: “This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, yet take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.”—I Pet. 2:19-23

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE

Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath and the Pharisees condemned him for that. The Lord responded, “What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on

it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.”—Matt. 12:11,12

This same event is described by Mark in these words: “He saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.” (Mark 3:4,5) The look of anger on the Master’s face was an expression of righteous indignation, because the scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites, and whose hardened hearts Jesus could read. Indeed, the spirit of Israel’s law did not prevent the doing of good deeds on the Sabbath.

GOD’S CHARACTER

“God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” (Ps. 7:11) Many fail to understand that the meaning of “angry” in this text refers to God’s righteous indignation against sin. They instead visualize him as a vengeful being intent upon destroying much of the human family whose evil ways they feel warrant such punishment. Throughout the Bible, however, there are many references to God’s perfectly balanced qualities of love, holiness, unchangeableness, and justice.—John 3:16; Lev. 20:26; James 1:17; Ps. 89:14

Our Heavenly Father perfectly balances his attributes and is always in control. We could never imagine him saying after having formulated his plan, “Satan makes me so angry with all of the

wickedness that he is perpetrating, I am going to destroy him right now.” In God’s own due time, and according to his perfect judgment, he will do exactly that. He manifests righteous indignation towards sin through his unerring justice, such as when he condemned Adam because of disobedience. Nevertheless, love found a way to provide an opportunity for man’s recovery through the sending of Jesus as a “ransom for all.” (I Tim. 2:5,6) Loving righteousness and hating iniquity is an integral part of our grand Creator’s character, and these exist in perfect harmony. The permission of evil was provided to instruct the human family as to the real consequences of sin and disobedience.

During Christ’s kingdom the Adversary is to be “bound” for a thousand years, after which he will be released to test mankind for a “little season” to determine whether they have internalized the principles of righteousness, or if they will follow Satan and reap destruction with him. (Rev. 20:1-3) When all creation has been fully restored and God’s character is entirely vindicated, his righteous indignation will not need to be further manifested. All will then come to him in loving obedience, and iniquity will be a thing of the past. How blessed we are in having such a wise and merciful God.

SCRIPTURAL EXHORTATIONS FOR BELIEVERS

As New Creatures in Christ, we must rid ourselves of the works of the flesh if we are to be more than overcomers and associates of the Master in his kingdom. Our serious endeavors to identify our weaknesses and rectify them should be of paramount importance in our lives. Paul counsels us: “Grieve

not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.”—Eph. 4:30,31

Here are some of the actions we can take to control anger in our lives, with scriptural references to help guide us in this effort.

Overlook minor offenses. “The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.”—Prov. 19:11

Accept personal responsibility for one’s own errors. “Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.”—Matt. 7:5

Intensify our prayer life. “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”—I Tim. 2:8

Be just and merciful. “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”—Mic. 6:8

Be ready to exercise forgiveness. “Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”—Eph. 4:32

Use great care in our conversations with others. “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”—James 1:19,20

Meditate upon the wholesome and the good. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are

lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”—Phil. 4:8

Be receptive to godly counsel in addressing matters that have the propensity for resulting in strife. “Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.”—Prov. 11:14

May God’s Holy Spirit enable us to overcome unrighteous anger in our lives. ■

*Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in him always, and feed on his Word.
Make friends of God’s children;
help those who are weak;
Forgetting in nothing his blessing to seek.
—Hymns of Dawn*

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

AUGUST 2—“O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.”—Psalm 95:6 (’99-184 Hymn 360)

AUGUST 9—“If the light that is in thee be[come] darkness, how great is that darkness!”—Matthew 6:23 (Z. ’04-297 Hymn 145)

AUGUST 16—“In everything give thanks.”—I Thessalonians 5:18 (Z. ’03-25 Hymn 37)

AUGUST 23—“And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”—I Corinthians 13:13 (Z. ’03-58 Hymn 166)

AUGUST 30—“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”—Matthew 5:16 (Z. ’03-206 Hymn 236)

In Season and Out of Season

*“Preach the word;
be instant in
season, out of
season.”*

—II Timothy 4:2

THE APOSTLE PAUL WROTE the words of our opening text to Timothy as a reminder to him, and to all footstep followers of the Master, that it

is God’s will for them that they lay down their lives in the service of the Truth, by witnessing to the world, and building one another up in our most holy faith. This phase of the divine requirements for the Christian should not be considered incidental. It is something which is directed in the Word of God, and whatever comes to us as an instruction from God should not be deemed as of secondary importance.

This commission from the Scriptures is binding upon us at all times—“in season, out of season.” When we see indications that it is a seasonable time for those to whom we are given the opportunity to testify the Gospel of the kingdom, we should let our light shine. Moreover, we should be willing and ready to preach the Word whether or not the time, place and circumstances may be convenient to us.

We would make a great mistake if we assumed that God's commands and exhortations to faithfulness in bearing witness to the Truth constitute the whole of the divine will for us. God does, indeed, want us to lay down our lives in his service, but he expects us to make that sacrifice in harmony with the precepts and principles which he has given us in his Word. If we fail to heed these we will be like those of whom the Master speaks when he says that some would come to him claiming that they had done many wonderful works in his name, but that he would recognize neither them nor their work. Jesus makes it plain that because these did not serve in harmony with the divine will they were in reality workers of iniquity.—Matt. 7:22,23

PROPERLY EQUIPPED

In order to be an acceptable ambassador of the Lord there are certain qualifications which the Christian must meet. He must, for example, repent of his sins and accept Jesus as his Redeemer and Savior. Then he must present himself in full consecration to God to do his will. This means that he has renounced his own will, and in thus doing has become a member of the body of Christ, accepting Jesus as his Head.—Acts 2:38; Rom. 12:1; Eph. 5:23

Taking these steps, and being reconciled to God through Christ, the follower of the Master must then make every effort to bring his daily thoughts, words and deeds into harmony with the divine Word. This standard of righteousness is so high that it includes even the love of our enemies and a desire and effort to do them good.—II Cor. 10:4,5; Matt. 5:44

In II Corinthians chapter 6, the Apostle Paul outlines many of the important points of Christian practice essential to our being acceptable ambassadors of the Lord. He says that in “all things” we should be “approving ourselves as the ministers of God.” (vs. 4) The phrase “approving ourselves,” in the original Greek, means to constitute or establish ourselves as his servants.

Then Paul proceeds to outline some of these “all things.” Among them are patience, purity, knowledge, longsuffering, kindness, being filled with the Holy Spirit, having on the armor of righteousness, and humility which will enable us to serve faithfully even though unknown, and which will keep us balanced although well known.—vss. 4-9

Paul also speaks of the importance of “love unfeigned,” which is the sum of all the Christian graces. (vs. 6) He further warns us against being unequally yoked together with unbelievers. He stresses the importance of being kept free from the worship of false gods and fleshly idols. (vss. 14-18) Paul shows that all of these points are important in order that our “ministry be not blamed.” (vs. 3) These are the qualifications for our service, but by themselves they do not constitute our service.

PREACH THE WORD

Among the requirements for service mentioned by Paul in the foregoing passage is the possession of knowledge. This means a knowledge of the Truth, which gives us a knowledge of God. If our ministry of the Truth is to be pleasing it must be in harmony with God’s plan. Knowledge of the Scriptures in connection with our ministry is fundamentally important,

because our message must be a true representation of the Heavenly Father's eternal purposes. If such is not the case, while we might be laying down our lives in a ministry, it would not be one of the divine Word but would be proclaiming the theories and traditions of men.

In Philippians 2:16, the Apostle Paul speaks of "holding forth the word of life." This suggests that if we are truly preaching God's Word we are "holding forth" a hope of life to those who hear. To present a message of this kind properly implies the necessity of explaining the great fundamentals of the divine plan. These include such scriptural doctrines as creation, the fall of man into sin and death, the redemptive work that is accomplished through the death and resurrection of Jesus, the hope of the heavenly calling of the present age, and the hope of restitution for the world in the next age. All of these features of God's plan are involved in the "word of life" set forth in the Gospel.

Dispensational aspects of the Gospel also have a part in an acceptable ministry. It is our privilege now not only to proclaim a hope of future life in "the times of restitution of all things," but also to assure our hearers that this hope is soon to be realized. (Acts 3:20,21) Today mankind is recognizing more and more that human wisdom is utterly failing to find a solution for the world's problems. Hence many want to know whether there is a God who is interested in their affairs, and who proposes to help the human race out of its dilemma.

It is at this time, therefore, that we have the privilege of obeying the commission of Isaiah 61:1,2, which states: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon

me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.”

IN SEASON NOW

Proclaiming the various truths associated with Isaiah’s prophetic commission is very much “in season” at the present time. While many are asking why the world is in its current distress and trouble, the vast majority are disinclined to consider viewpoints which emanate from the Word of God. Thus, it is not an easy time to proclaim the Gospel, but this does not mean at all that we should not make the effort. The divine will in connection with bearing witness to the Truth should never be determined upon the basis of how easy or how difficult it may be. If we let our light shine only when it is convenient or easy to do so, the probability is that we will not let it shine at all. Paul says that we should hold forth the Word of life “in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,” a world in which we are to “shine as lights.”—Phil. 2:15

Human reasoning today might be inclined to conclude that people have become so perverse and wicked that there is no use to letting our light shine. However, this is not the way Paul reasoned. It is the general evil conditions in the world today that make our witness work important. In this respect, conditions in the world are much the same now as they were in Noah’s day, yet he continued to be a “preacher of

righteousness.” (II Pet. 2:5) When sin no longer exists in the world, our witness efforts will be unnecessary. Then no one will need to say to his neighbor, “Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD.”—Jer. 31:34

WORLD’S CONVERSION FUTURE

It is true that we should not expect to convert the world at this time. That is to be accomplished through the future work of the kingdom. However, our knowledge that the results of the present witness work will be meager should not deter us from doing all we can to let our light shine. Experience has shown that “one here, and one there” have been blessed by the rays of light which have shone out as a result of these efforts. We believe that this will continue to be so until the end of the church’s experiences on this side of the veil.

The Lord may not always reveal to us the encouraging results of our efforts, and we may not know the extent to which the Truth we have proclaimed has reached into the hearts and lives of others. This, however, should not be of particular concern to us. Our sacrifices should not be made with the object of seeing great results, nor of receiving present rewards. They should be made, rather, upon the basis of faith, zeal for the Gospel message, and because we know it is the Lord’s will that we participate in his work.

Our fallen flesh shrinks from sacrifice, and may often seek excuses for not letting our light shine. Just as Satan quoted the Scriptures in an effort to tempt Jesus to leave the pathway of sacrifice, so the Bible may at times be quoted to us now for the same purpose. One text sometimes misused in this regard

is Jesus' admonition not to cast our "pearls before swine." (Matt. 7:6) The thought might be expressed that because the world is so wicked and "swine-like," we should not preach the Truth, as it will not be appreciated, and may even lead to persecution.

However, Jesus never refrained from preaching the Truth in order to avoid persecution. The darkness hates the light and will oppose the light-bearers. (John 3:19,20) To cast our pearls before swine is evidently quite a different matter from letting our light shine in a darkened world. We should not attempt to force the Truth upon those who do not care to hear it. Neither should we spend time and effort trying to interest individuals who are in violent opposition to the Truth. We are simply to "sow beside all waters." (Isa. 32:20) When we note a positive response on the part of one here and there, we are to make further sacrifices in order to help such individuals know the Gospel message more fully.

HOW WE MAY SERVE

It is a matter of concern to many of the consecrated as to just how they can serve the interests of the Truth. Ways and means of letting our light shine are much more numerous now than they were in the days of the Early Church. Back in those apostolic times most of the brethren were limited to whatever personal contacts they could make. This, in fact, is still a very important means of letting our light shine—perhaps more so than almost any other means at our disposal. It is limited, however, in the number of people it reaches.

Today, this personal method of proclaiming the Gospel can be greatly augmented by the use of many

other avenues available. There are many times in our comings and goings that a tract or booklet can be left for others to read. The printed page can be used effectively to supplement the spoken word. Many today are rejoicing in the Truth because some consecrated child of God left a piece of literature where it was found and read by them.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

There are also the more general and cooperative efforts to make known the glad tidings. Some of these are radio and television programs, including recorded announcements which advertise literature; advertising on the Internet; literature booths at fairs; and presentation of the message on many different types of electronic media. These are efforts in which all may have a share in one way or another. What blessings result to each one who faithfully does his part in these cooperative efforts! It is a human weakness to let others shoulder responsibilities which we could help to assume ourselves. However, this should not be so among the consecrated people of God.

One of the scriptural illustrations of light-bearing is Gideon's little company of three hundred Israelites who broke their vessels to let the light shine out. (Judg. 7:1-25) According to ancient custom, only the captains of an army carried lights at night. When the Midianites saw three hundred lights flickering on the hillside, they assumed that Israel's army was tremendously large, and they became terror-stricken at the thought of engaging them in conflict. This was part of the Lord's strategy by which the Midianites were defeated.

There is a good lesson here for us. It is that each one of the consecrated should feel an individual responsibility for the Lord's work. This does not mean, however, that we should go a different way and not cooperate with others. The Israelites were not free to do this. They were under the command of Gideon, and acted in accordance with his instructions. Today, we are under the direct command of the Lord. We have no liberty of action outside of his instructions, but we do have an individual responsibility of faithfulness to those commands. Those who did not wish to go with Gideon were at first given the liberty to turn back. That is the freedom we had as we counted the cost concerning the way of sacrifice. Now, however, as Paul wrote, "We are not of them who draw back."—Heb. 10:38,39

We are to work individually in the sense of realizing our own responsibilities, and of being zealously on the alert to use faithfully every opportunity we can find to sacrifice our all in the service of the Lord. However, we are all brethren in Christ, and members of his body. Hence, our activities should be governed by that which is in the best interest of the body as a whole. At times, this may mean the subordination of our personal preferences to the expressed wishes of the ecclesia, or of those with which we are engaged in a joint effort. Blessed are we if we can learn thus to cooperate with God's people, even though at times it may mean the humbling of ourselves.

IN EVERY WAY

Hence, though it may be that the time and manner of service offered may be "out of season" for us, if it is "in season" for the ecclesia, we should gladly and

humbly cooperate whenever and wherever we may have the opportunity. If it be the privilege of distributing literature, we will use it. If it be follow-up work, we will gladly do that also. If it be the opportunity to spread the Gospel through electronic media, we will be ready to use those talents if they be ours. If it be to serve as an elder or a deacon, we will accept that service in humility before God.

If it should be a financial service that we can provide, then we should do what we can, no matter what the amount may be. In all these, and in many other ways, we will enter enthusiastically into the privileges set before us. We will do so knowing that we are cooperating with the divine commission to preach the Word, and thus to be lights in this dark world.

THE ISOLATED ALSO

It may be that we are isolated, hence not members of an ecclesia. In this case, perhaps there is all the greater need to sense our individual responsibilities before God. Where a few can meet and work together, they help to keep each other encouraged. Several coals of fire, when together, will continue to burn, but if separated they will die out the more quickly. Thus, as individual "coals," if we are isolated from others of like precious faith, we will need much prayer and a strong faith to keep our zeal fervent. There is no better help along this line than to keep actively interested in bearing witness to the Truth.

Though we may spend a lifetime trying to interest our friends and neighbors in the Truth and yet fail, we should not be discouraged. As we keep trying, the glorious message of the kingdom is kept alive in our

own hearts. This, after all, is the truly important thing. The commission to proclaim the Gospel is given to all the consecrated, and whatever is accomplished by our preaching is under the direction of the Lord. He “giveth the increase.”—I Cor. 3:7

The Scriptures reveal that the work of preaching the kingdom message during the entire Gospel Age will result in the bride’s making herself ready to be united in marriage with the Lamb. (Rev. 19:7) Our sacrifices along this line are, therefore, primarily on behalf of the brethren, and not for the converting of the world at the present time. It was through the self-sacrificing efforts of others that we ourselves were reached and our hearts made glad. Now it is our privilege to lay down our lives for the brethren, some of whom are already with us, while there are others, perhaps just one here and one there, yet to be reached. Let us then be faithful “in season” and “out of season,” even unto death.—Rev. 2:10 ■

OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to their family and friends in the loss of these dear ones.

Brother George Stanley Edward, Siliguri, India—
June 20. Age, 80

Sister Betty Lalitha, Bangalore, India—June 21.
Age, 58

Brother Mitchell Blicharz, Kalispell, MT—June 29.
Age, 94

Sister Ann Restifo, Phoenix, AZ—July 6. Age, 90

The Glory of the Terrestrial

ONE OF THE MARVELS of the creative works of God is their almost endless variety. Many believe that this variety simply indicates development and progression, which fluctuates as one species evolves into another. This continues, they say, haphazardly and endlessly. The Bible disagrees. The Bible teaches that the great variety in creation is by the Creator's design and that species are fixed.

The highest order, or species, in God's earthly creation is the human. This is referred to by the Apostle Paul as the "terrestrial," which simply means "earthly." (I Cor. 15:40) Man was created in the image of God, and in his perfection he reflected the glory of the Creator's character.

Man was not a blending of earthly and spiritual natures. In all the myriad creations of God there are no hybrids, except as man has produced them. While a very limited number of God's human creatures, upon conditions of faithfulness in following in the footsteps of Jesus, will be exalted to a higher nature in the resurrection, this does not mean that humans are, by nature, partly spiritual.

The perfect man was given dominion over all the lower forms of the earthly creations. In this respect he was endowed with the official glory of the Creator, who exercises dominion over the entire universe.

Because of disobedience to divine law, man not

only lost life but he also lost his dominion over the earth. As a result, we do not see the glory of God reflected in the human race as it was possessed by the first man, Adam. Today we see man fallen, imperfect and dying, and unable to extricate himself from the thrall of sickness and death into which he was plunged because of his sin.

God, however, has continued to love his human creatures and has made provision to deliver them from sin and death. God's provision is redemption through Jesus. Thus, while today we see man dying, and without his dominion, by faith we see that Jesus has already given his life that man's life and terrestrial glory may, during the thousand years of the Messianic kingdom, be restored to him.

It is not the divine purpose to exalt the people of the earth to a higher plane of life but, through a resurrection from death, to restore them to life on the earth. This is expressed by the Apostle Peter in the word "restitution," which means not exaltation but "restoration."—Acts 3:20,21

What a glorious provision this is for a sin-cursed and dying race! Today the world is filled with misery and woe, degradation and sorrow, all of which will pass away as the work of restitution progresses. Eventually, not a stain of sin will mar the peace and harmony of humanity. There will not be an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of the former reign of sin and death. Instead of dying and going into the tomb, the people will be returning from death, the power of God being utilized to restore them to life. This is God's loving provision for man. This is the destiny for humanity that has been made possible through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This will be the restored glory of the terrestrial.—Rev. 21:3-5 ■

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

G. Balko

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

R. Charlton

High Leigh, England
August 15-19

D. Christiansen

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

A. Fernets

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

J. Freer

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

B. Jakubowski

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

R. Niemczyk

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

A. Oystryk

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

J. Parkinson

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

D. Rice

High Leigh, England
August 15-19

B. Siwak

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

B. Sweeney

Red Deer, AB August 10-12

T. Thomassen

High Leigh, England
August 15-19

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?—Luke 2:49

Should we not all have the Master's spirit, expressed by his words? The Lord's true saints have no business of their own, for they gave their all to the Lord at consecration. Their business they manage as trustees for the Lord—not to be turned over at their death, in prosperous condition, to their children or their friends, possibly to their injury. It is to be used by the trustee as wisely as he knows how before death; for then his trusteeship ends, and he must render his account.

—Daily Heavenly Manna, August 22

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 8-12—Szczyrk, Poland. ul. Wrzosowa 28 A, 43-370 Szczyrk. Website: www.biblestudentsconventions.com

RED DEER ALBERTA CONVENTION, August 10-12—Pioneer Lodge, 4324 47th Avenue, Red Deer, AB, Canada. Contact J. Neumeier. Phone: (403) 746-5052 or Email: jbneumeier@live.com

OKPU ALA NGWA CONVENTION, August 11—Class Meeting Hall, Okpuala Ngwa, Abia State, Nigeria. Contact C. Godwin. Email: nyerugo@yahoo.com

OHOBA CONVENTION, August 25—Ohoba place of fellowship, Adapalm Road, Alaka Ohaji, Imo State, Nigeria. Contact M. Uzor. Phone: +2348097161428 or Email: mauriceuzor@yahoo.com

JACKSON CONVENTION, September 1,2—FaHoLo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact M. Davis. Phone: (517) 414-4509 or Email: harb37@gmail.com

NEW YORK CONVENTION, September 1,2—Double-Tree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ. Contact G. Passios. Phone: (201) 939-3196 or Email: gpassios11@verizon.net

SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 1-3—*New Location*—Seattle Scottish Rite Center, 1207 N 152nd Street, Shoreline, WA 98133. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (206) 518-2678 or Email: laurie@flinn.us

OGUN STATE CONVENTION, September 8—Ogun State, Nigeria. Contact J. Isife. Phone: +2348035220141 or Email: johnisife@yahoo.com

TENNESSEE VALLEY CONVENTION, September 8,9—Comfort Inn, 4725 University Drive, Huntsville, AL 35806 Contact T. Allen. Phone: (360) 910-4451 or Email: timallen6768@gmail.com

QUEENSLAND CONVENTION, October 5-7—Alexandra Park Conference Centre, 13 Mari Street, Alexandra Headland, QLD 4572, Australia. Contact D. Greenhalgh. Phone: 617-5483-1946 or Email: darryn-greenhalgh@hotmail.com

LAGOS CONVENTION, October 6—Sure Foundation Schools, #16 Akintojoye Street, Orioke Bus stop, Ejigbo, Lagos State, Nigeria. Contact C. Oledibe. Phone: +2347033693841 or Email: oledibe@yahoo.com

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 6,7—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact L. Mlinek. Email: lmlinek@verizon.net

COLORADO CONVENTION, October 6-8—Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 17140 West Colfax Avenue, Golden, CO 80401. Phone: (303) 278-2388. Contact D. Moss. Email: deb.moss@comcast.net

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 13,14—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact T. Malinowski. Email: malinowski.tim@gmail.com

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 27,28—South Seminole Masonic Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707. Contact J. Kuenzli. Email: jkuenzli@cfl.rr.com

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, November 3,4—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Farchione. Phone: (414) 324-9667 or Email: debfarchione@aol.com

NEW HAVEN CONVENTION, November 4—Westwoods Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven, CT. Contact A. Suraci. Phone: (203) 248-3793 or Email: annasuraci@comcast.net