Mark - Commentaries by Unknown Author

The Remembrancer: 1894, Mark 9:49-50

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" For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall he salted with salt. Salt is good; but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."

The Lord here lets us know that all should be tested by the perfect holiness of God, and that in judgment by one means or another. Every one should be salted with fire-the good and the bad.

Where there was life, the fire would only consume the flesh; for when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. If the judgment reaches the wicked (and assuredly it shall reach them), it is condemnation-a fire that is not quenched. But, for the good, there was also something else: they should be salted with salt. Those who where consecrated to God, whose life was an offering to Him, should not lack the power of holy grace, which binds' the soul to God and inwardly preserves it from evil. Salt is not the gentleness that pleases (which grace produces without doubt), but that energy of God within us which connects everything in us with God,. and dedicates the heart to Him, binding it to Him in the sense of obligation and of desire, rejecting all in oneself that is contrary to Him (obligation that flows from, race, but which acts all the more powerfully on that account). Thus, practically, it was distinctive grace, the energy of holiness, which separates from all evil; but by setting apart for God. Salt was good: here the effect produced in the soul, the condition of the soul, is so called, as well as the grace that produces this condition. Thus they who offered themselves to God were set apart for Him; they were the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor, wherewith can it be salted? It is used for seasoning other things; but if the salt needs it for itself, there is nothing left that can salt it. So would it be with Christians; if they who were of Christ did not render this testimony, where, should anything be found, apart from Christians, to render it to them and produce it in them? Now this sense of obligation to God which separates from evil, this judgment of all evil in the heart, must be in oneself. It is not a question of judging others, but of placing oneself before God, thus becoming the salt, having it in oneself. With regard to others, one must seek peace; and real separation from all evil is that which enables us to walk in peace together.

In a word, Christians were to keep themselves separate from evil, and near to God in. themselves; and to walk with God in peace among one another.

No instruction could be more plain, more important, more valuable. It judges, it directs, the

whole Christian life in a few words.

Bible Treasury: Volume 18, Mark 9:50, Thoughts on

It is well known that the truest harmonies grow out of the strongest contrasts. The precepts of scripture are no exception to this rule. The connection is not obvious between a peaceable spirit and the discriminating zeal for God, which was doubtless typified by the salt of the sanctuary. But nonetheless is there a divine and necessary connection between the two. In short, there is no one-sidedness in scripture. There is a good deal in us. And we are too apt to cross the border-land of spirituality on the one side or the other, and consequently either to be particularly hard on those whose habits of thought, disposition, or training, lead them in a direction aside from our own; or else to think that to differ is a light matter. We are all aggression, or all yieldingness. We are either fain to call down fire from heaven on those who differ from us, or we call them soft names and hint, not obscurely, that after all we should not be so tenacious of doctrine; that Christianity shows itself in the charity that beareth and hopeth all things more than in the energy of the girded loins and burning lamp. In fact, they are just as essential the one as the other, and the blessed Lord in this concise verse links them in a divine harmony. Of course there are times for yielding, as also for bold defense of the truth. Subjection to God can alone teach us when and how. But though zeal be aggressive, it will be dominated by peaceableness; and if the occasion calls for peace pure and simple, it will not be invertebrate; it will be, so to speak, the gentle pressure of the strong hand. In proportion as this precept of the Lord is, by His grace, made good in our own souls, in that measure shall we be like Him Who, as one has said, “when meekness became Him, was meek; when indignation, who could withstand His overwhelming and withering rebuke?” So much for what seems to be the direct teaching of this verse; but does it not also admonish us that we are often needlessly wordy, and consequently pointless, seeing that so much truth is wrapt up in words so few and so simple? Such brevity is of course divine, but may we not follow the Lord in this also? R B Jun

Christian Truth: Volume 35, Mark 9:49-50

How often have the words of the psalmist king charmed us: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Psalm 37:25. How often, also, have the deliverances recorded in Scripture found a present-day illustration in our own lives or in the lives of others.

The Bible teems with deliverances and is full of hope. God does not always deliver out of trials, but He always carries His people through them, and gives them hope. But God often delivers; indeed, in some cases (we say it reverently), He must, because of His own character.

It is when circumstances close around us and we have no possible way of escape unless God makes it, that deliverance is sure to come. What escape was possible to the Israelites when the Egyptians pursued them? None, absolutely none, humanly speaking. How often have we sung:

Only God could have made a way of escape for the three Hebrew children. Who would have thought that the fire would burn their bands, slay their enemies, and give them the company of the Son of God in such a splendid fashion? (Dan. 3).

Again, only God could have made a way of escape for Daniel in the den of lions. Only God could have shut their mouths and used them as a bodyguard for His servant instead of devouring him. They were hungry enough, as Daniel's enemies soon found out when they themselves were thrown into the den.

Do we need to multiply instances? The Bible teems with them. The Apostle Paul's life was made up of deliverances. He wrote of God those grateful and triumphant words: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver...." 2 Cor. 1:10.

Past, present and future! What a God! How we can trust Him!

Two instances come to my mind as happening under my own observation.

An old Christian lady was sitting in her armchair with her aged husband, an invalid, near her on the sofa. The last piece of food had been taken from the shelf and eaten, and the last shovel-full of coal was burning out on the hearth. Yet her spirit was brave, and her trust, deepened by many an experience, strong as ever. Her husband grew petulant and wanted to know what was to be done. "God will provide," she calmly replied, and his impatient rejoinder was cut short by a knock at the door. A Christian lady handed them an envelope with the message that her mother could not rest until it was delivered. The envelope contained several dollars. The aged husband burst into tears of joy when he saw how God had answered his wife's faith.

A Christian young man was in need of work. He looked most industriously for it, and wore out two or three pairs of shoes in his search. Meanwhile he was living on a small sum of money received from the sale of an aunt's furniture. Smaller and smaller it dwindled, till at last he had spent his last dollar and hope of work seemed as far off as ever. A Christian, who had taken a deep interest in his case, gave him some money (which he could not well spare), but before it was spent, work was found most unexpectedly; and from that day to this, an interval of several years, he has enjoyed good health and steady work.

I have often noticed when the circumstances are hopeless as far as men are concerned, God comes in. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. 10:13.

Things New and Old: Volume 16, Two Solemn Facts

“For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.” Mark 9:49.

In this brief passage of holy scripture, we have two distinct classes of people indicated, and two solemn facts enunciated. In the first place, we are told that “everyone shall be salted with fire.” And, secondly, we are told that “every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.” Both these statements, taken together, open a very wide field of divine truth to our view. May the Eternal Spirit enable us to enter and make our own of it! May we feel its deep solemnity—its soul-subduing power!

1. In the first clause of the passage, we are distinctly taught that judgment is appointed unto man. “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” (Heb. 9:27.) And again, “For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

This is the solemn appointment for men— “death and judgment.” We may reason as we will; we may seek to put it away from us; we may argue against it; we may say we do not believe in such things. But that, in no wise, affects the weighty fact. Of what use would it be for a poor guilty criminal, on whom sentence had just been passed, to say that he did not agree with the testimony of the witnesses, the verdict of the jury, or the sentence of the judge How could this alter the fact of his condition? He may say, he does not believe in such things as witnesses, juries, or judges at all; but he is a guilty and condemned criminal all the same; and, in a few days, he will be executed. His thoughts and his reasonings can, in no wise, touch the facts of his case. Opinions are one thing, and facts are another.

In like manner, men may call in question the truth of our Lord’s solemn statement, that “ everyone shall be salted with fire.” They may affect not to believe in judgment to come, or in eternal fire. They may treat such things as old wives’ fables, wholly unworthy of the belief of rational, intelligent, cultivated men, and only suited for silly women and children.

But the question is, Whose word shall stand—Christ’s or theirs? If Christ declares that everyone shall be salted with fire, it is our wisdom, our safety, to say nothing of our bounden duty, to believe what He says—to bow down under the weight and authority of His word, to give to the winds all our own stupid reasonings, foolish notions, and proud imaginations. It is of no possible use for us to attempt to define what is or what is not suitable for God to say or do. If man is competent to judge God, then he really denies God’s existence altogether, and puts himself into God’s place; for, clearly, if there is a God, He must be the supreme and infallible judge of all, and man must submit. This is man’s true wisdom. He must bow, sooner or later. How much better to bow in this day of grace, then to be made to bow in the day of judgment.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ declares, three times over, in Mark 9, that hell fire is eternal. There is no gainsaying this. He says, “If thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” This solemn statement He reiterates three times over; and hence, though all the infidels, skeptics, rationalists, that ever were, are now, or ever shall be in this world, were to presume to say that punishment is not eternal, we should place our blessed Lord’s statement in front of all their arguments, reasonings, deductions, conclusions, and imaginations, and utterly and absolutely reject them all. This we consider to be our true wisdom, our moral security, our bounden duty.

It is, in our judgment, mere waste of time, to say the very least of it, to attempt to reason with men who presume to set themselves in opposition to God—to judge His word, and to pronounce upon what is, and what is not worthy of Him to do or to say. A man who dares to sit in judgment upon his Creator is not likely to be moved by the arguments of a fellow-creature. And most assuredly all those who take upon them to say that it is unworthy of God to permit any of His creatures to suffer everlasting punishment, do, really, and to all moral intents and purposes, sit in judgment upon their Creator; and all such shall learn their egregious folly, sooner or later. Every true Christian knows and feels that " the Judge of all the earth shall do right;" but infidels presume to sit in judgment on the Judge. They are clearly wrong. Scripture is against them: and scripture cannot be broken. "Every one shall be salted with fire," and that fire never shall be quenched. The stamp of eternity is upon every wave of the lake of fire, and upon every fang of that worm which shall be the sure portion of all who die in their sins. " There is a great gulf fixed." Hell is a fixture. It can never be removed.

The wrath of God abideth."

Unconverted reader, think of these things. Think of them now. Think of them not in the darkness of infidel reasonings, but in the light of God's word. Flee, we beseech thee, from the wrath to come. Flee, at once. God has provided a way of escape for sinners. He, in His infinite love, has devised a means by which men may be delivered from this terrible salting with fire. He has given the Only-begotten Son of His bosom, to die the Just for the unjust. Jesus, the spotless holy Lamb of God, exposed Himself to the fire of divine judgment, in order that all who will simply trust Him and put their case into His hands, may not be condemned, bat freely forgiven, and have eternal life. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt never be salted with fire. "The torment and the fire thine eyes shall never see."

Why? Because the precious Savior met the judgment of God in the sinner's stead. When there was no other possible way of escape, He came, in perfect love, and exposed His own bosom to the stroke of infinite justice; and having borne the judgment, paid the penalty, died the death, God raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavens, crowned with glory and honor; and now all who believe in His precious, peerless name are as freed from guilt and condemnation as He is Himself. All who put their trust in Jesus are brought into the very same place of acceptance with God that He Himself occupies. Nothing less than this could satisfy the loving heart of God—nothing less than this is worthy of the perfect sacrifice of Christ—nothing less than this could fully glorify the eternal Trinity.

Reader, is it not very much better, safer, and wiser to accept God's blessed way of escaping the judgment than to adopt the infidel plan of denying it? "Every one shall be salted with fire." This cannot be set aside. But "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many," and all who believe in Him are taken, clean and forever, off the ground of judgment. He endured the fiery salting in our stead, so that it can never apply to us who believe in Him. The heavy clouds of death and judgment burst upon the head of the sinner's Substitute, in order that the believing sinner might pass off the platform of judgment into a region where there is neither enemy nor evil occurrent.

2. And, now, we are in a position to enter into the, meaning of the second clause of our weighty text which declares that "every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." This applies to all those who, through grace, are delivered from the wrath to come—from the salting with fire—from the fear of judgment. It is to such that the apostle addresses these most touching and powerful words at the opening of Rom. 12, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Here the "salt" will be needed. "Every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking with thy meat-offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." (Lev. 2:13.) "Let your conversation be always with grace seasoned with salt."

Thus we see what a very important ingredient salt is, in the daily life of a Christian. It is absolutely indispensable, if we would present ourselves as a living sacrifice to God. "With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." "Every oblation of thy meat-offering thou shalt season with salt," If we, by the mercy of God, and the atoning death of Christ, have been taken, once and forever, off the ground of divine judgment, what remains? To what end is it? Surely that we may be a living sacrifice to God, that we may present the continual oblation of Christ, in all His preciousness, His fragrance, and His excellency, to the heart of God.

Yes, this is to be our grand business, morning, noon, eventide, and midnight; and for this there must be the "salt." "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." He does not say " everyone shall be salted with salt." Alas! alas! it is not so. It is only those who know something of the mercies of God—something of the constrainings of the love of Christ, that can be a sacrifice, and all such must use salt. "Salt is good." It is pungent and preservative. "But if the salt have lost its saltiness, wherewith shall ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."

Mark the order and moral connection! "Salt and peace." The claims of holiness must be attended to ere there can be peace. It is not peace first and then salt. No; this must not be. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." Such is the divine order which must never be reversed. All our sacrifices, whether as holy priests or as royal priests—our sacrifices of praise to God or of doing good to men, must be accompanied with salt. There must be purity, holiness, and self-judgment, for "every sacrifice shall be salted with salt."

Gospel Gleanings: Volume 27 (1927), Person of the Christ, The

In the opening of John's Gospel we see the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in past ages. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The beginning" is put there because our finite minds must start somewhere, but there was no beginning with Him. From all eternity He was daily the delight of the Father.

But in v. 14 we read that He Who throughout eternity was with God, and was God, became flesh. Oh, how marvelous that He should leave those heights of glory, where all was perfect joy and happiness, to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as Man to be seen here! Though unbelievers knew (and know) Him not, He was made flesh and dwelt among us, the blessed Son of God! Those who believed in His Name beheld something the world could not see in Him: they "beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." And what they saw, we, in God's mercy see. Think of Him here among sinners, the holy Son of God; hear them revile Him, and He reviles not again! God manifest in flesh, in all the perfection of moral glory found in Jesus! We may trace His way from the manger to the

Cross; and every detail of that path, every action, every word demonstrates one fact: “the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth!” When His eye saw one passing through trial, whether affliction of body or of soul, how He “had compassion,” and bade them “weep not”; how He spoke words of cheer and comfort, and gave strength to the weak, sight to the blind, life to the dead! In all His ways He was distributing mercy and truth—the eternal Son of God, the Word made flesh, Who at last hung on Calvary’s cross as the Lamb of God, Who suffered in the sinner’s stead, and Whose precious blood was shed that your sins might be washed away.

But in Mark 9 we see His official glory. He led three of the apostles up “into a high mountain apart by themselves.” They had beheld His moral glory, and were following Him. “And He was transfigured before them.” Is my soul occupied with the world, or with Him? If I am occupied with Him away from earth and earthly things, then I see before me that blessed Person in both His moral and official glory. “And His raiment became shining,” glittering, with all the brightness that belongs to Him, the Son of God, with all the glory associated with Him. Man would not have Him, but God will give Him glory; it is His title and His right. So His very raiment became “shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them.” There was something that was not natural, something which belonged to Him, and the One Who was giving Him glory. We read in Daniel of the Ancient of Days, Whose garment was white as snow; and in Revelation 1 there is the same characteristic. Here He is brought before us in the supernatural glory God had given Him. And the same blessed Face Peter, James, and John had known and loved when they companioned with Him, they see it shining as the sun!

“And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.” What were they talking about? Luke tells us it was that which heaven is most concerned about; that which all the coming ages of eternity will never exhaust: “they spake of His decease which He should accomplish in Jerusalem.” It was the death of Christ these men were speaking of! To think that the One Whose moral glory these disciples had seen should be talking to these strangers from heaven about His death!

Throughout both Old and New Testament God ever brings one theme before us, the glory of Christ. And never did His glory shine out with such beauty and excellence as when He suffered on the cross. Never was such love or such sorrow as met then. Can you, dear reader, say with me: “The Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me?”

But when Peter speaks he shows he does not appreciate the Person of the Son of God as he should. He puts Moses and Elias on a par with Him. Good men as they were, they were only sinners, only men; but the Person of the Christ is beyond all men, He is God, God and Man.

Then the Father comes out. The Cloud which led them through the wilderness, the Cloud which told the presence of Jehovah, and which had not been seen since the people went into captivity, that Cloud is seen again. And it “overshadowed them.” No wonder they “feared as they entered into the Cloud!” Then the Father’s Voice is heard saying: “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him.” It is not the law now, nor the prophets; their glory is surpassed by Another, by the Only Perfect One Who walked this scene entirely to the glory of God; the One Whom the world rejected and cast out. But the Father’s testimony is “This is My Beloved Son; hear ye Him.” That Person is everything to the Father. Soon His glory will be manifested; and though earth spurns Him today, God has highly exalted Him, and has decreed that all in heaven, earth, and hell shall acknowledge He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Eternal Son is He Who came from God, and went to God; and God presents Him today with His finished work, to the sinner. That glorious Person is the One Who died for the sinner, and is risen again; Who alone can meet the heart’s desire, and fill the soul with peace and joy; an Object too big for the soul, Who can fill it to overflowing, so that the believer is lost in the beauty, excellency and glory of the Person of the Christ!

QUARTUS.

God's Glad Tidings: Volume 7, Canst Thou Believe?

“AND when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked. the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And lie said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.” (Mark 9:14-20.)

This ninth chapter of Mark shows us what it is to have to do with the Lord Jesus personally, and there is nothing so real, as to have to do with Christ, to meet Christ, and to hear His voice speaking words to you, that go to your heart and meet its need; for the Lord Jesus, whom God presents to me now, for the acceptance of faith, is the very same Jesus who walked this earth for three and thirty years, and therefore it is so blessed to trace His pathway down here.

In the end of Chapter 8 Jesus had been asking His disciples, “Whom do men say that I am?” They answer that some had said one thing, and some another, but all had said wrong. Peter beautifully owns Him, “Thou art the Christ.” He was the reputed son of Joseph the carpenter, the One who had for years wrought with His own hands. His countenance betrayed what kind of a man He was, “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”

And why? Because, I believe, the Lord never met a sorrow that He did not make it His own, and never met a grief that He did not bear it.

He carried every sorrow in His heart that He took away by His power, and therefore the Scripture says, “He was acquainted with grief.” And if this be the character of Jesus, there is no kind of sorrow that may not go to Him now, and tell out all its bitterness, all its weary grief.

He had always leisure when on earth to attend to everyone that came to Him, whoever that one might be. He had not leisure sometimes to eat, but if there was a heart that needed Him, Jesus had always leisure to attend to that heart and meet its need. He meets the widow with her dead son, and raises the dead; meets the leper and cleanses him.

In Luke 6 you have a beautiful picture of a vast multitude healed by Him of every kind of disease. Did he send a few away helped? No! He healed them all. He sent way no convalescents, as we speak, but all went from His presence cured.

This ought to have shown who He was, but those round about with their guesses were completely wrong. Peter alone says, “Thou art the Christ of God, the Son of God.” Then the Lord says, “I am going to die.” Peter did not understand this; he had not yet learned that “without the shedding of blood there is no remission.”

Have you ever learned yet the absolute necessity of death coming in between your soul and God? If you have not, you must learn it, if not now, you must learn it in a future day, when you taste the second death yourself; and what is that? The lake of fire!

In the beginning of Chapter 9 the Lord takes up Peter and James and John to a high mountain, and they see His glory, see a miniature picture of the day that is coming when that glory will be displayed. When He comes down from the mount, He comes at once into a scene of misery.

I find in this chapter a picture of what the world is, of what man is, and of what the power of Satan is—of what the power, too, of Christ is.

As the consequence of riffs death, He is able to bring out this, that all power “in heaven and in earth is given unto me.” By His death He has bought the whole world.

He bought the field for the sake of the treasure in it. He has the power to deliver every heart that cares to be delivered from the bondage of Satan. Every heart that cares to be made free, He has the power to make free. Those that want to know His power shall know it. Those who want to know Himself shall know Him.

This poor child was filled with the power of Satan. Do you say, “That is not my case?”

It is your case unless you are brought to the Lord. Paul says he is sent to the Gentiles “to open their eyes,” that is the first thing “to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.” What does that mean if you are not under Satan’s power?

And again (Col. 1:13), “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.” What does that mean, think you? It means that man unconverted, man unsaved, man unblessed, man unwashed, though he may talk of being free, is still under the power of Satan, under the power of the enemy of souls.

People say, “It is impossible that we are under Satan’s power, we do not believe in Satan, we do not believe in hell.” Do you not believe? I do! And I warn you by the blinding power of Satan now. I warn you by the terrible certainty of the lake of fire in the future, not to despise the Word of God, and I beseech you to accept the Grace of God now.

I warn you by coming judgment, do not let Satan deceive you.

People do not like to own they are led captive by Satan, but God’s Word says you are under the dominion of Satan, unless you have been brought to Jesus.

Have you ever been brought to Jesus yet?

You know whether you have or not. “I have been religious,” you say. That will not do.

The father had brought his son to the disciples, brought him within the sphere of religious influence, but it was all of no use. Had he been brought to Christ? No! Never! And none but Christ could meet his case, or can meet yours. Nothing but the delivering power of Jesus is sufficient for your need. It is humbling to have to confess that your case is too bad—for any remedial measures short of the divine power of God, in the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ; but is it not better to see and own your state now, and to be delivered from it, than to find out too late, by-and-bye, that God’s word is true, and that you have been the vassal of Satan, when there is no longer any deliverance. Satan has blinded you and deceived you, and now you are with him forever; for let me tell you this solemn truth, those who keep company with the devil in time, must keep company with had through eternity, and those who know Christ in time, will know Him, and be with Him through eternity.

“In the place where the tree falleth there it shall be.” If your tree were cut down today, where would it be? Oh! Christless soul, where, think you, would you be? If you are not brought to the Lord yet, you are Satan’s slave, however much you may dream you are free.

You are like a ran condemned to death, who has committed murder, and his country’s laws have doomed him to die, but he has fourteen days respite, and he hopes still in some way to get off at last, so that the sentence will not be carried out in his case. But the fourteen days draw to a close; the last night before the day fixed for the execution has come: let us enter that felon’s cell. The man is fast asleep. You would have thought he could not sleep the night before his execution; but there he is, his head resting on a hard bolster, fast asleep. A few hours and he will be in eternity; but now he is asleep and he dreams. Listen, he is talking in his sleep.

He thinks he is at liberty; he talks of the river he played by as a child; he makes an appointment for the morrow; he dreams he is free!

“He is deceived,” you say. True, he is deceived, but still he dreams he is free. Now the turnkey puts the key in the door, the lock goes back with a harsh grating noise. Ah! he is awake now. Is it to freedom he wakes?

No! no! The prison walls are a reality; the handcuffs, the sheriff, the hoarse cries of the crowd are all realities, the executioner and the gallows are terrible realities, and to these he wakens. The dream is over. Death and judgment are before him, and there is no escape.

The last hour of the respite has expired, and there is no pardon!

He is alive to his condition now; and oh!

Christless soul, you too will wake up some day; take care that you do not wake up in hell, wake up to find God's word is true, that you are under Satan's power, for there you will be under it forever and ever!

But to you who do want Christ, you who know you are bound and are seeking liberty, what have I to say to you? I can tell you with joy what a Christ you have to turn round to; One who has wrought out a perfect and eternal redemption for you by His own death upon the tree; One who has now gone up on high, having finished the whole work of redemption. What is the only thing He is looking for from you? For you simply to trust Him! He is not looking for you to improve your condition, but to trust Him!

"Bring him unto me," Christ says of the child in this chapter. If deep be the need of your heart, deeper still is His desire to meet your need. "Bring him unto me." Charming word to fall on the ears of an anxious soul from the lips of Christ.

Why was it a dumb spirit here? Because it had not a word for God! And that is just like you. You have never had a word for God till now. And how long have you been a sinner far from God? All your days. "Of a child."

Ever since you came into this scene.

"And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him." The grand object of Satan is first to deceive and then to destroy you Look at this picture of helpless agony, and hopeless impotence, but not too helpless and hopeless for the hand and heart of Jesus. It is the picture of a sinner in his sins. He must be brought to Jesus. You are brought to the Lord as you are, and he meets you just as you are. He only looks for you to give up all thoughts of being better, and simply trust Him. "If thou canst do anything," the father says. Is that the language of faith? No, of unbelief. What is there He has not power for? Mark the Lord's answer. Jesus said, "The 'if thou canst' is not my side but yours, not have I got power, but will you exercise the faith that draws down the blessing? The 'if thou canst' is, canst thou believe? Canst thou trust me?"

See the effect of this on an honest soul, "And straightway the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." Here was faith.

When he comes to the Lord first, he says "Master;" but when the Lord turns the "if thou canst" back on the man, as it were, faith springs up immediately in his heart, and he says "Lord!" "Lord, I believe." Can you say "Lord, I believe," to Him just now?

What will bring showers of blessing down on you this moment? "Lord, I believe."

That is the link between the Lord up there in glory, and you down here in your sins.

"I am waiting for you to trust me," says Jesus. "I can do no more for you than I have done. I have done everything that God demanded, and that your state required. I have met Satan for you, met judgment for you; can you trust me?" Do you say, "Lord, I believe?" Then it is all settled. Not "Lord, I feel," or "Lord, I desire," but "Lord, I believe." Is this the language of your heart, Christ-less but Christ-seeking soul? Then it is a settled question, the indissoluble link is formed. The Lord never helps people to be saved. He saves them outright.

This evil spirit was not only dumb but deaf. "How is this a picture of me?" do you ask? I will tell you. Not only have you never had a word for God, but you have stopped your ears to every word of God. Not one word of God's has ever entered your soul, or pierced your heart. You are deaf, and dumb, and dead, and lost; sinner take care that you are not damned too!

If you would have rest with Christ above, if you would escape the horrors of hell, turn to Jesus now. Still the sweet words of Jesus sound forth, "Bring him unto me;" but a day is soon coming when He can only say, "Depart from me," for evermore.

"And the spirit cried out and rent him sore, and came out of him, and he was as one dead."

There was a tremendous struggle at the last. The devil does not let go his prey without a terrible struggle to hold it still. "You had better put it off," he says, "do not be so decided just now, wait a bit." Satan does not like to lose his vassals.

"He was as one dead." That is what a soul feels like. But Jesus lifts him up and he arises. He is set free by Jesus! Can that emancipated soul ever get back to its old condition? Never! Never!

The sow goes back to its wallowing in the mire, truly. But why? Because she is a sow!

And the dog to its vomit, because it is a dog; but if a sheep gets into a ditch, and it is taken out and washed, it gets as far from the mire as possible.

When a soul is brought to the Lord, and learns it is a sheep of Christ's, I do not say that soul might not slip and get down into the mire, but it would not become a sow, And presently the Shepherd's crook comes in, and the sheep is drawn back. It does not love the mire, and the sow does; there is the difference.

Never have you seen a sheep in a ditch but it was struggling to get out of it.

"Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose." What power, what dignity it gives! I have been taken up by Christ, delivered by Christ. I did nothing, he did everything.

This is a scene that tells of the perfect deliverance that Jesus gives to those who trust in Him. I ask you, do you trust Him? If so, may your heart be filled by the amazing blessing of knowing He has perfectly delivered you from Satan, and you are set free to follow Him. Christianity is to know Christ and to enjoy Christ. May your heart be only occupied with learning to know Him better, and with the enjoyment of Him day by day till He comes.

W. T. P. W.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Mark 9:50; Matt. 18:15-17; Peace; 1 Cor. 6:3

Ques. 175. From H. A. C.

Ans. Mark 9:50. Salt is the fear of God and desire to please Him. That keeps the soul separate from evil, and connects it with God. This sense of obligation to God which keeps, judges evil in our heart also. We are to have it in ourselves, and also be at peace one with another.

Ques. 176. From N. S. C.

Ans. Matt. 18:15-17 is about individual trespasses. "If thy brother trespasses against thee," and in those verses the individual is guided what to do. The assembly must look elsewhere for guidance. It is the word of God that gives a brother to know how to act. The assembly cannot give any one authority. The assembly need to wait upon the Lord for their guidance; we cannot tell beforehand what the Lord may lead them to do.

Ques. 177. From J. J.

Ans. You cannot have peace with God till you believe that Christ died for your sins and that in His resurrection God declares that He is satisfied, and you are eternally forgiven. (Rom. 4:25, 25; 5:1; 1 John 2:12.)

If you look for good in yourself you will be miserably disappointed, for God's word is, "In me, (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good things." God does not forgive sin, but condemns it, (Rom. 6:6,) and tells me to reckon myself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (ver. 11.)

1 Cor. 4:5 is true, also 2 Cor. 5:10, and are written to cause us now to to judge all our ways, and to search our hearts in God's presence. (Psa. 139:23, 24.) When we are manifested at the judgment seat of Christ, we are in our glorified bodies, and no flesh in us to obstruct our sight, nor false pride to deceive.

1 Cor. 11:31 is present discipline, not eternal judgment. There is no judgment to the believer; all has been borne and settled by the Lord on the cross. (John 5:24; Rom. 8:1)

Titus 2:9, 10. Slaves adorned the doctrine of our Savior God in all things by obedience to their Masters, and by good fidelity in what was entrusted to 'them. They did not waste their Masters time preaching when they should be working.

Ques. 178 From H. A. C.

Ans. 1 Cor. 6:3. The saints are to reign with Christ The angels are His servants, and are under the saints. If the Lord can give them wisdom to fill such a high place in the future day, how much more, when they look to Him for wisdom, will He enable them to determine what is right to do in the affairs of this life. It was their unspiritual condition that was the hindrance.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Mark 9:49; The Trinity

Ques. Please explain Mark 9:49.MAR 9:49

Ans. This passage sets forth a most solemn truth for all who are out of Christ; and a great practical truth for all Christians. "Every one shall be salted with fire." This refers to the future judgment of all who die in their sins. "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." This refers to present self-judgment exercised by all Christians who will present their bodies a living sacrifice to God. We are delivered, by the death of Christ, from the salting with fire; and we are privileged to know the preservative power of self-judgment.

Ques. I cannot understand the Trinity. Can you help me?

Ans. We are not surprised at your inability to comprehend the profound mystery of the Trinity. But let us remind you, dear friend, that though you cannot understand it, you are reverently to believe it. The Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Ghost is God. Did you ever hear those last words of a dying idiot?

“I see! I see! I see!”

“What do you see?" said a bystander.

“I see three in One, and One in three, and they are all for me, for me.”

Think of those words.

Scripture Queries and Answers, Universal Redemption?; Salt?

Q.-Mark 9:50. Has " salt " any meaning typically beyond preservative purity? M.

A.-Gen. 19:26 is clearly not the consecrating principle but judicial infliction. For Lot's wife disobeying at such a time became an abiding monument of divine judgment. So too, if Israel rebelled and fell under the curse, Jehovah declared that their whole ground should be brimstone and salt, like the overthrow of Sodom (Deut. 29:23). The N. T. adds the awful figure of salt losing its savor, and hence, as proper

neither for land nor for dung, but to be cast out. Grace does effect not only love but separateness to God in the believer. Easy-going unbelief destroys all savor in those that bear the Lord's name without self-judgment. What must the end of this be? Not only unrighteousness but apostasy.

Q.-1 Tim. 4:10. Does this apostolic sentence countenance universal redemption? L. C. H.

A.-In no way. The reference is, not to Christ's work, but to God's faithful care of His creatures, His children especially, in providence day by day. Where is the propriety of reading the salvation of men's souls in the terms of the verse? where, the consistency with other scriptures, which declare that only those who believe shall be saved, and that the mass, being impenitent and unbelieving, must perish? "For unto this we labor and suffer reproach [or, strive], because we have our hope set on a living God, who is preserver of all men, specially of faithful ones." It is God as appealed to in Job 7:20, and even more widely in Psa. 36:6. Compare Judg. 3:9, Neh. 9:7, Obad. 1:1, 20 There is no mention or thought of Christ's death even in the way of purchase, still less of redemption. It is a living God as Savior in present labors and trials; and this goodness of His is real toward every child of man, especially toward believers. Apply it to the salvation of the soul, and the comfort evaporates; for all are thus thrown into confusion and uncertainty. If those who are Christ's he only in degree more saved than such as reject Him and perish, theirs would be indeed a little and sorry salvation to the denial of life eternal and everlasting redemption. Any application of the kind would dishonor Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as it contradicts the Scriptures. Indeed it would be nonsense to speak of saving the souls of all men, especially of the faithful. The fact is, the apostle treats of a wholly different subject: the sure ground of confiding in a living God for the path here below. As in wisdom He made all, so does He care for all compassionately, even in a sinful and ruined world, especially for such as look up to Him in the faith which strengthens them to labor and suffer with joyfulness.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 9:14-50, A Boy's Sad Condition:

In Galilee, the land north of Judea, the people refused to honor God for many, many years, although they knew His care and power. One king placed a gold calf for them to worship (1 Kings 12:28-31). They followed the way of Satan until even children suffered by wicked spirits.

When Jesus came to Caesarea, in that land, there was one poor boy dreadfully troubled by a wicked spirit, which caused him to be deaf and dumb, to hurt himself, and even to fall into the fire. His father heard of Jesus and brought his son to see if Jesus could help him. But Jesus was then up on the mountain, and the disciples could not help so dreadful a case.

When Jesus came down from the mount, the man begged Him to help. He said, “If Thou canst do anything ... help us.”

This man did not know that Jesus was the Lord and that there was no case too hard for Him to cure, or he would not have said “if.” Jesus told the father to believe, and He commanded the evil spirit to leave the boy and not return, and the boy was freed.

Satan’s Power Broken

This story shows how awful is the power of Satan, who has no kindness for any and who would even harm children. How different from the Lord Jesus, who did good to all and was tender and kind to children. He came to earth to break the power of Satan, as was promised (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14).

But sin and Satan still cause the suffering of war and all other evils. Jesus spoke plainly of the end of sin. He spoke of the hand or the foot or the eye “offending.” The word “offend” has the meaning “to sin against God.” A person’s hand may do what is wrong, his foot may go to wrong places, or his eye may see evil. Unless the sins are stopped — “cut off” — the whole body is soon in sin, and the end is a place of suffering named hell.

The Lord spoke of the suffering of hell as “fire,” which causes the most severe suffering we know. Natural fire can be put out. But Jesus said that the “fire” of hell is not “quenched” (put out); the sorrow there will not end.

Serious Consequences

This lesson of Jesus is the saddest of all, and some think there is no place of punishment. But He spoke plainly and repeated the words “the fire is not quenched” several times, so we must believe Him. At another time He said the place of suffering was prepared, not for people, but for Satan and his angels (Matt. 25:41). This lesson shows that those who always want to follow Satan’s ways must share that place of suffering.

But let us remember that Jesus Himself died to bear the punishment for sins for all who believe Him. He now urges, by His Holy Spirit, men, women, boys and girls to let Him save them.

Jesus said His people were to be “salted” — kept for Him — by “fire” (judgment) that He bore on the cross. He also said they should “have salt” in themselves. To keep right in themselves, for Him, they must judge their sins; to judge means to decide against our sins, which we should all do in our hearts and minds each day.

1. How does the expression “shall not the Judge of all the earth do right” relate to punishment for sin?

2. What is meant by “judge not, that ye be not judged”?

3. You might find the pamphlet Self-Judgment by H.E. Hayhoe helpful in considering the theme at the end of this chapter.

Sound Words - 1873, All Sufficiency of Christ, The: Intercession/Advocacy; ROM 7:9;

Notes on an Address from Mark 8:10-28.

What I find in every one's history is this: that first he has to learn that Christ gave Himself for him, and next he has to learn that he must give up everything for Christ. Our history is that double thing; but in one sense we may say the first is readily acquired, though it be a long time before you find that, as a thoroughly ruined one, Christ is absolutely for you. The day will come when we shall have nothing but Christ. In that moment of terror, when you find out the emptiness of everything. He is the One who in the darkness that surrounds you, alone is for you.

In type you see it in Jonah. It was not that Jonah was not converted before, but he had to be brought into the depths where no one but God could save him.

First of all I have Him as the Savior. To be devoted I must find that He is absolutely for me. Now when He taught Peter that in the 5th of Luke, how did He teach him-at what point?

It was when the boat was full of fish-that-most exciting moment to a fisherman-that Peter found himself in the presence of God good for nothing. "I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

. Look at that man fallen down there at Jesus' knees, he who had given his time and his boat to the Lord, like a religious man now who gives his money for the spread of the gospel. One knows what it is to have gone on in that floating way for years.

There is a moment in your history when you must be sensible of the thorough insufficiency of everything. and of the thorough sufficiency of Christ. These disciples at the most trying moment for fishermen, brought their ships to land, and forsook all and followed Him.

What is a death bed? How beautiful it is at times, It is simply that there you have a person saying, " I have tasted the insufficiency of everything, but I have sound the all-sufficiency of Christ." Does not your heart respond? The day is come in that person's history, when Christ is found sufficient. But he must first be known by the soul, and this Peter's history declares.

There is a darker lesson we have to learn. We have to learn that there is death upon everything. If you consider the Scriptures, you will find it brought out in every history. The Gospels are the school; the Epistles set forth our standing. Christ is now teaching His disciples death and glory.. The point is this, Is He sufficient for everything? He sighed deeply in his Spirit. He sighed deeply at the nation's unbelief.

"Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf." You cannot imagine anything more resource less than their condition, without bread, and in a ship upon the sea. What. the Lord brings out is this-His own sufficiency. He does not make the bread a hit more, but He tests their faith. "Am I sufficient for you when there is a dearth of everything? I have made myself known to you in power, how is it that ye do not understand?"

Do not be pained; mercies are very often given you that you may learn to do without them-that you may learn the Person who gave them, and then find Him sufficient. It is not the gifts that gave a color to Him, but He that gives a color to the gifts. What had Jonah to learn? Not only that there is death in himself, but that there is death in everything here.

I have two things to learn-life in the Son of God, and death down here. "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." Do not shrink from it-do not be afraid; faith never looks at difficulties, but at-the One who is sufficient for the difficulty.

Men of faith do no end of rash things. Look at Moses.. When he came down from the Mount he confronts 600,000 men, as if they were nothing. He stands for God. He never thought of them; he never took into account-the odds against him. He calculated on God only! The disciples have not rested upon Him. They ought to have-shown skill about Him. What I mean by "skill" is power properly applied-faith's use of power. This is the difference between David and Jonathan; Jonathan-might be the stronger man; David, the -man of skill and not afraid of Goliath.

You will find in your own private history that you have to learn His sufficiency, and not to be a bit disheartened by what. you see around-not a bit disheartened because there is no bread in the ship. The turning point of my history here is, that as I am traveling through this scene I have to do with the risen Christ, no matter what the circumstances that may arise. Practically this is what comes out; I have no resources. I am not a bit disheartened. I have Christ. Like Paul who could say before the greatest tribunal in the world " all men forsook me"-there was no bread in the ship; "nevertheless the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." 2 Tim. 4:16,17. Do not he disheartened. Do not do what people are always trying to do, they are always trying to relieve themselves by change of circumstances. You will never reach a brighter point of strength than saying " Blessed God, make me equal to it, make me rise above it;" instead of saying "alter it, do remove this thing or that thing."

The old era was that everything was greater than man; the new era is that man in Christ is greater than everything.

It your child is ill and you pray for its recovery, and it is given back to you, you have not the same knowledge of God as if you had risen superior to the trial. While I am resting in the Lord, let Him do what He will Christ is sufficient. It is not " resignation." That is a poor thing-only putting up with a thing because I cannot help it.

"The man that walks by faith must be faithful "-nothing truer has been said. I believe if we are walking by faith, in simple dependence on Christ, nothing could be brighter than our faith. There is only one path of life, and if you are walking by faith you are in it.

If we have "skill" we shall not be like the sons of the prophets, bringing the wild gourds into the pot, then death is brought into it.

God cannot demonstrate His love by giving you this thing or that thing. He demonstrates His love in glory, where your destitution is fully met. But I say, practically do not shrink from it. Do not be afraid. We all have a pressure. It is not that I want you to be unfeeling about it. But there is all the difference between the ring of the soul that is dependent on mercies, and the soul that is learning to walk according to God without mercies.

Do you say, " Oh, He would put me to toe much trial 1" I reply; "He loves me ten thousand times more than I love myself, and if you say otherwise you have not learned salvation and the love of His heart."

I know what pressure is. What is it for? It is to bring me to Him, so that "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," may keep my heart and mind through Christ Jesus. Relief from the thing pressing may not be known, but you have the blessedness of Himself between your soul and the pressure, and " the peace of God that passeth all understanding" keeping your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. The Lord lead us to understand this side of our history as walking through the world.

One's heart sometimes trembles seeing people making themselves so happy here. I say " Oh, the gourd will die some day, and you will learn the lesson-death is upon everything, and Christ is all-sufficient." It is- no sorrow at all if you find that you have a better one in place of it all.

I deny that Mary was not satisfied with the presence of Christ, when walking to the grave of Lazarus.

You have to learn the sufficiency of Himself in the wretchedness of a scene like this, and then you will move on cheerfully and faithfully to the praise of His name.

" Jesus! I rest in Thee,

In Thee myself I hide,

Laden with guilt and misery,

Where can I rest beside? 'Tis on Thy meek and lowly breast

My weary soul alone would rest.

" Thou, Holy One of God,

The Father rests in Thee,

And in the savor of that blood,

That speaks to Him for me,

The curse is gone, through Time I'm blest,

God rests in Thee-'in Thee I rest.

The slave of sin and fear,

Thy truth my bondage broke;

My willing spirit loves to bear,

Thy light and easy yoke '

The love that fills any grateful breast,

Makes duty joy, and labor rest.

"Soon the bright, glorious day, The rest of God shall come, Sorrow and sin shall pass away, And I shall reach my home; Then, of the promised land possessed My soul shall know eternal rest."

G. V. W.

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Talk on a Journey, A

Mark 9:27 to 38

Jesus had been to the towns and villages “throughout Galilee”, doing great miracles for all, and teaching the people. He had been to Tyre and Sidon, on the Mediterranean Sea, and also to the country cast and south of Galilee (Mark 1:39 and 7:24,31). His visits south to Judea, and going through Samaria, are also written of (John 4:3,4).

Here it is written that Jesus and the disciples started to the country north of Galilee to the towns of Caesarea Philippi, about twenty-five miles from the Sea of Galilee. That was near Mt. Hermon, and was in the border land of the nation of Israel when they first had the country in early times (Josh. 11:17).

This shows us how Jesus went to all parts of the land of Israel, every where doing good to so many and telling God’s words, so that all peoples of the land must have heard of Him. They were people who knew the writings of the prophets, of a holy One to come to earth; they should have understood by the great miracles and wise answers and teachings of Jesus that He fulfilled all the promises.

On their walk to the northern border, Jesus and the disciples were perhaps more away from others, and Jesus asked them, “Whom do men say that I am?”

The sad answer to his question was that people thought He must be a prophet, not that He could be the Promised Messiah.

Then Jesus asked the disciples, “Whom say ye that I am?”

It was Peter who answered, and he said, “Thou art the Christ.” That meant The Messiah, the One Anointed and sent by God, as told in their Scriptures (see Matthew 16:16; John 6:69; John 1:11).

The disciples then fully believed that Jesus would be their Great King, but Jesus knew He would be refused as the Messiah and King, and He began to explain. to the disciples what would be done to Him.

He said that He “must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.”

Peter did not think that the Lord would be so treated, or that He should say this. Yet that was also what the prophets had written: that the Holy One would, “be led as a lamb to the slaughter”; and “be stricken”, and “bare the sins of many” (Isa. 53).

He asked the people who were then listening, this question:

“What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

“What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

Not to believe the Lord Jesus as the One to suffer for our sins, is to lose our soul, and the things gained while in this world would be over.

Only Christ could pay the price of a soul, as He had said, He came “to give His life a ransom.” Mark 10:45.

ML 03/19/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Blind Man Made to See, A

Mark 8:22 to 26

Jesus came to Bethsaida, a town on the north shore of the sea of Galilee, where a blind man was brought to Him. It is not said that tl, man asked Jesus to give him sight, but his friends besought Jesus to touch him; they were certain of what Jesus could do, and the man must have been willing.

Jesus had healed the blind before this, by touching their eyes, but there is more told of this case. First, Jesus took the man by the hand and led him out of the town. He would not manifest His power in the midst of the manifest unbelief of the people.

Blindness is one of the many sorrows in the world since there was sin, and unbelief is spoken of as “blindness.”

Yet Jesus showed full mercy to the man himself in his trouble: He put His hands upon him; then asked him if he saw ought. The man looked up and said he saw men as trees, walking. He saw, but not correctly. Jesus touched his eyes again, and told him to look up. Then he saw every man clearly, so of course he saw Jesus and must have been very happy.

Jesus told the man to go to his home, and not to go into the town, or tell of his cure to any there. The people of that place had seen the greatest of Jesus’ miracles, and listened to Him tell God’s words, yet they did not believe Him, or think He was sent by God. Because of that, He had spoken of woe, or judgment to them, saying,

“Woe unto thee, Bethsaida for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Tyre and Sidon (Gentile cities which did no have or know the Scriptures) they would have repented.” Matt. 11; 21.

But the people of Bethsaida had not been sorry for their sins, and Jesus could do no more for them. This must have been the reason He led the blind man from there. Yet in spite of the people’s sin against Him, He used His power for one, willing to be helped.

To restore sight to the blind, was one of the special good things which the Holy One to come to earth, would do, as promised in the writings of the prophet (Isa. 29;18; Luke 4:18.)

And Jesus restored many blind, as the Obedient One. We find He also taught the people by the ways that He used; and those ways are told in the gospels to help us now to learn His truths.

We do not always understand the lesson to be learned, but as we think about it, some other part of God’s Words seems to give the meaning. ale thing for us to think of in this story, is that, however little trust the blind man had, Jesus took him by the hand and led him where He could give him sight. One touch of the Lord made the man see, because He is the true light for the soul; one “touch” by Him, gives “sight” to any willing one.

The man did not at first see those around him rightly; it was a confused view, as though men were in a high position. Whatever the lesson in that, it required the touch of Jesus, and to look up, as He bade, for him to see every man clearly. We know he then saw Jesus, as He would have him, and others, in their place.

ML 03/12/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Multitude Again Fed, The

Mark 8:1-21

There was much wild, grassy land on the sides of the mountains near the shores of the sea of Galilee, where the Lord Jesus taught the people, who came in great numbers from the villages around to hear His words, or to be healed. They may have gone to their homes at night, but they returned the next day, for Jesus said,

“They have now been with Me three days.”

Jesus knew they had no food with them that evening, and He was very sorry for them, He said, “If I send them away fasting (without eating) to their houses, they will faint by the way: for divers (many) of them came from far.”

The disciples had a few loaves of bread, and a few small fish, but there was no place near to get more. Not long before this Jesus had made the few loaves and the fish one boy had become enough to feed more than 5000 people. This probably was not the same place, or the same people, but Jesus supplied their need in the same wonderful way.

He said for the people to sit down on the ground: He took the seven loaves and the fish, thanked God, broke them in pieces, and gave to the disciples to pass to the people. By His power, that bread and fish was not only enough for all the big company, but more than enough, showing His power could not all be used, however much was needed.

The people who ate that meal must have sat in great surprise, and later, as they walked to their homes they must have talked together and wondered. How well they were repaid for their long walks over the rough ways: they had listened to One from Heaven, and been fed by Him! Many believed He was a very great Teacher and Prophet, and about this time the disciples said they believed He was the Christ, who was the One promised to come to earth.

Later those who believed the scriures, and the words of Jesus, learned that He who took so humble a place on earth, was the One Who in the beginning, had created all things, and was also the Giver and Sustainer of life. One disciple afterward wrote: “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life.” John 1:3,4; see also Colossians 1:16,17.

A few days after the miracles of the loaves, Jesus told some of the people that He was “the Bread of life.”

The bread He supplied the two meals, satisfied them only a short time; the next day they must have more. But all who believed Him should be satisfied with life forever (see John 6:35).

It is nice for us to notice in these miracles, that Jesus used the food which someone had, to make more. That showed His kindness, and that it is His way to bless even a little that is given to Him, making a very great blessing for others.

Althought Jesus had done as no one of earth could, He soon after had to remind the disciples of the two miracles, for them to remember Who He was. (vss. 19,20.)

ML 03/05/1944

Correspondence, Correspondence: Mark 8:38; 1 Pet. 4:1-2; Rev. 3:4

Ques. Mark 8:38. J. D. A.AR 8:38{

Ans. The Lord proved by His words and works that He was the Son of God. He told His disciples He was to be rejected and killed and rise again. Peter rebuked Him, and He had to rebuke Peter very severely. (Verses 32, 33.)

He then taught them that the value of the soul is beyond compare with the whole world. "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Let everything else go, and secure salvation. Then in verse 38, is the warning, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me (Jesus) and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." Ashamed means to deny or disown, and so be disowned by Him in that day. Peter did not deny that Jesus was the Son of God, but he denied that he knew Him. He failed to confess Him, but Peter will not be denied when the Son of Man comes.

Ques. What does 1 Peter 4:1, 2 teach us? C. W.

Ans. The truth of our death with Christ is to be applied to our souls in our living. If we are dead with Christ, we should consistently ask ourselves in our every-day actions: Is it to please myself that I am living? or is it like Christ, our Lord and Savior, seeking to do the will of God? How many difficulties would be removed immediately, and our path made simple and plain, if we did so.

Ques. Is Rev. 3:4 present or future?

Ans. "They shall walk with Me in white" is future; "for they are worthy" is present. It is encouraging for our souls to see that the Lord is taking notice of our feeblest efforts to glorify Him.

Rev. 3:10. The "hour of temptation" is future. The saints will be kept from it by the Lord coming to take them to Himself. "Those that dwell on the earth" are a special class who claim the earth. ("Earthly-minded," Phil. 3:19.)

2 Cor. 12:7-10. These verses teach us that even an apostle had to be kept humble. The flesh in him is the same incorrigible thing as in us. So the Lord sent this "thorn in the flesh," this "Messenger of Satan" to buffet him. No matter what it was, it ties to keep him humble and dependent, needing the Lord's help and getting it day by day, with no credit to him, but all praise to the Lord for His faithfulness. So he was willing to be nothing and the Lord alone to be glorified. Having learned this he could say, "Therefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in straits for Christ: for when I am weak, then I am strong." May it be so with us also.

Echoes of Mercy: Volume 4 (1894), "Out of the Heart of Men Proceed Evil Thoughts."

Mark 7:21.

WE often hear it said, in these days, that man is being elevated by lofty and scientific thoughts. But the question for us is: Does man give God the right place in his heart, and is there anything there to suit Him? The Bible shows us clearly that, from the beginning, the tendency of man's thoughts has been to make much of himself and little of God. Perhaps not always openly so, but God looks at what lies hidden in the heart. "Hell and destruction are before the Lord; how much more then the hearts of the children of men?" (Prov. 15:11). Let us contrast what the man of the world thinks in his heart, with what God has revealed in His word: —

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."—Ps. 14:1	"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."— 1 Tim. 2:5.
"The wicked…hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity."—Ps. 10:6	"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape."—1 Thess. 5:3
"He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: . . . He will never see it." —Ps. 10:11	"Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance."—Ps. 3:15.
"He hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it."—Ps. 10:13.	"God requireth that which is past."—Eccles. 3:15
"That evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming."— Matt. 23:48.	"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." — 2 Pet. 3:9.
"Thou hast said in Mine heart, I am, and none else beside me."—Isa. 47:10	"Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."—Ps. 39:5.
"She saith in her heart, I fit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."—Rev. 18:7	"In one hour shall thy judgment come." — Rev. 18:10.

"As he thinketh in his heart, so is he."— Prov. 23:7

It is a blessed thing that the Gospel not only unfolds to us the deceitfulness of our thoughts, but it reveals to us the thoughts of God, — thoughts of love and mercy for the poor sinner who is weary of the evil of his own heart. When we can own before God that every imagination of the thoughts of our hearts is only evil continually so that nothing less than the death of Christ can deliver us from them, then God can say: "I know the thoughts that I think toward you; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer. 29:11).

L. C. W.

To Every Man His Work, Toiling in Rowing

Notes of an Address given in London on Mark 6:31-52

This scripture brings before us a most touching incident, and one that has a special voice to us to-night, which I want you distinctly to take in, through grace.

There was a large multitude of hungry people around the Lord, and the time was far passed; circumstances were pressing, and the disciples come to Him and say, " Send them away." Now I am afraid the disciples were very like some of us in these days. " Send them away," they say; " we do not want to be burdened with this hungry multitude, we do not want to be troubled with their wants."

Observe how their wants are not questioned, their need is not denied, there is no doubt but that hunger and distress were fully represented. " Let them go," say the disciples, " into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: there is nothing here; send them away; " which meant, send them away from Jesus.

O beloved friends, do we say that -now? Well, I am afraid sometimes we do. " Give ye them to eat," says the Lord. May God make our ears hear that to-night. My beloved friends, do you ever think of giving other people to eat, or do you think only of eating yourselves? Have you ever thought that there are spiritually hungry men and women in multitudes at our doors, that there are people all round you starving for the bread of life? And have you not heard the Master's words, " Give ye them to eat? " These blessed, gracious words of His might well be an everlasting reproach upon the saints of God; words which might well ring in our ears forever, " Give ye them to eat."

They were thinking only of their miserable provision, and they say, How can we poverty-stricken people give to them? Then we find what is so blessed, and gives us the contrast between Him and all else beside. Hearken to His blessed words, " I have compassion." I love those words; 0 the sweetness 'and tenderness of those words to the heart, " I have compassion on the multitude."

0 that our blessed Master would give us more of His compassions? 0 to think of this great city, with its millions of immortal souls; here we are surrounded by a multitude of perishing ones; we are positively living in a kind of modern heathendom. Alas! that is what Christianity, so called, is; thickly populated places, cities and towns teeming with multitudes of immortal souls perishing for the bread of life. And think of our unconcern; I marvel at our little thought about it. I ask you affectionately to-night, do the walls of your room bear witness to your pleadings with God about it? I think I hear you say, " Oh! I am riot sent." Ah! what a very convenient way to escape from your responsibility; numbers of people think they get out of it like that. " I am not sent." Shall I tell you what strikes me? It is this, whether you would go if you were called! Bear with me in the plainness of the words, bin the one who says " I am not sent," be assured of it, that person would not go if he were sent. 4 see this very same unwillingness manifesting itself in the excuse. But what I do press upon you is this, while I fully grant we are not all sent to do the same kind of work, and are not all sent to preach, what I maintain is, that if 'the love of Christ were in our hearts as the grand constraining power, no need, or misery, or distress, however great or pressing, would hinder us from seeking in every way to give the gospel of Jesus Christ, Who is the true bread of life, to every hungry soul with which we come in contact. I confess I do not understand what Christianity and the religion of Jesus Christ is, nor what the ways of Jesus Christ were, if one of His own true, beloved people in this world, let them be ever so simple, let them be ever so feeble, refused to follow in His ways-assuredly they could by grace tell of what had satisfied their hunger and of what had met their thirst; assuredly they could say, " I know what met the cravings of my soul, and I can tell you it will meet yours." Who do you think knows the value of bread? The chemist? Not he; but the starving man that has eaten it. I have eaten that bread, he says. There is too much mere head-work, I fear, about us; hence our reasonings and our speculations and so forth, in reality a poverty-stricken state of soul. " Give ye them to eat," rings in our ears to-night. The Lord in His grace give us to hear it, and to heed it as well.

That is what introduces His departure in figure here; He sends His disciples, and He goes on high, as it were-that is what is represented by His going up into the mountain-and the disciples cross the water in a boat, and you have their vicissitudes. 0 how blessed it is to think what it says here, " He saw them." Now I want my brothers in the Lord to share with me the comfort that passage brings; " He saw them toiling in rowing."

Ah! brother, you are laboring, it may be in some sphere of service or work, and it is very uphill, very hard, and it takes a great deal out of you, and you are very often depressed. Now think of this, " He saw them toiling in rowing." Not the shades of night, nor the earnest vigil, which He kept in prayer on the mountaintop, nor the storm-lashed lake that they were crossing, none of these things had hidden His poor servants from the Master's eyes: " He saw them." 0 what a comfort that is! What a comfort for us all, whatever may be the character of the " rowing," whatever may be the character of the labor or danger as we sail over the sea of life, " He saw them."

0 what words are these! Those blessed eyes looked down in a tenderness which was all His own! And now mark this, in the darkest part of the night Jesus came to them. That is always the time Jesus comes. The fourth watch is just upon day dawn, and the dawn of day is, as we know, preceded by the darkest part of the night. Have you never watched by the bedside of some beloved one, and have you not witnessed the struggle between darkness and dawn? There is a sort of struggle between night and day at the very moment just preceding day dawn. That is the time Jesus comes. And observe how beautiful it is; He came walking on the water. Let us delight in contemplating the majesty of His love! It is not only that I see His divine power as He steps the waves, but I see the majesty of His mighty love. They could not be upon the stormy sea without His walking those waves too; they could not be, as it were, in difficulty and in danger without His drawing near to them; they could not be surrounded by the fury and hurricane of the tempest that came down from the mountain side and threatened to destroy their little barque, without His going near to them, too. He came to them walking on the water.

There is a little touch here of great beauty; have you ever thought of it? " He made as though He would have passed by them." Do you think it was a mere accident that this is recorded for us here? Do you think it is a mere little trifling circumstance in the history that the Spirit of God brings out? I believe it is exactly the same thing that you find in Luke 24., when He joined those two poor, heart-broken, weary ones upon the morning of His resurrection, as they walked and were sad, and had given up all hope in this world. It says, " He made as though He would have gone farther." It is the same kind of action here; He " would have passed by them." Why? To call out from them the faintest cry of want and need of Him; that is what it is. It is not that He was indifferent, that He did not feel; oh, assuredly it was not that!

He was never insensible to the distresses of His poor servants in their vicissitudes; but He delights to draw out confidence. Oh! if there is the feeblest confiding of trust in any of your poor hearts, if everything has fled but this one hope in Him, small though it be, be assured He wants that. That is the meaning of His action here; He would have passed them by; but only that He might awake up, and draw out, as it were, and minister to the dying embers of that faith which was in the heart. Then they " cried out." How grateful to His heart that cry! Was not He attentive? Did He not delight in that confidence so expressed?

Mark what He says; there are three words here, " Be of good cheer," " Be not afraid; " but note especially the words between them. Our beautiful old translation has it, " It is I; " but that in reality means " I am," the same as in John 8. Mark the connection, " Be of good cheer; " " I am; " " be not afraid." Oh, beloved friends, what a trinity of blessedness there is in these three expressions! " Be of good cheer: " might not that well wipe away every tear from the eye? " I am: " the mighty God in the glory and dignity and majesty of His own person walking the waves and waters. " Be not afraid: " the very words He is saying to us to-night.

Now, brother or sister (thank God we can all of us be engaged in work in different ways), you are " toiling in rowing: " may God in His infinite grace give us that blessed confidence in Christ's care and love, that amid every wind and storm, and our toiling through them, we may ever hear Him say, " Be of good cheer "-" I am "-" Be not afraid."

Oh, the luxury of being the means of blessing to some poor heart! The one who is so used knows its sweetness; but it must be tasted to be known and thus enjoyed. " There is that scattereth and yet increaseth and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."

But remember, in all the vicissitudes of service, and in all the ups and downs so-called of life, whether it be at home or in the service of God, in the world or in the church, whether it be in the counting house or at the counter, wherever you are, remember this, there will be " toiling in rowing " while Jesus is absent; but in the darkest part of your night He is near, so we can sing,

" In darkest shades, if He appearMy morning is begun."

And " He talked with them." How blessed the rest of that intercourse! the divine familiarity; oh, how precious the intimacy expressed in those words, " He talked with them." Oh to hear those beautiful words, those wonderful words! The Lord in His grace use His own precious tidings to-night to encourage our hearts, beloved friends, that we may all go forth with a little more of the fire of Christ's love in our souls, and that we may have the comfort, whatever position we are in, as we toil through this world where He is not, of knowing for ourselves the solace and cheer of Himself, for His name's sake.

Christian Friend: Volume 13, Servants' Rest, The

“Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.” (Mark 6: 31)

“ Come ye yourselves apart, an rest awhile;

I would not always have you in the strife

That follows in the track of desert toil,

And fills with care the hours of desert life.

“ Come ye yourself apart, and rest awhile,

Repose thy head upon my loving breast,

Nor fear to leave thy labor and thy toil

To taste the joy of solitude and rest.

“I know thy labor, and will ne’er forget

Aught that is done in faith and love to me;

Fruit shall be borne, and I will never let

One grain be lost throughout eternity.

“ I do not value faithful service less—

My joy ‘twas once in service to be found—

But I would have you know the blessedness

Of leisure and of rest from all around.

H. A. C.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 3, How Many Loaves Have Ye?

Mark 6:38

The Lord uses what the disciples had. It was but little-nothing for such a multitude; but when blessed and broken by Jesus, it goes a great way. The God who gave life could sustain it, independent of means, or multiply the means to make them adequate to the need. So now, it is what "we have" that Christ uses. Use what we have in faith, and He will make it meet the need of all present. It is the power of God giving efficacy to His word, that makes much or little a blessing, and without that, plenty is in vain. In ministry of the word, the grand end it getting the soul, through the presentation of Christ, brought into living connection with God. True ministry does this for the poor; the rich go empty away.

Christian Truth: Volume 2, How Many Loaves Have Ye?

Mark 6:3; 8

The Lord uses what the disciples had. It was but little-nothing for such a multitude. But when blessed and broken by Jesus, it goes a long way. The God who gave life could sustain it, independent of means, or multiply the means to make them adequate to the need. So now, it is what

"we have" that Christ uses. Use what we have in faith, and He will make it meet the need of all present. It is the power of God giving efficacy to His word, that makes much or little a blessing, and without that, plenty is in vain. In ministry of the Word, the grand end is getting the soul, through the presentation of Christ, brought into living connection with God. True ministry does this for the poor in spirit; the rich go empty away.

Seas: May 2024, Sea of Galilee, The

What a moment it must have been, when the Lord stilled the wind and the sea on the lake of Galilee (Mark 4:37-41)! What an expression of ready obedience there was in those angry elements! It must have been wonderful and beautiful to have witnessed it! People may talk of the necessary force of principles, the laws of nature, or the course of things, but it is surely the law of nature to obey its Lord in the midst of even its wildest ways. As here, in the twinkling of an eye, the sea of Galilee felt the presence of One who transfigures at His pleasure the course of nature, or by a touch unhinges it all.

When the same Jesus (Psa. 104) by and by roars over His prey like a lion, the thunder, though it was asleep the moment before, utters its voice (Rev. 10), for all the forces of nature are equally, either still or alive, at His various pleasure. And so at the end, from His presence, when enthroned in white or for judgment, the heavens and the earth in like instinctive readiness will pass away (Rev. 20).

The Lord Listened to Joshua

I observe a difference in the style of the action in Joshua, when the sun and the moon stood still in the midst of heaven. It was the Lord who listened to the voice of man there. Joshua prayed and got the power of God on his side, and the occasion was full of wonder, no day being like it.

But Jesus acts at once and from Himself, and no wonder is expressed by the inspired evangelist. All the wonder which waits on the occasion comes from the unprepared hearts of men or the disciples.

Many a wind, I may say, has blown over the same water since the day of Mark 4, and the heart of many an alarmed disciple has again cried out, but there has been no answer. Many and many a trying and terrible storm of affliction still sweeps across the path of the people of God, and there is no command to it from Him who has right and power still. But this we may learn that, though there is “need of patience,” and Jesus appears still to sleep, yet is He as truly with us now as He was for the disciples in the face of the danger then.

The Presence of Jesus

And this same water was not always disturbed. Often it witnessed the successful fishing of the disciples of Jesus. At the command of the same power which now quieted the waters, they again and again yielded their treasures, and nets full were given to them without any toil of theirs. As now, in the changeful scenery of life, it may be peace and abundance, and again danger, disturbance and fear. But oh the comfort, could we but embrace it! It is the presence of the same Jesus which faith is entitled to know, whether in smooth waters, in allayed waters, or in waters which still rage and swell without a voice to command them. He may be active in the one case and seem as if asleep in the other, but He is equally in the ship, in either case.

And I have thought that the communion which the disciples had with their Lord after they had wakened Him was not equal to that they would have had if their faith had left Him still asleep. They were, it is true, at the end of their fears from the wind and enjoying the fruit of His power, but they had fears from Himself and were not at ease in His presence. He had rebuked them, and they could not but remember that they had disturbed Him. Had they let Him sleep on, they might have sat and gazed at Him on His pillow, and through that gaze have learned the intimacy of His interest with theirs, and seen themselves as bound up into one bundle of life with Him. But all this was now lost to them: losers spiritually, gainers providentially. So it is with us oftentimes. The Lord comes down to our level, to the place our fears have brought Him, in the delivering operations of His hand, but it is with the loss of the light of that elevation where He was — the place up to which faith would have taken us. Have not our souls known something of this?

Fear or unbelief at times hinder communion with the Lord and separate the soul from the enjoyment of what He is to us.

Selfishness

It is a worse thing still, when selfishness is the hindrance. We know these things ourselves, and we hear of them in the recorded experiences of others. In a previous scene on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 4), the disciples, through fear, lost what their Lord would have been to them; here, on the same sea, they lost Him through selfishness (Mark 6:31-52). They had returned to Him after a day’s toil, and He had retired with them, that they might rest and be refreshed. But their privacy was soon disturbed by the multitude. In the perfection of His ways, He at once turned from them to wait on the deeper need of the people. They were like sheep without a shepherd, and He begins to teach them. This was perfect, and therefore the only path the Son of God could take. He turns from the less to the greater necessity, from the fatigue of the disciples to the spiritual wants of the multitude. In taking this direction, the disciples suffer. But this is not the fault of their Master, but the result of the perfection of His way.

This is so continually with us, and we are offended. Our selfishness makes us intent on our own part in the great scene around us, and we are not, with Him, in wisdom and love, surveying and weighing it in all its relationships. So it was here with the disciples: They are offended by the multitude being thus waited on, and they propose to their Master, after some little space, that He would send them away. Hence there was a moral breach between Him and them. Their selfishness, their narrowness of heart, had wrought it. He cannot take the course they prescribe. He feeds, instead of dismissing, the multitude.

The discipline, then, comes in due season. After feeding the people, the Lord tells the disciples to go aboard and cross the Sea of Galilee. As their selfishness would gladly have separated Him from the people, His discipline must now separate them from the joy and strength of His presence. They launch on the sea, and He pursues His perfect path, taking leave of the poor shepherdless flock, retiring to the mountain for prayer, and then descending to walk on the sea, which all this time, by reason of contrary winds, had cost them toil in rowing.

Separation From His Presence

This was separation indeed. They see, but they do not share the triumph of their Lord. In principle, this carries with it all the difference between judgment and salvation. For a moment their souls have to taste somewhat of this. They do not discern Him; they cry out. They are sore amazed above measure and wonder. They see their Lord in the place of strength and victory, but they are not with Him there. This is real separation. They behold Him, and with fear, walking over all that mighty maze and tempest, which was giving them such toil and distress.

Judgment and Salvation

This carries all the difference between judgment and salvation. For what is salvation but a share in the victory of the Son of God? And what will judgment be, but seeing that victory in its glorious fruit without a share in it, and rather driven from its presence with confusion and amazement?

The Sea of Galilee may picture the Christian's life to us. The surface was smooth at times, rough at times, asking for toil in rowing at times, affording propitious sailing and successful fishing at times, and at times awakening fear. But change as it may, Jesus was there with His people. His ways may vary, but He is always with them there or joins them there. He may at times be prospering their nets, directing their labors, asleep as though He heeded them not, the companion of their gentle passage across, or walking in strength over what was too much for them. But still He is with them: Whether sailing, fishing, rowing, or buffeting the wind in fear, He is ever with them.

The Remembrancer, 1902

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Jesus, the Son of God

Mark 6:45-56

After Jesus had supplied the meal for the great company of people in the wilderness, He told His disciples to go in the boat to another place on the shore of Galilee, and He went alone on the mountain near to pray.

The disciples seem not to have gone toward Bethsaida, as Jesus said, but toward another place (John 6:17). They rowed very hard all night, but the wind was against them, and at the 4th watch, which was the early morning, they were still far from the shore, and were very tired and discouraged.

But there in the stormy sea, those men saw a wonderful sight: Jesus walking on the water coming to them; He kept on, as though, for them all to see that He was walking. At first the men were greatly frightened and thought Jesus was a spirit, until He spoke to them, telling them to be of good cheer; He said, "It is I; be not afraid."

Jesus came into the boat with them and the wind stopped. The disciples were filled with wonder that Jesus had walked on the water, more than at all else they had seen. They knew He had power to cure all sickness, feed the hungry, raise the dead, and they had before heard Him still a storm. They believed His power was from God, and that He would he their King; they loved Him, and had left all to be with Him.

But when they saw Jesus walk upon the sea, they realized that He was Himdelf, different from all others, that He was One of Heaven, the Son of God (Matt. 14:33). Because Jesus lived so humble a life, they had believed Him only as God's prophet and King. He was not a spirit; which they could not see (Luke 24:37-39), but a perfect man, yet divine. This is a mystery we do not understand, but all who have truly learned of Jesus, reverence Him as the holy Son of God. That is the reason His words, His deeds, and His death on the cross for sins, have such value.

When Jesus and the disciples landed on shore, and people saw Him, they all hurried to bring their sick friends or relatives to be healed. It seems there were too many for Him to go to each one, and they carried the sick ones on their beds or blankets, and placed them beside the road where Jesus would pass, and begged Him that they could touch but the border of His garment.

"As many as touched Him were made whole."

This shows how constantly and patiently Jesus kept on going to all the villages to do good for all as God's Servant; no one was missed, who reacd out to Him for help.

Do you suppose there was a sick one who was not willing to put out his hand to touch Jesus? Such a one would be carried home again, still helpless. Many now miss a far greater blessing from the Lord Jesus.

Although He is now the Risen One in Heaven, we may "come" to Him in as simple a way as the sick ones: if we believe He is our Saviour, we "touch" Him by faith, and His power gives eternal life to the soul.

Which disciple asked to come to Jesus on the water? (Matt. 15:26).

ML 02/20/1944

Bible Herald: 1877, Communion With the Lord

Mark 6:30

We must ever remember that communion with the Lord is at once our joy and our security, the life of all service, and the power of all knowledge.

Whatever knowledge we have that does not connect us in spirit with the Lord, is a vanity of the mind, even though it may evert have the form of the truth, and be fully orthodox, as it is termed.

How often do we gather sorrow and shame in the end of our doings and ways, when we might have reaped joy and assurance, because we did not walk in the Spirit, or in fellowship with the Lord, through the circumstances as we should have done?

This is frequently illustrated in Scripture. As, for instance, in the striking and varied histories of Lot and Abraham; the former walked in the light of his own eyes, and he reaped shame, and loss, and sore disappointment; the latter walked by faith, and was brought to power and high estate, and great favor with God; and yet they were both in the main righteous.

I have been just meditating on a scene in the Gospel of Mark which illustrates this, chap. 6:30. You will observe on the return of the disciples to their Master, wearied and somewhat faint in their labor, He in tender consideration for them draws them aside to take rest and refreshment; in this He acted in the Spirit, as ever entering into their necessities. You can find Him moved with pity towards the scattered and unpitied flock of Israel, and again regardless of Himself, he turns to minister to them, and began to teach them many things. Here also He was not pleasing Himself but others, to their good to edification (Rom. 15:2). But here we find the disciples ceasing to sympathize with their Master. His heart was set on the urgent necessities of their spiritual wants, and He began to teach them. But towards evening the disciples seem to interrupt His work, and present to His attention their temporal wants, and would fain have them dismissed, that they might go into the villages and buy themselves victuals.

Now in this they were not walking in the Spirit, they were not of one mind in the circumstance with Him. However, He does not rebuke them there; the rebuke was to come afterward, as we shall see in the fruit of their ways. He, still as the minister of the need of poor necessitous man, sets Himself to meet the occasion, and He supplies the multitude with bread. When He had thus done, He sends His disciples off in the ship, while He remains behind with the people.

Now I believe that He resumes His teaching of them, for by the words, “He sent away the people,” I understand that He dismissed them in a solemn manner, giving them godly admonition, and testifying further of the Father to them. But you observe the disciples forfeited all title to take part with Him in this service, and therefore He previously constrained them to go away in the ship. They had forfeited this honor, inasmuch as they had not been one with Him in His compassion for the multitude, as I before observed; for you know we cannot suitably instruct others, or take part in ministering to their souls, till we feel for them.

We then find the blessed Jesus; having sent the multitude away, in the mountain at prayer. There you see Him still in spirit, fervently laboring in secret with God, walking in the light, in full fellowship with the Father.

The disciples meanwhile began to gather the bitter fruit of departing in spirit from the Lord; while He was in prayer, they were toiling in rowing against contrary winds. He, in the fullness of power, and as the Lord, who is mightier than the noise of many waters, who spreadeth out the heavens and walketh upon the waves of the sea, having finished His course of ministry and come down from the mountain, that had witnessed the fervency of His spirit, gathers glory, the reward of His ways; He appears treading on all that was the occasion of His people’s travail and trial, and they were amazed and confounded in the presence of His glory.

They did not understand it. They cried out and were troubled, and all this because the heart was hardened; had their hearts been tender, had they continued in full sympathy and communion with their Lord through the previous circumstances, they would now have stood in the presence of His glorious power, not abashed and confounded but in assurance and joy—and so with us.

Let us now, in this time of His absence, seek communion in spirit with Him, and then when He appears we shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

I do not speak of loss of the glory, as in this scene you find the disciples with their Lord safe over the storm and together on the other side of the lake. His blessed grace and power reserve the glory for us; but I speak of the presence of that glory not putting us to shame, as it surely must if we now walk in fellowship with that which is not of its own character. —M S.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Luke 9:3 Compared With Mark 6:8

Question: Will you kindly answer the following question?—In Luke 9 the Lord told the disciples not to take a staff when sending them out; whereas in Mark 6:8 He says, “Take nothing... save a staff only.” Can you say why the two Evangelists differ?

Answer: If the enquirer has access to vol. 9 (N.S.) of the Bible Treasury (1913) he will find on page 356 what, we think, may be a solution of his difficulty.

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 6:30-56

MAR 6Verses 30-34. The apostles now return and tell the Lord all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. Likely they were full of the excitement of their mission. He says: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." How kind to them this was, and they needed it so much, to take away their self-importance, and to remind them where the blessing came from, and that they were but His instruments to carry out His will, so that there in His presence in retirement they might find out what they were in truth, and enjoy His love without being puffed up by their usefulness. Notice He does not say, "Go ye yourselves apart," but "Come." It is being in His company that is the rest He desires for our souls; away from others, a desert place in His company.

For there were many corning and going so that they had no leisure so much as to eat. This coming and going does not tell of needy ones sitting at Jesus' feet, and the Lord gets away from them. They departed into a desert place by ship privately. The people saw them departing.

He was recognized. The news quickly spread, and out of the cities came the crowd together unto Him. The love of God breaks through His repose to meet man's need again. Jesus coming out saw a great crowd and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things. What a true, faithful, loving Servant we have here. He saw their sad moral condition, and ministers to them the teaching He knew they were most in need of. Their leaders had already rejected Him and blasphemed the Holy Ghost. (Mark 3:22-30.) But His heart goes out to the needy ones in deep loving compassion.

Verses 35, 36. The disciples at length remind Him that the day was far spent and that it was a desert place and advises sending the crowd away that they may go where they can buy themselves bread; for they had nothing to eat. Could He send them away? No, indeed! His compassion on them was greater than that. If He detained them to teach their souls many things, He will also prove Himself able to meet this need also. He will testify that He is the Great Messiah of Psa. 132:15, who of old said, "I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread." He will also teach His disciples, what they failed to learn in their mission, that they were His administrators (but see verse 52).

They do not understand this when He says, "Give ye them to eat." They speak about buying bread. He said, "How many loaves have ye? Go and see. And when they knew, they say, "Five, and two fishes." He will use His disciples to arrange them in ranks of fifties and hundreds. And He will also use them to distribute what His fullness provides. He now takes the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke the loaves, and divided the fishes, and gave them to His disciples to set before them, and they did all eat and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men. What proof this was that Jehovah was in their midst blessing the poor of His flock. In this we have a foreshowing of the Messiah's glory and of the place His disciples have with Him. But it is only a picture, He is yet the rejected One.

Verse 45 begins another picture. In figure He dismisses the Jewish nation, constrains His disciples to get into the ship (the Jewish remnant became the Church at Pentecost), while He goes up into a mountain to pray. A picture of this present time when the Church has to face contrary winds and trials, but He is interceding for us on high, and though we are apparently left alone, He is with us now by the Holy Spirit. (John, 14:18.) This time will end with His coming to meet us, not on the earth, but in the air.

His coming to them walking on the water, pictures His coming to the believing remnant of Israel, and calming their fears, and delivering them from the oppressors-the winds and waves of the great tribulation. His coming for us has no signs. His coming to Israel has many signs. He watches over them, and says "Be of good cheer: It is I; be not afraid." And coming up into the boat the storm ceases; but with the Church it is taken up out of the storm. Our rest is not here. In Him we have peace. The disciples were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered, the miracle of the loaves had only hardened their hearts.

Verses 53-56. They now land at Gennesaret, or Gadara, where the man that had the legion cast out was left. Now, what a change! They besought Him to depart before, now they recognize Him and run to bring all their sick to Him, where they heard He was. And besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made whole. This pictures the future blessing of Israel when they are restored to the Lord. God's purposes will be fulfilled without fail, and He knows the end from the very beginning. What a blessed portion is ours now, as saints in light. May we walk according to it!

Continued from page 296.

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 6

Verse 1. Jesus now comes to His own country where He had been brought up, and His disciples follow Him.

Verses 2, 3. On the sabbath day He began to teach in the synagogue. Words of wisdom flowed from His lips, and many, hearing Him, were astonished, and question, "From whence has this man these things? What wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands? "

They call Him the carpenter; that is all He is to them. They know His family, but they care nothing for Him; they are offended at Him. What unbelief; what hardness of heart; what a display of the flesh that profits nothing! The carnal mind is enmity to God; the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. (Rom. 8:7; 1 Cor. 2:14.) He did not flatter their pride. He did not come with earthly glory, but as a lowly servant. Quite true, He manifested the character of God, but they did not want that. Worldly power and glory would suit their taste, but not a humble servant like Jesus. They were offended at Him; they reject Him, and He will reject them.

Verses 4-6. Jesus said unto them, "A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house, and He could do no mighty work there." What a loss to them!

Their unbelief lost the blessing He had for them, and only a few sick that He laid His hands on, were healed. They were needy, and love will work where it can. The few sick folk profit by this love that seeks their good, but the rest go empty away. What a lesson for us all not to hinder the work of God by our unbelief.

What will He do now? If He can do nothing there because of their unbelief, He will seek a wider field: "And' He went round about the villages, teaching."

Verses 7-11. He now shows His power in calling others into the work, and gives them power over unclean spirits, and sends them out on a mission entirely dependent on Him to supply their every need. They take nothing but their staff for their journey: no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse; sandals they would need, but not two coats. Luke tells us, they lacked nothing. (Luke 22:35.) Those that would not receive them, would receive judgment worse than Sodom and Gomorrha. The house they entered into, there they were to abide while they were in that place.

Verse 12. They went out and preached that men should repent. Doubtless, many did repent and turn to God, and thus escaped the terrible judgment Israel's sins, their sins, deserved.

Verse 13. They cast out many devils and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. What grace is here seen, not only does He send good news, but uses men to carry it. May we,' too, have our hearts filled with the Savior's love, so that we may tell others what we have received, and thus be used of Him to carry blessing to others.

Verses 14-29. We are here told how John, the Baptist's ministry came to an end, a fore-showing of what the Lord's ministry would come to also. (Matt. 17:12.) John rebuked Herod's sin, and he threw John into prison. Herodias would have killed him, but she could not. Herod's respect for John sheltered him from her, but pleasures and excitement laid the snare, and Herod promised with an oath to give the dancing girl what she wished. Her mother told her to ask the head of John the Baptist. The king's false oath bound him, and John was executed. The story shows the heartlessness of Israel's ruler. His disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse and laid it in a tomb. Matt. 14:12 adds, "and went and told Jesus."

When Herod heard of Jesus, it came into his mind what he had done. (He will never forget it to all eternity.) He thought God had raised John from the dead, and therefore mighty works showed themselves forth in him. Others thought Jesus a prophet, such as Elias, perhaps from Mal. 4:5.

(To be Continued).

Shepherding Pastoral Care John 21: September 2008, He Was Moved With Compassion

“Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things” (Mark 6:34).

In a world of misery and want, how blessed to know One whose heart feels it all, who makes it His own, and whose emotions of pitying love are so expressed that we can know and see them: “He was moved with compassion.” That blessed face plainly told of the throbbing of divine mercy that worked within. The heart expressed itself before the hand moved to relieve what the eye looked upon. Nor was it a transient feeling, a passing emotion. Human misery has found a home in the heart of Jesus, and He, who is “the same yesterday, and today, and forever,” although now on the throne of God in glory, is still “moved with compassion” as He looks out upon and takes in all the misery and want that plead incessantly, in accents of ever deepening intensity, at the throne of mercy.

If the Shepherd of Israel was moved with compassion as He looked upon the children of Abraham, “as sheep not having a shepherd,” how deep must be the emotion with which the Lord Jesus now views the children of God again “scattered abroad”! What havoc the “grievous wolves” have made in “the flock of God”! How the speakers of perverse things have led away “disciples after” them! What widespread division and offense have they wrought who “serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly”! Surely all this appeals with touching force to Him who “loved the church and gave Himself for it.”

But was it only that Jehovah’s people were “as sheep not having a shepherd”? Had they not sinned themselves? Had their hearts been “right with Him”? Had they been “steadfast in His covenant”? Full well He knew the long, sad history of that perverse and stiff-necked people; it was all before Him, “but He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity” (Psa. 78:38).

And has the church of the living God suffered only from false teachers and bad guides? Have the children of God a better history than the children of Israel? Have they been less perverse and stiff-necked? Have they altogether kept His Word? And have their hearts been right with Him who redeemed them with His own blood? How well He knows that higher privileges and better promises have only brought out deeper sin and relatively less response to His love! Surely every heart knows this. How sweet then, in our day, to turn to Him whose “compassions fail not” and who, “having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end”!

We do well to be at home with that deeply moved heart of pitying, forgiving love, as it “began to teach them many things.” True enough, He now speaks from heaven, but that heaven is open to us, and there is no distance to faith.

Failure and ignorance are on every hand. Only rightly can we feel the one and minister to the other as we are really with Him who, above all evil, sees it all, only to find in it the occasion for the ministry of love.

They who would, in any little degree, serve the sheep of Christ need much to ponder these words, spoken to one of old: “Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother.” While doing this, they need to be in spirit with that “merciful and faithful high priest,” who Himself is not encompassed by infirmity, yet who is touched with the feeling of ours and is “able to have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way.”

Most merciful High Priest, Our Saviour, Shepherd, Friend; ‘Tis in Thy love alone we trust Until the end.

C. W., from Words of Faith, 1:5

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 6:1-44, Jesus, Meek and Humble:

Jesus went to Nazareth, which had been His home, and the people were astonished to hear His wise teaching in the synagogue. Yet they would not believe that He was from God and greater than they, nor would they show Him respect. Instead of listening more, they talked against Him among themselves.

Jesus did not do great miracles there, as in the towns nearby, because of their unbelief. He did, however, heal a few sick ones who, perhaps, believed His words. Instead, He went to teach and help people in other towns.

No Proud Servants

You notice that Jesus sent His disciples to teach people in the same plain, humble way: They were to go even where the roads were rough and stony. Therefore, they needed to wear sandals, but they were not to take an extra coat or scrip (a bag or wallet for food), nor money. They were to go as very poor men and get food on the way as best they could. All this would teach the disciples, and those they went to, that there was to be no pride, and that God’s words were for the poor.

The disciples were given power from Jesus to heal the sick and cast out wicked spirits, and many were healed. Although Jesus and the disciples went about in so humble a manner, the news of the miracles was told in all places. When Herod, the ruler, heard about them, he said the prophet John must be alive again and doing the wonderful things.

Herod had given the awful order for John to be killed, although he knew that John was a holy man of God (vs. 20).

He seemed to want to think that John was alive, so he would no longer be guilty of his death. But he did not go to see if it were John, and he kept on in his proud ways.

Many people who heard of the miracles wanted to see Jesus and came where He and the disciples were, so they had not chance even to eat their meals. Then Jesus told the disciples to come apart to rest, and He went with them in the boat across the Sea of Galilee to land where no people lived.

The Miracle of the Loaves

But the people saw them leaving in the boat, and they hurried along the shore to the same place. When Jesus saw they were waiting for Him there, He was sorry that they had no one to teach them God’s words, and instead of resting, He patiently taught them again.

When evening neared, the disciples spoke to Jesus to send the people to their homes, but He wanted them first to have food, for they had a long distance to walk. The disciples said it would require two hundred pennyworth of bread for so many. A penny was of much greater value in their money than it is to us today, and the men spoke as though they could not buy so much.

Perhaps you know what a wonderful thing Jesus did. He took the five loaves of bread and two fish they already had, gave thanks to God, broke all into pieces, and gave them to the disciples to pass to the people sitting on the grass.

In the hands of Jesus, those few pieces of bread and fish became many, more than enough to supply those five thousand men, beside women and children (Matt. 14:21).

1. How else did the Lord keep His servants humble?

2. What are some of the ways that Jesus showed He cared for His people’s physical needs?

3. If you’d like to meditate more on the Lord Jesus, you’ll no doubt enjoy A Short Meditation on the Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ by J. G. Bellett.

Echoes of Grace: 1950, As Many As Touched

"As many as touched Him were made whole." Mark 6:56. They did touch, and it was as many as touched that received the healing blessing. Some looked on, some heard, some reasoned, but those who touched were healed.

There is a lesson here for the seeking soul which teaches him to get close to Christ. Personal contact with Him is the necessity. It suffices not for the sick man to look at the healing medicine, he must take it if he would be helped thereby. You must come to Christ, not come just a little way towards Him, if you want to be healed. The sinner must needs meet the Savior, his soul must come into contact with Him; and when this is the case, lo, the sinner is "made whole.”

There was no virtue in the touch of these sick persons! Think we, that the finger of a paralyzed man had power in it? Or that in the hand of the leper there was cleansing? Nor is there in us any virtue, or any good thing: the virtue dwells in Jesus, and through the touch the blessing was received. The touch was the evidence of faith; faith led to the touch. It was also the sign that the sick needed the healing of the Great Physician. On the one hand, in Jesus there is stored the fullness of grace and pardon and cleansing; on the other, in us is the absolute need. Faith puts the empty sinner into communication with the aboundings that are in Christ.

Many a soul carries its burden to this hour because there has not been the coming close to Jesus in simple faith. Some are content to hear of His gracious works, others satisfy themselves by looking at Him from afar off; but the healed people—the saved people—have been content with nothing short of getting close to Christ, each one for himself and herself.

"As many as touched Him were made whole!" We do not wonder at this; there is no room for surprise, the only surprise is that so few go to Him. Does it astonish us that we read of a dying thief being saved, or of a blasphemous man, a persecutor and injurious, being made a follower of the meek and lowly Lord? Or that we hear in our own day of the vilest and worst being "made whole,” and living no more the life of sin but living instead the life of faith? Do we lift up our eyes with amazement and say, "How can these things be?" By no means, for Jesus is so wonderful, and His salvation is so complete, and the cleansing efficacy of His once-shed blood is so perfect, that we know He can and does heal as many as come to Him.

"Whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment." What a sight of power and of pity, of grace and misery! The Son of God, who had come from heaven, surrounded with every type of human woe! And as He walks on, His heart moved in tenderness toward all, hundreds of weak hands stretch out as it were to touch the very skirts of His garments. If our eyes could but see, we should behold in this our day the selfsame Jesus, the Son of God, moving amongst the longing and perishing children of men, and we should see weak and helpless hands outstretched to touch Him, and "as many as touched Him were made whole.”

Before the night closes in, and the Lord has passed by to return in mercy no more, oh! stretch out the hand of faith and touch Him!

Christian Treasury: Volume 11, "How Many Loaves Have Ye?"

Mark 6:38MAR 6:38

The Lord used what the disciples had. It was only a little—nothing for such a multitude. But when blessed and broken by Jesus, it went a long way. The God who gave life could sustain it independent of means, or multiply the means to make them adequate to the need.

So now, it is what we have that Christ uses. Use what we have in faith and He will make it meet the need of all present. It is the power of God giving efficacy to His Word that makes much or little a blessing, and, without that, plenty is in vain. In ministry, the grand end is getting the soul, through the presentation of Christ, brought into living connection with God. True ministry does this for the poor in spirit; the rich go away empty.

In seeking to meet the need of sinners and to feed the church of God, only by nearness to Christ and as those who have tasted His mercy shall we not faint under the ministry committed to us in serving His people it is our privilege to magnify His name by drawing on His strength in such a way that He alone is the spring and strength and power of ministry. Jesus said, "Give ye them to eat."

Christian Friend: Volume 7, Three Raisings of the Dead, The

AR 5:22-43{UK 7:11-16{OH 11{Three times only, as far as we know, did the Lord Jesus, while upon earth, raise the dead to life; viz., the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus. Each of these cases has its special characteristics and instruction. The daughter of Jairus had but just expired when the Lord entered the chamber, and turned the weeping of the night into the joy of the morning. The son of the widow of Nain was being carried to his grave when the procession of death was arrested by the Prince of Life; and Lazarus was in his tomb, had been dead four days, ere, at the bidding of Him who was the Resurrection and the Life, he came forth again into the, light of day. Thus did Christ vindicate His power as the Son to quicken whom He would, for "the hour," said He, "is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25)

There was a divine reason, too, for the selection of these cases. Had the Lord raised only the child of the Jewish ruler of the synagogue, infidelity, in its shameless presumption, might have questioned the reality of the death; and so also in the instance of the son of the widow. The case of Lazarus, therefore, was of another kind-one whom death had claimed, and retained for four days, so that even his sister exclaimed, "Lord, by this time he stinketh." But 'he who stood by the grave had "life in Himself" (John 5:27), and was about to die, and rise again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living. (Rom. 14:9) Death therefore had no power, nay, could not exist, in His presence; and He, in His condescension and grace, has proved it for us by meeting and overcoming death in every stage of decay and corruption. He will prove it again, in a still more wondrous and victorious way, at a later time, when "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (judgment). (John 5:29)

The motives also, it may be remarked, of the Lord's action in these respective instances were different; that is to say, His motives as revealed in the several scriptures. He went to the house of Jairus at the earnest request of the sorrowing father. "He fell at His feet, and besought Him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: [I pray thee,] come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." (Mark 5:23) It was faith, so to speak, laying hold of the heart of Christ, and constraining Him to answer its appeal. It was the heart of Christ delighting to meet the need of one who in all confidence was casting his burden of sorrow upon Him. What consolation! yea, what encouragement to every poor burdened soul-burdened with whatever grief or anguish-to come to Christ and evoke the sympathy and succor of His unfailing and inexhaustible grace and love! Truly all such shall find that He has a heart for every woe.

But there was no appeal from the widow of Nain. Whatever her sorrows, exercises and desolation, they are all unrevealed, save in her circumstances. They are left to be gathered from that one pathetic word, "The only son of his mother, and she was a widow." But this one word is enough. It is a living picture of unequaled sorrow and heart-breaking grief. Divine sustainments there may have been; but if we speak after the manner of men, it is a picture of dark and hopeless desolation. Knowing therefore something of the heart of Christ, we do not wonder that it says, "When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not." (Luke 5:13) We have said that this poor widow made no appeal to Christ. Nay, her hopeless sorrow, her total bereavement, constituted her appeal. The Lord saw her, estimated as no other could the depth of her need, and thus, moved by His own heart, He went to her relief. We do not sufficiently understand this. All can comprehend that the Lord should listen to the cries of His people, but how many of us live in the power of the blessed remembrance of the fact, that our own griefs and sorrows find an answering response in His heart? "In all their affliction He was afflicted." (Isa. 63:9) "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are-without sin "(sin apart). (Heb. 4:15) If a parent bends over his suffering child with yearning pity, "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." (Psa. 103:13) Some who read these lines may be lying on beds of pain and affliction; others, bereaved, may be weeping over their dead; and others again may be mourning over those who are dead in sins. Surely, then, it will be a comfort to all such to remember, that He who, when He saw the widow of Nain following the bier of her only son, had compassion on her, has the same heart for their griefs; that He stands by them with infinite tenderness, waiting both to succor and to console.

The case of Lazarus differs from both. There was not the faith in the heart of Martha, or even in Mary, that characterized Jairus. They had faith; but it only embraced the power of Christ to raise up from sickness. Both alike said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." (John 11:21-32) Nor did the Lord, as in the case of the widow of Nain, act from His own heart. On the other hand, He refused the appeal to His affections. The message of the sisters was, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou. lovest is sick." (John 11:3) No doubt they concluded that this constituted the most effectual entreaty they could make, believing that they were laying hold of those strong cords of love that bound Him to Lazarus. They made no mistake as to the fact of His affection; for the Spirit of God carefully adds: "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister,

and Lazarus." (vs. 5) But still the Lord refused the motive presented. It says, "When He had heard therefore that he was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was." Wherefore this delay? It was not, as we have seen, that He had no heart for Lazarus, nor that His heart would not prompt Him to speed to the succor of the one He had honored with His love, but it was because the sickness of Lazarus was "not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." (vs. 4)

Every word He spake, and every act He performed, was for the glory of God; for it was His meat to do His Father's will, and to finish His work. But it has pleased God to unfold to us the different ways in which the Lord acted for that glory, and thus to display the manifold perfections, and the varied moral glories, of His beloved Son. Here therefore we see Him losing sight, as. it were, even of those He loved, that it might be known that He was actuated in this wondrous exhibition of resurrection power solely by the glory of God. Hence it was that He abode two days still in the place where He was, after the cry of these sorrowing hearts had reached Him; for though He was the eternal Son, the Word that was with God, and was God, the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And in coming down to this scene, He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. (John 6:38) He would not therefore act at the promptings of His own heart, because He had taken the place of obedience, and thus waited for the Father's word before He responded to the appeal. Cold must be the heart that is not moved by this outshining of His moral glory, this combination of infinite greatness with the lowliest grace and humility. It is, in fact, the revelation of what He was.

What needed lessons are thereby conveyed! Human affection would have prompted to instant succor; but allowing death to come in first, brought, in raising Lazarus, as nothing else could do, not only glory to God, but also to Christ Himself; for if this sickness was for the glory of God, it was also "that the Son of God should be glorified thereby." How then it should still our hearts in the presence of God when He seems to delay to answer our, cries! Urgent need or pressing danger is generally importunate and impatient. "Has not God said," we repeat at such times, "that He will hear our prayers?" How then is it that we have cried in vain? Ah, no! we never cry to Him in vain; "for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers." (1 Peter 3:12), If the Lord wait, He waits only for His own glory, and our fuller blessing.

Martha and Mary would naturally conclude, that if Lazarus died the case was hopeless; for they had not counted upon resurrection power. In like manner we often limit God, and thus it is that He leaves us, like Paul, to have "the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." (2 Cor. 1:9) We should challenge our hearts as to how far we have thus learned God as the God of resurrection. Martha and Mary needed and learned the lesson, and, on the evening of the day on which their brother had been raised up from death, would thank God that He had permitted him to die ere the Lord came upon the scene. What was thus for the glory of God, and glorified the Son of God, secured at the same time for His people unspeakable blessings.

These three different motives for the Lord's action may in another way be connected. If we begin from man's side, as presented in Jairus, we see that it is faith which lays hold and secures the intervention of His power on our behalf. If we look at His side in relation to ourselves, we learn that it is His heart which moves His arm of power in answer to our cries. And then if we inquire what is the object He has before Himself in all the exercise of His grace and power, we find that it is solely the glory of God. Thus, ere He came to earth, in the past eternity, foreseeing man's condition and the failure of everything to satisfy God's claims, He presented Himself, saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;" and before He returned to the Father, but taking a place, in spirit, beyond the cross, He said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

A few words may be added upon the dispensational teachings of these three cases, leaving for the present the more general instruction. All symbolize Israel in different ways. But it must be remembered, as another has said, "that, while dispensationally Israel has great importance as the center of God's government of this world, morally Israel was just man where all the ways and dealings of God had been carried out so as to bring to light what he was. The Gentile was man left to himself as regards God's special ways, and so unrevealed. Christ was a light "to reveal the Gentiles ( )." The daughter of Jairus sets forth the condition of Israel on the Lord's return. Christ was on His way to heal the nation, but while on His way the poor woman, who had been afflicted with an issue of blood for twelve years (Mark 5:25), and had come to the end of all resources, whether in herself or in others, in vainly seeking for cure, comes in the energy of faith to Christ, and at once obtains relief. This is what has happened. The nation of Israel refused their Messiah, but faith, even while He was on earth, proved His ability to save, and still proves it now that He is on high. The present dispensation, therefore, like the woman with the issue of blood, comes between His mission to Israel and His actual restoration of the nation to life. The son of the widow of Nain also speaks of Israel's moral condition. Remarkably enough, too, the incident comes after a striking exhibition of faith; faith in Christ as having the power of God, and such faith as the Lord had not found in Israel. (Luke 7:9) But in this case it was a Gentile, and not one of the chosen people. He was a Roman centurion. Luke, however, presents Christ as the Son of man, revealing God in grace outside of all dispensations, although, as a matter of fact, He was in the midst of Israel. Hence the prominence given to the faith of the centurion, who was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger from the covenant of promise. It is in contrast with this that the son of the widow of Nain is introduced. Morally Israel was dead, and, as such, beyond hope, save for the intervention in grace of resurrection power-a power unknown to the ordinances of the law. Israel then must be the object of sovereign grace and mercy equally with the Gentile. (Compare Rom. 11:30-32)

Lazarus typifies, in like manner, the state of Israel, as indeed the state of man as displayed in Israel. In chapter 8, the Jews reject the word of Christ; in chapter 9, His work; and in chapter 10, He, as the Good Shepherd, calls His sheep out of the Jewish fold. This excites the enmity of the Jews, and they took up stones again to stone Him. (10: 31) They had done this before. (8: 59) Not only, therefore, had they rejected Him, but they had also displayed the murderous enmity of their hearts against Him as the Son of God. (10: 33-36) It was consequently all over with them as a nation, and in the next chapter their state in death, as the fruit of their sin, is displayed in Lazarus. They had sought to stone Christ as the Son of God; God testifies to Him in this character in the resurrection of Lazarus. "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Moreover, if Israel is dead, the question is, Can these dry bones live? If so, it can only be by the sovereign exercise of resurrection power in grace. And this is what will take place; for "thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel."

(Ezek. 37:12) "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

(Rom. 11:33-36)

E. D.

Christian Truth: Volume 22, Trip to the Unfailing Physician, The

Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48

The daughter of Jairus the ruler of the synagogue, lay dying in her father's house. Everything that could be done for her had been done, but nothing could stay the relentless waves of death which rolled onward as if resolved to quench the light of that fair young life. Will then the father and mother of the damsel have to part with this dear child of their affection? It must be so, unless Jesus would come and raise her up; and happily for them Jesus was at hand. Jairus goes to Him, beseeches Him to come and bid his daughter live; and the blessed Lord, ever gracious, ever ready to answer the cry of need, would go and rescue this child from the gates of the grave, and place her again in her parents' bosom. On His way to the ruler's house, much people followed and thronged Him; and among them there is one to whose state and actions the pen of the inspired Evangelist now abruptly turns our attention.

For twelve long years she had been sick; and her case, like that of the, ruler's daughter, baffled the skill of the medical men. Physician after physician was consulted, and fee after fee paid, till all that she had was gone, and she was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. Oh, those weary twelve years during which the heart of this suffering woman had been beaten about like a shuttlecock between hope and despair—one day thinking she was gaining strength, the next day finding she was not; one physician given up and another tried, but all alike impotent to do her any good, until poverty and a long unbroken series of disappointments bade her hope for health no more, but prepare for the final issue—the coffin and the grave.

What a picture have we here of the sinner's condition! How it speaks of that incurable disease—sin—from which humanity everywhere is suffering, and of the anxious but fruitless efforts of many a soul to find spiritual health and healing. Yes, sin is an awful reality; and death and sorrow and crying and pain and tears are the bitter fruits of it in this world; and how infinitely more sad and solemn its results in the world to come. And this cruel and malignant foe has made a prey of every heart, and manifests its presence and its power in man's insubjection to God, in lawlessness, for "sin is lawlessness." It is a terrible thing to be a sinner, and the fact that all have sinned does not lessen the terribleness of it any more than the power of cholera to kill would be lessened by every individual in the country being seized with it together. "All have sinned." Alas! alas! that it should be so.

Many are the means which well-intentioned persons have devised to repress or at least check certain forms in which sin shows itself. There are societies for the promotion of temperance, of social purity; societies for the circulation of wholesome literature, and for the suppression of vice; but all such agencies, when they have accomplished their highest measure of good, leave the sinner's state before God untouched. The sore healed upon the surface frets underneath; the chained demoniac is a demoniac still; the rotten ship is not made sound by being painted on the outside. Stanch the bleeding wounds of humanity as much as you may, man remains a sinner; and the question for each is, What do you purpose doing in reference to your having sinned against God?

If you set yourself earnestly to work, determined to lead a better life in every sense of the word, in what way would that make your condition less hopeless than it is? If a man is deeply in debt, his circumstances are not improved by his resolve not to add to his indebtedness. If in the future he pays cash for all he buys, that does not liquidate his former debts—the past remains, and it is written that "God requireth that which is past" (Eccles. 3:15).

It is the natural impulse of the heart to have recourse to many physicians. No one likes to regard his case as hopeless. No one likes to believe himself lost as far as his own efforts go. When the prodigal's last penny was spent, and no man gave unto him, he did not begin at once to think of his father's house, nor determine to return thither. He will seek to mend his broken fortunes somehow; anything rather than go back in poverty and rags, and own the sin and folly of his ways. But if God is dealing with your soul, it is to that point you must be brought; and the longer you fight against it, the longer will your misery last. If you still resist, God will suffer you to go on till your last cent is gone, and your last interview with the physicians is over; and what will you then do? Poor and strengthless, sick and ready to die, to whom will you then turn?

The woman of our narrative had come to this when someone told her of Jesus. What her informant said we know not, but it is easy to imagine how hope sprang up afresh within her heart-hope which maketh not ashamed-as she heard of the One whose power had never been known to fail. Here was a new Physician to whom the poor were as welcome as the rich, and from whom healing virtue flowed at the first touch of those who felt their need of Him. To Him then she would go, and at once; so gathering her garments about her, she straightway mingled with the great crowd in the street.

Little by little did this afflicted soul elbow her way through the throng. Hope gave her fresh strength, and her faith led her to dare what otherwise she would have shrunk from; for, as men speak, the crowd was no place for her. But she said, "If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole"; and this was no small matter for one who had suffered many things of many physicians, an d was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. Silently and unobserved she drew near and stretching out the hand touched the hem of His garment. The act was weak, but how rich in its results! The simple touch of this feeble woman ended in her perfect cure. What she had sought in vain all those long years now came to her in a moment, not as the reward of incessant labor or almost endless research, but the happy fruit of a faith that brought her into personal contact with Jesus.

Nor is it otherwise today. The sinner that comes to the Savior does not remain unblessed. The serpent-bitten Israelites lived when they looked on the serpent of brass; and the conscience-stricken jailor at Philippi was saved the moment he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation tomorrow might do very well for any who are sure of living till tomorrow, but for those who know the uncertainty of human life a present salvation is required. This is what God presents. Salvation now, free and everlasting, is found in Christ for everyone that believes. The soul that believes in Him is saved, everlasting life is his, into judgment he shall never come, he has already passed from death to life (John 5:24).

And this dear, timid woman, having received healing, would now return home as unheeded as she came. Little did she think that her faint touch had been noticed by the Savior; but it was happy for her that it had. So with His question and His look He called her from the clustering crowd. Fearing and trembling she came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth. Everything was out. She who had secretly

obtained the blessing is now in the presence of the Blesser, and what will He say? Will He blame her boldness in coming to Him as it were by stealth, and censure her lack of courage in not asking for healing in the open day? Far from that—He calls her to His feet that she might know the heart of Him whose power she had already proved. "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." She can now go back with the blessing confirmed in her possession, and her spirit rejoicing in the One who had blessed her thus.

When the soul has received eternal blessing from Christ, it is well that there should be a firm confession of His name. It was due to Him that this one should declare "before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately." Who can tell the effect of this personal and public testimony? By it the faith that was ready to falter may have receive d strength, and some hearing of what Jesus had done may have hastened to tell of Him to others whose case was as hopeless as hers.

Another point may be noticed. Numbers may flock around Jesus and touch Him, but at the touch of faith alone the healing streams flow forth. It is only when such a touch is given that the Savior can say, "Somebody hath touched Me." And has this no voice for those who crowd around Christ, so to speak, in places where His name is named?

There they like to go, as their going gives a tone to their respectability, which would not be complete without it. Moreover, it quiets the conscience and rocks it to sleep in the cradle of self-complacency. But alas! how few among the many who handle the externals of religion have touched the hem of His garment in faith and in felt need! How few know Him savingly, yet not to know Him thus is not to know Him at all.

"And didst Thou feel the gentle touch

Amid the noisy rabble throng;

Knowing that need of Thee had drawn

A weak one, that rude crowd among?

"With sickened frame, and trembling heart,

She crept unnoticed through the throng;

And, sheltered 'neath those healing wings,

She found, at once, her burden gone.

"Her need was answered-and unseen

As she had come, she hoped to go,

Alone to love that healing One

Whom soon she'd as Messiah know.

"But no-the words, 'Who touched My clothes?'

Gave birth to thoughts which none could tell;

She had spent all-had naught to give-

And trembling at His feet she fell.

"She knew Him not. 'Be of good cheer'

Threw peace, and joy, and light around,

As rainbow-drops from heaven descend

In grateful showers on thirsty ground.

"Her fears dispelled, she sees Him now

Her God and Savior, looking love;

He'd been her hope of comfort here,

And now her hope of joy above."

The Evangelist: Volume 7 (1873), Glimpses of Jesus' Ways.

No. 2.

READ Mark 5:22-24, 35-43. “And He commanded that something should be given her to eat.” How very kind and thoughtful was this of our precious Lord Jesus! and how strikingly it illustrates His own gracious words, “Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.” Here, then, we get a little “glimpse” of one of those many “ways” in which He “declared the Father.” (John 1:18; 17:6, 26.) The poor girl, you know, had been ill of a fever, and no doubt had suffered much; and when people suffer they can’t eat. But she had not only suffered and been sorely weakened by the fever, but it had killed her outright. Then came Jesus, and with that word, “Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise,” He gave her life again. His word sufficed. “He spake, and it was done.” And if in thus speaking the dead into

life He showed His power, a power greater than that of death itself—if thus He would show that He was the life, and His word life, how tenderly, how humanely, He does it! He “took her by the band,” all unconscious as she was; for He would befriend the very DEAD. Nor was this all “He commanded that something should be given her to eat.” Wonder, amazement, and joy unspeakable, might have caused the parents and friends to forget at such a moment the need of the poor child; but Jesus forgets nothing. How calm He is in all the turmoil and excitement of this scene; how conscious of power! yet how He stoops to think of giving a poor girl “something to eat.” What tender pity for a little one! As the beautiful curtains of the tabernacle were all of “one measure” (Exodus 26:2), so the precious features of Jesus’ character were all equal. His tenderness was as deep as His love, His pity as great as His power. No doubt this little scene shadows forth a glorious future, when the daughter of Judah shall be “taken by the hand,” raised from “death in trespasses and sins,” and fed on the meat that endureth forever. But just now I want you to think over the tenderheartedness which could care for the need of a child just raised from the dead by His own almighty word. God and man stand before us in one person, and in one little scene. The resistless power that can raise the dead is united to a compassion not less tender and thoughtful than that of a mother for her little one. Love was the spring of it all; and He is love, for He is God; but, blessed thought, He is man too, and His pity is equal to His power. What a Friend to have forever! Is He yours by faith? Do you know Him as your own precious Saviour, whose blood cleanseth from all sin? Only such can have Him for a Friend, and to all such He is “a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” But to know Him as a friend you must walk in obedience and communion.
(John 15:14; 13:23-26; 19:26, 27.)

K.

The Evangelist: Volume 7 (1873), Glimpses of Jesus' Ways.

No. 1.

“As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.”— MARK 5:21-36

POOR Jairus! It was his only daughter, you see (Luke 8:42), and she lay a dying when he left the house. He had tried all means, you may be sure, and all had failed; but there was one hope left. What was that, do you think? If he could but find Jesus, Him of whose wondrous power he had heard, his beloved one might yet be saved. And he had found Him, and had fallen down in his deep distress at His feet, and had “besought Him greatly” to come and heal his child. Ah, he didn’t know Jesus! He needed no pressing. Jairus had but to tell his sorrow, and He was ready at once; nay, I doubt not He had crossed the sea on purpose.

What the poor father felt as he hastened on towards his home with the Great Deliverer beside him, a father’s anxious heart alone can tell. How glad he must have been! how grateful to Jesus for coming so readily! how anxiety and hope would in turns fill his soul, as he pressed on through the thoughtless crowd which “thronged” his gracious Companion! But, alas! just when the hope of seeing his dear child once more made well begins to cheer his drooping spirit, the terrible message comes, “Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?” How cruelly abrupt! What a heart that messenger must have had who could speak thus to a father, without a soothing word to prepare him for the sudden blow! And I think you may see also, that although the man speaks with seeming respect of “the Master” (or teacher), as he calls the Lord Jesus, there is secret contempt and opposition towards Him in his heart. It is as if he would say, “It’s of no use to bring Him any further; He can’t help you.” Poor Jew! he didn’t know Jesus, did he? He seems in such haste to hinder Jesus, if he can, from coming to the house at all, that he utters his hard, cold message as abruptly as possible, quite unconscious, it appears, that he has stabbed the poor father to the heart. Depend upon it, he had no liking for Jesus’ miracles of love and power. “But as soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken,” before the stricken father could well feel the crashing force of the message, or utter a cry of pain, His precious sympathy, like a fountain welling over, is instantly in action. How beautiful is this! Quick to feel another’s woe, He anticipates the pang, and the ear, which had hardly yet drunk in the meaning of that bitter news, hears the gentle, loving voice of Jesus say, “Be not afraid, only believe;” and so, breathing words of comfort on his stricken heart, He goes with him to deliver.

Do you know what sympathy means? It means to feel with a person; not simply to feel for them, but so to enter into their sorrow or their joy as to feel as they feel. Thus we read, “Weep WITH them that weep.” (Rom. 12:15.) You see, it doesn’t say merely, “Weep for those that weep”— the hired mourners could do that (verse 38)— but “with them.” That is sympathy, and in the blessed Jesus you see it to perfection. Now every believer, young and old, has “the Spirit of Christ” (Romans 8:9, 10), and therefore can sympathize (feel) with another if he will; and if he does not, it is because that blessed Spirit is hindered or grieved. One may therefore well be sorry for a believer who shows little or no sympathy for others. There is something wrong, you may rely upon it. How is it, dear reader, with you?

K.

The Christian Shepherd: 2000, Food in the House

“And He took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. . . . He . . . commanded that something should be given her to eat” (Mark 5:41-43).

Jesus commanded that something should be given her to eat. Now, perhaps lack of food was partly the cause of her death—because she hadn’t really been given food to eat. Perhaps the Word had been read to her in a mechanical way. But when the Lord restores her life, He brings in the thought that her life should be sustained with food.

It is lovely, too, that there was food in that house, for the Lord wouldn’t have said what He said, if there were no food available. Many times we have an abundance of food in the house, yet perhaps the children are spiritually starving. Could it be that we don’t take time to give them this divine food?

MAR 5Verse 24. Jesus went with Jarius, but before He gets to Jarius' house another incident comes in: "And much people followed Him, and thronged Him. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched His garment. For she said, 'If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole.' And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." Here is a case of need; a woman with no name, and no claim, except that He is the Savior and she is a needy one, and she has faith in Him. How all this answers to the present time. Now, it is individual salvation, not national. We have no claim as Gentiles but our need. No doctors can work improvement of our hopeless case. Only Jesus can do helpless sinners good. It must be nothing short of personal faith in Christ that can meet our desperate case.'

Verses 30-34. "And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that virtue had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' And His disciples said unto Him, 'Thou seest the multitude thronging Thee, and sayest Thou, who touched Me?' And He looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth." She was healed; that was all she wanted, but that was not all He wanted. He wanted her to know His love and grace, as well as His power to heal. He wanted her to know His heart, as well as His hand. And so He called her out in confession before Him, so that He might speak to her His words of grace. "And He said unto her, 'Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.' " Is this not another likeness to the present time? In no other period of time was the Lord revealed as now. He called her daughter. We are the children of God the Father; we are members of the body of Christ; we are sealed with the Holy Ghost; blessings only known during this present time on earth, yet they will be ours for all eternity. Full assurance of faith; full assurance of understanding; full assurance of hope, given to us now by His word and Spirit.

This story of the woman suddenly ends and the narrative returns to Jarius again, so when the Church is completed and taken on high to be with the Lord, the prophetic clock will start again just where it left off, to complete Israel's story also. We must not look for the fulfillment of prophecy during the period when the Lord is calling His bride out of the world.

Verses 35-43. "While He yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, 'Thy daughter is dead: Why troublest thou the Master any further?' As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, 'Be not afraid, only believe.' " Here we see how He encourages the believing remnant of the Jews in the coming day, and will recognize them as those who have not seen and yet have believed (John 20:29). "And He suffered no man to follow Him, save Peter, and James, and John, the brother of James; and He cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. "Just as the Jews do now at certain seasons, but they are just as ready to laugh the next moment. So when the Lord said, "Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth," they laughed Him to scorn. To Him she was but sleeping, awaiting the time when God's promises to Israel would be fulfilled (Ezek. 36). "And He took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, `Talitha cumi,' which is, damsel, I say unto thee, `Arise.' And straightway the damsel arose, and walked, for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. And He charged them straightly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat." So, when Israel is restored again, the Lord will see to it that she will be cared for. His covenant with them will be a covenant of grace. His law will be written in their hearts, and their sins and iniquities will He remember no more (Heb. 8:10-12). But He does not speak to Jairus' daughter as He spoke to the woman. Israel will be His earthly people, but the Church is His body and His bride; she will share His heavenly glory (Eph. 5:25, 26, 27). May our souls enter into His love for us now.

(Continued from page 239.)

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 5:1-23

MAR 5In this chapter we have a picture of Israel's state and God's ways in grace. The man possessed of the devil is the delivered remnant, while the swine taken possession of, is unbelieving Israel rushing on to their destruction. The Lord, cast out of the world, leaves the man behind to testify for Him. Jairus continues the picture; he, the believing remnant, is concerned about his daughter, who lay at the point of death. She pictures the Jewish hopes. Jesus goes to heal her; but on the way another picture comes in, that is, the present time-the Church period-when individual faith gets the blessing; this is suited to the Gentile also. When He reaches Jairus' house, the daughter is dead, but the Lord encourages Jairus with the words: "Be not afraid, only believe." She is dead to all but Jesus; then He raises her up and commands them to feed her. This is His care over restored Israel. Let us draw some lessons from the chapter.

Verses 1-5. Here we find man under the power of Satan; his dwelling is among the dead, and no man can bind him with chains, he is untameable, and he is miserable, night and day, crying, and cutting himself with stones. Try to improve the flesh, put it under restraint, all its good resolutions are broken, all its goodness disappears, and it is the same at the end. None but the Lord can meet such a case. It is the same with us all; in reality, there is no difference.

Verses 6-8. "But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshiped Him." Satan tries to hold on to his prey, but must yield to the, Son of God. He said: "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit."

Verses 9-13. The man is the mouthpiece of the demons; how terrible is his case; but there is a Deliverer. Satan's day with that man is over; the demons do not want to be chained up in the bottomless pit. (See Luke 8:31.) The Lord allows them to enter the herd of swine-unclean Israel in figure-they ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were choked in the sea. Israel's destruction.

Verses 14-17. "And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind." What a change to that dear man; his unrest, his wretchedness, his nakedness are all gone, and there he sits in the presence of his Savior! Were the

people glad to see it? No, they were afraid; and when those who saw it, told how it came about, instead of worshiping the Savior, they besought Him to go away out of their country. They had lost their swine, they loved their uncleanness, the pleasures of sin which are for a season. The Lord is the cast out One now. The world seeth Him tic, more. He is the rejected One, cast out by the world.

Verse 18. "And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him." How nice this is, how refreshing to the Lord's heart, that precious soul now delivered from Satan's power, wants His company. Is it so with us, beloved children of God? Is Christ's presence the one desire of our hearts now? But it could not be yet, he was to remain where his Lord was cast out. But his very desire to be with the Lord, showed he was the fit man to represent Him where He was cast out.

Verse 19. "Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Does the man do it?

Verse 20. "And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel." "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:5.) Now, He is gone, we are to shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. (Phil. 2:15, 16.) May we be able to tell out to others what the Lord has done for us.

Verses 21-23. We find the Lord going on with His ministry. Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, when he saw Him, fell at His feet, and besought Him greatly, saying, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray Thee, come and lay hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." Jairus, a type of the believing remnant of the Jews, sees his daughter (in figure the hopes of the Jews) dying; he is much concerned. Why should not the Lord, the true Messiah, set up His kingdom at once. The Lord goes with Him. He knew Israel would reject Him, but He waits on them in longsuffering even after He is raised from the dead, giving them another offer (Acts 3), but instead of repenting and receiving Him, they stone Stephen, declaring by it, "We will not have this Man to reign over us." (Luke 19:14.)

(To be Continued).

Echoes of Grace: 1980, Only a Touch!

MARK 5:25-34

It was a sad case; to all appearance there was no help for her. Hopeless, and penniless, with no one to turn to in her last extremity,

SHE HEARD

of Jesus, the Great Physician, the Healer of sin-sick souls. Mixing faith with what she heard,

SHE CAME

to Jesus. Her desperate need brought her to Him, and putting faith into action,

SHE TOUCHED

His garment. Happy moment for the poor woman! She was in the personal company of Jesus, the only One who could possibly heal her body and meet the deep need of her soul. In a moment of time a change had taken place;

SHE FELT

... she was healed. She knew and realized what was done in her.

"She came in fear and trembling before Him,—She knew her Lord had come; She felt that from Him virtue had healed her,—The mighty deed was done.Oh! touch the hem of His garment,And thou, too, shalt be free;His saving power this very hour,Shall give new life to thee."

This is the way that the blessed Savior can meet the need of your precious soul. Not by any merit of your own can you obtain the salvation of God; it must be your sense of need that brings you to Himself, there to find, not an accuser, but One who in very truth is

Gospel Papers, Touch of Faith, The: Mark 5:24-34

Oh, who is that among the throng,

Who so calmly walks alone,

Love resting in His face?

'Tis Christ the Lord, God's blessed Son,

Responding to the call of one

Who needs His healing grace.

One, too, there is amid that crowd,

Beneath the weight of suffering bow'd,

Unknown to all beside.

For twelve long years she bore her pain,

Spent all she had, could nothing gain,

Till Jesus she descried.

But when she sees Him drawing near,

How bounds her heart with hope and cheer,

Resolved the crowd to brave!

To touch that bless'd One's garment's hem

She knows is to “be whole;"-and then-

The touch of faith she gave.

Immediately her pains depart,

What joy, what comfort fills her heart!

She would not have it known I

She little thought that feeble touch

Had cheer'd her Savior's heart as much

As it had heal'd her own.

He felt the virtue flowing o'er

That He was trusted, which was more

Than aught she e'er could do.

And can He let the heal'd one go

Without a word or look to show

That He had loved her too?

He will not heed the callous press,

He longs to hear her lips confess

The secret of her soul.

To tell Him is to get release,

Lord Jesus! Thou art still the same

As when that lowly woman came

To have her pain removed.

Since Thou ascendedst to Thy throne,

How many a heart, unseen, unknown,

Thy healing power has proved!

Yes! now the streams of virtue flow

Unhinder'd, for our sin and woe-

Has all been borne by Thee.

God's glory in Thy face doth shine,

While righteousness and grace combine

To set the suff'rer free.

The feeblest look of faith on Thee

Secures salvation full and free,

And gives Thee joy and cheer,

As much in glory bright above,

As in Thy walk of lowly love,

The " Man of Sorrows " here.

The Remembrancer: 1904, Manifestation

God, sooner or later, will have all manifested, all things and all persons. Again and again, this is declared. This thought, I may say, pervades Scripture.

So will He have His own grace in the operations of His Spirit manifested.

In the parable of the sower different soils had been disclosed. The one seed, the same in each soil, was the occasion of this.

The good soil had been made good by the husbandry of God, or the hidden visitation of the Spirit. It would not have been good otherwise. But having been thus visited by God, it must be fruitful, because of this principle that God will have His operations manifested. He never lights a candle to put it under a bushel.

This is further taught in the parable that follows, "the seed which grows secretly."

For there, the earth is declared to bear fruit fit for the sower “of itself." That is the point in the parable. God has tilled that soil, and it must therefore be fruitful.

And on the authority of this great truth, that all is to be manifested, the Lord warns us to take heed to the heart, for all in our history depends on that (vs. 24, 25). And the parable of " the mustard seed " appears to enforce that warning. The evil soil of the heart is betrayed and convicted. That which yields luxurient entertainment for the unclean grows naturally there.1

Thus, there is a great manifestation through the preaching of the gospel. Christendom becomes a field of wide and varied observation. Within it, there is ground visited and tilled by the Spirit, and fruit is yielded to the divine sower; and within it also there is the native ground of the human heart, and fruit in luxuriant abundance is yielded to the unclean.

By and bye, however, complete manifestation will be made, and all this constitutes truth of a solemn character. The secrets of the heart shall be all declared. God “will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained." All must be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ. This is one holy serious truth connected with this, and which may well persuade us even now to be upright and truthful in our ways.

And there is another. If our ways are by and bye to be all manifested, and the very counsels of the heart declared, if there be nothing in us now that is not then to come abroad, so God's operations declare them selves. If He convert a soul or visit a heart, making good the soil in any of us, we may be sure that such operation is ordained to to show itself. His tilled ground shall bear fruit “of itself." If no fruit appear, the fact, of the Spirit's hidden husbandry may be denied. On the ground of this great truth that all is to be manifested, the Lord exposes the folly of hypocrisy (Luke 12:1, 2).

The apostle, in his ministry, behaved himself in the faith of it (2 Cor. 4:5). The great white throne with the opened books Will at last vindicate it and illustrate it (Rev. 20.).

The Remembrancer: 1892, Word Precious Above Everything, or an Offense, The

AR 4:17{Note, how vital root is—secret life. If the word has given life, only the word can satisfy it. The rain which cometh oft upon it will be relished. And needed, too, for as there is no power of life in the heart, so there is no source of nourishment if life exists.

But if I have got divine life through the word, it will be everything to me. If I have found my, joy in God's word, persecution or affliction, because of it, will make me cling to it the closer. Persecution, in such a case, would merely come to rob me of my treasure. But if the word has never separated me from myself, by the gift of a. new eternal life in Christ, then if trouble comes for the word, I shall give it up to keep myself—my life.

Sound Words: 1878, Mark 4:21-25

AR 4:21-25{THE seed which fell on good ground brought forth fruit in different proportions. We see the activity of grace in the heart, because it grows and bears fruit, and keeps on growing. He who has truly received the word in the heart is fitted to communicate it to others. He may not have the gift of preaching, but he loves the truth, he loves souls, he loves the Savior, and the light which has been lit in his heart is to light all around him. He too sows according to his strength, and is responsible to do so. All will be manifested, faithfulness and unfaithfulness, with regard to this, as in everything else. God sends light into the heart in order to give it to others, and not to hide it. We shall receive more, if we are faithful in communicating what we possess; and, if there is love in us, this cannot fail. Truth and love both came in Christ, and unless the heart be full of Christ, the truth will not be manifested. If the heart be full of other things, or of itself, Christ cannot be manifested. If Christ—truth and love-be in the heart, the truth will shine out for the blessing of others, and we ourselves shall be blessed, and more will be given to us; and there will be liberty and joy in the sod:), That which he already possesses will be taken way from the man who does not let others profit by the light he has. J. N. D,

Food for the Flock: Volume 9, Three Parables of Mark 4, The

AR 4:14-41 {IT is difficult to understand clearly the structure, of this passage without referring to the corresponding one in Matt. 13, which furnishes: an explanation to it. I may indeed say, they whole gospel of. Matthew furnishes, in some respects, a key to the other gospels. Matthew gives dispensational truth, dealing with facts which are more readily, laid hold of by us than principles of truth, but which are necessary to, the right intelligence of these principles.

In Matthew the kingdom is habitually called' " the kingdom of heaven "-an expression which is peculiar to that Gospel. It presents to us the sphere in which the authority and government of God are known. Christ is the One who exercises it as Son of man; as we read in Dan. 7 "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like-.the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there whs given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,1

that all people nations, and languages, should serve him his dominion is an everlasting do: minion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." The moment He comes before the Ancient of days all the power is given to Him.

In this passage we see the place where the dominion and glory is given to the Son of man; and consequently get a further detail as to how the eighth Psalm is accomplished. But the great point is that He who stands before the Ancient of days is. " One like unto the Son of man," as it is stated in the Psalm: " What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." It is to man not angels that the " world to come " is subjected. This is what the apostle insists on in Hebrews, when quoting this passage from the Psalm; and he adds: " But we see Jesus, who was, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should' taste death for every man... For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (Heb. 2:9,16.)

The truth as to this coming time of blessing, foretold all through the Old Testament, is, that the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the seed of David, the One whom all the prophecies speak of, and in whom all the promises center, that One is a Man. He has not taken up angels; and God does not subject Messiah's kingdom to angels at all. It is put under the power of man, in His person-the " Son of man:" " Thou hast put all things under his feet."

Now we come to another point. The moment lie enters into this place of power as man, the kingdom of heaven really begins. It is, as far as we are concerned, in mystery and patience surely; but the power is given to Him, though He has not as yet taken possession of His " world kingdom," according to the expression of Rev. 11:15.2 But as He says in the end of Matthew: "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Indeed how else could they? He had sent them forth " as sheep among wolves." As such what prospect could be before them but to be eaten up: killed all the day long, accounted as sheep for the slaughter "? If He had not all power in His bands, how could they now go forth to preach? But there is power given to His servants to go forth, and that because HE is in the place of power, as we find it indeed clearly indicated, in accordance with the general character of the Gospel of Matthew.

Another passage which will help to make this clear is the parable of the nobleman in Luke 19 Jesus was just entering into the city, at the end of the journey which according to the structure of the gospel begins in chapter 9.; when He comes down from the mount of transfiguration. He was on the mountain with the two " men" who appeared with Him in glory-Moses and Elias, and who " spoke with him of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." He comes down from that Mountain with His face " steadfastly set to go to Jerusalem," and telling His disciples that what He was going to there was the cross.

They did not understand His words, and were afraid to ask Him their meaning. We find in the Gospels that He spoke of it to them four times at least. But they did not understand. And when He arrived at Jerusalem, they thought, as we read in chapter 19., " that the kingdom of God would immediately appear." So He " added and spoke the parable " referred to above. " A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten 'servants, and delivered them ten.

pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come."

Now this shows what Christianity is. Christ has gone into " the far country to receive the kingdom: for it is given in heaven to the Son of-man, as Dan. 7 shows. He has gone up as Man to receive it, and now we are waiting for His promised return. " Occupy till I come " is His word to us; it is our sole business now. Knowing-that He is gone up there to receive the kingdom; our privilege is to be waiting for Him, and occupied meanwhile especially with that part of the kingdom which is nearest to God; that is the heavenly side. So in chapter xii the Lord warns us against being careful about things here, as food and raiment. We are not to be of a doubtful mind, for, He says, " it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Surely then He will care about the small temporal needs of His children, for whom He has prepared such glory. We are to seek " His kingdom," and all the needed things of this life will be " added " to us. The very smallest thing possible He knows you have need of, He makes His care. What He-desires for you is that you should be occupied with things above, having an unfailing treasure in the heavens, the place to which the Lord is gone. This, too, gives a deepening value for our souls to the expression " the kingdom of heaven."

(*So it should be read in Luke, and not " kingdom of God," as in Matthew. Here it is the Father's.)

But let us glance at Matt. 13 There are' in it seven parables, six of which relate to the kingdom of heaven. The first one, that of the " sower," is introductory, and unfolds the principle on which the Lord is now acting. Then three parables, spoken to the multitude, furnish a view of the kingdom seen in its external character the last three lift the veil to show us what is internal, unseen by the world and unknown to those who do not know Christ. These three are spoken in the house privately, to the disciples, when the Lord gives them the explanation of the parable of the tares.

Let us look, then, for a moment at this introductory parable in the order in which it is given in Matthew and Mark. On the face of it, we see-that the Lord is not now seeking fruit from this world. Man is no longer looked at in his responsibility to bring forth fruit to God. This had: been the case under law, and it was, continued too, whilst the Lord was upon earth, as is shown, by the parable of the fig-tree in Luke 13:6-9,„ and again by His cursing the fig-tree that brought forth nothing but leaves. And so, in. John, He says: " If I had not come and spoken to them, they

had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." As a matter of fact the trial of 'man went on up to the cross; but here the Lord spews that He is introducing a new principle, a new way of dealing with man. It is no longer man under probation, but He Himself brings into this world what is divine and absolutely perfect: He "SOWS" in it the WORD OF GOP; and this is what is to bring forth fruit for God. The Sower is Christ Himself. Thus both the Sower and the seed sown are perfect, -divine, infinite. And, being sown, the seed remains in its own divine perfection.

As the parable is explained in Mark 4:14-20 one is struck by the way in which, as compared with the other Gospels, the word " sow " characterizes the whole passage in Mark. It is peculiar to this gospel. In verse 14 we read: "' THE SOWER SOWETH the word." The thought of sowing is given doubly in this verse. It is His own personal work, and- the seed, too, is divine; but this latter is more the point of the -parable in Luke. (See Luke 8:11.)3

Then He goes on to speak of the four classes of hearers. It is remarkable to find the word “sown" introduced in verse 15, for the seed was eaten up by the birds. But the way it is stated allows for the strict truth as to this; "those by -the way-side where the word is sown;" thus leaving the direct effect produced indefinite, while the point of the parable is maintained in its integrity, as Mark does all through, insisting-upon the work of "the sower." So the word is repeated in the end of the verse: ". the word sown in their hearts." It assumes, indeed, in Mark an importance it has not in the other Gospels, not only from its being repeated in the description of each succeeding class (vers. 16, 18,. 20), so that the verb is found six times in verses-14-20, but also in the two succeeding parables, the same prominent idea is kept before us. See verses 26, 31, 32. It is the divine work of Him who has come as the Servant-Prophet into this-world, and prepares here for God, by the word, a living testimony to the truth. Over and over-again this word "sown " is repeated; it is the important part of the truth in these three parables. It is no longer God testing man, coming down to see what good He can get out of the world, but it-is God in grace bringing into the world that which, can and does bring forth fruit for Himself, though in different degrees certainly. In Mark it is precious to find that the measure of this fruit-bearing gets ever higher and higher, until it reaches" an hundred-fold." The Lord's heart cannot rest, satisfied until God has His full desired portion.

In this Gospel also we have another characteristic word: " straightway," or, " immediately." It is not lacking in this parable, and very solemn it is in verse 15 " Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was Sown in their hearts." The activity of the 'enemy in evil comes out in marked contrast with the unceasing, unwearying energy of God's holy Servant. But more: in verse 16, " they receive the word immediately with gladness." But does that necessarily give hope for the apparently willing hearer? Alas! it only serves to make more evident man's inefficiency and weakness; such persons are as '" immediately offended " as they had quickly received, being unable to endure affliction or persecution arising for the word's sake.

The third class is that which was sown among thorns; in this case " the cares of this world, and -the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other Things entering in," choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. This latter is another remarkable expression. It does not say the things that are already there; it is other things that keep entering in: it implies an unceasing activity of the enemy to destroy the effect of God's word in-the soul, thus demanding, on our part, continued -watchfulness, that we may not be entrapped.

The Sower sows the seed. If it had been merely doing good for—people, nothing could have been got out of them by that. The Lord 'did not commit himself " to those whose 'intelligences were convinced by the evidence of His power in the miracles which He did, but whose consciences were unreached by the word. (John 2:23-25.) When seed is sown it is another matter. The sower expects to reap fruit from it in the place where he sowed it. You may leave your garden without sowing anything in it at all, and in that case you could not look to get anything but weeds out of it; but if you want it to bring forth fruit, you will sow it with the seeds of what you wish it to produce. So Christ has come down here to sow seed for God. And the seed sown brings forth fruit, though indeed in different measures. In some cases there is comparatively little fruit; the yield is but thirty-fold; yet He does not pass it by unnoticed, because it is little, though he goes on to say that there is that which does bring forth More: there is the sixty-fold. And, further still, for He cannot rest short of what answers to the delight of God's heart, there is the full measure-" the hundred-fold." May it be so with us through His mercy, as our hearts dwell in His love!

In considering the two following parables we must go back for a moment to Matt. 13, which presents six parables relating to the kingdom.

There are first, as we have seen, the three which refer to what is outward in the kingdom -its aspect in this world. The first of these is the parable of the tares, where the enemy seeks to spoil the fruit-bearing of the field by sowing other seed amongst that sown by the Son of man. The Lord gives no remedy for such a state of things: the servants are to leave it all as it is, letting both grow together to the harvest, because they are not competent to judge of what,..should be rooted up and what left. The judgment, when it comes, is committed to other hands.

Next, the Lord speaks of the great tree grown from " the least of all seeds." The kingdom of heaven, which had so small a beginning, becomes, a great power in the world, so that the birds of the air-unclean thing such as those emissaries of Satan who caught away the seed that fell by the way side-come and " lodge in the branches thereof."

And, lastly, we are told of the leaven " hid in three measures of meal, till the, whole, was leavened." The whole 'thing becomes corrupted in man's hand: it is Christendom as man has made it by adulterating christian doctrine. The Lord does not there say what He will do with it, but He indicates what has taken place.

Thus far we have the outward public aspect of the kingdom. Then, in the secret of the house,, the Lord gives His disciples those two beautiful parables of the treasure found in the field and the pearl of great price.. We know what the field is the Lord had explained it before, in connection with the tares; it is the world. And we know the One who found the treasure in it-the only One who could see it and who had anything to sell so that he might buy it. Angels looked down upon a scene of moral degradation here, growing darker and darker as the years rolled, by. What treasure could they see in It? What could they -do to remedy it, though they might wonder at the grace that bore with it so long? But there was One who looked, on it and saw in the world a treasure that would serve to set forth the glory of God. And He hid it. So at the beginning of His ministry He tells His disciples two things. He says, " Ye are the salt of the earth," and "'Ye are the light of the world." The " salt " answered in a way to His hiding the treasure. Christians are the salt of the earth. It is for their sake the world is preserved from imminent destruction. So in Peter, " we are to count the long-suffering of God as salvation." Hence, too, our responsibility, as in 1 Tim. 2, to pray for the powers of the world, " that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty," that this world may be kept going on by God's power, the progress of evil restrained, and the governments, though they know it not, overruled so that we may be left to serve Him in quietness, and that His word may have free course and be glorified.

On the other hand, the responsibility of Christians is that there should be a light on God's behalf, a living testimony for Him, in the world. The former truth is more brought out in ' Matthew; the latter in Mark, see chap. 4:21-25.

The next parable, that of the pearl, goes deeper, bringing out what is more personal to Christ. It is no longer the field bought for the sake of the treasure, but the pearl itself, in its moral beauty, is the object of His research and desire. It is the church; but we find here, I believe, a divine principle, which I do not think we ought to limit so as to apply it only to the church. The principle holds in the case of an individual soul, and so indeed as applied to. Christians generally, viewed as children walking before the Father. The apostle says in Galatians: "He loved me, and gave himself for me;" in Ephesians " Christ loved us, and gave himself for us;" and so, too, we read in Revelation: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;" and again in Eph. 5 we find: " Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." It is the divine principle of His love that we get in the pearl, though our hearts know that the beauty He sees in it is the fruit of His own toil. Was ever love like this?

The last parable in Matt. 13 spews us the work of the servants, the fishermen instructed in the Master's mind and ways in view of that. Which He is now doing in grace in this world.

To resume then, we have seen in these six parables Of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 13 its upward and inward aspect; the latter affording us a precious insight into the Lord's thoughts and blessed work. The two parables in Mark 4 give us the same two aspects, though in the inverse order: they are the two things that our hearts have to learn, in order that we may walk through this world in wisdom and grace, in a way worthy of Him.

But before speaking of them I would say just A Sword as to the difference of the two Gospels. Matthew presents the King, Messiah, the Anointed 'One who is to reign. Mark gives the perfect „Servant, the living Word, He who came to do God's will, and who, on entering into His service on earth is introduced in the first verse of the 'Gospel as " the Son of God;" for, if He is to be the Servant, it is as Son of God. Thus we too have to learn the qualification for service: there is none now apart from sonship. So it is, " The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of -God." And we find Him all through the Gospel as the perfect Servant-Prophet declaring God's mind, and carrying out His will in this world.

We cannot now go into the details; but we find Him in chapter 3 joining others to Himself in this service; we read: " He ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach." In Matthew, as we have seen, all power being now given to Him in -leaven and earth, He sends them forth to all nations. And then in John: " As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you;" which implies the Sonship. Both sides of the truth are united in His person in the Gospel of Mark. When at the end of the Gospel He ascends to heaven, He leaves the testimony in the world, giving power to His word, which always goes out through His, servants, as we read in the last verse: " And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."

They preach everywhere. What had they been called for? That they might be " sent forth, to preach." But there was a needed preparation for this service, in the place which He gave them, near to His own blessed person. " He ordained them that they might be with Him." Then, when He sends them forth, He works with them.. How could they preach unless they knew His mind? We have to learn that it is our joy and blessing, through His grace, to be able to present, His truth according to His mind. And to do this we must be habitually with Him in spirit, dwelling with Him, and learning of Him.

These considerations will, I trust, help us to seize the special character of the two parables of the kingdom of God in Mark. The first one, following after that of the sower, gives us again the sowing of the seed, the bringing in of the divine word. We know who this " man" is, this " sower" who cast seed into the ground." There is only one. He sloes not say there are many sower’s. It is the Lord.

The parable continues: "And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the 'earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Mark again the word " immediately." During all the progress of growth what is he waiting for? When the farmer has cast the seed into the ground he has abandoned it all to the soil. He has it no longer in his granary; it is no longer in his power; he cannot set his eyes on it; it is gone. It is of no use his going to look at the ground in which it lies; it is of;, no use his rooting it up as children do sometimes to see if it is growing. He can only leave it alone; he cannot help it in any way: " The earth bringeth forth fruit of itself." He cannot help it to grow; if the rain does not fall, he cannot make it sprout; if the sun does not shine, he cannot make it ripen. From the moment he has cast the grain into the ground he has practically given it over into God's hands; he has his daily occupation elsewhere, and as he sleeps and rises night and day, the time passes while he waits-waits for the harvest day. Then he has again work to do in his field: "immediately he puts in the sickle."

And that is what the Lord is doing now, He has sown the seed, but does not interfere in any active, outwardly apparent way; He is leaving it to grow: " The earth bringeth forth fruit of itself." And this is applicable in principle to the individual soul as well as to the entire church, as indeed we saw in considering the parable of the pearl in Matthew. If it is the individual, the " harvest " is the completion of divine work in the soul in God's school while passing it through this world: when ripe, He puts in the sickle and takes the soul home to Himself. If it is the church, He is waiting until the last one is called in and then He will come to take all His redeemed home to Himself in glory. He is waiting for the harvest-day-that day when He will present to " himself a glorious church, not having-spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

And what are you and I looking on to, beloved friends? Are we waiting for that harvest-day?' Do we so realize in our souls " the kingdom of God" as to have it before us in this aspect of the carrying out to the end of God's will in. His ways with His own, whether individually or-collectively, and that for the glory of Christ and: the delight of His heart, that He may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied? Is it this-which is occupying us, giving us courage to go, on serving Him, and making us to abound in joy in the Holy Ghost? The more we think of it,, the more we shall find it comes into all the details of our daily life. Christ is waiting for the harvest; He will not be satisfied till it comes.-In Thessalonians we get the very same thought " The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ." Just what-, we find indeed in this chapter of Mark. His, love is shown to men. Before ever the world was His " delights were with the sons of men." It is-, not said to have been with the angels. It is with men; amongst them, He came to live and die amongst them, in this earth, He has sown the-precious divine seed. The " love of God" is manifested in sending His only begotten Son into the world. (John 3) And the "patience of Christ shines out in His waiting for the harvest day. (See 2 Thess. 3:5.)

In the next parable-that of the grain of mustard-seed-we have the outward aspect of the kingdom of God as in Matt. 13:31,32,, only that here stress is laid again by repetition on the word " sown." It is as the insignificant seed, which " when it is sown in the earth is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater' than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches;4 so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the, shadow of it." That is what the kingdom of God has become in its external aspect. Principles and agents of evil find a convenient home in -it; they "lodge under the shadow of it." It shoots out " great branches;" there is plenty of -room and convenience for lodging in it. He does not say that the tree is going to be cut down, or its branches lopped off, or that the birds are to be driven out, but he states a fact that all must admit who have eyes to see and hearts to understand. This great power is in the world both for good and evil; it is full of confusion and corruption; yet we are not told to expect that things will get brighter or become better. What have we then for our hearts to rest in? Is it not the blessed certainty that He is waiting for the harvest day, and that then His heart will be satisfied in having around Him forever through eternity -all those who have been "brought forth" by His word to the Father's glory?

The end of, the chapter furnishes a practical comment on these two parables. The Lord is seen with His disciples in the ship launched -forth amid troublous waters: " And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto -them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship: and there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full." There they are amid all the confusion of the tempest; -the waves breaking over them, Satan striving to destroy the testimony. And where was He? Look at this picture of peaceful calm in such a, scene! The One who " had nowhere to lay his head" had found a resting-place in the midst of the raging storm: " He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." He was taking no outwardly active part in the management of the ship. He was truly with them, as a matter of-fact, and they all knew it; but Her seemed to see nothing that was going on, nor to know it; He said nothing to still the wind, nor was He disturbed by the boisterous waves; yet they saw-the water were filling the ship, while He, in the hinder part of it, was asleep, taking no apparent notice of the dangers around.

And what were they doing? Had they not already forgotten the parable of the seed cast into the ground? " They awake him, and say to him Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Just think of what these words imply! " Carest thou not!" It was impugning His thoughts of love for them; it was making nothing of all their experience of His care and affection. But more: it betrays their utter want of trust in Him, their practical insensibility to His being with them, If you were to read this part of the history to, one who did not know the passage, leaving out the first part of verse 38, and were to ask him', Where was the Lord at this time? the natural answer would be: Oh, of course, He was in heaven, and they were offering up a prayer to. Him there; they speak as if they we're apart from Him altogether. But He rises at their request, rebukes the wind, and says to the sea -" Peace, be still." And the wind ceased, and -there was a great calm. And then He says to them: " Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" In Matthew He says, " little faith;" here it/is, "no faith." Did not His words burn into their hearts, making their consciences say, on His behalf: You have doubted my love; you have doubted that I was " caring" for you; you have thought that, somehow or another, you would go down, and that I should leave you to go down-leave you to " perish." Was that all 7-the practical result to 'them of having been " ordained to be with him," that He might send them forth to preach? Alas, what hearts are ours! How slow to receive, how ready to let slip, -the sense of His perfect' love!

And when He had done it, did 'they say, Well,.(this is just what we might have expected? No strange to say, "They feared 'exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is -this?" There is no communion here. If there had been communion with Him, would they not have found in Himself an all-sufficient reason for feeling perfectly safe, and sheltered from the enemy's power? Could their trouble have another result than in a fresh miracle, skewing them again the might of His power, and the activity of His love? Would not their hearts have at least taken the cue from the unruffled calm in which He was sleeping? The raging billows were no hindrance to His finding a little moment of rest from His active service. And in what a scene! ' Every human heart was filled with turmoil and fear of death; He was at rest, enjoying peaceful sleep; and He was with them. Should not His presence have been sufficient for them?

I am convinced that we shall find more and more, through grace, that this blessed fact of the Lord's presence with His own is to be the starting-point for our souls in everything. If it is a question of the church, He says: " Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Supposing that an assembly is professedly and truly gathered to His name (I do not, of course speak of any manifested evil there, or suppose it), am I to find out, first, what its moral condition is, in order to know whether, the Lord may be there? That would be to act as did the disciples. Satan's power may be, and is, displayed against it; the ship may be full of water; but I am to start with the fact that He is there. That will produce individual exercise of heart and conscience, that everything is in me, of me, and about me, may be characterized by that presence. It is to be the starting-point of all my thoughts.

There we shall find the needed balance for our souls as we go through this world. Impossible it is, surely, for mere man to pass safely through it, with such an enemy as Satan in constant activity, going about, seeking whom he may devour.. But the presence of the Lord with His own changes everything. What is impossible for man is possible with God;5 and so we may fearlessly meet every difficulty, knowing that the Lord is with us, and that the storm is just the occasion for the manifestation of His active grace.

Thus may we not lose courage; thus may our hearts rest in the blessed certainty that God is carrying out His own work of grace, both individually and collectively, and that Christ is waiting for His harvest-day-the day when His heart will be satisfied in the perfect blessing of His own-satisfied in the delight of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will, who " rests in his love," and who, when all is finished,, ushers us, too, into His rest-" the rest which remaineth for the people of God.".

(W. J. L.)

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Bible Treasury: Volume 6, Mark 4:14-29, On

As the Gospel of Mark gives us the character of the Lord Jesus as the servant of God, so likewise do we find the service of Christ coming out in a most remarkable way. For in every act the divine glory of Christ stands out in virtue of and by His service, and not merely by miracles,

though that is true in its place. But if Jesus takes the form of a servant, there must be the divine power for the accomplishment of the service. If it be the mere healing of the body, if Jairus' daughter is to be raised, divine power must be there to do it. He had to make good the word of God spoken in Ex. 15:26, "I am the Lord that healeth thee;" and this could not be done but by divine power. He is content to be as the servant; but if He is God's servant, there must be this power of God, though with the entire abrogation of self. So He said "I do always those things that please him." But no act of His service could be accomplished without this divine power; for if sins are to be forgiven, "who can forgive sins but God only?" and He, the Son of man, forgave their sins. "Thy sins be forgiven thee; go in peace." Thus all through His service we see the divine glory brought out.

Then another thing appears, which is, that when He ascended up on high He transferred the same spirit and power of service to His disciples, and so to us, by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. When the Lord was down here, He took the place of a sower in connection with others: for He is not now seeking fruit in the Jewish vineyard and finding none; He had set it aside for the present, as the "degenerate plant of a strange vine," and had now come to sow that seed which had not before been brought to the earth. He came to produce fruit where there was none. He is not yet come to reap: that will be when He comes again, as the parable expresses it, "As if a man should east seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.... But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

There are three things in this chapter; and, first, the full responsibility of the effect of what we bear. "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you." This shows that the result of your hearing puts you in the place of testimony. Therefore, "take heed what ye hear: for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you." I am looking for whatever you have received to come out again, and, according to the kind of reception the truth has met with in our souls, will there be the fruit produced, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold.

Then, secondly, between the time of His sowing and His coming again to reap, the seed is springing and growing up, "he knoweth not how." The Lord is apparently inattentive to the whole thing. During all the toil and exercise of heart accompanying the service the Lord is apparently unconscious. Tares spring up among the wheat without His taking any notice or interfering at all, leaving it all to the exercise of faith in the laborers, while He, in one sense, is doing nothing. Thus when they were crossing the sea, they get into trouble by reason of a storm that came against them; and while they were toiling against it, He was fast asleep on a pillow in the binder part of the ship. They had also trial in another way—that He could suffer them to be in danger and apparently take no notice. "They awoke him and say unto him, Master, rarest thou not that we perish?" They were in the same ship with Christ: therefore nothing could be more safe; but they had lost sight of the glory of His person, and thought they were going to perish, thus connecting the circumstances with themselves and not with God. But with Christ in the ship they were as safe in the storm as in the calm. In the next chapter, where the man who had the legion cast out of him "prayed Jesus that he might be with him, howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee." He desired to be at rest with Jesus; but the Lord said, No: you must go back to be a witness of grace in a world that has turned Jesus out.

Then, thirdly, now that we have the apparent absence of the person of Jesus, but not as to grace (that is always and everywhere present), we have to walk by faith and not by sight. The word of God now takes the place of Christ's personal presence: as it is the word of God that can alone give us the mind of God. Of course, the Spirit is needed to apply it. And this it is that makes us responsible for the truth we hear, though, of course, we can do nothing without grace. A light is not put under a bushel but in a candlestick, that it may give light around: and I have put you as a light, that you may give out the light. Or why have I lit up the light in you, but that you may give out the light I have lit? "God hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And as there is nothing hid that shall not be manifested, God is now looking for the outshining of that out of our hearts, which He hath shined in. This is the way that God works. He first puts a word in our hearts that we may bring it out again. If God has lit up a light in my soul, it is that it may shine out to all around; and if not, why does it not? Ah! there is some hindrance within, some hidden lust in the heart that dims the light; and if I do not search it out at once and judge it before the Lord, that He may put it away, I shall, sooner or later, fall into some open sin; then discipline will bring it out manifestly. It is as much as to say, If the light I have lit up in you is not shining out, I will bring out that which hinders it. "Judge yourselves that ye be not judged of the Lord." "For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested; neither anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad." But here it is meant in reference to the truth, no doubt. Supposing the Church has failed, well, the things by which it has failed will be brought out to light. All God's counsels of glory He has entrusted to the Church. "Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels" through unfaithfulness; for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. If you only mete out a scanty measure, a scanty measure will be meted to you in return. "For he that hath, to him shall be given." What you have received you are to give out, that you may get more. When Christ comes again, He comes to reap the harvest of everything He has sown. Then during this interval of the Lord's sowing and reaping, while the seed is springing up, He knoweth not how—that is to say, while He is apparently absent from us, not interfering in all our trials and conflicts—yet we have this on which to stay our souls, that we are in the same vessel with Himself; and, however much the ship may be tossed about by the storms and waves of the devil's raising, while we have Him in the vessel, we are as safe in the storm as in the calm.

Next, we have two things brought out here—the grace of God and the light of life; and whether it be one, two, or twenty talents we have received by way of gift, the reception of the grace of God into our souls will make us tell out the truth as it is in Jesus. And as Jesus, when here, was the light of the world, so (having lit up this light of life in our souls) He is looking for us to be light-bearers in the midst of this dark world where He has left us (like the poor man out of whom the legion was cast), that "our light so shine before men, that they seeing our good works may glorify our Father which is in heaven." Then how great is our responsibility as to our hearing! ("Take heed what ye hear;" "To him that hath shall be given") that in hearing of God's grace, we may possess it in the knowledge of what God is. And, when hearing of Christ, our souls should realize all of Christ—to hear, seize hold of it in all its power; and hearing, also have it, and be it, even the light as it is in Christ. And that will make manifest everything that is contrary to it; for we only want the light of Christ to make manifest all that is Babylonish or Egyptian.

"Take heed how ye hear." As far as our flesh is not mortified, we shall not possess the truth: and only so far as our flesh is mortified, can we possess the truth. And to the same extent as the flesh is continually judged and kept down, will our "loins be girt about with truth," because the flesh cannot receive the truth. And when we really possess the truth in our souls, it judges ourselves and all that it finds within first, and then shines out.

May all that we have heard, and our hearing of Christ, thus be manifested by us to the praise of His glory!

Girdle of Truth: Volume 7, Kingdom of God, The

Mark 4:26 to 5:20

There is nothing more striking in the word of God, as showing its divine authorship, than that, when rend with diligence and care, there should be constantly rising up to view some fresh proof, some new and striking feature, of its infinitely-diversified and infinitely-perfect character.

When read with careless indifference, the mind contracts a habit of supposing that all has been learned from it which it contains, because familiarity with its general contents serves to take off the edge of its interest. It is far otherwise when the habit of daily study keeps the word before the soul.

This thought has been suggested by a recent meditation on the two parables, and two historic scenes in our Lord's life, which are presented in this passage, and which I will now endeavor briefly to set before my readers.

It may tend to an understanding of the subject, and to give definiteness to our thoughts, if a remark or two be made on the phrase, " the kingdom of God," with which both parables are introduced. In Matthew's Gospel, and peculiar to it, as the Gospel of dispensation, the corresponding phrase is " the kingdom of heaven," or the reign, or rule, of heaven. From the uniform application of the phrase, it is manifest that a distinct dispensational period or state of things is characterized by it. In Matt. 3:2 we find John the Baptist commencing his preaching in the wilderness of Judwa, by crying, " Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When John was cast into prison, it is said, (iv. 17,) " From that time Jesus began to preach, and say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand:" i.e., He announced a new period in God's dealing with Israel, with its own peculiar characteristics, as about to commence. Much is said about it in parables and otherwise afterward, without attention to which it is impossible that the gospel should be understood.

It was plainly an expectation familiar to the Jews, however much their thoughts were astray as to the nature of the kingdom" and of the characteristics of its subjects. The phrase itself appears to have taken rise from a prediction in Daniel, if not from an earlier oracle in Deuteronomy, (chap. xi. 21,) in which Israel's blessings are foretold as " the days of heaven upon earth." But Daniel is plain. In chap. ii. 44 it is said, " In the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," &c. This, coupled with chap. vii. 13, 14, presents the fact of the kingdom, and the person of him who is said to wield its power. " I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came unto the Ancient of Days; and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom," &c.

The corresponding phrase to that of Matthew in the other Gospels is " the kingdom of God." To a considerable extent this is interchangeable with that in Matthew, and is often so employed. It is, however, distinctive, and is less knit up with Jewish expectations; and I think it is always used to indicate the moral power connected with the reign rather than simply the reign itself: Moreover, it runs on in its application to a sphere which lies beyond the apparently-proper range of the kingdom of heaven. We read in 1 Cor. 15:50, " Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

As used by the Lord Jesus in these parables, it marks a definite sphere in this world subject to the operation of God; which commenced, as to time, with His own ministry, and will be terminated by His coming again, in connection with its final results. There needs no formal proof as to who the sower is, and as little as to who it is that will be present again in the " time of harvest."

The purport of the parable is to show that to the eye of man, after Christ left the scene, as the sower, all goes on apparently in its natural course; and in truth that there would be no personal interference on the part of him who sowed the seed until the time of harvest. The parable represents simply a process in husbandry. A man casts seed into the ground. He sows his field and leaves it. " He sleeps and rises night and day;" i.e., the ordinary circumstances of life go on, and he does not trouble himself about his field. He has sown it, and however indifferent he may appear, the field was sown that in the time of harvest it might be reaped. Meanwhile the processes of nature go on The seed springs and grows, but he knows not how. It is the result neither of his power nor care. " The earth brings forth fruit of herself." In due time there is the blade and the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. All this is a result apart from man's power, or man's care, or man's cognizance. When the fruit is brought forth and the harvest is the result of his sowing, immediately he puts in his sickle and reaps, "because the harvest is come." The parable is but a tale of everyday farming life, and is seen in accomplishment in the revolution of every season. The divine instruction is, "so is the kingdom of God." The seed was sown by the Son of man. Since then the world has gone on in its ordinary, unheeding course; but ever since the harvest has been advancing.

Man's care, it is true, has had little to do with the matter; but the power that gives the increase has been silently and effectually at work. To the eye of man there is no interference. All seems to have been left to the course of the world; but the process has been going on. The blade has sprung up, the ear has been formed, and the full corn in the ear is at hand, when " the harvest" will bring Him who sowed the field, to be again present in connection with it to gather the wheat into his garner. " He was once offered to bear the sins of many; [the corn of wheat, the true sowing for the harvest, has fallen into the ground and died:] and to them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." But the lesson of the parable is, the absence from the field, and the apparent indifference toward it of the sower, until harvest brings him again into personal concern and interference with it.

The parable of the " grain of mustard seed" presents another aspect of " the kingdom of God," and which indicates that its recognition, in this character, is by the eye of man, like the former.

The historic scenes which follow are intimately connected with the parables, and give the other side of the truth with regard to them. But their elucidation must be deferred to the sequel of the paper.

(To be continued.)

Girdle of Truth: Volume 3, Word Precious Above Everything, or an Offense, The

Note, how vital root is-secret life. If the word has given life, only the word can satisfy it. The rain which cometh oft upon it will be relished. And needed, too; for as there is no power of life in the heart, so there is no source of nourishment if life exists.

But if I have got divine life through the word, it will be everything to me. If I have found my joy in God's word, persecution or affliction, because of it, will make me cling to it the closer. Persecution, in such a case, would merely come to rob me of my treasure. But if the word has never separated me from myself, by the gift of a new eternal life in Christ, then if trouble comes for the word, I shall give it up to keep myself-my life.

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Edification: Volume 7, Storm and the Calm., The

(Mark 4:37-41).

THE Sea of Galilee was proverbially a stormy lake. The wind coming down from the mountains would suddenly and unexpectedly raise a storm, often dangerous to the fisherman on the lake.

It was so in this case. The disciples pushed off from the shore in fine weather, having for Companion, their Lord and Master, the Son of God. Then we read, “There arose a great storm of wind.” The waves rose at the bidding of the wind, the water of the lake leaped into the tiny craft till it was water-logged.

Is it not the experience of many, perhaps of all, that in some time of our lives, perhaps more times than we like to think, a great storm arises. Troubles come. It may be ill-health, and no prospect of betterment. It may be financial difficulties, and how many have experienced this during these years of stringency since the war. It may be shame comes into our families. A thousand and one distressing things may come into our lives and homes. It may be the weakness of old age, the ever-shortening tether that has only one ending, unless the Rapture takes place.

The storm arose on the Sea of Galilee. But the Master was on board. How could the frail barque sink if the Lord of life was there? At any rate He was at hand, and that was the great point. Asleep on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship, His very attitude of repose, though the wind howled round and the waves filled the boat, was enough to rebuke the fears of His disciples.

Arc we any better than the fishermen of the Sea of Galilee? Do we instinctively turn to the Lord in our troubles? How often we try to put things right in our own strength and fancied wisdom, and only turn to the Lord when we are at our wit’s end. Can we not trust the Lord? I have known saints of God, who have had wonderful opportunities of getting on in the things of God, saints who have sat under the choicest ministry for years. And yet when the storm arose I have heard them say with anguished lips, “Has the Lord forsaken me?” We may not blame them, for we know how frail we are ourselves, but we may well seek to strengthen each other’s faith.

The frightened disciples awoke the Master with the cry of reproach, “Master, rarest Thou not that we perish?” Then, HE AROSE! What a moment! We can almost see His loved form, stretched to its height; we can almost hear His voice, rebuking the wind and saying to the sea, “Peace be still.”

He arose! Like wild hounds called to heel by their owner, so the wild waves sank to rest at His command, the wind ceased at His rebuke, and “there was a great calm.” “There arose a great storm—there was a great calm.” What a contrast! What a lesson!

When the Lord steps in in connection with our tribulations, difficulties and sorrows He can turn the storm, great as it may be, into a great calm. We may not find our outward circumstances much altered. For instance, old age cannot be avoided. But God can and will make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear the trial. A way of escape, not out of the trial, but in the trial, so that in our spirits we may be able to rise above it, and glorify God in it.

When the disciples saw the mighty power of the Lord, they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, “What manner of Man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?” Aye, more than a man! What man could command the wind and the sea? How powerless is man in the presence of the elements, let loose in all their fury. The tornado moves on in irresistible force. Nothing can withstand it. The sea rages. No human power can curb its frightful power. How puny man is made to feel in the presence of these elemental forces! No, the disciples found themselves in the presence of the Eternal Son of God, “God manifest in the flesh.”

And yet they were not afraid of the sleeping form when they awoke Him with their cries for help. Might they not come to the conclusion that our Lord tabernacling in flesh was in order that Divine power might be at the disposal of man for his blessing? And so we can turn to One, who is God and Man, — God in Divine power and might, Man in “human sympathy and kindness; nay, disclosing the very kindness of God, divine sympathy and kindness.

May we not trust Him? “THERE AROSE A GREAT STORM... HE AROSE... AND THERE WAS A GREAT CALM.”

A. J. Pollock

The Parables of Our Lord, Growth of Seed, The

Mark 4:26-29

“So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”

The teaching here is that the seed is completely fitted to produce fruit. The seed is placed in the ground by man, but he cannot make it grow, nor does he understand how it is that it does grow. He sleeps at night, and rises at day, and can see that the seed has taken root, and is springing up, but” he knoweth not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.’’ Even in nature God has so ordered it that the seed should fructify:” first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” Then the harvest, and the sickle gathers in the fruits of the earth.

So is the kingdom of God.” The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” (John 3:8.) Thus it begins — takes root; and God is the Husbandman. A Paul may plant, and an Apollos water, but God must give the increase. And thus, as all must be begun by God, all is increased by God, and all will surely be gathered into His garner by-and-by. On the other hand, our Lord said,” Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.” (Matt. 15:13.) While, of the Christian, we read, “Ye are God’s husbandry” (“tillage” in the margin). He sows the good seed; He waters watches over, and tends the growing, that we may grow up into Him in all things. And a glorious harvest is approaching, when we shall be gathered into His heavenly garner. To Him be all the praise!

Correspondence, Correspondence: Fifty Days; Mark 4:26-29; Passion Play; John 14:12

Ques. 76. Please explain how you find fifty days between the resurrection of the Lord and the coming of the Holy Spirit? W. H. H.

Ans. The word "Pentecost" means fifty, or the fiftieth; the allusion is to Lev. 23. In that chapter we get two offerings on the morrow after the sabbath. The wave sheaf is the type of the resurrection of Christ. (Lev. 23:10-14.) There is no sin offering attached to that; it is the Lord Himself. Then seven sabbaths were counted, and on the morrow after the seventh sabbath, that is, the first day of the week, a new meat offering-"two wave loaves baken with leaven"-is offered. A sin offering accompanies it, for it is typical of the redeemed Church, which, though redeemed, has sin in each member. (Lev. 23:15-21.)

In the New Testament we see that the Lord rose on the first day of the week, and was seen of His disciples forty days (Acts 1:3); then came His ascension. The disciples continued in prayer and supplication the rest of the period (not many days), till Pentecost, the fiftieth day, was fully come; then the Holy Spirit came down.

Ques. 77. What does Mark 4:26-29 mean? W. H. H.

Ans. Mark 4:26-29, compares the kingdom of God "unto a man that casts seed into the ground" who rising and sleeping day and night, allows it to increase without taking any notice of it. The earth produces thus fruit of itself, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full grain in the ear. Now when the fruit is ripe, the sickle is put in at once, because the harvest is come. Thus the Lord worked personally, sowing the Word of God upon earth; and at the end, He will return, and work again in person, when the time for the judgment of this world shall have come, but now, in the meantime, He remains seated at the right hand of God, as though He did not occupy Himself with His field, although in secret He does work by His grace, and produces everything. But it is not manifest. Without being seen, He works to make the seed grow in a divine way, by His grace, whilst apparently He allows the gospel to grow, without having anything to do with it, until the harvest. Then He will appear and will Himself work openly." (J. N. D. Col. Writ.)

Ques. 78. What do you think of the Passion Play? W. H. H.

Ans. To make the Lord Jesus and His finished work the subject of an entertainment is sacrilegious. Think how horrible it must be in the eyes of God, the Father, that men should dare to personify His beloved Son in the hour of His deep suffering as an atoning sacrifice!

Ques. 79. John 14:12. To whom does the Lord refer? Is it before the cross that those who believe shall do these works, or does it take in believers in this present time? What are the works referred to? J. E. K.

Ans. The Lord is speaking of what is true of believers when He would be with the Father. The Holy Spirit would then dwell in them, and what they did would be done in the power of the Spirit. The works would include such as Peter (Acts 5:12; 15:16), and Paul (Acts 19:11-12) did; but also to see Christ-"the life of Jesus" (2 Cor. 4:10-11)-produced in redeemed men, once under the power of sin, is more wonderful than to see the moral glory in all its perfection in Him who was ever and always altogether perfect. What care we should take to walk in the power of the Spirit ungrieved. (Eph. 4:30.)

Young Christian: Volume 23, 1933, Laying a Pillow for Jesus

“And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow.” Mark 4:38.

It might be that some kind hand had placed this pillow for Jesus. He had said on one occasion,

“The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.”

And it is remarkable that Matthew (8:19-27) puts these words of Jesus just before His embarkation, though they were possibly uttered at another time.

It may be that some loving hand arranged that pillow for Him, knowing that He was weary. It was evening when He entered the ship, probably after a long day's toil.

We may learn a lesson from that pillow. Jesus never asked for a comfort from any when He was down here: He did ask the poor Samaritan woman for a drink of water not that He was seeking her care, but that He might draw out her need. Still He gave opportunities to those who longed to show their love and attention to Him.

Sometimes we may not have it in our hand to give when we have it in our heart. No matter; He looks at the heart. Do not let us judge Him with man's judgment, and say,

"I cannot do so and so; then why need I wish to do it?"

It may be that the one who arranged that pillow (if such were the case) was gladdened afterward to find that He had fallen asleep upon it. In any case, He accepted it then—yes; used it fully for Himself.

It may be, too, that there was no one of all His disciples whose heart was open to give Him "the tribute money." If there had been one, He might have allowed that one to do it unto Him; but a fish must be the giver. Doubtless, if there had been one at the moment who would have longed to give Him the money, He would have sent Peter to such an one, and not to a fish. He displayed His lordship over creation in the act, of course; but would He not rather have had the need filled up from some loving heart which was looking for an opening to help?

Could it be possible that at that particular moment not one on earth was longing to aid the Man of Sorrows? I say, "at that moment;" for it is not enough that life from God must be present in him who acts for Jesus; he must also be in a moral state of soul, in communion with God, ere Jesus will ask for his aid.

The ravens fed Elijah. But if there is even a Sidonian widow, with nothing save a little oil and a handful of meal, she will have the blessedness of helping the servant of the Lord.

The Lord loves us to give to Him, but "a cheerful giver" is the one He wants. When He wanted the colt for His entry into Jerusalem, He knew well who really was willing. There He sent, and asked. All that was needful to say was, "The Lord hath need of him." "Strait-way" he would be sent. Perhaps the owners of that colt were anxiously waiting for some opportunity of service. If so, how it strengthened their faith to find that Jesus knew all about it!

In the case of the man with the pitcher of water (Luke 22:10) we see the same thing. The "good man" of that house may have been thinking of Jesus, and saying,

"My room is a large one: how suitable it would be for the Lord and His disciples! How I wish He would eat the Passover at my house!"

If so, how his heart must have leaped when the two disciples, Peter and John, came into his very house to tell him that the Master was coming! Little did the man with the pitcher know what his carrying the pitcher signaled. Anything, everything, can be used by God to accomplish His purposes.

But to return. We may say that we cannot lay a pillow for the head of Jesus now. I think we can lay many for Him. Is not every believer now a member of His body? Many of those members need our pillows so to say. The "Head" is in glory, and as such, He needs them not. But Saul could persecute Him— "Why persecutest thou Me?" Every word of comfort, then, every act of kindness, every little succor towards a saint, because he belongs to Jesus, is an odor of a sweet smell, Godward.

What mean the words, "And the house was filled with the odor of the ointment?" (John 12). Sooner or later, all will know what is clone for and to the Lord. The people on the housetop could know that something sweet was being offered below.

Do not the angels know what is done to Jesus? We smell, as it were, the sweetness of Abraham's sacrifice, although no eye saw it, save that of Jehovah. (Gen. 22). Envious ones may have been attracted by the odor in that house, who would not own Mary's devotedness at all. They could not help smelling its sweet savor.

We cannot do too much for the Lord; and nothing is too little or insignificant for Him to notice. Alas! how many are making pillows for their own comfort beautiful pillows provisions for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts! When we are thus occupied we have not large hearts towards the Lord. "The flesh" always narrows our hearts in divine love. When separation from self and the world is going on, there is room for enlargement in love and heavenly activities. (2 Cor. 6).

To Every Man His Work, Nearness to Christ the Secret of Power

" And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." Mark 3:14,15.

We often look at the apostles as vessels of power, taken up by the Lord, and qualified by Him for the accomplishment of His gracious and mighty work on earth. And we are right, for they were ordained by Him to preach, to heal, to cast out devils, and thus to illustrate the infinite power of the blessed Redeemer. That He should have possessed such power, that He should have entered the domain of Satan and spoiled his house, is no wonder when we remember who He was. But it is marvelous to think of the apostles—men—wielding a similar power! They received it from Him in dependence upon Him. They carried His authority, and lived on His account.

But, whilst all this is true, we are prone to overlook the first great privilege, and that from which all the others flow, viz., that "they should be with Him." They were ordained to this as fully as to the others. The principle thus asserted is, that communion precedes service: and this company of the Lord is that which alone fits for testimony.

Now this is exceedingly happy. The blessed Master, in order to make His service a pleasure, calls us first into His presence, and creates us His friends. This is Christianity and the atmosphere of love. " Henceforth," He says, " I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends." The idea of slavery is thus precluded, and the service, though intensely real, is perfect freedom. It is the service of love, and a pure, holy, happy service therefore. Hence the first consideration on the Lord's part was, that "they should be with Him." How can you send a servant to do your bidding if he be not within call? It is necessary that he should be at your constant command. You must have him near yourself. Again, how can you familiarize your messenger with your mind and ways if he should habitually live apart from you? Proximity creates acquaintance, and companionship produces similarity, and this is indispensable when accurate witness is to be borne. The ambassador must be in the secret of his government and the servant of Christ in the sweet enjoyment of His presence.

Moreover, as to power or authority, where else an such a one find this? If the Lord authorize for service He also grants the needed power, but only on this ground, that it is held as in Him alone, and by us as in full dependence on Him. The excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. Mark this, it is " not of us." We are in no sense depositaries of power. Nay, but we may be its channel: yet only then as being in company with the Lord. " That they should be with Him... and to have power " (authority). Being with Him (in spirit now) and having power go together. He has most power who abides most in his Lord's blest company. The nature of the power is not the question. Mighty signs and wonders may not be seen, but he is always a man of spiritual power who walks with the Lord; for with such communion is the first thing, and service results from that. Such service is, like Mary's ointment, precious to Him, and it fills all the house as well,)

Bible Dialogs and Answers to Correspondents, Answers to Correspondents.: Different Styles; Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit; Saved?; Politics; New Birth; Judas; Died for Me

J. I. K.—The different styles of the writers of the books of the Bible is a fact that does not militate in the smallest degree against the doctrine of verbal inspiration. That doctrine in no way obliges us to view Moses, Isaiah, Paul, and John as mere mental machines who, when writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, were placed beyond the range of feelings, emotions, and sentiments peculiar to themselves. Nothing of the sort is claimed. On the contrary, it is frankly conceded that each wrote according to his own manner. Hence we have the glowing imagery of Isaiah and the simple plain style of John. But the vital point is this: Were those men, when writing the Holy Scriptures, so under the control of the Holy Spirit as to be safeguarded from error? We believe they were. Did they set down just what the Holy Spirit would have them communicate, neither more nor less? We believe they did. Could the same be said of Shakespeare or Milton, or even of those spiritually minded men to whom we are indebted for the choicest hymns we sing? Assuredly not. There is a great gulf lying between the best of human writings and the Holy Scriptures given by inspiration of God. And it is intended that there should be, so that the latter might have their unique and proper place and possess an authority exclusively their own.

A COUNTRY READER.—Mark 3:29.—There is surely forgiveness with God for any and every sin if the guilty one turns to Him in sincere repentance and rests simply and wholly on the Lord Jesus Christ. Of that there can be no doubt. But blasphemy against the Holy Spirit betrays a condition of heart only reached after a long and hardening process, and leaves no hope of repentance and faith. It is not that the atoning sacrifice of Christ could not reach to such a depth of sin, or that the grace of God is outdistanced by it, but rather that a sin so great was a sure sign of hopeless apostasy from which there was no recovery and therefore no forgiveness.

TROUBLED.—If you are in doubt as to whether you are one of the Lord's saved ones or not, it is easy to understand your repeated seasons of spiritual distress. But you will not find deliverance in the endeavor to determine whether your conversion to God was true or false. The Corinthians were called upon to examine themselves and to see whether they were in the faith, but it was not to discover whether they were saved or not, but whether Christ had ever spoken in Paul. They must acknowledge that He had, or else deny the fact of their own conversion (2 Cor. 13). But in your case the important question is, Do you trust Christ now? Do you receive that gospel which proclaims forgiveness of sins to everyone who believes in Him? No doubt you can answer that query easily enough. Your letter shows much self-occupation, in which there is no profit. It is a miserable piece of business at best, but when we see ourselves as we really are in the sight of God, it is then we loathe ourselves and are only too glad to turn our eyes to 'Christ, in whom we are accepted and complete.

"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Assured of that, and never doubting it more, we are then free to be engaged with the love, glories, and interests of Christ, whose blood gives rest to the conscience, and who Himself becomes the object of the heart's desire and delight. In that lies the secret of happiness for the Christian. There is no other.

C. K.—We never knew a Christian man who became engrossed in municipal or political affairs without his suffering serious spiritual damage. The intelligent and devoted Christian, while gladly rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and following the example of his Lord and Master, who went about doing good, remembers that he belongs to a commonwealth which is in the heavens, and from whence also he expects the Savior (Phil. 3:20). And if his energy seeks a sphere for its exercise, he knows where to find one that will yield richer results than the political arena. As to the universal brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God, while it is true that all of us spring from the loins of our father Adam, yet the sharpest distinction is drawn in Scripture between the children of light and the children of darkness. In a broad sense all men are God's offspring, as in Acts 17:29, yet His saints are entitled to call Him "Father" as none other can. To blot out these distinctions or to enfeeble them is evil work.

A LEARNER.—"The new birth" and "being born again" are simply different terms to express the same work of God in the soul, without which none can see or enter into His kingdom. Every converted person is born again and has received divine or spiritual life. But the gift of the Holy Spirit is another thing. We must distinguish between the operation of the Spirit in the new birth and His indwelling. With the latter comes the experience of life in a larger, broader sense. The blood of Jesus Christ spoken of in 1 John 1:7 is that which judicially cleanses from all sin, fits the believer for the holy presence of God, and gives him liberty to draw near according to Heb. 10:19.

A BELIEVER.—John 6:70.—Judas was one of the twelve chosen to be with the Lord Jesus and sent forth to preach. But this choice and service is not to be considered as an equivalent to salvation and the gift of eternal life. A man may preach with the tongues of men and of angels and yet be nothing. Why Judas was called we know not, unless John 13:18 gives the answer. Possibly it does.

A. T. D.—We cannot recall any scripture which exhorts the individual sinner to believe that Christ died for him. That He died for the ungodly, for sinners, for the unjust, for us, is all most true. These are sound, scriptural terms. Moreover, the believer may justly adopt the language of the apostle Paul and say, "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." But forgiveness of sins is hardly dependent on the unforgiven one being able to say, "Christ died for me," though the believer can say so. At least, that is not exactly how it is put in Scripture, so far as we see. The momentous question is, What has God found in the sacrifice of Christ? What is it to Him? Has it so met the requirements of His throne in reference to the sins of sinful men that He can justly show them His saving mercy Doubtless it has. Hence in the activity of His love He sends out His gospel to all nations of the earth, and in that gospel we find such gracious words as these, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." This leaves no room for the anxious inquiry, "Did Christ die for me?" Such a question need never be asked. His death, on its Godward side, brings full and everlasting forgiveness to everyone that believeth. Do I believe in Him who, having died for the ungodly, is now alive again and in the glory of God? Is He the One on whom my faith is founded? If so, my sins are forgiven. I am justified from all things and saved. Acts 10:43; 13:39, 16:31 are passages which place the matter beyond dispute, and the comfort of all this flows into my soul as it receives the Word in simple, childlike faith.

To Every Man His Work, Faith of Four Men, The

" And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was."

Mark 2:4.

In this portion of the Word of God there is a very lovely picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, as Jehovah's perfect Servant. Unwearied and untiring in His love and devotion He is here seen preaching the word to those who were gathered together in the house. Doubtless many had been drawn there, attracted by the wonderful words that He spoke; and others were there to criticize and to find fault. But what we wish to notice more particularly is the four men who came unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy. They teach us all, as servants of Christ, a most impressive lesson. " Jesus saw their faith." " Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him " (Heb. 11:6). This 'we see exemplified in this narrative. The gathered multitude saw nothing in this, nothing to excite their interest and approval. If only these four men could bring the sick one to Jesus, it mattered little or nothing to them what the multitude might say or think.

1. They were United. Very little would have been done had this not been in their " work of faith and labor of love." 0, that we realized this more in our service! We cannot think of one servant of Christ working independently of another (1 Cor. 1:10); " Ye also helping together by prayer for us "

(2 Cor. 1:2) " Strive together with me in your prayers to God for me " (Rom. 15:3o). By this it will be seen how much the beloved Apostle Paul valued prayer and fellowship in service. I believe this is what will keep God's people united in all their efforts to reach the unsaved, to bring them to Jesus.

2. They were Unselfish. It is beautiful to observe how this is brought out in this incident, when apparently everything was against them. 0 that we thought less and less of ourselves, especially in the light of so many scriptures that bring before us the entire self-forgetfulness of the Lord Jesus! " We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself " (Rom. 15: 1, 2, 3). Nothing less than this is to be our pattern. " That they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again " (2 Cor. 5:15).

Of Him it has been written, " Pleased not Himself," ", Humbled Himself," " Gave Himself." What a precious thought to think of Him thus stooping to the lowest depths, and making Himself of " no reputation! " (Phil. 2.).

3. They were Urgent. No time was to be lost; every moment was precious. It may be here said they redeemed the time, " Buying up the opportunity.' That is what the true servant of Christ has to do: he cannot afford to let one opportunity slip without testifying of Christ. May God give us grace to " preach the word; be instant in season, out of season," and in view of the judgment seat of Christ, when all our work will be made manifest of what sort it is, to be filling up each moment with loving devoted service to Him.

" Precious Savior, may I live,Only for Thee;Spend the powers Thou dost give,Only for Thee."

4. They were Undaunted. It was their faith that overcame all the obstacles that stood in the way. They might have reasoned as to how their purpose was to be fulfilled; as to what the Pharisees might think of them. But no, they put aside all that, and unwavering in their faith they step out with the sick of the palsy. They had the assurance that Jesus would heal if only they could come nigh unto Him. We can only preach the Gospel in so far as we know its power for ourselves. " We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen " (John 3. " I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak " (2 Cor. 4:13). May God give us grace to realize the importance of personal dealing with the unsaved, when preaching His blessed Gospel! Thus shall our labors be rewarded, as was that of these four men. " Always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord " Cor. 15: 58).

The Evangelist: Volume 2 (1868), Palsied Man., The

(Read Mark 2:1-12.)

IT is a fact no less sorrowful than true, that man by nature knows not his utter helplessness in the sight of God, and consequently fails to appreciate God’s unbounded love in giving His only-begotten Son to die for the ungodly, even while they were “without strength.” When a soul is in any measure conscious of the necessity of righteousness in order to appear before God, the first thought almost invariably is, that such righteousness must be wrought out by doing good works, keeping the commandments of the law, or obeying the precepts of the gospel; not knowing that poor fallen human nature is incapable of doing anything which can be acceptable to God, nor the force of that Scripture,

“they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Romans 8:8.)

The case of the man who was sick of the palsy, as recorded by the Evangelists, beautifully illustrates this truth, and also exemplifies the way in which the Lord meets the necessity of the poor helpless sinner.

A palsied man, who is so prostrate, that he is “borne of four,” is brought unto Jesus, and let down on a bed or couch before Him; just a picture of man as a sinner, altogether incapable, so to speak, of moving hand or foot towards God. There he is, completely powerless, lying before Jesus, who though found in fashion as a man, is the “the mighty God.” “The Saviour of the world,” and also “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” And what is the first act of this great and gracious One? Does He comply with the desire of those who bring the man to Him, by communicating strength to his paralyzed limbs? He does indeed, in due time; but He first surprises all who hear Him, by saying to the sick of the palsy, “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.” The man is brought for help and healing, but Jesus speaks of “forgiveness of sins.” He knows what is in man, and what man is. He penetrates beneath the surface to the source. “All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” (Hebrews 4:13.) He knows that the cause of man’s helplessness and misery is SIN, that root of all bitterness. To put away sin He came into the world, He shed His precious blood, He died upon the cross. He put it away, root and branch, “by the sacrifice of HIMSELF.” (Hebrews 9:26); and having finished the work which God gave Him to do, He is now seated “on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (Hebrews 1:3.) Hence, in the case of the poor paralytic, the Lord goes at once to the root of the disease, and pronounces with divine authority the forgiveness of his sins; and then, and not till then, does He give strength to his fixed and helpless limbs to rise up and walk.

Dear reader, do you know the forgiveness of your sins, through the precious blood of Christ? or are you seeking to be justified by works? The word of God, which is truth, declares that we cannot be justified before God by works; but that we are poor, helpless, vile sinners, who can do nothing towards saving ourselves. A sinner has neither the strength, nor the will, to walk in the ways of God and to serve Him, while he remains unreconciled to Him, through not believing the record concerning His Son; but when, through grace, he believes in Christ, as the One who, “when we were yet without strength, in due time died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6), he is saved with a present and everlasting salvation: and then, with this salvation is given power, through the Holy Spirit leading the soul to abide in Christ, the source and secret of all strength; to walk in the ways of the Lord “unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.” (Colossians 1:10.) So that good works are the fruits of faith in Christ; but until God’s record concerning His Son is believed, there can be no fruit borne to God; for “without faith it is impossible to please Him.” (Hebrews 11:6.)

Thus in the instance before us, the Lord having made known to the poor man, the forgiveness of his sins, adds the gift of strength, to enable him to arise, take up his bed and walk; and so he goes forth before them all, insomuch that they are all amazed, and glorify God. Yes! God is glorified in the holy, upright, intelligent and devoted walk of His saints, in newness of life; having created them in Christ Jesus unto good works, which He hath before ordained that they should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10, &c.)

But the first point for the poor, powerless sinner to have settled in his conscience before God, is, the forgiveness of his sins, through the knowledge of Him who “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mark 2:17); who “once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust” (1 Peter 3:18); who “is the propitiation for the whole world” (1 John 2:2); and who, as “the Lamb of God,” hath taken away “the sin of the world.” (John 1:29.) The eternal song of the redeemed is, “Unto HIM that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” (Revelation 1:5.) May you be found among that countless and blessed company, through NOW believing in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. (John 3:16, &c.)

Bible Herald: 1877, Sphere of Christ's Power, The

I desire, beloved friends, to show you, not only what power is, but where the sphere of power is—where it works.

We have two things in Mark 2:1-12; one is what Christ does for us, and the other what He does in us. These are very distinct things in themselves. What He does in us is seen in the body. This is what people too much overlook. They are saved, and they go on satisfied with that, as if the body had nothing to do with it. Now this was exactly the Corinthians. They did not want grace, but they did not look to it that the body should be the exemplification of that grace. I am sure of this—there is more grace in people than they show, and what is the reason of this? Why, there is something hindering. But where is the hindrance? Their own bodies—the working of the flesh. When I come to the second part, we shall see how this is to be dealt with.

Tonight we shall consider where the sphere of the power is now.

And first, to clear the ground—not because it is necessary to dwell upon the facts of what Christ has done for us. Generally I find people at the bottom are quite clear about this, if they are not always clear and certain about what Christ does in them—the simplest thing in the ministry of Christ is when He comes to a poor powerless man, and sets forth and displays His power. The first two chapters of this gospel are one series. Our Lord is here looking at everything as it was, but as a man come into the world able to remove every character of trouble and grief to which man was liable. That is the great thing, here was a man upon the earth able to deal with every class of evil, and remove it. He takes every class. Not every variety of a class, but every class of evil. I will show you here four classes—four different varieties of disease from which man suffers.

Turn to the first chapter and 23rd verse, and read to the 28th, here we find satan has found entrance into a man. Not into every man, though no man is safe from him and it is very important to get hold of this fact. An unconverted man has no safeguard against satan, because man is not able to keep out satan. There never was a man yet able to expel satan except one—the Lord Jesus Christ—and the moment he expelled him, the devil cried out you are not a man, you are more than man, you are the holy one of God. No man could expel him before. God could of course. The wonderful thing now is that a man has power over satan, and can lift off the burden from the shoulders of a man, whatever that burden may be. The judgment is on the body, but while resting on the body, the spirit also suffers. And now satan enters man. But there is a man here who has power over satan, and the Lord rebuked him, saying, “Hold thy peace and come out of him.” The devil had said, “art thou come to destroy us?” They thought that He had come to cast them down to the abyss, as we see in scripture He will. “I know thee who thou art—the holy one of God.” He does not own Him as a man at all. But He is there as a man, and this is quite a new thing. And I too, as a man

connected with Jesus—I too can defy satan. I am a man by birth, but I am more distinctly so as born of Christ than ever I was as born of Adam. I more and more distinctly belong to the new creation than ever I belonged to the old. I am more distinctly so because of this great work of Christ. I am a brother of the risen man. I am a brother to the dying man by birth, but that is broken into by Christ now by divine power, and He says, “My brother.” That is the new creation. I belong to this man. The Lord utters just one word, and satan leaves the man. “Hold thy peace and come out of him,” and he came out immediately. There is power for you, if you want power. He speaks the word and it is done. There is not the slightest parade about it. And this is always so marvelous about the works of God. When we come to speak more of the character of power, we shall find that one great characteristic of power is quietness. People are always quiet in power. When it is a master, or a father, or whoever he is. When he has power, he is quiet. Man as man can do nothing quietly. He must make a noise about it; when I watch the growth of a vegetable or a flower, I say this is divine. It proceeds noiselessly, therefore I say that is God’s hand.

I turn now to the second class. I cannot dwell upon these instances. The second is merely to note another class. In the 30th verse, Simon’s wife’s mother lay sick of a fever. Here He came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up, and straightway the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. It is another class. This is the excitement of nature. A person might be in a temper in what he is doing or in haste, and we say “you are quite in a fever about it.” Here the Lord takes her by the hand, and lifts her up. He does everything in a different way. He has not one sovereign remedy for all. He has a particular one for each.

The third class is in the 40th verse. A leper comes to him. That, is outward evil, and He puts away this by touching it.

Now I come to the chapter I read from, and I bring before you the palsied man — a man characterized by perfect powerlessness. The others had some strength remaining in them, this one had none. And this is what I think marks it so much, and which may be of immense help to your souls, is his perfect powerlessness. He could do nothing, and he himself received everything. And he receives it from God, and knows it is a perfect thing he receives. If God does the whole thing, it must be well done. And this is the great thing that the soul finds out in grace—that He has done it. This is practically what characterizes the man in the 7th Romans. He has not a bit of power left. He could do nothing, could not stoop to pick up a crumb. That is when you get power. When you have nothing, and can do nothing, then you must receive everything. It is then a very simple thing for the heart. God has done it all for me, and it must be well done. When you come with nothing—no power — nothing the soul wants to retain—then what comes out is the simplicity of grace and power. When the palsied man goes forth, grace comes out in its fullness. See how it acts, ‘Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.’ He does not touch the palsied man—does not heal him first, but forgives his sins. He goes down to the root of the work. Now I find His perfect grace, by the necessity of perfect powerlessness. That is what the poor soul has to do. Come with perfect powerlessness, and you will unlock the heart of Christ. Here, then, are the four classes, and the Lord has power over each and all, and the delight of His heart is to shed forth this grace. He looks for a scene where He can display all the benign influences of His love. The real attraction to Christ is that you are nothing. Like the Syrophoenician woman, I will be a dog, and come and pick up a crumb. You see it is the essential point. I have to learn that He has done it all.

Now let me say one thing in connection with this, to make it a little plainer. You see Christ does it all for us. He is sent from God to do it. He comes from God to meet the mind of God about the sinner. He does not come to meet the mind of the sinner about God. Now, I know people press it this way. And though it is true, it is not the whole truth. I may say I am perfectly certain I paid an account to the last farthing, and yet, my creditor might grumble because he does not think it is paid. And so long as this is the case the matter is not settled—cannot be said to be settled. Now, we could not say we have paid the Lord the last farthing. No one knows what there is in his own heart. No one knows the extent of his sins. He knows a little—some half dozen sins and failures—but he does not know half of what goes on there. “If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.” I say, then, that what you have to learn is, that God has satisfied Himself, and that is quite a different thing. Thus Christ came to meet the mind of God about sin. Hence, the moment Christ is revealed to my soul as the one in glory, I see He has satisfied the heart of God about me, a sinner. It is God’s satisfaction I have got. It is not, “I know I have paid the last farthing, and have got the receipt in my pocket.” The whole truth is I have got the satisfaction of God touching the work done for my salvation, and that is acceptance. Hence a Christian is “accepted in the beloved.” That every believer has, though he may not know it. Every believer is like a prince who is born to a kingdom, but does not know it, till he is grown up. Does not enjoy it. He is heir to a throne, but he has not got it—does not know it—has not got intelligence about it. Thus souls do not know what they have got. That is acceptance. That is what Christ has wrought. Now do not be thinking I state it too strongly—I could not—you never can improve your acceptance, and what is more you never can lose it. Your soul may be darkened without it, but that is another thing, you can never lose it, nor alter it. You have no hand in it whatever.

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 2:1-17

Verse 1. After some days He comes into Capernaum again, and it was noised that He was in the house.

Verse 2. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and He preached the word unto them. This is the special service He has before Him, and faithfully He attends to it. It would be the truth-what He Himself is, unfolded from the Scriptures, and new things from the divine storehouse; Israel's Messiah promised; the Savior of men, who can meet man's need. His works conforming His word, carrying with it delivering power from every evil.

Verse 3. And they come unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy (paralysis) which was borne of four. Here is the helpless sinner who cannot come, but four men who have confidence in the Lord carry him.

Verse 4. And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was; and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. Their perseverance expressed their confidence in Jesus, in His love and in His power. Faith overcomes obstacles and presses on till its object is gained. The man is needy. Jesus alone can meet his need and they have confidence that He will heal him.

Verse 5. When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." The cause of man's ruin was sin. Sin was the root of all the trouble and disease that had come upon man. Now the one who can meet the need is come, the great Messiah of whom it was written (Psa. 103) "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." He tells the man the cause of the trouble-it is sin.

This is the teaching of God that draws the sinner to Christ (John 6:45). There He meets us and gives us soul healing-the remission of sins. It is the same faith we need to exercise now as Christians, that, making us feel our need, keeps us as needy ones drawing from His fullness, and assures us that He will not fail us. He will teach us patience and prove us, but He will answer the soul that relies upon Him. This is the Holy Spirit's work in us.

Verses 6-11. The scribes reason in their hearts, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?" They are blind to the things of God; it is the carnal mind (Rom. 8:7), and it cannot receive the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14). Jesus knew their thoughts, for He was God manifest in the flesh who was present among them, and He answers them, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the paralyzed man, Thy sins be forgiven thee: or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed and go thy way into thine house." God had come in love to pardon and to heal. He had the right and the power in His own person as Son of Man to meet man's wretchedness, and to free him from the sufferings of body which sin had brought in; and to forgive His sins. Isa. 53:4-6 tells us what it was to cost Him. He could speak it to the man, well knowing that God's justice would be maintained by His finished work at the cross. Thus He proved Himself to be the Friend of Sinners, forgiving their sins and delivering them from sins forever, and by His grace attracting them to Himself as a loving Savior.

Verse 12. "And immediately He arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them: insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, we never saw it on this fashion." The man's walk is a witness" to the new power given him by the Lord Jesus.

Verse 13. "And He went forth again by the seaside; and all the multitude resorted unto Him, and He taught them." This is His special work again.

Verse 14. "And as He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alpheus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow Me. And he arose and followed Him." The publicans were considered the lowest of the Jews, and were hated, as servants of the Romans, for collecting the Roman tributes from their brethren. The Jews hated to pay this tax. They were continually reminded by it of their sin that put them under the Roman yoke. The publicans were, therefore, despised and detested. Some of them grew rich and were blamed for defrauding the Jews to enrich themselves. In calling Levi, the Lord shows the true character of His mission, that it was to seek the lost, the needy sinner, that He came.

Verse 15. "And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and His disciples: for there were many and they followed Him." Luke 5:29, tells us that Levi (or Matthew) made a great feast to Jesus; it seems to be this same occasion.

Verse 16. The scribes and Pharisees show their ignorance of their own state under their religious garb, questioning His disciples. "How is it that He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?"

Verse 17. "When Jesus heard it, He saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I Came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." What a rebuke to them, to their pretended sanctity, and what grace to the lowly confessed sinner-grace in seeking the lost; forgiving the guilty; welcoming and gathering the needy repentant souls, to give to them remission of sins.

This is not law; the law demanded righteousness from man and cursed him for not having it (Gal. 3:10). But the Lord Jesus is full of grace and truth seeking sinners to forgive their sins, as we know (Rom. 3:25), righteously, because of the work He would do upon the cross., "There is none righteous" otherwise (Rom. 3:10). He does not send the sinner away, but seeks him and sits and eats with him while still being Himself altogether holy. This is the love of God winning the hearts of men, and producing confidence towards God in these hearts; to give them a perfect object, and to form them after His image. May we contemplate His glory as thus revealed, that we may be drawn after Him.

God is revealed to us in the gift of His Son; the cross manifests that love in giving Him for us. And in righteousness, too, for there we see the blessed Lord made sin for us, and we are now made the righteousness of God in Him, and have an inheritance awaiting us in glory. We are also God's dear children. What a contrast with law which demands and gives nothing.

(To be Continued.)

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 2:18-28

MAR 2Verses 18-20. "And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto Him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." The fasting of John's disciples was in accord with conviction under a broken law. Jesus' disciples could not fast for they had the Bridegroom with them; they were the children of the bridechamber, and so could not fast, but rejoice that He was with them. But when He was gone, the joy of His presence would be turned into the sorrow his absence would create in their hearts; then shall they fast in those days. But see John 16:16-22, for their joy after his resurrection, which gives another reason for their not fasting.

Verses 21-22. "No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment, else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but the new wine must be put into new bottles." The old is Judaism; the new is Christianity. The new wine-the truth and spiritual ceremonies of Judaism. The new wine would burst the old skin bottles; the new cloth-God's righteousness-would not agree with man's efforts to work out his own righteousness (Rom. 10:3, 4).

Grace and law do not mix; it is important for us to have done with what recognizes the first man. We have a new life; Christ risen from the dead, is the beginning of the creation of God (Col. 1:18; Rev. 3:14). We are redeemed, and are children of God the Father. Christianity is not

Judaism improved; it is a new order of things in the power of the Hoy Ghost. Yet Christians have tried to mix up the two opposites-law and grace-which has resulted in a corrupt thing which we speak of as Christendom. The truth abides, may we abide by it.

Verses 23-28. And it came to pass, that He went through the corn fields on the Sabbath day; and His disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto Him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful? And He said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungered, he and they that were with him? How He went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the show bread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

The institution of the Sabbath, the sign of God's covenant with Israel, was founded by God (Ex. 1:17). When God ended creating, He rested the seventh day; it was given to man (Exo. 16) with the Manna. When Israel was put under law it was given again. It is not "a" seventh day, but “the" seventh day. Israel did not keep the law; they transgressed, the covenant was broken.

But the Sabbath was made for man. The Lord brings before them the time when David was the rejected king and he ate the show bread. Now a greater than David was rejected, even God's beloved Son, and could God delight in their keeping the Sabbath when they had broken His command? No. But the Son of Man is Lord of it, and He can Use it for man's benefit. This is what pleased Him, to show mercy to needy men. God could not respect those who despised and rejected His beloved Son. This is brought out in Chapter 3:1-5.

(Continued from page 131.)

The Remembrancer: 1908, Different Aspects of the Gospel

The Gospel of the Kingdom. Mark 1:14.

AR 1:14The preaching. of Jesus announced the kingdom, showed that the time was fulfilled, that the kingdom was at hand, that the people must repent and believe the gospel. We should distinguish between the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of our salvation. Christ is the center of both; but there is a great difference between the preaching of a kingdom which is drawing near, and that of an eternal redemption accomplished upon the cross. It is quite possible that the two truths should be announced together. And indeed we find that the apostle Paul preached the kingdom; but he also proclaimed an eternal redemption accomplished for us on the cross. Christ prophesied of His death, and announced that the Son of Man should give His life for the ransom of many; but He could not announce an accomplished redemption during His life. Men ought to have received. Him, and not to have put Bim to death. Hence His testimony was about the kingdom which was drawing nigh.

This kingdom in its public power has been delayed because Christ has been rejected (see Rev. 11:17); and this delay lasts all the time that Christ is sitting at the right hand of God until the time, when He shall arise from the throne of His Father to judge. God has said, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool " (Psa. 110:1). It is nevertheless true that the kingdom was already come in mystery according to Matt. 13 This goes on during the time that Jesus is seated at the right hand of trod; but when God's appointed moment shall come the Lord will arise and set up the kingdom, and with His own power will judge the living, and peace and happiness shall be established on the earth; and we who have received Him, whilst the world has rejected Him, shall go to meet Him in the air. We shall be forever with the Lord, and shall come with Him in glory when He shall appear before the world, and shall reign with Him; and, what is still far better, we shall be like Him, and always with Him in the Father's house.

The Gospel of the Glory of Christ. 2 Corinthians. 4:4

CO 4:4As to the difference between the gospel of the glory and the gospel of the humiliation, the latter is pure grace in God, manifested here in Christ. John's writings show God revealing Himself in Christ to man in His life down here. In Paul's writings what we have habitually is marl manifested in righteousness before God. The gospel of humiliation is perfect grace; it is God coming down to man where he is, visiting him in his condition as such a one on earth. The gospel of the glory takes "this treasure " (ver. 7) and unfolds it. In Phil. 2, we have the whole line, from the time when Christ was " in the form of God" till He was on the cross, when, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death. This is the manifestation of God down here amongst sinners. But in the gospel of the glory man is looked at as the old man totally set aside, yet man is in -glory in virtue of the complete work that redeems us and justifies us, and gives us a place in the glory. The glory is the testimony to the efficacy of the work; the humiliation is the testimony to the greatness of the love. But it is all the same gospel. The gospel of the humiliation is God in grace, whereas the gospel of the glory is. man in glory, of course as fruit of grace. In the gospel of the humiliation we have God in Christ, and in the gospel of glory we have man in Christ. The latter is a glorious result of the other no doubt, hut it is a different aspect of the gospel.

Things New and Old: Volume 27, Miracles of Our Lord: No. 1 - Mark 1

“And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying. Let us alone: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?”

“And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.” (Mark 1:23, 24, 39.)

Not only did there shine out the true Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ in the miracles He performed, but in those miracles the moral condition of man is very distinctly illustrated, and God’s way of meeting that condition in and by Christ. He was the true light that made all things manifest. Satan was in the world as the dragon, he was in the palace, the god of this world. But also there were demons in the synagogue. This is a very serious reflection. The synagogue was the Jews meeting-room, or, as people say now, the place of worship. Men may admit that devils may be in the tavern, the theater, the concert-room, at the ball, at the billiard-table, or the rambling-den; but how little is thought of

Satan and his ministers in the meeting-room, or place of worship! But so it was; and if we look at a few scriptures we shall soon see that so it is now.

Let us look, then, in the first place, at man. All men by nature are under the power of Satan. We see men led by this wicked spirit, walking "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2.) There is no middle stale. Men are either dead with Christ, and risen in Him, or led by the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. One of these is assuredly the condition of the writer and the reader of these lines.

In another scripture we learn that men are now blinded by Satan: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not," &c. (2 Cor. 4:3, 4.) A blind man cannot even see the sun; and a morally blind man cannot see even the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, our Substitute and Representative. Oh, blessed light, to see my name, encircled in the radiancy of the glory, accepted in the Christ! But those blinded by Satan cannot see the light. But if that is the condition of all men by nature, what has that to do with the synagogue? Does Satan get into the synagogue now? Well, let us look, if we have sight, at what he was about, even whilst the apostles were here.

In this same epistle we read of the crafty and deceitful way in which Satan blinds and corrupts the professing church by his agents. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor. 11:13-15.)

Now, if Satan had his agents in the professing church so early, what is it now, as foretold? "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.... forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats," &c. (1 Tim. 4:1-3.) Many more scriptures might be quoted. But how few believe or understand what we have already read! What power Satan has ever had since the first woman trusted his word, and distrusted God!

There are three ways, then, in which Satan has still great power over men. He leads men by their lusts, as the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. He blinds the minds of them that believe not, and he transforms himself as an angel of light, in the synagogues, or so-called places of worship. Who would have thought this, if scripture had not revealed it? Mark, so great is the deception, that his ministers are transformed as the ministers of righteousness. What matters it to Satan, whether he leads souls to destruction by an unclean, sensual demon, or by a demon leading them to the same end by self-righteousness?

The presence of Jesus at once greatly disturbed these demons in the synagogue. It is just the same now. If Jesus be truly preached, in the power of the Holy Ghost, there is immediate disturbance. The man in the synagogue, with an unclean spirit, cried out. Think of man in such a condition, in the very possession of a demon. And how terrible the state of every rejecter of the grace of God now! And what does he cry? He says, a Let us alone." Yes, this is the cry of every unconverted soul: Let us alone. Why cannot we have our own way, and do our own will? Why disturb us? "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?" Ah, it is the very demon that thus speaks in the man. How dreadful the condition of every unconverted man, whether the slave of unclean lusts, or the slave of false, deceitful ministers of Satan, as ministers of righteousness, like the serpent in the garden, professing only to seek the good of their dupes. Let Jesus, the present and eternal Savior, be preached to such, and immediately they cry out, "Let us alone!" "What have we to do with thee?"

Oh, how often this is the case on a dying bed. Satan has succeeded as an angel of light, and by his ministers, as ministers of righteousness, in lulling a soul into the false security of trusting in sacraments and his own righteousness. You will be kept from that dying chamber, if possible, but if you should enter it, and proclaim forgiveness of sins through Jesus alone, how soon, and how sad, the cry, "Let us alone!" "What have we to do with forgiveness of sins through Jesus? We do not need it, we are good religious people!" On the other hand, Satan may have held complete power over another case, and as the terrible hour of death approaches, awful despair already is set-tied on the dying countenance. Now, who but the Lord Jesus, the eternal Son of God, could meet this first condition of man, led, blinded, possessed by demons—yes, even in the synagogue? Oh, blessed be God, Jesus has power to deliver. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8.)

Oh, beloved reader, are you possessed of an unclean spirit? Has Satan, by uncleanness and iniquity, complete power over you? Or has he deceived you as a minister of righteousness? Do you say, "I attend the synagogue, and my minister tells me how good I must be, and then God will love me?" If you do, mark that man, he is one of the ministers of Satan. God so loved the world, when it was as bad as it ever could be—yes, so loved it then—that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have eternal life.

Yes, yes, by that work which He finished on the cross for us poor sinners, He has power and title to deliver every sinner that believes on Him from the power of Satan; and no other name is given, by which Satan can be cast out, but the name of Jesus. Thus, not only did He, when here in flesh, put forth His blessed power for man, in casting out devils, even in the synagogue, but He has all power now to meet this desperate state of man—of all men; of you, my reader. How distinctly both His true manhood and Godhead shine out in this! Who but God could bind the strong man? " And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils:, and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him." (Mark 1:31.) Yes, they knew Him to be God, and must submit to His power. And now mark His perfect, dependent manhood, in the next verse: " And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." How blessed that we can thus go with Him into a solitary place, and pray with Him as perfect Man, in all the tender love of His truly human heart! As such He maketh intercession for us. Do you sometimes—yea, often—feel cold and dead in prayer? Think of Him; as Man He prayed with and for you. Yet He is God over all, blessed for evermore. And as God you can pray to Him; and in answer to Simon's question, or announcement, "All seek for thee," He said, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth." Oh, ye who would serve this Lord and Savior, retire with Him into the solitary place in prayer. Then go with Him to the next towns, and preach there also.

The wind bloweth where it listeth; and, where He will, there will surely be the putting forth of His mighty power in the deliverance of a great number of souls.

"And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils." Yes, such was the condition of the synagogues then, and such is their condition now; and such is His power to meet this desperate condition of man. But do not go alone to this work—go with Him. He

says, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age.” Blessed Jesus, may all Thy servants, from this hour, be more with Thee in the solitary place, and thus more with Thee from town to town, until we see Thy face, and hear Thy precious words, “Well done.” Thou hast said, “And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

Conference: 1978, Mark 1:21

Reading

When we look at a part of Mark's gospel first chapter, perhaps starting from the 21St verse, from the first chapter of Mark, Mark Gospel chapter one, verse 21. Then they went into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and stopped, and they were astonished at his doctrine. Where he taught them as one that had authority. They're not as described. Than there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, Let us alone, what have we to do with these? Our Jesus of Nazareth, art thou come to destroy us? I know these who thou art, the Holy One of God. Can Jesus reduce him, saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him? And when the unclean spirit had turned him and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him, And they were all amazed in so much as they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is that? What new doctrine is this? Where was authority commanded He, even the unclean spirits, And they do obey him. And immediately estranged spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. And forthwith, when they were coming out of the synagogue, they entered into the House of Simon and Andrew with James and John. For Simons wife, mother lay sick of his fever, and a non they tell him of her, and he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. Benedeva When the sun did that, they brought unto him all they were diseased, and then they were possessed. The devil and all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of diverse diseases and cast out many devils, and suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him. And in the morning rising of the great wild before day. Dear widow and departed a solitary place, and they're afraid Simon and Lisa were with him, followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. They said unto them, Let us go into the next town, that I may preach there also. For therefore am I became I'm for. Any preached in the synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils. And there came a leopard to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him. Southern him I will be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed. Administrative charged him, and forthwith sent him away, and said unto him, See thou say nothing to any man, but go thy way. Show thyself to the priests, and offers of the cleansing, thy cleansing those things that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. But he went on and began to publish it much and the blaze abroad the matter influence that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places, and they came to him from every quarter. Believe we have the person of the Lord Jesus before us in this passage, and the person of the Lord Jesus sets before us the path of faith. Dependence and obedience being its character, you perhaps remember that him writer Kurt Stegan. And he made this comment. Across the will of nature lies the path of God. Now it's natural for us to follow our own hearts. But we have to be instructed from the word of God. And how much better could we do than to follow the path of our blessed Savior, as Peter says, to follow in his steps?

Here we have the Lord Jesus in a peculiar different way than from we have what we have in the other Gospels. He's seen as the servant Son of God. Servant Son of God in this book. And so that there are particular things outstanding in regard to service here that we should notice because it's in this very same book that he says he appointed to every man his work. And so it doesn't leave any Christian out. The great thing is to discover the particular work that the Lord wants us to do. It might be prayer, it might be visiting, it might be preaching, it might be simply having that confidence. Cast not away there for your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. But whatever it is, we find the pattern of it in the blessed Savior. Now in this chapter we have the early days, possibly the first few days of his service. John the Baptist been put in prison. And as soon as he's put in prison, the Lord begins his service. Because it's in Mark, we get the chronological order. In a general way of his ministry, that is the events as they happened one after the other. And so we have a great deal of instruction for the server, but not only for the servant, the general principles that should guide us as Christians. Down here we've been just hearing about the doctrine of it in the book of Timothy. Here we see the practice of it in the person of the Lord Jesus and how beautiful to trace, especially in this last meeting. Now that which has to do with the person himself. And that we might walk as he walked, as John says in his epistle. Now it's true that in Luke's gospel we have the pattern. In which the enemy approaches the Lord Jesus and the wilderness. The flesh, the world, and the devil. But in this passage we've read, we find that the devil. Comes first. He's going to seek to upset the path of the Lord Jesus at the very start, and so we notice that. In the 21St verse they come to Capernaum. Now that's the Lord's own city. That's where he made his headquarters, at least for a time. And in the 22nd verse. Teachers with authority. And now we have a man with an unclean spirit, and he cries out. Well, it's the power of Satan immediately attacking the power of Satan. The Lord is speaking with authority. We find he's just been. In the wilderness he has withstood that enemy of our soul. And now he's beginning his ministry sealed for that ministry. And he speaks with authority. Now this is important for anyone who would serve the Lord. To have a sense in their soul that they have been sent, it doesn't matter. Whether it's to visit your neighbor or whether it's to preach on the street, to have a sense in your soul that you've been sent. It's been said by another that if you and I have a real sense in our soul that we have been sent, we can be sure that the message we bring will command the consciences of those that hear it. Because the word of God says, Inasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. I make these comments introducing this because I believe that here we have a series of events in the early first days of the ministry of the Lord Jesus that set before us some very practical principles where this was standing the enemy, or whether it's prayer, whatever it is, we have very definite things mentioned here that would be helpful to us.

In our Christian pathway. Whatever that pathway may be, and they certainly are buried today, striking in the Gospel of Mark the use of the Word, and we have it over and over again. Notice how many verses in this chapter begin with the Word and almost every chapter in the book begins with the Word and. For the Lord's service was an uninterrupted service with us. We may be very diligent and then we get discouraged and sort of slow down or give up, and then we start again. But I believe in the pathway of the Lord Jesus and the straightway and forthwith are very noticeable in the Gospel of Mark because the Lord's service was not interrupted service. Of perfect obedience to his Father's will, always knowing his Father's will. Always doing it for us. We're not always aware of his will. We should be, but we are often not near enough to the Lord to discern His will. When we have. There isn't a spiritual energy always to do it, or perhaps there is a delay before we do it. How beautiful to see this perfection in the Lord Jesus. He went on in that path constantly. In a general way, one that's enjoyed of thinking of the Gospel of

Mark as corresponding to a section of the book of Isaiah, we turn to the 42nd chapter of Isaiah. It begins with a verse which you can easily see goes along with what's been said. God had in Israel one who was. To represent Him down here below, that is supposed to represent God here below. But we know the failure of that people. But now it's as it were that the Christ comes along and he steps into that place of servants. And perfectly fulfilled that in which Israel had failed. Behold my servant whom I uphold mine elect, in whom my soul delighted. I have put my spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. And that goes right through. Oh, you find it in the 49th definitely, and the 53rd we know so well. And perhaps the 61St, where he reads from that chapter in Luke's gospel. And so we find Christ now in the little book of Mark. That's perfect servant, the one who is upholding, and as soon as he is sealed with the Spirit, he goes forth in this wonderful field of service. I was just wondering that might correspond to the remarks our brother made this morning about the Hebrew servant. Surely it does well. Trace steps into that place and brings honor and glory to God. He is uphill. I like to relate just a striking incident that happened in the Dominican Republic. In December last when I was there. Generally in that island there is great religious liberty and you can give out tracks and speak to almost everyone and get a pretty nice response, but not always, and this was the exception. Perhaps about the last day of my visit, we had got into an old taxi. That's the way you travel around the city and they pile on phone until they're running on the riding on the fenders. But. We have, I have two of my local brethren along and our local brethren are so good at giving the gospel down there. And so they, this young man got in and they gave him a track and. He turned around and asked this question. He says Why did Jesus wait till he was 30 years old to begin in his servicing? What did he do from the time he was 12 years old? Why did he do something when he was 20 and 25? And so on. I always leave our local presidents an answer and they are good at it, but they seem to be kind of stumped about it. They just didn't hardly know what to say to him. So I asked the young man this. How old was the first man when he was tested? I said you've read your Bible and how old was the first man when he was tested? He couldn't give an answer. You see, we don't know. But he was a whole grown man, wasn't he? The 1St man was a full grown man when he was tested and so was the 2nd man. Jesus began to be about 30 years old and as soon as he was sealed with the Spirit.

Then in the section we're reading about, he went forth and he showed all the power of God, imperfection, the perfect servant to overcome all the power of the end. That's what we're reading about, isn't it? Your comments about. Isaiah. Are so beautiful in grace. Because after Israel had failed. Then God says, thou art my servant, O Israel, and the Lord Jesus takes up that failure. And beautifully sets forth the perfection of the path of service. And then when you get to the end of Isaiah again you find. Him turning the service back over to Israel again and he speaks. These are my servants. And you'll read, we won't turn to it, but you'll see it in the 63rd chapter and earlier to where the services turn back to Israel again and they will be his witnesses on the earth in the millennial day. Now, I think this is beautiful. The Lord Jesus first of all, has to show the pattern of true service, because they didn't know it. They weren't even believers. They had turned against their God. But sovereign grace comes in and puts a beautiful example before them. And of course they'll be taught of God. That is, they'll have a new spirit. But then they become his servants. Well now, isn't that just what he did with us? We were far off from God and then he saved us and then he set this beautiful pattern before us. Of the Lord Jesus, and then he sends his disciples forth to serve, and he sends us forth to serve to that's great sovereign grace. But now we see the pattern of it. How are we going to walk? How are we going to serve? Here we have it in our chapter. Would you also say in connection with the Lord's service beginning at 30, that was when the priests began their public service. Their service was from 30 to 50 in the book of Numbers we find. And so with the Lord Jesus, He spoke as one having authority. He rebuked scribes and Pharisees, and there was a proper. Age in which a man took the position of responsibility in Israel. And the Lord Jesus, who is the one who is perfect in everything, followed that pattern that had been marked out. The priest was put in that position publicly at 30. The Lord takes that position at 30 years of age. We certainly are sure that his pathway was perfect up to that point. Bird of God hasn't been pleased to tell us all the details, but we know He was. The perfect one. Everything about him. He did no sin. He could not sin. But the public part of the Lord Jesus work began at 30 years of age, didn't it? I think he made a pretty good yoke of oxen tooth for the oxen too, didn't he? When he made, when he was a Carpenter that would fit. And this, this really teaches us, doesn't it, that whether it's making a yolk for oxen or whether it's preaching the gospel. This, we learn here, is the service of God. And I believe that we must remember that. Everyone doesn't take the same place. But whatever ye do, do it as unto the Lord and. He's going to reward whatever is done to His name. If I do it for myself and my own interests, it's one thing. But whatever path I am placed in, if I do it to the Lord, I don't do it for the reward. But He's going to reward it because it's done to His name no matter what it is. If I do it to the Lord and it's a path He's put me in, He's going to meet His reward in that day. Is that right? Servants in the 14th of. Romans, at least it seems to fit some of us. It begins there with him that is weak in the faith. Well, that's kind of a rebuke. We ought to be strong in the faith, like Abraham giving glory to God. Well, here's the one who is weak in the faith. But what it says about this one in the fourth verse?

Who art thou that judgest another man's service? You see, we all are in the service. And then it says to his own master, he standeth or false than this. Yeah, he shall be old enough, for God is able to make him to stand. Does not that even apply to the Lord? By the Spirit we shall whom I uphold, My servant whom I uphold. All the acts of the man, faith, Jesus were in the power of the Spirit. And we have the same spirit. Am I going too far there? Everything that you do, the position on the principle of grace is not real services. And so he takes the weakest vessels. Well. You're saying that the Commendation and. Too much, but it speaks of some of those kingdoms. You know, it's a wonderful thing. To be when the Lord wants us and be there when he wants us. Now that's more important than seeking out great service. And that takes waiting upon the Lord, doesn't it? It's not just saying I want to go to a certain place and do a certain thing. We learned that at the end of this chapter. Everyone was running to hear as far Jesus Allen always said and disciple. I was supposed to power, but where I went back. Why didn't we go to the throne? Just let him hear it. You know that wasn't the fast. Oh how we missed the Lords mind because we're moved by what people say or what you see in our eyes a national sentence. But it's grace and embrace the wall that enables us to serve directly and service of the Lord and all. How much we have to learn just from this first chat. How much we have to learn to pass the place and how we see our deficiencies in our daily life as we read this first chapter. The first 2-3 days of the Lord's ministers figure out our life. I think it's very important saying that we should be sent to anything. Go in Isaiah chapter 6 where it says here am I send me. The emphasis is on the word send, not on the word me. Sometimes we take it here am I send me, but the emphasis is on the word sent. He didn't want to go unsent, and you and I should always remember that. It isn't the need that puts us to work, for there are needs everywhere. It ought to be the call of God. And if we're going to wait for that, it may be like it was with Phillip. There were many that were hearing, many that were being saved. If blessing was the proof that he was sent of God, there was much blessing in Samaria. But the message was to go down into Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went, he was sent to another place. And the important thing was that he was sent, being sent, that he had a message and a service for the Lord to fulfill there. Well, I think that's good for all of us, young or old, to desire to be sent. And I believe if we turn to Galatians chapter 5, we have this point brought before us. Galatians chapter. Six, I should say Galatians chapter 6, verse 3. For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone. And not in another, For every man shall bear his own burden. I believe that this is taken up from the service of the

Levites that we spoke of a few moments ago. The Levites were brought to Aaron, and each one was appointed to his service and to his burden. And the Coethites were the ones who carried the holy vessels. The others, Gershom and Murari, carried. The other vessels were the ones who carried the ark, thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think.

To undertake that service of carrying the holy vessels and need. The others feel that they were doing an unnecessary work, because they were not given the work of carrying the holy vessels, but another work had been appointed to them. Well, it was a joy that they could have in knowing, just like the Coabites, that they were doing what they had been called to do. And sometimes we hear people say, oh, I wish I was out in some foreign field preaching the gospel. As though that were the thing that would be the most important, but for a sister in her home or for a brother in a more quiet work in his own assembly. If that's where the Lord wants him to be, he can have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another. That is, instead of saying, oh, I wish I was able to leave home and go to some important work like. Some foreign field. No, he says. If that's the word that you're appointed to get before the Lord, discover what that work is. Let every man prove his own work. Then you can have happiness in knowing that you're doing that which has been appointed to you, your service and your burden. I think it's very possible to go through life without ever discovering what the Lord wanted us to do. But it's a great loss. For God has, for every one of us who are saved in this room this afternoon, a service and a burden. And how happy it would be if each one of us in his presence discovered that and did that. And the service becomes important because of the one who has given us the work to do and that we're doing. The appointed work, well, it's a very lovely thing that God has brought this before us because. We measure service by how much it puts us in the public eye. But service that puts us in the public eye is much more dangerous because we're liable to have wrong motives. We're not so likely to have wrong motives for a service that hides us from the public eye. We have to be before the Lord to continue in a work that's unnoticed, like Epiphyrus in prayer. But we can very lightly want a public place. And so missed the mind of the Lord. Because we like public service. We like something that puts us before others. Natural heart wants a place. Now is the natural thing for the Galatians, wasn't it because they were turning back to law and that would be setting man up into place? Oh, how different the law is from grace and how much we have retained of the spirit of the law, each one, even though we were never under the law as a people. But it's been said that the law is in every natural heart because of pride. And so we're always thinking of something we can do that will be approved. Before man by and this is not the path we see here. Because the Lord Jesus, as he begins his work, He was the servant Son of God. That is, He was the servant of God, not of man, and he did everything regardless. That which would please his father, regardless of whether men were pleased or not, he always did that which pleased his father. And I believe this is one of the great points we have that that we begin this gospel of Mark that he was the servant son of God. I can remember an older brother when this was mentioned once that this book gives us the the the servant character. He said remember he said it gives the servant Son of God character. And I believe that is important to remember for everyone who served that. We are serving, it's true, we serve our brethren, but the purpose is to serve the Lord, no matter how small the task may be. We serve the Lord because He is the Lord and He appoints to every man his work and were responsible to the Lord. He's the one who rewarded.

A verse in the 13th chapter I'd like to ask a question about in this gospel Christ. It's been mentioned the 13th of Mark and the 34th verse. I'll just read it. For the son of mine is as a man picking his, picking a far journey, who left his house and gave authority to his servants and to every man his work, and commanded the Porter to watch. The question is about the authority. As far as I know, it's the only mention that I can find of authority given to us during this time in a very direct way. And I just wonder what the comments are. What is this authority? Well, I believe it ought to characterize the servant, that he is delivering a message from God. And of course, that is what the authority is. Sometimes we can. Say I think this or I think that, but where we have the direct word of God, it should be given out with His authority, shouldn't it? And I think it's important we find that as it speaks about the Lord Jesus. He spoke as one having authority and not as the scribes describes, gave out things and sort of apologized for them. When we give out the truth of God, we ought not to make any apologies for it. It's the truth that's given out as the word of God. In that connection. We could have just turned to Matthew's Gospel the the 9th chapter. And the 38th verse. And it's connected with the multitudes and their need and the disciples ministry. And so he says, pray there for the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest. I connect that with the verse that you have just called our attention to. Now there is such a thing as praying to the Lord of the harvest because it's His work and He's appointing His servants. I don't mean to be legal about it. We pray to God and prayer is general. Supplication is specific. Certain thing we have in our hearts. Prayer is general. Intercession is really for others. Should always be accompanied by the giving of thanks. We learned that from the passage that was brought before us this afternoon. And Timothy? So that prayer is general. We pray to God in a general way and for many things. But now when it comes to the gospel, he says, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest. And I think it's nice when remember that we we have that privilege of praying directly to the Lord Jesus, who's Lord of the harvest in connection with that harvest. Not that we want to be legal about it, because most of the time we address the Father when their prayer seems even in a. A prayer for the gospel. But I believe that we have a principle here, that we pray the Lord of the harvest, that he will send laborers into his harvest. And Brendan, when do we need a prayer like this? When did we need it more than we needed today? We need to pray that the Lord will send laborers into His harvest. There is a need for this very thing this very day. 22nd verse of our chapter. Your Lord taught them as one that had the forest. No question about where his authority came from. He was and is the Lord. But it seems comforting to me that in the one instance in the 13th chapter. While he's away, the one who has gone into the fire country, he has given authority, has delegated authority so that we can go with the force of knowing that God is behind us too. Is that right? Yeah, that's Colossians. And the power of his might is put that way. So. Elder or Deacon in that way? Not a hierarchy. That's not the authority, is it?

Goes right up to the head, to the Lord. Word that gives the authority. I was thinking of First Peter chapter four. We have a similar thought there. First Peter chapter 4. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God, or the sayings of God. Any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To whom be praised and dominion forever and ever. Amen. You sometimes hear a comment. Well, everyone has as much right to speak as another. None of us have any right to speak unless we have something from the Lord to say. And it's a very solemn responsibility. Of course, the Scripture says let the other judge. So we're not the final judge. But there ought to be a consciousness in our souls when we speak that God has given us something to say and that we have the authority of his word for what we're saying. If not, I believe it's our business to be quiet. We should have something from God and it has the authority of His Word. For our own glory, not to show off any knowledge, but as it says that God in all things may be glorified. all-purpose of ministry is the glory of God and the blessing of His people or of sinners. I believe this is quite interesting. May I introduce a verse in in Luke 12 Connection what's just been said? 1241 Luke 1241. Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler. Over all that he had. Now I believe here we have a principle that's very important. I know it's found in the Gospel of Luke, but still it fits the subject. Because Peter isn't told. Now, Peter, you go to such and such a city, and you. Preach there this was. Definitely told in the acts to

certain ones we know, but we're living in a day when faith must be an exercise and there has to be. The discerning between soul and spirit. We get that on the 4th chapter of Hebrews. We won't turn to it. That is, I may have a desire in my heart to do a certain thing, but I have to consult the Word of God in the power of the Spirit. That is, I have to be there under the guidance of the Spirit of God. For my directions, there isn't anyone going to say to me now you go to a certain city at a certain time and do a certain thing, but I'm guided by the Word of God and the principles of the Word of God. And what is laid upon my heart and in the presence of God. Uh, to provide meat in due season, if that happens to be the work that Peter was to do, well, then he was to provide me to do season. And that's a responsibility. And he, he had no doubt real exercises from time to time as to what meat would be in due season. And so that if the Saints might be edified by what is introduced. In ministry. So that's an exercise of faith in the presence of God, but on the principles laid down on the Word of God. I believe it's a very important thing. 25th song we have that says the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. And and as I see it, there are many decisions that. We face from day-to-day can be practical decisions of life, can be those in connection with the service of the Lord, but there are many decisions that we face where we don't have a definite scripture that we can turn to that specifically gives us the answer as to what the Lords mind is. The principles as we've had brought before us the principles of the Word of God are given to us to guide us and direct us in the path of faith.

If I could use an example for the benefit of our young people here, that a decision might be called upon in your life. As to where the Lord would have you to go to work, well, it may be that you have two cities before you, and in one city there's a gathering where you can meet with the Lord's people and remember the Lord Jesus and his death and seek to be an encouragement to the Lord's people. And in the other specificity, there's no meaning at all. Well, the principles of the Word of God forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the matter of some is, for example, would give you. Principles of the Word of God to guide you in that particular decision. But suppose there were two places where you go, both of which there is a meeting. Where you could be a health in both locations, where the type of job is one that in both cases you feel is commendable and one that a Christian could happily be engaged in. Now how are you going to decide which city to go to? Well, there is only one way and that is to be before the Lord in communion seeking the Lord's mind. And that's why it says the secret of the Lord. I believe it says the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. To there seek to be guided by the Lord's eye, to have him bring before your soul just in communion. Him communicating with your soul, what is the path of obedience? The mind of the Lord for you in that particular occasion. In that case, you wouldn't go and tell someone, Well, the Lord told me to go there. You might have a sense of it in your own soul. But that verse in First Corinthians 4 is in that connection where it says, I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified? But he that judgeth me is the Lord. So if you have a definite scripture, we gather to remember the Lord Jesus and His death. This morning we had a definite scripture this due in remembrance of me. We had definite instructions in the Word about the proper way of gathering according to His Word. So we had something to follow. It was discerning His mind through His words and fulfilling it in obedience. But when it's a question of. Going to such and such a city where you have no definite Scripture, then we ought to always be very humble in speaking about it. The Lord can give us the confidence of it in our souls. Be not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is. But when it's talking about Speaking of it, then we have to be careful. We have to be humble. It's very easy for us to boast. And if we say. Told me to go there. We're practically telling all our brethren and our friends. Well, you know, I'm just walking so near the Lord. I'm so much in his secret that I couldn't have missed his mind. He told me to do that. That kind of thing is spiritual pride, or it leads to that. It's not found in the Word so that we can have that hostile faith. Have it to thyself before God. We can have that secret as You've called our attention in our souls. But let us not boast before others and say what the Lord told us to do when we don't have a Scripture. In that 25th Psalm that says, The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way. They must be meek instead of proud about these things. On this first instance. How that the Lord meets Satan? As it were at the very beginning. And he takes away as we noticed in the. Wilderness. He took away his armor when he trusted, but now he takes away the attack that the first attack upon the Lord. Here is this man possessed with the demon and the Lord. Cast out the demon and now there's there's fame in the 28th verse. So there is a temptation to the natural man immediately to say, well, now I have really gained a reputation here, I think I'll take advantage of it and I'll see if I can get some people together and, and, and make use of this now for the Lord. But no, the Lord, he goes into the House of Simon. Why? Because he was directed by the Spirit of God and. His activity here wasn't that which would correspond to the fame.

No, it was a corresponding to true service, independence and obedience. And So what does he find in Simon's house? Simon. Had been called to serve the Lord Jesus, but he had trouble in his house. Now, do you think the Lord Jesus is going to have someone go out and serve him and then have to carry all the worries of home with him? No, no. As soon as there's trouble in Simon's house, Simon turns and there's Jesus standing there to take care of his problems. This is beautiful. Never an occasion. For one who is sent on any mission but what the Lord will come in, and He's always there ready to meet the particular need of His people. We can count on it. We learn it from this scripture. He may not meet it the way we expect it, but He will meet it. And so we find that. He entered into the House of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever and they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. And immediately the fever left her. She ministered unto them. Now that's Philippians ministry, we have some of it already. We we just cast all of our burdens on the Lord. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. I was told of a brother years ago who was serving the Lord and as he left the house. There was, there was hardly enough bread for the family, but he went out to serve the Lord just the same. And before the day was over there was bread in the family to take care of the family. Others know of what I'm speaking here, but the Lord will never send a servant but what he sustains him and meets his need, and he'll meet the need of his home too. But what he wants us to do is to ask him, to ask him. And the problem arises. Do we ask him always say, well, I, I think I can take care of this myself some way. I'll make some arrangement, No. Ask him and then they tell him of her. And so the Lord just takes his hand and lifts her up. And then what happens? And the fever left her, and she ministered undo them. Now she's serving. So by simply turning the matter over to the Lord, He takes care of the affairs of the household for Simon. And not only that, but she's raised up from her favor and she goes back to her service. Beautiful, isn't it Beautiful? Is there a suggestion to us in the 24th verse the way it's put when it says, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God. I have taken from the way this demon spoke to the Lord, that there is the very real evidence here that he knew who the Lord was. But there was no understanding of the counsels of God, of the purposes of God, of how God was working. So he, he says, art thou come to destroy us? Well, this was not the time for destroying these demons. Cast them out was true. But it wasn't the time for the destroying of them. But they nevertheless knew who he was, that he was Jesus, the Holy One of God. It seems to me that we find from the Scriptures that there is every evidence that Satan and the demons know who the Lord is. But over and over again Satan is tripped up and frustrated because he doesn't understand what God is working, what God's purposes are. Even what God was accomplishing in the cross. He had little understanding. Of justice what God was working in his counsels and purposes the. Pearl we singular eye in that same verse, and we don't know how many demons were possessed in this man. We find it similarly with the man of the legions of legion of devils. We find unspoken of his eye and then as we it's difficult to see

that sometimes the demon speaks through the man. Sometimes the man speaks himself as being under the power of the demons. And it's really hard sometimes in the record to distinguish.

And but it it appears that the man himself becomes the mouthpiece of the demons at times. Sometimes it speaks himself as an individual. Yeah, I think we see this in different instances. It's an awful thing, that demon possession and how a man comes under that power. Is there a suggestion to or or a principle brought out? What I've taken from this chapter in in three instances we have the one who is delivered from the unclean spirit. Then we have Simon Peters, wife's mother who is delivered from the fever. And then we have the leper who is given positive instruction. And who doesn't go by that instruction? And at least I have enjoyed thinking, thinking of it in this way, that first of all, we needed to be delivered from the power of the enemy. And the Lord Jesus had one risk. Grace has done that. But then we also need to be delivered from the, I might call it the fever of nature to have that rebuked too, because there is no more room for that fever of nature than there was for the demon. Be occupied in the service of God, and so both have to be set aside, delivered first from the power of the enemy, and then given to see that, as I might say, nature or the flesh has no place in the things of God. It had to be rebuked too, and set aside. And then when we come down to the case of the leopard, we find that the Lord Jesus after cleansing him. Says to him straightly charged him. See thou say nothing to any man, but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded. No doubt there was a testimony here to who he was as Jehovah, the one who could cleanse leprosy, but nevertheless it is what he went out and began to publish it much at the blaze abroad. The matter in so much that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city. And that is that while we, as I say, we need to be delivered from Satan's power. We need to see that the flesh has known in all its feverish activity, has no place also in the things of God, and then to see that the only real path for faith is in obedience to the Word. Here was this one. Even though he loved the Lord, even though he was grateful for what the Lord had done, his disobedience to the direct instructions the Lord gave him hindered the testimony rather than helped him and actually hindered the work that the Lord would have done. Says it actually says that in so much that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city. Disobedience to the word can actually hinder the work of God. Well, it's even now the sun is setting. This is where we are today I believe there's a real voice for us in this next verse I am hurting a little because there are. Main points here that I had in my heart when I suggested this chapter. And there's much detail we could occupy ourselves with, but I'd like to call attention to some of these points that I feel are so important and not even. There is such a thing you know as even in these present day of grace. We are at that, even just at the time, just about the time when the Lord's coming. And it's remarkable how the Spirit of God has revived the truth for us, and with it He's revived exercise of soul with many. Even Elijah had to confess that there were 7000 that he didn't know about. If there was exercise of soul the 7000 and there are many around us who are really believers and we don't know them, but that's to our shame a great deal. But here it's even. And the sun is setting and what are we doing? What did they do? These are very practical things, I believe. They brought unto him all that were diseased. I memorized being I was in Tacoma once and my brother asked me if I'd go down to the street with him to preach. So we went down and he found. Two or three soldier boys, he said, Will you come to the gospel with us? That was after the preaching was over, and they said sure.

So he put him in the car and he took him to the room. And when he got the room, why there was number one there? So he said, you just wait here for a moment and I'll go get the key. So when he came back, they were gone. He gets in his car and he goes back and gets three more and brings them back to the gospel. Now that's real energy of faith. He went back and got three more and he brought him to the gospel that night, and I was very much impressed by his diligence, his energy of faith. That would not be discouraged because the three had left, but he went back to get three more. When the sun did set, they brought on him all that were diseased. Them that were possessed with devils. Here was the man, the man, Christ Jesus, the servant, the Son of God, and they knew that He was able for it. Now we know that the Lord is able to save souls even in this late hour. And we have this happy privilege. We may not be able to do many things others can do. But we have this happy privilege of bringing souls to the Lord Jesus in some way. And it's a happy privilege to do so. And. All the city was gathered together at the door. It makes us think of that little song that the children sing. Christ being the door, Well, here it is, the door. I know this is a a long simpler line, but perhaps this is what we need tonight. Simpler lines of truth being gathered at the door. What does it mean? It'll it'll mean a great deal to a soul if there's one soul saved tonight in this room when the gospel goes out, it mean a great deal, and there should be rejoicing with us as there will be in heaven, if one soul is saved tonight. What a happy thing it would be if someone here has brought someone to the door tonight in this little room. Lord wouldn't allow the enemy to be mixed with the work either, would he? Suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him. Find Paul doing this in the 16th of Acts might have seemed very convenient to have that girl crying out these men are the servants of the Most High. God would show unto us the way of salvation was almost like a public advertisement for what was going on. And he might have thought this at least brings people together, but he didn't want any help from the enemy and I believe it's important for us. God is going to accomplish His own purposes. He gives us a work to do, but we never have to have the help of the enemy to do it. God will accomplish it. No man can come unto me with because the Father, except the Father which has sent me draw him. Sometimes there's the thought, well, we just got to do a few little things. The question is, are these things scriptural? If they are, well then we can follow the Word of God. But to bring in our own ideas or anything of that is of the enemy. To help along the work is really a hindrance in the end. The message to Laodicea. The Lord says, I counsel thee, Devi of me. Gold tried in the fire. The thalamus be rich and white Raven and so forth. I believe that at least the thought that's committed itself to my heart is that there may be methods. In carrying on the work of God. That are dubious, but they will probably get results. I believe the Lord would have us leave results to himself and if he uses someone else. To get the results that we would like to have. Then let the other brother have that honor or and let us. Seek the goal that is the glory of God. I believe in this case to honor Him and His word, if we. He that knoweth to do good and knows it not, to him it is sin. So if we know scriptural principles, it will bring honor to the Lord. And we? Go across those principles, then we're going to lose out. I believe that's a spirit of Laodiceanism. That is Luke warmness to the glory of God, he says. I counsel you by me, Gold cried in the fire to tell me it's the.

Rich they were rich. Increase was good but. No, they knew not that they were miserable and poor and blind, naked and so forth. We look over the fence and we see others getting good results. Souls are genuinely saved and we would perhaps like to try some of their methods. But we know better from the word. I just going to say it's interesting here to see how the Lord didn't suffer the devils to speak, but in the next verse we find him in a solitary place and they're praying. They could have, as we said, have used some of this publicity, but He did His Father's will. He was in total dependence upon Him, and so he goes into a solitary place and their praise. And then we find. Them saying, all men seek for thee, and we find the leper coming to him, and we find the Lord, the perfect obedient one. He would be dependent upon his father in that service. He didn't seek popularity. He wouldn't let the devil speak. But there are results in the end of the chapter. The work is still going on, but it's going on in the path that his father had marked As for him. Now that expression early in the morning, we get that with Abraham. And others. And does it not suggest to us, although literally early in the morning would be good because? One is fresh in the morning, but still, does it not suggest the energy of faith? I noticed the in a home I was recently a little poem. Some of you may know it and I can't quote it, but

it it was just in that line giving the Lord. That part of your life early in the morning. I believe that's very important, and especially young people. Who remember that the Lord is entitled to that time, and not only that, but our lives are going to be richer. If we're occupied with the Lord early in the morning, the first thing, give him his place early in the morning. But here we find the Lord rising. In the morning, rising up a great while before day. Find that. Mary Magdalene was there a great while before day at the tomb, and she certainly was rewarded. And she was occupied with his death. What a subject. But here the Lord is rising. Great while before day in a solitary place, they're afraid. Now the Lord had the mind of God, and the disciples did not. In the 9th chapter of Luke we find the Lord praying. Twice. And the disciples were with him, and they were not praying. And in that chapter they make several mistakes, or at least, shall we say, they miss his mind at least seven times. But in the 11Th chapter. They say, Lord, teach us to pray. And so he answers them. Which of you shall have a friend? And I believe that that is the answer to it. If we really believe that the Lord is a friend, then we will pray. Otherwise, there's a sense of distance with us and we're not ready to go into his presence. We're not ready to drop on our knees when we get home from work or school and justice for a moment get into his presence. We would if we regarded him as a friend. All how many problems there are in life today? And there's not a problem. Too small, but what the Lord is interested in it and wants to hear about it, and He wants to take care of it for us. Well, if the center comes in his need by the Lord is ready to meet him. Taught us how Eli said to Samuel, that when the Lord called, he was to say, Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth. But when the Lord came and called Samuel, all he said was, Speak for thy servant heareth.

Well, Lord didn't just want him to repeat a certain phrase, but He did. He did desire to hear the message, even though He didn't just phrase it the right way. And so we could tell the Center exactly how He should speak and tell him the very words to say. But there may be an omission in the way a thing is said. But the Lord who looks on the heart knew what was in this man's heart. His feeling of need and that he had come to the right person for that need. Well, to me that's very encouraging because very often we make mistakes and slips and I don't say things in just the right way. But isn't it encouraging? The Lord knows the heart. And could I say even more that if the servant is in communion with the Lord, he doesn't pick a person up just because he doesn't say exactly the right words, but he rather seeks to judge the. State of soul. And in that way, very often you can be a help to a person even along things are not expressed the way you might feel is right. Don't you think that the Lord will do as He said to his servants? That he would give them. Words to speak in the hour of their testing. I remember in Ottawa one night after the gospel, there was a man standing at the back of the room. And I asked him, I said, are you saved? He said no. I said, would you like to be saved? Oh, yes, I said, why aren't you saved? He says, I'm too timid. I don't know what to say. Well, I said, would you like to go up in the little room? Remember you had a little room upstairs in the older meeting room. So two brothers went up with him up in the little room. And you ought to heard the lovely confession of Christ. It was a man who was too timid to speak. He was too. He didn't know what to say. He was too timid to speak to anyone. And he gave a lovely confession in his prayer. Of receiving the Lord as his Savior. And then he went around and came down and started shaking hands with people and telling him he can receive Christ as his Savior. That was just an indication of how the Lord came in with a man who in himself was absolutely too timid to even speak to the Lord or confess him, and when he actually took the step, why he was at liberty so. I believe that we need that simplicity of heart, and I believe Mark's Gospel suggests this to us. One thing here that. Is important to notice in connection with what's just been said about the leper. That's very important to me. That the Lord could have spoken to multitudes. On this occasion his fame was spread abroad, but his instructions for the day were to go to this leper. And this leper was healed. Now there's a lesson here for us. We might feel that we have great opportunities in a certain place and in a certain way, but if we are before the Lord and we actually do the things that were instructed, Scripture says in as much as she know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. And so faith can recognize that the service done to the Lord if we are independence is going to meet its reward whether we see the results or not. And here this one leper. Was saved as a result of the Lord. Walking in complete dependence upon. To His Father's will, and the disciples didn't understand it. Some have asked why the Lord told him not to publish it, but I believe it's interesting to notice that the Lord said this on more than one occasion when it was something done to the body. He never told anyone to be quiet as to what had been done for their souls. Now we know, of course, that the healing of leprosy is a picture of. Cleansing from sin. But the actual fact was this man was a leper and he was cleansed. It could talk a lot about what had been done for his body. And you'll hear people talk a great deal of something miraculous has been done for their body. Seemingly not ashamed to talk a great deal about that. But to say the Lord saved my soul for that man who was under the power of Satan to go home to his friends and say there's one who set me free.

Well, this was really a testimony to what the Lord had done for his soul. It's always right that we should. Here and I will tell what the Lord has done for my soul and other scripture says. But we can do a great deal of talking about things that attract attention to ourselves and what has been done for us in a physical way or material way. God wants us to speak more of those things that have to do with our souls. I don't mean that we never mentioned the other, but. This is rather striking in the Gospel of Mark that you find this to be a done what the Lord said to what a testimony it was. To all those that may place that the priests were, that here was one among them who could cleanse the leopard, that was the proper testimony. The Lord wanted him to. That would have been a spiritual testimony of who the person was who was in their midst. Because our brother said he wasn't only the servant, he was the Sodom. Never, I suppose, that the priest ever had to invoke those commandments in connection with the cleansing of the leper. Was a man he sent now to show who was really in their midst. It seems he didn't do that, but a lot of the other the popularity that would be given to himself, talking about himself. And isn't it solemn that he had to say to those Pharisees, You both know who I am, and also was it where I've come from? That was solemn, wasn't it, when they knew it, When they were acting contrary to the light that they had?

Young Christian: Volume 37, 1947, Correspondence: Saying Nothing About Being Healed

Question: Was it disobedience on the part of the healed ones in the gospels in not heeding the Lord’s charge to say nothing about their being healed? Why is it mentioned in one gospel and not in another?

Answer: The Lord had always a reason for telling anyone not to speak about what had been done. Sometimes it was because He was rejected. Other times, because as a Servant, He was hiding Himself. This is especially true in Mark’s gospel. You should specify what instances you desire light about.

Those who were healed and told it did disobey, but acted out of the fullness of their gratitude, and failed to enter into His purpose at the moment.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Healing of the Demoniac, Questions on the

Question: (1). Mark 1:23, Luke 4:33-36. The late Dr. Trench, Abp. of Dublin, in his well-known Notes on the Miracles of our Lord (p. 233, seventh ed. 1862), speaks of the healing of this demoniac as “the second miracle” of the kind which the evangelists record at any length. Is this correct?

(2). He connects in p. 234 “the Holy One of God” in the accounts of this miracle with Psa. 16:10, as “the first appearance of this phrase.” Is it really so?

(3). Dean Alford in the fifth edition of his Greek Testament, 1 313, says that this demoniac’s healing in the synagogue at Capernaum was “not immediately after the preceding. The calling of the apostles, the Sermon on the Mount, the healing of the leper, and of the centurion’s servant, precede the following miracle.” Is this the fact? or ignorance of the chronology?

Answer: (1). The Abp. cannot have carefully examined the relative order of the events in the Gospels; else he must have known that the cure of the demoniac at Capernaum was the first case of detailed account, and long before that related in Matt. 8:28-36. Mark and Luke are explicit that the cure in the synagogue at Capernaum was on the same sabbath when he healed Simon’s mother-in-law, soon after the four apostles were called as Mark proves, whereas only Luke reserves that call for fuller development in the miraculous draft which so powerfully acted on Peter’s soul (Luke 5:1-11). But both conclusively show that the cure of legion (Matthew telling us of two demoniacs) was after the day when the parables of the kingdom were delivered (Matt. 13), and the storm on the lake when the Lord rebuked the winds and the raging water.

(2). Dr. Trench is not less mistaken as to the phrase, “Holy One of God.” “Holy” here answers to , whereas the corresponding Greek in the Sept. rendering of the Psalm (and quite accurately) is . The former means strictly holy, as separate from evil; and this the angel announced even of the Lord’s humanity, in a way never said of any other born of woman, nor yet of Adam unfallen. Compare also 1 John 2:20. The latter is often in the Sept. said of Christ as the “pious” or “gracious” One, which comes practically to the sense of “holy” as said of man, and “merciful” of God. This is the word that occurs in Psa. 16 as quoted in Acts 13:35, as also in Heb. 7:26. Psa. 89 is very instructive, in that we have the former said of the Holy One of Israel, our King, in ver. 18; whereas He is said to speak in vision of His Holy or gracious One in ver. 19, the One in Whom His loving-kindnesses or mercies centered.

(3). From what has been already remarked on Dr. T., it will be plain how far from all intelligence of the structure of the Gospels, and of Matthew’s in particular, was Dean Alford. For there is no ground to doubt that the healing of the demoniac at Capernaum is the first recorded miracle of our Lord after calling the four apostles, that the leper was healed not long after, and considerably before what is called the Sermon on the Mount, and that the centurion’s servant was not healed till after it, as is shown in Luke 6, 7 beyond cavil. Matthew was led to displace the events in order to group together a divine dispensational picture; Luke brings together events for the moral purpose which reigns in his account. Mark had no such reason to depart from the sequence of fact. Failure in apprehending the truth of things has wrought serious mischief in immature harmonies of the Gospels, and still worse in those whose lack of insight emboldened them to tax inspired men with discrepancies and errors.

Miracles of Our Lord, Miracles of Our Lord: No. 2 - There Came a Leper to Him

In our last paper we saw Jesus meeting the desperate condition of man as in the possession of Satan and demons. We also saw Him as perfect Man, rising a great while before day, in a solitary place, in prayer. As God, we saw Him come forth in divine power, casting out devils in the synagogues of highly favored Galilee. Another sad picture of man's condition is before us. " There came a leper to him." (Mark 1:40.) Whenever Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, delivers a soul from Satan, there is sure to be this discovery—the loathsomeness of sin. Not merely what we have done, as blinded and led by Satan, but what we are. What so loathsome as leprosy? It is incurable, getting worse and worse, until the destruction of the body, in one mass of sore disease, ensues. Just so the sinner—every sinner, every man by nature—his very nature poisoned by sin. It is incurable sin, to any but God. Just as none but God could heal the incurable leper, so none but God could devise a means to meet and cleanse the sinner of his sin. Go into the leprosy hospital, and see the patients, slowly getting worse, worse, to final destruction of the body. Go abroad in this world, and see every unsaved soul slowly going on to endless destruction.

There were two things this poor leper knew. He knew his wretched condition, and he knew who alone could heal him. This being the case, to whom could he come but unto Jesus? This is the exact case of a truly awakened sinner. He knows his own true, wretched condition. His whole being is poisoned with sin. He may have tried many pretended cures, but he has found them all false. Very often it takes years to learn that he is, as to all efforts of his own, and all the religion of men, an incurable. Thousands of remedies have been prescribed by learned philosophers and religious Jews, and by professing Christians, mixing both philosophy and religion; but all in vain. Man is just like that leper. “And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

Now, did he not come just as he was, in his leprosy? Did Jesus say, You must give up your leprosy first, and then come to me to be cured? Just as he was he came—an incurable, except to God. And God was there, God manifest in the flesh. Yes, just as he was he came straight to Jesus. Have you, as a wretched, incurable sinner, come straight to Jesus? He did not come to the blessed mother of Jesus, or to angels, or to any of His disciples—did he? Then why should you? That poor outcast came to Jesus, kneeling down to Him, and saying to Him, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Precious faith! Have you ever thus come to Jesus? Read each sentence, and we ask you solemnly. Have you ever thus come to Jesus? If you have not, then you have never really known your true, incurable condition in the leprosy of sin. Oh, what mistakes are made on this subject. Men of great learning, and highly distinguished in this world, will, and do, direct thousands to seek the cure of their depraved nature by baptism, confirmation, and the Lord's supper; and will tell them, that if they do not feel good enough to take the Lord's supper, it is still safer to come to holy communion! Could there be greater ignorance of the gospel? Does not baptism show the utter incurableness of the flesh, the old man—that it is only fit to be buried with Christ in death? Has it not been utterly judged, and set aside, in the cross of Christ? How, then, can that be confirmed which is to be reckoned dead and buried? And is the Lord's supper for poor deceived souls who think themselves good enough s or for those who were so bad, that nothing short of the atoning death of Jesus could redeem them? Nay, for those, and those alone, who can give thanks because they have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins? To make the

Lord's supper a make-up for those who are nearly good enough, is to lead souls to endless perdition.

Miracles of Our Lord, Miracles of Our Lord: No. 3 - The Leper, Continued

But to return to the leper. Was it a question if he were well enough, or good enough? Was it not the opposite? We are told in Luke 5:12 that he was " full of leprosy," and that he fell on his face at the feet of Jesus. Why, it is the very badness of his case that makes him a fit object for Jesus. Is it your badness, or your goodness, that makes you a fit object for the mercy of God? If you have never been thus brought to Jesus, what is your case? Full, your very nature full, of the leprosy of sin—incurable depravity. This is our very condition from birth. How our sins have proved this to be the case, getting worse and worse, nearer every day to endless woe! “And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." (Mark 1:41.) Here is One that can heal him, and have compassion on him, just as he is. Ah, He had compassion on us; He put forth His hands to be nailed to the cross; He gave Himself that He might heal us, and save us. What compassion on us, what righteousness before God. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree.

Now mark what took place. " And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed." This is the grand secret: the moment the words of Jesus are heard and believed, the work is done; the change has taken place; sins are gone forever, never to be judged, or remembered again. We enter a new existence; we have a new position; yea, we have eternal life. Carefully compare this miracle of Jesus with His words in John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [or, judgment]; but is passed from death unto life." Is it not exactly as it was with the poor leper? Is it not so in every case where the anxious soul, really awakened, and knowing the utter loathsomeness of sin, comes to Jesus? Yes, direct and first to Jesus, though full of sin—just as he is—and falls at the feet of Jesus. You own your true condition; He is ever moved with compassion; He speaks—you hear His word; you believe God that sent Him to save you by the death of the cross; and, on the truth of His own word, the work is done, the change is wrought. You have eternal life: no more judgment for sins; you are passed from death unto life. The leper was cleansed—the believer is cleansed; and, to his astonishment, it is revealed to him in the word that the work was done, long, long ago, that cleanseth him from his sins. He no longer walks in the darkness of seeking salvation by baptism, confirmation, and the Lord's supper; but it we now walk in the light, u as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7.)

Yes, the work is done, and it is complete. As it regards the charge of guilt before God, nothing more is needed, nothing more can ever be needed; all sin, to that believer who is in the light, and receives the testimony of God, is gone, to be remembered no more; yes, all sin. It must be so, blessed Lord; Thine infinite and perfect sacrifice cannot have an imperfect effect.

Now mark the word—immediately the leprosy departed from him, &c. Jesus then gave a remarkable test for his faith, and also to ours. He charged him to go to the priest, and offer the things for his cleansing which Moses had commanded. Jesus did the same to the ten lepers of Luke 17 He said, " Go, show yourselves unto the priests.” There was only one that understood the fact, that, since he was really cleansed, he need not go to the ceremonies of the law for cleansing. “When he saw that he was healed, [he] turned back, and, with a loud voice, glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan/' How could he go to be cleansed, since God had cleansed him? What did Jesus say to this? He said, " There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole." So it is said of our leper in Mark, " But he went out, and began to publish it much."

How simple the test, both to the leper, and to the sinner. Have you still need of ceremonies and sacraments to heal you, or can you return to the feet of Jesus, giving glory to God? Can you go out and publish it much, that the blood of Jesus has cleansed you from all sin? The cleansing of the leper in Lev. 14 is most instructive as types and figures. But that leper whom. Jesus had perfectly healed, plainly need not go to those shadows for healing. Now, if you have been brought to Jesus just as you are; if you have known His infinite compassion in dying for your sins, and rising again for your justification, if you know, on the very testimony of Jesus, that you have passed from death unto life, you cannot certainly go to anything else for life. To do so, is to deny that you have got it. We will, in the next place, look at the third picture of man's condition, as seen in the man sick of the palsy.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Grieve Our Lord?; Say Nothing; Lead Us Not into Temptation?

Ques. Is it possible to grieve our Lord?

Ans. The Lord was grieved on earth, and He is the same Jesus “yesterday, today and forever.” He still has a heart of love, and will love His own unto the end, and cannot but be grieved (even as Jehovah of old often was, though in heaven) at our willfulness and hardness. Surely, if we grieve the Spirit, we grieve our Lord too. (See Gen. 6:6).

Ques. Why did the Lord tell the leper in Mark 1 to say nothing to any man? and how should the disregard of this injunction be viewed?

Ans. Because, here in Mark, He is Jehovah’s servant, whose voice was not heard in the streets, but “He could not be hid,” and the new-found joy of the leper would not allow the Lord to occupy the place of retirement and obscurity He here sought. The man did not obey Christ, doubtless, and the result so far was to prevent Christ working on in the City. The man meant well, but after all, Christ’s way is best.

Ques. What does “lead us not into temptation” mean?

Ans. God does not tempt any one with evil. Satan tempted Christ, though He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. The meaning of the prayer is to be kept from all temptation of the Evil One, not to be sifted as were Job and Peter by God’s permission, as very rightly we ever mistrust our own power. If, however, we should be brought into it, we can overcome by closely adhering to the Word, after the pattern of our Master.

MAR 1Verse 21. The words "forthwith." "immediately," "straightway," "anon," tell us of the diligent Servant filling His day, doing the Father's will. It is not like a memoir when the writer does all he can to eulogize the one he speaks of. It is the Holy Spirit giving us a life picture that to the opened eye and ear, shows how the blessed Lord hid Himself, and in the overflowing goodness of His heart in untiring patience, meeting the needs of all who came to Him.

Verse 22. "They were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." Their teachings were opinions of man; His teaching had with it the authority of the word of God. He spoke the truth, He was the truth, and the word He spoke being the word of God, aroused the opposition of Satan.

Verses 23, 24. There was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth?... I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." What a state for man to be in-possessed by a demon; the Lord's presence makes his state manifest, and the demon owns Jesus of Nazareth the Holy One of God, a man to whom Satan must submit.

Verses 25, 26. Jesus rebuked him, saying: "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." He will not have testimony from Satan, and He delivers the man from his power. The unclean spirit, showing the reality of his presence and his evil influence, tore the man, and having cried with a loud voice, came out of him. It was the power of God, in the word of Jesus, who, as a man, had overcome the enemy in the temptations, and was now spoiling his goods.

Verse 27. "They were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying.

What, thing is this? What new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him." Satan cannot stand before Him. He is the Deliverer foretold in Isa. 61:1.

Verse 28. "And immediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee."

Verses 29-31. They now leave the synagogue and go into the home of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever. Straightway her state is laid before Him. And He came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. This is a case of violent fever, but the same power of good is with Him to rebuke it. The desire of His people is answered; they do not tell Him of her in vain. He took her by the hand, the fever fled at His touch, and she was able to serve them.

Verses 32-34. "And at even, when the sun did set (that is when the Sabbath was over), they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils, and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew Him."

He meets the need of poor, ruined men, but He will not allow the evil spirits to speak of Him. It is ever Satan's effort to spoil the work of God by mixing evil with it. The perfect Servant knows this, and will not allow it.

Verse 35. It seems that He accepted the hospitality of that house for the night. "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed unto a solitary place, and there prayed." He is the dependent One, ever doing the Father's will. His communion was ever perfect, and here we see Him early in the morning seeking the presence of the Father alone in that solitary place, as He says in Isa. 50:4, "The Lord God hath given Me the tongue of the learned (that is one instructed), that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned." There is the source of His strength and guidance-walking in communion with His Father. What diligence we see in Him in this also. What a lesson for us to be much in prayer.

Verse 36. "And Simon and they that were with Him followed after Him." This is very nice, but they seem a long way behind. The spirit indeed may be willing, but with us the flesh is weak. And they followed after Him; they have Him in view, and that is what we should seek.

Verse 37. And when they had found Him, they said unto Him, "All men seek for Thee." But He had been with the Father, and had already His way laid out in which He should go. He will not be turned aside for men; He did not seek fame nor numbers of followers.

Verses 38, 39. And He said unto them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth." This was His special mission-to preach the Word. He keeps it before Him; healing comes in by the way. "And He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils." His word was with power, and delivered men from the yoke of sin and Satan: it is the goodness and power of divine love shown out in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Verse 40. And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying unto Him, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." It was bold for a leper to come so close. He was to stay in isolation, and when any one came near, he was to cry. "Unclean, unclean" (Lev. 13:45, 46), but this leper was drawn to Jesus, he was convinced of His power, but was not sure of His willingness. It was a sad picture of the defiling character of sin. He was a loathsome leper, but here he is drawn to Jesus, humbled on his knees and yearning for the healing power of Jesus. He did not know the love that was in His heart for him.

Verse 41. "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." Elisha could not do this for Naaman. (2 Kings 5.) Elisha would have been defiled; but Jesus, the Holy One, could not be contaminated; instead, the leprosy fled at His touch, thus declaring that God was present. His deep compassion reached out to the man's need; He came so near as to touch him. God had come down in love and grace. The leper is healed, cleansed.

Verse 42. "And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed." What gladness would fill that man's heart.

Verses 43-45. "And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Could he keep

such news to himself? Impossible, the vessel was too full; it must run over. The Lord owned the priest, sent the man there, and sought to hide Himself, but this new wine could not be contained in old bottles. The man went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to Him from every quarter-a crowd too great for the narrow streets to contain.

(Continued from page 75.)

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 1:1-20

MAR 1Verse 1. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God."

Verses 2, 3. Mal. 3:1, and Isa. 40:3, are quoted to announce John as the messenger preparing Messiah's way, but do not tell of the result. God's thought is for blessing; judgment will result if the blessing be rejected.

Verse 4. "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." This was good news to the remnant of Israel that felt their sins and their low estate. In answer to this preaching, many consciences were stirred, and Verse 5. "There went out unto Him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins." We know some refused to bow in humiliation before Jehovah, but the excellent of the earth confessed their sins.

Verse 6. John's clothing and food and isolation in the wilderness (Luke 1:80), tell of his separation from Israel's state; his message was a righteous one, demanding repentance.

Verses 7, 8. He told of One coming "mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." John thus introduces Him as Jehovah, and as the One who, when the work is accomplished, and the Lord glorified, will baptize those who believe on Him with the Holy Ghost. Remission of sins for the repentant, that is, governmental forgiveness and a promise of blessing from the coming One, was the place John's baptism brought them into Note:-This is not justification as in Romans (See Ex. 32:14, 34; 2 Sam. 12:13, 14.) Repentant Israel in the last days will be justified through the work of Christ. Believers are now justified eternally.

Verse 9. "And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan." How wonderful that one equal with Jehovah, should take a place among those repentant ones, showing His delight in them as the excellent of the earth. Confessed sinners they were, and He in lowly grace is with them in this right step. (Psa. 16:2, 3.)

Verses 10, 11. "And straightway coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." John saw and heard, but the words are addressed to the Lord for His comfort. He has taken the servant's place, but He is none the less the Father's beloved Son, the Father's delight; heaven is opened. He is heaven's object. He is sealed and anointed. He is the peerless, spotless, perfect Man.

Verses 12, 13. "And immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness, and He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him." this obedience is proved, He goes into the wilderness and is there forty days. Adam was tried in the Garden of Eden. Jesus was tried tempted of Satan, in the wilderness. Adam fell. Jesus was victorious, and bound the strong man. And what can wild beasts do against their Creator? When the trial is over, the angels minister to Him, the obedient One. There are no details of the temptations, as in Matthew or Luke, but enough to show us the servant fully fitted for the work to which He has given Himself. The Father has owned Him as His beloved Son; heaven is opened upon Him; Satan is overcome by Him; the wild beasts cannot harm Him-the Lord of all Creation; and the angels minister to Him. Wonderful Servant with whom none can compare.

Verses 14, 15. Isa. 40:4, and Mal. 3:2, are not fulfilled yet. Instead, John is put in prison, and "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." It is good news He has come to bring, and not the judgment man so fully deserved. It is the time of the fulfillment of the ways of God, and men are called on to repent, take their place low before God, own their guilt and believe the gospel. There is forgiveness with God (Psa. 130), plenteous redemption.

Verses 16-20. He calls others into the work with Him. They are called to this ministry. "Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Simon and Andrew, at the call, forsook their nets and followed Him; James and John, sons of Zebadee, also left their father, ship and hired servants, and went after Him. They had been personally called before, but now it is to serve with Him. May we also know something of this call:

(To be continued.)

Bible Treasury: Volume N7, Mark 16:20

“They went forth and preached everywhere” —for there is this character of largeness about Mark— “the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.” Would a forger have kept up the bold thought of “the Lord working with them,” while every other word intimates that He was then at least quiescent? W. K.

Things New and Old: Volume 1, Divine Remedy for Human Sorrow, A

The resurrection of Jesus is God's remedy for all the ills of this wilderness scene. (See Mark 16) The disciples were in great trouble and sorrow of heart at this time. "And she went and told them that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept:" (Ver. 10.) They had been bereaved of their blessed Lord and Master. To them, the whole scene around was a wilderness indeed. Jesus was absent, and the fairest spot in the wide universe is but a desert to the heart that loves Him, if He is not there. He alone gives beauty to the scene, and fragrance to the atmosphere. His presence makes the wilderness "as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." (2 Sam. 23:4.) Hence the blessedness and sweetness of our hope is, that, "in a little while," we shall be with Himself. This is the desire of His own heart of perfect love. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me," (John 17:24.)

But to return to the Divine remedy for present ills. A RISEN JESUS, according to the mind of God, and in the language of scripture, meets all the need of,

1. The burdened, and sorrowing heart, (v. 3, 4.)

2. The troubled, terrified, affrighted spirit. (5, 6.)

3. The amazed and perplexed mind. (v. 8.)

4. The bereaved, mourning, weeping affections, (v. 10.)

Then again, Jesus risen is power in service: power to preach the gospel—cast out devils—tread on serpents—heal the sick. Finally, we see the risen, victorious, ascended Christ, seated at the right hand of God, still maintaining the character of the workman. "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." (16-20.)

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Close of Mark, The

Question: Is the close, of Mark (ch. 16:9 to the end) authentic and genuine?

Answer: Having long since protested against those who treat this most interesting passage, and the beginning of John 8 with Suspicion, I proceed to state my reasons, passing over the disputed portion in John, which: has already been well defended in another place by another hand.

Even Dean Alford, who certainly does not err on the side of credulity, admits that the authority of the close of Mark is hardly to be doubted. Eusebius, and the Vat. and Sin. MSS., omit it; and several others note its absence in certain copies, but generally add, that it appears in the oldest and best. All else of the Greek MSS., all the Evangelistaria, all the Versions (except the Roman edition of the Arabic), and a large proportion of the earliest and most trustworthy Fathers are allowed to be in its favor. Lachmann, in spite of his notorious tendency to follow the very slips of the most ancient copies, edits the entire section without hesitation.

In his notes the Dean urges that the passage is irreconcilable with the other gospels, and is disconnected with what goes before; and that no less than twenty-one words and expressions occur in it (some of them repeatedly) which are never elsewhere used by Mark, whose adherence to his own phrases is remarkable, and that consequently, the internal evidence is very weighty against his authorship. That is, he believes it to be an authentic addition by another hand.

Before examining these criticisms, I must object to a reasoning which affirms or allows that to be scripture which is irreconcilable with other scriptures. If its authority be clear, every believer will feel that, with or without difficulties, all must be really harmonious. For God cannot err.

But, it is said, the diction and construction differ from the rest of the Gospel. Did the Dean or those who think with him adequately weigh the new and extraordinary circumstances which had to be recorded? In such a case strange words and phrases would be natural if Mark wrote (nor does he by any means want elsewhere); whereas, a supplementer, adding to Mark, would as probably have rigidly copied the language and manner of the Evangelist.

. (ver. 9) is alleged to be unusual. Doubtless; yet, of the two, it is less Hebraistic than . (ver. 2), and each might help the other to a Gentile or a Roman ear. And, so far from being stumbled by the way Mary Magdalene is mentioned here, there seems to me much force in Jesus appearing first to her out of whom he had cast seven devils. Who so suitable first to see Him and hear from Himself the tidings of His resurrection, Who through death annuls him who had the power of death, that is, the devil? As to the absolute use of the pronoun in 11, 12, is it not enough that the occasion here required what was needless elsewhere? If is found only in 10, 12, and 15, it is because the simple word best expressed what the Holy Ghost designed to say, whereas elsewhere the evangelist employed its compounds in order to convey the more graphically what was there wanted. Thus, he uses . eight times, while Matthew, in his much larger account, has it but once. Is this the least ground for questioning Matt. 15:17? So, again, Mark has in four different chapters, Matthew once only (27:9), Luke and John not at all. Leaving these trivial points, the phrase ' is to me an argument for, rather than against, Mark's authorship. Compare with it chap1:36; 3:14; and 5:40. As to ' and its difference from . , the answer is, that the word is most appropriate here and uncalled for in other places, and if the difference prove anything, it would show two hands instead of one supplementing Mark's narrative! Thus, for instance, the same verb occurs but once in all the Epistles of Paul: are we therefore, to suspect Rom 15? Matthew has only twice; are we for a score of such reasons as these to speculate that "another hand" added Matt. 27 and 28?

As to reiterated mention of unbelief and the Lord's upbraiding the eleven with it, what more instructive, or in better keeping with the scope of the context and of the Gospel? It was wholesome for those who were about to preach to others to learn what their own hearts were, and the Lord in His own ministry sets them right before announcing, their great commission. Even if we only look at the word , it occurs in Mark 6:6; 9:24. If the verb is found only in chap. 16:11, 16, what more marvelous than Luke's having it only in his last chapter (ver. 11, 41), and never once using the substantive either in the Gospel or in the Acts of the Apostles? It is true that .. and are found in no other passage of Mark, but his customary precision may be one reason why the former is not more common; and the latter occurs once only in Luke and John. It is confessed that . . is in Mark's style. The fact is, neither of the later Gospels contains the noun day. and Matthew always qualifies it as "the

gospel of the kingdom," or "this gospel;" whereas, whether or not Mark has the qualified phrases in chap. 1:14 and 14: 9 (for MSS. etc. differ), he repeatedly has "the gospel" elsewhere, as chap. 1:15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10. This, then, affords no slight presumption that the passage is the genuine production of Mark, as well as authentic.

. in 17, . in 20, occur nowhere else in Mark, and that for the best of reasons; the accuracy which the compounded forms impart was demanded here, and not before, where the simple form sufficed. And this is the less surprising, inasmuch as the former appears only in Luke's preface, and the latter nowhere else, as far as the four evangelists are concerned.

As to the singularity of , what simpler, seeing that this promise (as well as that about the new tongues, serpents, etc.) is revealed here only, and was unquestionably Verified in the subsequent history? It is the natural converse of a common scriptural designation for the sick ; and if the occurrence of should be here objected to, the reader may find it twice already in Mark 6, while Matthew and Paul use it each only once.

Only one further objection remains worth noticing, the use of k in 19, 20. In Mark 11:3, I suppose it is equivalent to Jehovah, and at any rate I would not press this as in point. But the absence of such a title before seems to me a beauty, not a blemish, in Mark, whose business was to exhibit the service of Jesus. But now that God had vindicated His rejected Servant by the resurrection, now that He had made Him both "Lord" and Christ, what more natural, or even necessary, than that the same Gospel which had hitherto traced Him as the Servant, Son of God, should make Him now known as "the Lord?" But this is not all. The Lord had uttered His charge to those who were, at His bidding, to replace Him as servants, and in a world-wide sphere; He was received up to heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. Now it was Mark's place, and only Mark's to add that, while they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord was working with them. Jesus, even as the Lord, is, if I may so say, servant still. Glorious truth! And whose hand so suited to record it as his who proved by sad experience how hard it is to be a faithful servant; but who proved also that the grace of the Lord is sufficient to restore and strengthen the feeblest? (Compare Acts 13:13; 15:38; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11.)

There is no doubt of the fact that this section had its present place in the second century, i.e., before any existing witness which omits it or questions its authorship. And even Tregelles, notoriously subservient as he was to favorite voices of antiquity and to points of detail, owns that the very difficulties it contains (exaggerated as I have shown them to be) afford a strong presumption in its favor. Thought and expression point to Mark only. It is therefore genuine, as well as authentic.

Simple Testimony: Volume 20, Plea for Work Among the Young., A

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospelto every creature."-Mark 16:15.

THE above text is amply sufficient to cover the title of this paper. The need of the rising generation presses heavily on the writer's spirit, and it is his earnest prayer that God may use this appeal to stir up many hearts to take an active interest in: work among the young.

It would be difficult to understand why any should be indifferent in this particular did we not remember that our hearts are the same as those of the disciples of old, who rebuked those who sought to bring "little children" to Jesus that He might lay His blessed hands on them and pray. The Lord had to rebuke the rebukers. May we never be rebuked because we are not in the spirit of our Master!

The children of thirty years ago are the parents of to day. A new generation is at our doors. Masses of children, rapidly approaching manhood, have yet to be evangelized. Evangelists long for virgin soil. Here it is, lying at their very feet. In every city and town, in every village and hamlet, there is an audience ready to their hand. "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Look till your heart is stirred and you are driven to your knees before God about it.

Three evils are rapidly overspreading the land and eating out the heart of all spiritual life—indifference, ritualism, and rationalism. A few years ago, in this country at least, the Scriptures were reverenced, and men trembled under the power of the Word. To-day the great majority never or rarely darken the door of a building where the gospel is preached.

Take your stand on the outskirts of any large city on a Sunday morning in summer. See the stream of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists, who are evidently "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." And if, saddened at the sight, you turn to many of the churches and chapels, it is only to be made the more sorrowful. In them the other two evils are too plainly evident. On many a so-called Protestant church door might be written, "This way to Rome." With such the children are held in high esteem, for their hope lies with the rising generation. Only a few weeks ago the writer ventured to invite some young men and lads to a gospel preaching. They turned upon him with, scorn, insult, abuse, and venom.

On inquiry he learned, to his grief, that they formed the choir of a very ritualistic church close by. Their spirit resembled that of the Dark Ages.

On the other hand, religious infidelity, under the name of "Higher Criticism," has taken possession of many a pulpit. Once infidelity was outside the churches; now, alas I it is inside as well. Scarcely one fundamental doctrine of Christianity but is assailed. The inspiration of Scripture is denied, the atonement flouted, the person of Christ attacked, the supernatural refused, and creation, miracles, and even the. resurrection, all explained as natural phenomena!

In this atmosphere the rising generation is being reared. Shall nothing be done to reach them? Shall nothing be done to gain their ears? Do not let us hide ourselves behind generalities or distort the sovereignty of our God and make it a stalking-horse for our indolence. Let us be up and doing. Let each ask, What can I do to forward this blessed work?

Scripture puts children and childlike simplicity in a most blessed place. We cannot forbear quoting one passage in full, ample enough, surely, to ' engage our prayerful interest in the young.

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And. 'Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of

heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. 18:1-6.)

How unlike are God's thoughts and ways to ours! We should have chosen great persons for great communications. God reveals them to "babes," and out of the mouths of "babes and sucklings He has perfected praise." Children, little children, babes, sucklings—what a list Scripture presents!

Joseph evidently was blessed by God before he was seventeen years old, for when he was sold into Egypt at that age he had enough spiritual decision to withstand temptations of no ordinary kind; and at the comparatively young age of thirty stood Second only to Pharaoh. And Samuel is described as "the child Samuel" when the Lord made Himself known to him. David was "but a youth" when he met the giant, and even then could recount how that the Lord had delivered him from the paw of the lion and the bear when as a lad he kept his father's sheep in the wilderness. Jeroboam's child was taken away because of all his father's house he was the only one in whom was found any good thing-toward the Lord God of Israel. “Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign... And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or the left. "Paul could write to Timothy," that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

More are saved at: seven than at seventy. The overwhelming consensus of testimony is that the vast majority of those whom God blesses are blessed when young. Very few are reached over forty; very many under fourteen. Aged sinners are saved to show what God can do, but He-claims the young. Ask a hundred Christians when they were converted, and it will but confirm this testimony. Only last night at tea the writer tested this. Ten Christians were seated round the table. Seven out of the ten testified that they had been brought to God when under twenty. The writer himself was saved at eleven.

John Wesley was the subject of God's dealing in a very manifest way when a little boy learning his alphabet. Whitefield, the prince of open-air preachers, was reached when a lad in his mother's public-house—the "Blue Bell"—at Gloucester.

C. H. Spurgeon was but a raw youth when, one wintry morning in a dissenting chapel in Colchester, the Lord reached him. Examples might easily be multiplied, but enough has been cited to show what an encouraging field the evangelizing of the young presents.

The grateful, cleansed prophet, Isaiah, on hearing this voice of the Lord, cried, "Here am I; send me." Oh that many of the Lord's people would as earnestly cry, "Send me"! It is no use going unless we are sent. We shall be failures if we essay to do that for which God has not fitted us. But we can all do something. ALL CAN PRAY. "I exhort," wrote Paul to Timothy, "that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men"; and the expression "all men" embraces all mankind, and therefore the young. If you pray, you sympathize. If you sympathize, you will show it in deeds, not alone in words. You will, at any rate, encourage the work. May I ask you, Have the young a special place in your prayers and sympathy?

One great mistake is to think that anyone can work among the young. We say, "Oh! he's a children's man," as if that meant something childish in the man. Let us seek to have a due sense of the importance of this Christ like work. When Elisha raised the Shunammite's son, we read, "he stretched himself upon the child." We should have thought that to put a living man's mouth on a dead child's mouth, a living man's eyes on a dead child's eyes, a living man's hands on a dead child's hands would require contraction rather than stretching. Believe me, if anyone imagines that the work is anything but of prime importance, he makes a great mistake. Indeed, many an acceptable preacher quite fails to get the interest and attention of the children. We appeal not to great minds and gifts, but to great simplicity, great faith, great tact, the love that hopeth all things, endureth all things, that suffereth long, and is kind. What need of inexhaustible patience, that first mark of an apostle, in such a work!

Some may be called to address from the public platform large audiences, others may be able to gather but half a dozen children into their drawing-room or kitchen, as the case may be. My first and greatest desire is for your prayers, then act in faith; and do not go beyond your faith, but pray do not lag behind it.

In the winter months in big cities how easily a band of earnest young Christians can gather the children into a suitable hall, and by means of clear, earnest, simple preaching, illustrated by the blackboard it may be, secure the attention of the children, and gain a hearing for the gospel. The Scriptures abound in incident and illustration, and with eyes, ears, and hearts open we may likewise glean incidents from everyday life, and illustrations from sea, land, and sky.

Then in summer what opportunities there are for open-air or tent services in the villages and country places! On foot or by bicycle, distant spots may be visited, and the whole country-side for a radius of many miles worked. Did not our blessed Lord visit the villages? One day a mountain was His pulpit, another day a fishing-boat. Oh, if our hearts were more like His, how simply we should avail ourselves of opportunities I Then, again, how happily and healthily a summer holiday may be spent at some seaside place where children abound, and opportunities occur leading to great results, if only used aright. And what shall we say of dark Roman Catholic and heathen lands? What need! What openings for faith, courage, and tact! Much that we have already stated applies with tenfold force here. May God light candles in many a dark corner of the earth!

"To the poor the gospel is preached," is as applicable to work among the young as among their elders. The children of the slums are more accessible than the children of the upper classes. The rich hedge themselves round with artificial barriers. Therefore there is need to ask that all classes of children shall be remembered.

One helpful principle is this-whilst all should remember the multitudes and the poor, we should seek to reach the children in the class to which we ourselves belong. Some Christians have position in this world. In Scripture we have not only the simple fishermen of Galilee, but Paul, the university graduate; Zenas, the lawyer; Luke, the beloved physician; Cornelius, the converted army officer; the most excellent Theophilus; those of Cæsar’s household; the elect lady and her children. What an opportunity lies within the grasp of those who are in good positions in this life that are denied their poorer brethren! How pleasant and natural it would be for such to gather the children of their neighborhood into their drawing-rooms, and thus seek an entrance for the gospel into circles naturally difficult of access. When the heart is filled with love for Christ and for souls, what blessed opportunities are ours! May we not miss them! Missed, they are beyond recall. Truly, "now is the accepted time.”

“Lord,... What Shall This Man Do?”

Peter, impetuous, warm-hearted, and blundering, asked the Lord this question concerning John. The blessed Lord answered by saying; "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me." In effect-but how delicately and gently it was done!-He said, "Mind your own business, and don't interfere with another servant." Most important advice, and well worthy of our consideration. So, please, let it be clearly understood that the writer of this paper desires only to put principles and suggestions before his readers, not to dictate to them what to do. He would fain stir up himself and others, especially his younger brethren, to fresh and deeper exercise as to this important field of service.

The facility of work among the young is alike its charm and danger. Older folks are under the bias of mature years, their minds made up on important questions, and less open to conviction. With the children this is not so. Sectarian partisanship has not yet gained a hold upon their minds and prejudices. They are ready to hear anybody and believe anything. For one adult ready to listen to the gospel, you can find ten children. Their minds are open to impressions and their memories receptive of the most lasting memories life is capable of.

This is the charm of work among the young. But in the very charm what danger besets the worker! He may be inclined to forget that, whilst all this is helpful on our side of things, on God's side it is as much a miracle of grace and power to convert a child as to reach a grown-up person. The work in their souls is as important and sacred. Then let us be careful not to take advantage of their plastic and receptive minds. Let us be careful not to push them beyond their faith or exercise, nor to lightly heal wounds of God's own, making till by the Spirit He applies the healing balm and ointment. Work among the young is a very blessed, gracious privilege, but it demands much prayer, seriousness, and dependence, as well as brightness, tact, patience, and love.

"Also I heard the voice, of the Lord, saying; Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then said I, Here am I;, send me.”

A. J. P.

Christian Treasury: Volume 3, Apostle's Gospel, The

The gospel preached by the apostles (Mark 16:15), was the glad tidings of salvation to every creature during this period, though their commission did not go so far as Paul's—the gospel of the glory. The gospel of the kingdom is the glad tidings of the coming reign of Christ on earth.

“We see not yet all things put under Him." Heb. 2:8. At present He is cut off, and has nothing as Messiah. He does not take the book of judgments and inheritance until the redeemed are with Him (Rev. 5). All who compose the full complement of the first resurrection live and reign with Christ a thousand years. May our hearts be kept patiently waiting for Him (Rev. 20:4, 5).

Bible Treasury: Volume N1, Himself He Cannot Save

It is not usual to mock at the sufferings of the dying. Even if it were a criminal, ordinary feelings of humanity would preserve men from such a crime. But this was the Son of God, and thus a different matter altogether. Man had no regard for Him; nothing was too bad to heap upon His holy head. We only see fully what man is when we look at the cross. In earlier dispensations he had violated his conscience, and broken God's law, and thus something of his wickedness was told out; but when we look at the cross of Christ, the tale is complete. Had there been a spark of goodness in the natural heart, the coming into the world of the blessed One would have brought it out. He came in love and lowly grace, not in judgment. “His hand no thunder bore.” But man was not to be won. He rose up in rebellion; and dared to lay his impious hands on the Son of God. And now He was upon the cross, and men were mocking His dying agonies! But who? Was it the ignorant and depraved? Nay, but the chief priests and scribes, the representatives of religion and learning in their day. What a tale this tells! How it refutes the notion that, given favorable circumstances, education, &c., man is reclaimable! Nay, dear reader, man is corrupt at the core—he is utterly ruined before God. Have you learned this, and bowed to it in His holy presence?

Mark what they said. “He saved others.” They knew His acts of power. He had cleansed the leper, cast out demons, and raised the dead. But they thought that now He was bereft, that His power was gone. “Himself He cannot save.” This was false. He was the mighty God, the Creator and upholder of all—there was no “cannot” with Him One word from Him, and the whole pack of foes might have been consigned to the pit. If Elijah called down fire from heaven upon his enemies, could not Elijah's Lord? But they were blind to His glory. They knew not that it was Jehovah Who had visited His people, though they might have known from both His actions and words, had they had eyes to see and ears to hear. It was guilty ignorance.

But, oh! dear reader, there was a sense in which it was true, “Himself He cannot save.” He had come into the world to save sinners, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and to accomplish this He must suffer and die. Naught else would have availed. It is a lie of Satan that the incarnation of Christ was sufficient for the redemption and raising of fallen humanity. Blood must flow, His blood; or atonement could never be made. Had He saved Himself, salvation from eternal woe would have been impossible for any. Love led Him on: the awful cup has been drained, the dreadful baptism has been endured, divine justice is satisfied, God has been glorified. Christ is no longer straitened. Salvation is now free to all. Mercy flows like a flood. Peace is proclaimed. Pardon is offered.

“He saved others.” So the Magdalene can testify, the thief on the cross, Saul of Tarsus, and millions more besides. The same Savior avails for you: will you trust Him? Oh, turn not away in the day of visitation! The Savior Who died is risen again, and is at the right hand of God. Him that cometh He will not cast out. He has saved others, and is ready and willing to save you. “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13).

“Faithful the word, and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am first” (1 Tim. 1:16).

Girdle of Truth: Volume 3, Mark 15:15

"And so Pilate, willing to content the people." There we get the spring of his conduct. Its fearful enormity does not at first sight appear. It would seem that he could not help it. The people were bent on their purpose. Very possibly,-but if they are bent on crucifying, why should I lend myself to aid them? I might not be able to prevent it, but at any rate I could keep myself from being a party to it. 0! there is need in this day of individual attachment to the person of the Son, need of weighing the worth of Jesus, and deciding to have Him or the world.

Christian Truth: Volume 2, Mark 15:15

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Messages of God's Love: 1944, Burial of Jesus, The

Mark 15:39 to 47

One, man of the leaders of the Jewish people had not agreed to the evil plans against Jesus; his name was Joseph and his home Arimathea, near Jerusalem. He had liened to the words of Jesus and believed Him.

No doubt Joseph was with those who watched while Jesus suffered on the cross, for when he saw He was dead, he went to Pilate and “craved,” or desired very much, to be allowed to have the body of Jesus.

Death by crucifixion is very slow, many hours, and Pilate thought that Jesus could not be yet dead. He called the captain of the soldiers, called by the Romans a centurion, to inquire of him. This man confirmed the word that Jesus was dead. Then Pilate granted Joseph to take Jesus’ body.

Joseph bought fine linen cloth, and went to the cross and took down the body of Jesus. Another leader who believed in Jesus, helped Joseph wrap and prepare His body for burial, and they laid Him in a tomb, belonging to Joseph which was near by. They rolled a great stone over the entrance, and went away.

The centurion, who had charge of the soldiers, may never have seen Jesus before that day, yet he, too, believed He was from God. It was his duty to carry out the sentence of Pilate; but the patience and meekness of Jesus, to bear the mocking, the words He said and His prayer to God taught the centurion that Jesus was not like any other man, and he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God.”

Later the centurion would know, how the tomb of Jesus was guarded, and of His resurrection, which must have taught him more.

The women who stood where they could see the cross of Jesus had known Him in Galilee, where they had listened to His words, known His love for their children, and the cures of all sickness, and that He fed the hungry, and raised some from death. Some of them had “ministered” to Him, which means they had in some way served Him; that may have been if He came to their homes, they provided food and a room, or however they could serve His needs.

Those women believed Jesus to be the Messiah promised in the Old Testament scriptures, and they were deeply grieved at the cruel treatment He received that day. Two of them stayed to see where Joseph laid the body of Jesus in the tomb. Then they returned to the places where they stayed to prepare sweet spices and ointments to bring to His tomb after the Sabbath.

It was then near sunset when the Sabbath day began, and by the law of God to their nation, no work was to be done on the Sabbath, the seventh and last day of the week. For that reason the day before the Sabbath was called “the day of preparation,” when all work was finished to be ready for the day of rest.

ML 09/03/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Wicked Choice, A

Mark 15:1-20

The Lord Jesus was taken by the chief men of Jerusalem to the hall of Pilate, the Roman governor, for trial. He was bound as though a man to be feared, and the priests told Pilate that He claimed to be the king of their nation, which would not he allowed by the Romans, and they expected Pilate would soon punish Him.

Pilate asked Jesus, “Art Thou the king of the Jews?”

The Lord answered, “Thou sayest it.” That meant, “It is true.”

Jesus had ridden into the city a short time before this, to let the people accept Him as King, but these men had refused. They now said many false things of Him. Pilate wondered that Jesus did not try to answer or defend Himself, and knew that the charges were untrue, and wanted to

free Jesus.

The Romans were severe rulers, yet it was a custom at each Passover time for them to allow the Jews to choose one prisoner to go free, as a very special privilege, and Pilate asked if he should release Jesus.

There was then a man in prison named Barabbas, who had rebelled against the government, and also had killed someone. He was the man the Jewish leaders wanted to be free, and urged the people to choose him.

Pilate let them have their way to quiet and please them, although he knew Jesus was just and innocent. He next scourged Jesus, which means to whip with leather cords, and gave the soldiers authority to mock and crucify Him. They treated Him with great cruelty, then led Him away.

To choose a man who had done much evil, instead of the Holy One who had done wonderful good, and fully spoken God's words, shows their hearts were full of hatred. It makes us know God's love for sinners, and the Lord Jesus' love to hear such treatment.

The trial of Jesus was before the highest men of the Jewish nation, and the judge, Pilate, representing the Romans, who then ruled all the world. They all refused the Son of God as King and Lord. All who were there must have made a choice in their hearts, and that is what we must each do now when we hear the words of the trial of Jesus and how He suffered, "the Just for the unjust" (1 Peter 3:18). Because it was for us He suffered, as for the people then.

There is to be a time when the Lord Jesus will be the Great Judge,

"God hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained." Acts 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1.

He will be the Judge at the "great white throne:" (Read carefully Revelation 20:11-15).

But He still waits, offering His love and sacrifice for all who will trust Him. These are words said by Peter about' the trial of Jesus:

"God ... hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate ... Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you." Acts 3:13,14.

ML 08/20/1944

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 15:21-38, Slain by Wicked Hands:

The soldiers led Jesus from the hall where the Roman ruler had condemned Him to death to the Praetorium. Later they headed toward the hill outside of Jerusalem where they were to crucify Him.

The wooden crosses on which persons suffered this cruel death were very heavy; at first Jesus carried His cross (John 19:17), and then the soldiers compelled a man who was passing along the road to carry it instead.

Cruelty

When they reached the hill, the soldiers fastened Jesus on the cross. We do not like to think of the cruel treatment, but we know He was fastened with strong nails through His hands and His feet, which was foretold in Psalm 22:16 (See also John 20:25).

Two men who were thieves were crucified at the same time, one on each side of Jesus. This was the third hour of the morning; we would call it 9 a.m. Many people had followed them to this place, some who loved Jesus but many who did not and spoke in ridicule. The priests were there to mock Him, and even the thieves spoke against Him.

The Lord Jesus hung on the cross for six hours, through the middle part of the day. The last three hours, from the "sixth" hour (noon) until the "ninth" hour (3 p.m)., the sun gave no light: "There was darkness over the whole land." Then Jesus spoke to God and gave up His life.

Laying Down His Life

All the cruel treatment did not take the life of the Lord Jesus, for He had said, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself" (John 10:17-18).

This was the great work which Jesus as the holy Servant of God came to do, to give Himself as the sacrifice for sins, as was pictured in all the sacrifices of all the years before He came.

Notice these words about the Lord Jesus: "Christ Jesus ... took upon Him the form of a servant, ... became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:5-9).

"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

"Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

Note: The man who was made to carry the cross of Jesus did not live in Jerusalem, but in Cyrene, a city of northern Africa. Except for the soldiers' orders, he would not have heard the words Jesus said or known so fully of His death. He may have been one of those who listened to the disciples soon after this (Acts 2:10). If he learned that the One whose cross he carried was the Christ who was going to bear his sins, how fully he would feel repaid for carrying that heavy cross! Men from his city later "preached the Lord Jesus" in other cities (Acts 11:20-21). His sons seem to be well known to Mark, the writer of this account, and to other believers.

1. Why did God darken the whole world for those three hours?

2. Where in the Old Testament can we read of Christ’s inner feelings during this time?

3. You would, no doubt, find The Sufferings of Christ by J. N. Darby both challenging and uplifting.

Girdle of Truth: Volume 3, Fragments

Mark 14:3-9

Is there not something analogous going on now?-a readiness to object to service done to the person of Christ, as if the energies thus employed were wasted, and should have been spent on the poor-a talk of philanthropy which would hinder from breaking the box on Jesus. It is much easier to give to the poor than to spend our affections on the person of Jesus. Mere nature could be careful and troubled about many things; but nature will never sit at the feet of Jesus and hear His words. It can trouble the house with the importance of its service, but will never fill it with the odor of the ointment.

Note, too, how affection to the person of Christ guides to the right sort of service, even when there is not positive intelligence as to it. The fact is, it is this affection to Christ's person that keeps people right.

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Lord Jesus Denied, The

Mark 14:66-72

The men we call disciples, had seen the great miracles done by the Lord Jesus and had heard His words, and believed Him to be the Holy One expected by their people. They thought He would soon take the throne as King over Israel. So when He told them, before the soldiers came to take Him, that they would all be “offended” that night because of Him, they could not believe they would ever turn from Him, or deny they belonged with Him.

One disciple, Peter, said he would never deny the Lord, even if others did. Then Jesus said to Peter,

“Verily (truly) I say unto you,... this night, before the cock Crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice” (three times). Mark 14:30.

It was not long before the soldiers and other men came, with lanterns and weapons, to take Jesus. At first Peter tried to fight against them, and struck one man with a sword. But Jesus healed the man, showing kindness to an enemy.

Yet Jesus did not use His power to save Himself, but let the soldiers bind Him and lead Him away. The disciples became frightened that they would be captured too, and all ran away.

But later, Peter followed to the pace where they took Jesus, and went in where the servants were. It was a cold night in early spring, and he sat down the fire. He was a stranger to the servants, but they all knew of the taking of Jesus; and a maid, who perhaps had sometime seen Jesus and the disciples, noticed Peter, and said to him,

“Thou wast also with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Peter answered that he did not know or understand what she said, meaning he did not know anything about Jesus. Then he went from the room onto the porch, and just then he heard a cock, or rooster, crow, as they do very early in the morning. But Peter seems not to have then recalled what Jesus had told him.

Soon the maid told the servants that Peter was one of those with Jesus. But Peter denied again that he knew Him. Afterward a servant said to him, “Surely thou art one of them, for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.”

No doubt Peter thought they might make him a prisoner, as they had Jesus, and he very wrongly answered again that he did not know Jesus.

After that he again heard a rooster crowing. Then he remembered the Lord’s words telling him that he would deny Him, and he realized he had not been true to the Lord.

He was sorry and ashamed, for he really loved Jesus.

Peter seems never afterward to have been afraid to speak for the Lora Jesus; he spoke even to those same priests who were against Jesus, and told them that there was no way to be saved but by the name of Jesus. He did not fear although they had him put in prison (Acts 4:6-12; 5:18).

“If any man suffer as a Christian (because he belongs to Christ) let him not be ashamed ... .but let him glorify God on this behalf.” 1 Peter 4:16.

ML 08/13/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Trial in the Night, A

Mark 14:53-65

The soldiers took Jesus to the palace of the high priest, the leader of the Jewish people; his house was near or a part of the Temple. It was night, but there were priests, scribes, and others waiting, as had been planned to question and witness against Jesus. They wanted to ‘luny through a trial of Jesus when most of the people would not see or know what they did.

These men gathered in the palace, knew the laws given to Moses to direct them how to give any accused person a fair trial with witnesses. They would know the words by the prophet,

“O, man, what is good, and what loth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

They did not do justly or love mercy; they had before tried to puzzle Jesus with questions, and have Him speak wrongly. They were so angry because He had told them God’s words and shown their wrong ways, that they were determined to condemn Him to death, although He had done no wrong.

There were men for witnesses, but they did not speak truly, and they did not agree in what they said. At last the high priest asked Jesus,

“Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”

The Lord answered plainly, “I am,” and told them of His coming with power.

The high priest called His answer blasphemy,” words against God. Then they all agreed Jesus deserved to die.

There were certain things people of those days did to show their feelings to others they “rent”, or tore their clothes to show great grief or shame. But the high priest was not to do so (Lev. 21:10), yet the high priest that night rent his clothes, to show he thought the words of the Lord Jesus were shameful.

Some of the men spit in the face of Jesus to show their contempt of Him; others covered His eyes, then struck Him with their hands (called “buffeting”), and said for Him to name who struck Him.

Yet Jesus did not answer or resist: He proved the words written long before of the Holy One to come:

“I hid not My face from shame and spitting.” Is: 50:6. It was also written of Him,

“He was despised and rejected of men.” “He was taken from... judent” (not given righteous judgment) Isaiah 53:3,8.

However, those men had no right to punish anyone by death: all they could do was to accuse and witness against Jesus, and send Him to the Roman ruler for another trial. They hurried to do this early in the morning.

Do you know what time of the year this was? It was the time of the passover feast, also called the feast of unleavened bread, because they then ate only unleavened bread (without yeast) for seven days. This was in their month Abid, the same as late March or early April to us. (see Exo. 13:3,4,6; Luke 22:1).

ML 08/06/1944

Faithful Words for Old and Young: Volume 15, Jesus Led as a Lamb - Jesus as the Lamb Leading.

ISAIAH tells us “He is brought (or led) as a lamb to the slaughter.” In the book of Revelation we read of those who “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” Our first text brings Jesus before us as a lamb being led, “led to the slaughter,” and none was ever led to such cruel slaughter as He. Who led Him? Not gentle hands; rough, fierce men hurried Him to death, and they were instigated by the hatred and malice of those belonging to His own beloved nation. This thought must have caused Him deeper anguish than all bodily pain. Did He not say in view of His griefs, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death”? (Mark 14:34.)

They seem to have had it all their own way, leading Him first to priests, then to Pilate, then to Herod, and back to Pilate again, and, from him to Calvary, where they slew Him — “the Lamb of God.” What deep, mysterious love, that He should allow Himself to be so led!

But the scene changes: He who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, leads His people. “They follow the Lamb.” Where does He lead His redeemed and glorified ones? Not to suffering and death, but to endless joys — to fountains of living water, to pleasures for evermore. In those bright scenes above He most graciously and tenderly retains His character of the Lamb.

Jesus leads us while we are here on earth, and He says to each of us, “Follow thou Me.” (John 21:22.) This is a personal call. He will guide us in all things day by day; let us seek to obey His voice. There is nothing really worth knowing without the knowledge of Him. All other wisdom will be as nothing — with it, all other may be sanctified. Let us work and live for Him, who “was led as a lamb to the slaughter” for us — for us!

St. Mark, in his account of Jesus giving sight to a blind man (ch. 8:23), tells us, “He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town.” How gently His hand would guide that man away from the bustle and the noise; how carefully would He lead him, telling him where to avoid a stone or a rough place, and where it was safe for him to tread; then, at the end of the journey, He gave him the blessing of sight, that thus the man might see the powerful and gentle Saviour who had so tenderly “led him out of the town.”

Does He not deal thus with us? He led us “out of the town” — away by ourselves. We did not always see Him; our eyes were once blinded by doubt. He leads us still, and He will do so to the end, then He will give us eyes to behold Him — “the King in His beauty.” Yes, very soon and “we shall see Him as He is.”

E. D. E.

Correspondence, Correspondence: 50 Days; MAR 14:3-9; JOH 12:38; LUK 10:38-42; REV 22:3

Ques. Please explain how you find fifty days between the resurrection of the Lord, and the coming of the Holy Spirit?

Ans. The word "Pentecost" means fifty, or the fiftieth; the allusion is to Lev. 23. In that chapter we get two offerings on the morrow after the Sabbath. The wave sheaf is the type of the resurrection of Christ (Verses 10-14). There is no sin offering attached to that; it is the Lord Himself. Then seven Sabbaths were counted, and on the morrow after the seventh Sabbath, that is, the first day of the week, a new meat offering-"two wave loaves baken with leaven"-is offered. A sin offering accompanies it, for it is typical of the redeemed Church, which, though redeemed, has sin in each member (Verses 15-21).

In the New Testament we see that the Lord rose on the first day of the week, and was seen of His disciples forty days (Acts 1:3); then came His ascension. The disciples continued in prayer and supplication the rest of the period (not many days), till Pentecost, the fiftieth day was fully come; then the Holy Spirit came down.

Ques. In Mark 14:3-9, the Lord's head is said to have been anointed, and in John 12:38, His feet. Please explain this, and say if Luke 10:38-42 refers to the same event.

Ans. No doubt both are true. The propriety of the head being mentioned in Mark, and the feet only in John will be at once seen if we consider that in the former we have Christ as the servant, in the latter as the Son of God. Luke 10 describes a previous scene in which Mary was not rendering any service to Christ, but learning from Him. In John 12 we get Mary giving, in Luke 10 she is getting. And it was doubtless what she got on this and similar occasions that enabled her to show such exquisite feeling when it became her turn to give.

Ques. Who are meant by "his servants" in Rev. 22:3? Does not our service end with our lives on the earth

Ans. Surely not. It means us. Are we not to be kings and reign? Our weariness and toil, our tears, our weakness, our unfaithfulness, will all be over then, but not our service. He ever will still be a servant (Luke 12:37), and shall not we? This, indeed, will be the bliss of heaven to be permitted to manifest, in a small but thus perfect measure, our love and faithfulness to our beloved Lord.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 14:26-52, The Lord Betrayed:

The disciple Judas, who had secretly agreed to betray Jesus to the men who hated Him, left the house after the Passover supper (John 13:26, 30). It was later in the evening that Jesus and the other disciples went out of the city to a place on the side of the Mount of Olives.

The disciples slept on the ground while Jesus went a little way from them to pray. He was “exceeding sorrowful.” He knew the time had come to give Himself into the power of the men who were planning His death and to suffer from their cruelty. Far more than that, He was to suffer from God’s punishment for the sins of many. That was why the Lord Jesus prayed, “Take away this cup from Me.”

He did not mean a cup He could see, but to take the punishment of God against sin was called “taking the cup.” Yet He said, “Not My will, but Thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

Intimate Language

Jesus spoke in the language the disciples knew, and His first word, “Abba,” has been kept for us now to know. “Abba” meant Father. Just think of how the very word He used will always remind His people of His perfect obedience to God, His Father.

Before long, Judas came with a band of soldiers and many men sent by the priests, for he knew the place on the hillside where Jesus often went. The soldiers did not know Jesus, but Judas had told them that the man he would kiss (as was a custom for friends) would be the one to take captive.

Judas at once came to Jesus, calling Him “Master, Master!” and kissed Him. This was most wicked and deceitful. When the soldiers took hold of Jesus, one disciple who had a sword started to fight against them. Jesus could have prevented them from taking Him, but He did not resist. He said, “The scriptures must be fulfilled.”

Scripture Fulfilled

Earlier in the night, Jesus told the disciples this scripture: “Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered” (Zech. 13:7).

Jesus was the “Shepherd” that God would “smite,” and the disciples were as “sheep.” They fulfilled those words, for it says, “They all forsook Him, and fled.”

That was a very sad night for those men who loved Jesus; He had told them other words which would have comforted them, if they had remembered them, telling them where to meet Him after He would arise from among the dead (Mark 14:28).

There was a young man who started to follow after Jesus, but he was not one of the disciples. He seems to have been roused that night from sleep and hurriedly wrapped a cloth or sheet about himself to come to the place. His name and his reason for coming are not told, but when the men tried to take him, he left his wrap in their hands and escaped.

The soldiers led Jesus back into the city to the chief priests. What is the name of the place where Jesus prayed (Mark 14:32)?

Why did Judas betray the Lord (Mark 14:10-11)?

What did the soldiers carry (John 18:3)?

1. In a figurative sense, why did the soldiers need torches in the presence of the “light of life”?

2. What has the Lord given to comfort us in His absence?

3. For some very refreshing ministry on this part of the Lord's life, consider reading The Evangelists by J. G. Bellett.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 14:10-26, A Man With a Pitcher:

The disciples asked the Lord Jesus where He wished them to prepare the Passover supper which was not to be eaten in the temple, but in homes. They had no home in Jerusalem, but Jesus knew where they could find a room. He told two of them, "Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman [owner] of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with My disciples? And he will show you a large upper room furnished. ... There make ready for us."

The two disciples were so directed that they could not make a mistake. The man with the pitcher of water met them and led them directly to the "upper room" where our Lord knew they would find all that was needed for the solemn meal.

The Remembrance

This was not what we would call a "feast," but a time to remember that God had saved their nation from death in Egypt and to rejoice and thank Him. It was to praise God that they had sung a hymn (or psalm) that evening before they left Egypt (Deut. 12:7, 12).

That same night Jesus showed the disciples how to keep a new "feast." He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave to them to eat. Then He gave thanks also for the cup, in which was the "fruit" (juice) of the grape vine, and gave them to drink.

This was a most simple "feast," told of in few words, yet it was to be done to remember the greatest of all events, the Lord Jesus' giving His body in death and shedding His blood, not as the Passover for one nation, but to save the souls of men, women, boys and girls of every nation who will believe in Him.

Clear Direction

We may wonder that the Lord's directions to find the place to keep the "feast" are so fully written. How can anyone now be helped by hearing of the man with a pitcher of water whom the disciples followed?

We find God's Word is called "water" (Eph. 5:26); it is to our souls what water is to our bodies. It tells of God's salvation and of all His way for His people. Yet they could not understand it without the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13).

From this it seems the man with the pitcher of water was a picture of the Spirit with the words of God. The Spirit leads by God's Word to where the Lord still keeps the "feast" with His followers. The Lord desires that those who love Him keep that simple "feast" of remembrance with Him until He comes (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:26).

1. What other scriptures refer to the Spirit of God by using the figure of moving water?

2. Where else in the Scripture is water used as a figure of the Word of God?

3. You might find help related to the topic of this chapter in Why Do We Meet as We Do? by J. R. Gill.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 14:1-9, A Beautiful Act:

A few days before the Lord Jesus was put to death, a supper was made for Him and His disciples in the house of a man named Simon. While they were eating, a woman came with a box, or flask, of choice oil and poured it on the head of Jesus.

To put oil on the head was a custom of the people, perhaps because of the heat and dust, and was a courtesy to a guest. Most often olive oil was used. Expensive oil, as the woman had, was used only by kings and rich men. Some present at this meal were indignant at what they called this "waste" and said the oil could have been sold for more than three hundred pence (the normal wage for about a year of work) and the money given to the poor.

A Beautiful Work

But the woman had a very special reason for using the rare oil, that was more than to honor Jesus as a guest, although that would have been a right use. Jesus Himself told her reason; He did not call it a waste, but a "good," or beautiful, work, and said, "She is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying" (vs. 8).

Jesus had plainly told them He must suffer and die, as was written by the prophets (Luke 24:44-46), yet none seem to have believed Him, except this woman. She understood He was giving Himself for her sins, as for all.

Oils and perfumes were used to show esteem for persons at death. She knew when the wicked men would take Jesus she could put no oil on Him, so she did it before. Her love and appreciation were a great contrast to the hatred of the men who were then planning to take His life. They would have sharp thorns hurt His head; she put on Him soothing oil, the best she could obtain.

The Lord's Approval

The Lord Jesus was so pleased that there was one who believed Him when others did not understand or believe that He said, “Verily I say unto you [very important], Wheresoever this gospel [the story of Jesus] shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”

It is almost two thousand years since this loving act was done, and the story has been read and told many, many times, as Jesus said it should be. No one can now anoint the Lord Jesus with oil, but this story teaches that He is most honored when His words are fully believed and when His people value His death above all else.

It was for His joy in those who love Him that the Lord Jesus “endured the cross, despising the shame” (Heb. 12:2).

In what village was this act done (Mark 14:3)?

What was the name of the woman (John 11:2)?

When can the poor be helped (Mark 14:7)?

The following verses show the use of oil as pleasing: Psa. 23:5; 92:10; 104:15; Eccl. 9:8; Isa. 61:3; Matt. 6:17.

1. Where else are special oils referred to in the Bible?

2. For more wise words on the general topic of worship, consider Christian Worship by W. Kelly.

3. You might find The Land and the Book by W. M. Thompson to be an excellent reference for cultural issues such as the one referred to in this chapter.

Bible Treasury: Volume 19, Correspondence on Mark 13:32

DEAR BROTHER,

A tract has just been handed me, the title of which is, “A few remarks on a paper recently published in the Botschafter,” and the author, J. S. A.

I have no thought of entering into a controversy to which, thank God, we are no party, but which, as it has already been lasting for some years, may last indefinitely for this simple reason that the subject under discussion is, in its main part, beyond the competency of any man.

But truth, and principally truth that bears upon the person of Christ, has its requirements, on the ground of which it becomes a duty to any and every Christian to confess his faith. Now, in the above mentioned tract, I read the following sentence: “Personally He (Christ) ever was God.; but without ceasing to be that, He has taken a place as the second man, and as He is in that position, so shall we be. As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. “As to omniscience, which is one of the attributes of a divine person, see what the Lord says of the position He was occupying” (Mark 13:32). The italics are mine, for it is upon this latter part that I would draw the attention of your readers.

If these words have a meaning, they make our blessed Lord to say that in Him the divine nature and the human were so separate, that one part of Himself knew and the other part did not; in other words, that, as second man, He had not omniscience. Is there any such lowering thought in Mark 13:32? First of all the text does not speak of Him specifically as man or Son of man, but as “the Son,” and this alone destroys the argument. Secondly, it is admirably in keeping with the whole Gospel (in which alone it is found), where the Son is characteristically presented as the perfect SERVANT. Now, it was part of His perfection, as servant, not to know “of that day and hour” wherein the Father would exalt Him commensurately with His own voluntary humiliation. To humble Himself and to obey unto death, yea, death of the cross, was His whole concern. The result, as regarded Himself, He would leave absolutely and unreservedly with His Father; “wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him,” &c. This is full of beauty and comeliness, truly heart-winning; but if you use the “no man knoweth” to infer that manhood in Christ had no part in omniscience, you disunite the two natures which now, i.e. since the Word became flesh, compose His person forever, and you cast a slur upon Him. It is a fresh wound inflicted upon Him in the house of His friends.

As we have the perfect servant in Mark, so have we God manifest in the flesh in John, that is characteristically the Son Whom “no man knoweth but the Father.” And in this Gospel what do we read? “For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him.” Is not this omniscience? Mark too, it is attributed to JESUS, the God-Man. Again, as to omnipresence, which is no less a divine attribute than is omniscience, we read, “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, THE SON OF MAN which is in heaven.” Who can fathom these mysteries? We are called upon to believe, not to explain them. The former leads to adoration; the latter is soul-withering and God-dishonoring work. O that we knew more of our littleness in order to see more of His greatness! Ever yours in Him,

C.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 13:28-37, Left in Charge:

The Lord Jesus had told some of His disciples the certainty that He would return in power to fulfill all God’s words. He also told them of great sorrows in Judea before that coming, but He said that none will know the day or hour for His return. He told them these words: “The Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.”

The Lord Jesus spoke of Himself as “Son of Man.” He would be away from His disciples (or all who believed His words) for some time, and He would give them work to do for Him.

While He’s Absent

He was Himself a holy Servant for God while on earth and knew the work to give each one. He had before told them to serve one another. Their “authority” for all they did would be His words.

He commanded the porter to watch. A porter is one to watch at all times, to announce an arrival, and other duties. So the “porter” may teach us of the Holy Spirit, most necessary for His “house”: None can enter except by the Holy Spirit, who also awakens His people to danger and teaches them of Christ, what is for Him and of things to come (John 16:13; 3:5).

In the great time of trial told by Jesus, the Holy Spirit is to give men the words to say to rulers about Christ (vs. 11).

Watching

Jesus told them plainly again that none knew the time for His return. He said, “Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

Jesus mentioned all the divisions of time as then used, and in much the same way as we now say, excepting the early morning time called “the cockcrowing.” They would know no set time of day to expect Him; they could only watch.

The Lord did not mean that His people do not need sleep for their minds and bodies; He meant they were not to be as not knowing, or careless, about His coming, or as if “asleep” to their work for Him.

Jesus had told the disciples of His coming with glory, which time none knew, and the same is true of His coming in the air to call His people to be with Him, as He said, “I will come again, and receive you unto Myself” (John 14:3), also mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. No time is told; they are exhorted to “wait” for Him (1 Thess. 1:10).

One of the wonderful things about the words of the Lord Jesus and about all Scripture is that what was said to people then has a deep lesson also for His people of later time. That includes us now and for a time still in the future.

What “shall not pass away” (Mark 13:31)?

1. What other passages in the Word of God show us how we can “watch” for the Lord to come?

2. How do we know that every scripture has an important lesson to teach us?

3. For a challenging look at this topic, consider reading The Watching Servant by J. N. Darby (only 24 pages). You will probably find it easier to read than you might think.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 13:3-27, Christ's Coming in Power:

There is a high ridge east of the city of Jerusalem, called the Mount of Olives, because of many olive trees growing there. It was a quiet place where Jesus came with the disciples away from the crowded city. From there they could see the temple which Jesus had just said would be broken down.

He had before told them that He must die and be raised and return to His Father, but also that He would come again with power (Matt. 16:27). The disciples asked Jesus when all this would be and what sign there would be.

Jesus’ Warning

Before Jesus answered their questions, He warned them of men who would say they were Christ and would do wonders, but were false. His coming would be very different and could not be mistaken, for He would appear in the clouds with brightest glory.

He told them that His “elect,” those of the “seed of Abraham” as promised, would be gathered from all parts of the earth for blessing (Gen. 13:15; Acts 3:25).

Jesus told them what would be a “sign”; it had already been written by the prophet Daniel (Dan. 9:27): An “abomination” would be seen “standing where it ought not.” A wicked man will cause the sacrifices and worship of the Jews to stop, and he will set up an idol in the temple to be worshipped instead of God. This “sign” would be seen before Christ’s coming with power, while there would be awful trouble for the saved people in Judea, so that they have to flee to the mountains (See also Matthew 24:15-16; Revelation 13:14-15). This most wicked man, called the “man of sin” and “the false prophet,” will go into the temple and declare himself to be God, and all who do not believe in God will obey that most wicked man (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-12).

But that wicked one’s power will end when the true Christ appears in the heavens, and his awful judgment is told (Rev. 19:20).

Jesus told the disciples that before His coming, the gospel of the kingdom must be told in all nations (vs. 10). Those disciples would tell of Jesus, the coming King.

When the most awful troubles are endured, men of the nation of Israel will tell of the Messiah to come. “Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels ... neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32).

Another Coming

We who are now the Lord’s are told of another coming in the air, to call all who have trusted Him as Saviour, before the time of trouble told here. Of this no “sign” is given.

“I will come again, and receive you unto Myself” (John 14:3).

“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

1. Why will God permit the “wicked man” to reign for a brief time?

2. If you’d like an excellent overview of coming events, consider Outline of Prophetic Events by B. Anstey.

3. For more on the subject of the Lord’s return, you might find The Lord’s Coming by C. H. Mackintosh to be quite helpful.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 13:1-2, Stones to Be Thrown Down:

As Jesus and the disciples were leaving the temple, one of them said to Him, “Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!”

The temple building then was not the one for which King David provided the beautiful stones (1 Chron. 29:2), but it was built on the same site with very large stones. It had porches with high pillars, and no doubt it was a beautiful building.

But even the disciples did not seem to understand that those great stones and all inside were not meant simply to be admired. Its purpose was to teach all who looked at the temple that the Lord of all the earth was to be honored there. The stones taught of His wisdom and power, for He had created them.

God’s Meeting Place

But most of all, God had said He would meet with His people there and speak with them. They could come there in sorrow or joy and pray to Him. Even a stranger, one of another nation, could come there to pray, or if the people were in trouble in a faraway land, they were to pray with their faces toward the temple (2 Chron. 6:5, 29, 32, 38; Dan. 6:10).

It was there that the scrolls of the Scriptures were kept and copied and read to the people, and where they praised God with music.

Sacrifices of animals could be offered in no other place, and all the men of the nation were to go there three times a year to feasts (Deut. 12:13-14; 16:16).

So no matter how far away people of Israel lived, the temple, or house of God in Jerusalem, was the most important place on earth to them. And we can understand the sorrow of the disciples when Jesus said to them, “Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

The Reason to Destroy the Temple

When God sent His Son Jesus to that nation, as the prophets had said, He came to the temple (Mal. 3:1) and must have been there many times. He told them God’s words and that He was from God, and He proved by His wisdom and miracles that He was the promised Messiah. Yet the leaders would not believe Him and were soon to have Him put to death.

That was why the great temple would be broken down. The Lord Jesus fulfilled in His death all the sacrifices, and those who trust Him come to God by Him (Heb. 9:14).

It is not written that Jesus told the disciples when the temple would be destroyed — only that it surely would take place. After His return to heaven, the disciples went to the temple to speak to people. The last mention of the building was when Paul was there (Acts 21:30). But from history by men, we know that temple was entirely broken down in battle in 70 A.D., and many people were made slaves. That was about 35 years after Jesus said those words.

The Jewish people have never since had a temple in Jerusalem. The building now on that hill is in honor of a false prophet and called the Mosque of Omar.

1. What kind of access do we have to God’s presence today?

2. For more on worship today, consider Five Letters on Worship and Ministry in the Spirit by W. Trotter.

3. You will find a fascinating historical account of these times in Josephus: The Essential Writings.

Present Testimony: Volume 5, 1853, Mark 12:1-12

AR 12:1-12:12{IN order to understand this parable, it will be well to consider first at what moment Jesus spake it, and to whom he addressed it.

He had made his solemn entrance into Jerusalem, with the shouts of " Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest."

On the morrow (ver. 12) he had pronounced sentence upon the barren fig-tree, and had cast out them that bought and sold in the temple, "saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Then on the third day, " as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the Chief Priests, and the Scribes, and the elders, and say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Thereupon it was, that "he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard."

The principal terms of this parable may, I think, be explained in the following manner; though I by no means wish to exclude other explanations:-

He who planted the vineyard, is God (Isa. 5:7). The vineyard comprehends two things; the land and the vines which are planted therein.

The land is the land of Canaan or Palestine (Psa. 80:8, 9; Isa. 5:7).

The vines are the men of Israel (Isa. 5:7; John 15:1).

. The fence, the wine press, and the tower, show us that the proprietor of the vineyard had neglected nothing which could make it fruitful (Isa. 5:4). He had protected it against the intrusion of the passer-by and of the wild beasts (Psa. 80:13; Sol. 2:15; Isa. 5:2,5). He had made every necessary arrangement possible that it should bring forth grapes (Isa. 5:2). He had established means suitable for habitation, oversight, and protection (Psa. 61:3; Prov. 18:10; Isa. 5:2).

And then he had let it out to husbandmen, in order that it might receive the care needful and might bring forth fruit. The husbandmen are all those whom God has established as conductors or pastors of Israel in Palestine, as Joshua, the Judges, the Kings, the royal governors of Chaldea and of Persia, and even of the Roman emperors, the Priests and Elders.

Then the proprietor of the vineyard went into a far country, in order to allow the cultivators time to show how they would cultivate the vineyard, and to the vineyard time to produce fruit; in other words, God left his people and their conductors for a time under their own individual responsibility.

The season for fruit is the time at which he judged that the labor of the cultivators might fairly be put to the proof, and what fruit the vineyard had produced be seen.

The servants whom he sent to the cultivators to receive from them of the fruit of the vineyard, are the prophets from Samuel (Acts 3:24;13. 20; 1 Chron. 29:29) down to John Baptist (Matt. 11:9-13). They have also in principle been sent to the kings and to those who possessed any authority; in support of which, it may suffice to name Samuel, Nathan, Ahijah, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and even John the Baptist (Matt. 3:7-9).

The history which the word of God gives us of these prophets, shows us how they were scourged and stoned and wounded; how they were rejected with opprobrium and were killed (Matt. 23:29-36), and how they were sent empty away (Isa. 5:2; Jer. 2:21; Hos. 10:1).

And last of all, the one only Son, the well-beloved, is the Jesus whom the Old Testament had already pointed out repeatedly in these very terms (Gen. 22; Psa. 22:20; 35:17; Isa. 5:1), and whom the New Testament expressly calls the only begotten of the Father (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9); The beloved (Matt. 3:17; 12:18; 17:5; Mark 1:11;9. 7; Luke 9:35; Eph. 1:6).

And thus we are come to the moment in which this parable was spoken.

Jehovah had, in his goodness and by his power, delivered his people from under the bondage of Egypt, and had introduced them into the good land, a land flowing with milk and honey, which he had promised to Abraham their father, and after having, moreover, on several occasions delivered them, by the judges, from their enemies who had subjugated them as a punishment for their unfaithfulness, He had at length begun, by His prophets to ask for the fruit of that vineyard wherein he had planted them.

Although that land was his peculiar possession (Lev. 25:23), and He alone was the king of His people (1 Sam. 8:7); He had acquiesced in their desire to be like other nations, and had given to them a king taken from among themselves. But quickly it was seen that neither did this royal power fulfill its purpose. And Saul, that carnal man, and David, the man after God's own heart, and Solomon, the king of righteousness and peace, had been more or less deaf to the words of God addressed to them by the prophets; the kingdom was rent in twain, and the kings, whether of Israel or even of Judah, were, spite of the warnings and threatenings reiterated by the prophets, fallen into such a state of disobedience and of idolatry, that the patience of God was exhausted, and He sent into captivity the men of Israel, and even them of Judah, so that there were left but a few of the poorest of the land to be husbandmen of the vineyards and laborers (2 Kings 25:12).

But, although God had thus withdrawn his glory from the temple and the city of Jerusalem (Ezek. 9-11) and had given the dominion of the world to the nations (Dan. 2:37,38). His goodness and His protection were not withdrawn from His people. He permitted some of His people to re-enter the land out of which they had been driven, and to rebuild the temple and the city, yet under a foreign yoke; He encouraged and warned them by means of His prophets, yet they continued to reject the warnings, and finally the Romans, the fourth of the monarchies to which God gave the dominion of the world, had, on the one hand, got possession of the land, and, on the other, after a series of overthrows and acts of violence, the Scribes and the Pharisees had placed themselves in Moses' seat (Matt. 23:2) and gave themselves out for the husband men of the vineyard.

It was under these circumstances, the land inhabited by various runaways of the captivity of Babylon, and the calamities consequent thereon, and directed, under the Roman government, by certain Scribes and Pharisees, that John Baptist proclaimed that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and that the king himself appeared, and that, after having, during a while, made preparation for his inauguration in his kingdom, he, at last, entered as king (at least for all those who had the will to receive Him as such) into Jerusalem (Matt. 11:14), the city of the Great King (Matt. 5:35), and purged the temple of God His Father (Matt. 21:12; Luke 2:49).

The moment was then come for the husbandmen to receive the Son of the owner of the vineyard and to yield to him of its fruit. But, instead of recognizing His authority, they asked Him whence it was? Then, not being altogether without discernment, they sent certain Herodians to Him to entangle Him and to ask of Him, is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar. After all, recognizing in Him the Heir, they say among themselves, " This is the Heir, come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance will be ours! And when they had slain Him, they cast Him out of the vineyard." The chief-priest, together with the chiefs of the temple and all the council exercising authority in religion, united with Pilate, who possessed the political power, to put to death Him whom they would not that He should reign over them (Luke 19:14); and they crucified Him outside of the city.

" What shall, therefore, the Lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give. the vineyard unto others." He has already destroyed those who put His Son to death; and yet a little while, when the land shall again be beneath the dominion of the resuscitated Roman empire, and shall be anew dwelt in by the descendants of those who dwelt there when the Son was rejected; when they will again, like their fathers, kill the servants that are sent unto them, and will rejoice in their deaths (Rev. 11:7-10). The Lord will destroy those husbandmen (Rev. 11:13); then will he avenge Himself on the vineyard of that land whose husbandmen refused Him the fruit of the vine; but it will be to cast the vintage into the great wine-press of the wrath of God; and it will be trodden outside of the city (Rev. 14:17-20.) Then when the vineyard has been cleansed and purified (Rev. 19:19-21; Ezek. 39:1-16) it will be given to others, to the children of the kingdom who will bring forth fruit, one grain giving thirtyfold, another sixty, and another an hundred (Matt. 13:18-23; 21:41, 43), and Jesus Will then be able to drink with his own of the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of His Father (Matt. 26:29).

Such is the explanation of the parable, imperfect and defective doubtless, yet, I think, true according to the principal traits. Let us now pass to certain applications.

Although the position of the Church be different from that of Israel, in that our country is heavenly and not earthly., yet our responsibility is the same as to fruits which had to be brought forth. In the Church also, God has done everything which was necessary in order that it might bring forth fruit; in the Church also He established at the beginning cultivators, that is to say, apostles, overseers, and servants (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 4:1-4;12. 28; 1 Tim. 3:5; 1 Peter 5:2); but soon also, when he sent messengers to ask for fruit, those who loved to have the pre-eminence received them not (3 John, 9, 10) and at Pergamos, Antipas was put to death (Rev. 2:13). They heaped up teachers to themselves according to their own lusts (2 Tim. 4:3). Persons who had no calling of God sat, of their own will, so to speak, in the seat of the apostles, and even despised the authority of the only-begotten Son, the well-beloved of the Father, and lorded it over his heritage (1 Peter 5:3). All this assemblage will, ere long, be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord (Rev. 3:16). In the meanwhile, the child of God who has ever so little spiritual discernment, will recognize such persons, in whatsoever position they may be, by their fruits (Matt. 7:16,20), and he will refuse to recognize their authority with the very same care which he will display to recognize that of the true Head of the Church, and to obey Him.

As to the political order of things, the application of the parable is yet more striking. Pontius Pilate, who delivered up Jesus; was at Jerusalem the representative of the Roman empire, and though he might wash his hands, he is not the less, before God, as well as that which he represented, morally responsible for the death of the Heir of the kingdom. They killed Him to take possession of the inheritance; their authority is then that of the usurper, and all the powers which are the successors thereof, whatsoever they may be, remain in the same position; time has brought with it so much the less of change, in that we know that the Roman empire, though lost to view for a time, will appear in force again; in every case; if the existing powers deny their Romish origin, there remains for them, according to the word of God, no foundation whatsoever. The child of God will assign to each thing its place, and will bestow on each thing its name.

Will he then deduce as a consequence, that he must not recognize these authorities, must not yield them submission? He might have done so, if God had not taken care to give us in His word directions of another tendency, " Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation ... For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.... For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing" (Rom. 13:1, 2, 4, 6).

But how reconcile this with that which we have just said above, that the powers which exist are illegitimate? To do so is not very difficult.

Every power which exists is ordained of God, not only in the sense in which it is said, that not one sparrow falls to the ground without the leave of God (Matt. 10:29), but also in a more positive sense, because all the powers which actually exist form part of that power which God expressly accorded to Nebuchadnezzar, and which passed from the Chaldeans to the Medes, and to the Persians, then to the Greeks, then to the Romans; in this sense all existing powers have been positively ordained of God.

But, it may be objected that the Roman empire, however legitimate at the commencement, can only have enjoyed the privilege of being legitimate up to the moment when God Himself resumed His rights in the world, by sending his son to take possession of the vineyard. This is true; and it is precisely thus that we enter into the application of the parable. Evidently, from the moment when Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified, his authority, legitimate as it was before, became illegitimate, and that of all the successors of the emperor. Tiberius has continued illegitimate in itself, and in respect of those who exercise the authority; and it is in this point of view that God will call them to account; for He will destroy the husbandmen and will give the vineyard to others.

But it is otherwise, looked at from the position we are in, from the position the Church is in. For them that love God, all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28), and the magistrate is the servant of God for their good (Rom. 13:4). They know that all that happens to them, all the circumstances in which they find themselves placed, and particularly the powers under which they live, are of God (1 Cor. 11:12; 2 Cor. 5:18), and they yield Him thanks, therefore. In particular, they give thanks for His having placed them under the authority of magistrates, who are not a terror to good works, but to the evil (Rom. 13:3), and they are subject to them not only for wrath's sake, but also for the sake of conscience (Rom. 13:5).

These are things which every pious soul feels, even though it understands them not; but every position in which there is zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (Rom. 10:2) has its dangers; we should grow in knowledge (Col. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:18). I pray God that He may deign of His goodness and by His spirit, to make these lines subservient to the advancement of some in the knowledge of the truth, as to those matters to which they refer.

(Signed) Steven Van Muyden.

Etudes Scripturaires, 24 June, 1852.

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Who Gave the Most

Mark 12:41 to 44

One day the Lord Jesus saw the people putting gifts of money into the chest or treasury of the Temple. The money was to be used to keep all there in honor to God. Many who were rich put in much; then a poor woman came and dropped in two small coins, called mites, which together were only the value of a farthing (English money), or a little more than one-half cent of our money.

We would think so small a gift would be of no help for the great Temple, but notice what Jesus said to His disciples about it:

“Verily, I say unto you, this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all of her living.”

Jesus often used the word “verily,” which means “it is true,” but it meant even more, used by Him. “Verily, I say unto you” meant that He spoke with authority to them as no one else could, and of an important matter. He knew that the people who put in much money, had plenty left for their needs and their comforts; and He knew, what others would not, that the poor woman had none left, not even for her needs.

It is good to know that the Lord valued those two coins; we see that He really counts what is left more than what is given, and that true giving is to give what we might use for ourselves.

The woman could have kept one of the coins for herself, but she put in both, willingly. It is not that the Lord needs the gifts, all really belongs to Him, but He has always given His people the joy to share in what is for Him.

When King David collected the gold, silver, precious stones, marble; wood and other things to build the first Temple to God, he said,

“Now our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name,... all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.”
1 Chronicles 29:13,14.

In the time of the young king, Joash, when the Temple had been neglected, a chest was made ready with a hole bored in the cover, for the people to put in gifts of money to repair it. Much money was put in, and the men in charge used it faithfully for material and for the workmen to make the repairs (2 Kings 12:9-15).

The willing gifts, large and small, honored God. His people now are not to keep a great temple, but there are as many or more ways for them to give for Him. They may help to pride His written words for others, and help those who tell of the Lord Jesus to those who do not know Him, as people of one town sent to Paul while he taught others (Phil. 4:14-17).

Many boys and girls now have more coins than the poor woman; if they have first given their hearts to the Lord, they will find joy to give for Him.

The giving of the poor widow seems to have been the only thing which the Lord Jesus could commend in His visit to the Temple, where all should have been for God’s praise.

ML 06/18/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Tax of Caesar, The

Mark 12:13-17

The people of Israel were once a free nation, and had their own king many years. But they sinned so greatly that God let other nations conquer them, as He had said (Deut. 28:47,48). When the Lord Jesus was in the land, they were under the Romans, whose ruler was called Caesar, and tribute (tax) was paid to him.

Some were willing to pay tax, others were not, and men of each party came to ask Jesus if it were right to pay tax to Caesar. These men did not believe Jesus was from God; when they said He taught “the way of God in truth” they were not sincere, but spoke in flattery, because they wanted to tempt Him to speak against Caesar, so He would be punished.

But Jesus did not speak against Caesar. He told them to show Him a tax coin, which they did. Money in those days had the likeness and name of the ruler impressed on it, as it often has now. Jesus asked the men whose likeness and name were on the coin. They said, “Caesar’s.”

Then Jesus answered their question: He said,

“Render (pay) to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

Jesus did not free them from the burden their sins had brought, instead He told them to pay it, and they saw He had answered them wisely, for they knew they had not given God obedience and honor which was due Him.

If they had welcomed Jesus, the Son of God, as their King, they would have been free of all their burdens. But before He rules as King over all, sin must be punished.

Jesus came first to give His life to save the souls of all who will believe Him, and to call them from this world's interests, since the rule of the Caesars, God has allowed many rulers in the countries, but the answer of the Lord Jesus to those men, has taught His people to pay whatever tribute or tax is asked. Much the same words were written to the early Christians:

"Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due." Romans 13:7,8.

In that same writing, it is told that all rulers, or "powers" are "ordained" or set by God, and the Christian is to respect them. But just before, in that writing, it is told the Christian owes himself to God, all that he is, to be for God (read Rom. 12).

It is not told when Christ will come as the Right Ruler over all, but this is one of the sure promises of God:

"Thus saith the Lord God; ... .I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." Ezekiel 21:26,27.

Pharisees: those who believed the laws given to Moses, but few of them lived in honor to God (Matt. 23:1-7).

Sadducees: those who did not believe that the dead rose, nor believed in angels, nor that man has a spirit (Acts 23:6,7).

Herodians: those who were not as interested in God or His laws, as Herod, the ruler chosen by Caesar.

ML 05/28/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Wicked Keepers

Mark 12:1-12

Do you remember about the big cluster of grapes which two men carried between them fastened to a staff, to show the people what a good land God had given them? (Num. 13:23-27). Those grapes grew in a valley of the land, later called Judea, of which Jerusalem was the chief city. So it was a good land to grow grape vines, and the people there have always had fine vineyards.

The Lord Jesus told men of the Temple a story of a certain vineyard and its keepers: He said the owner planted the vines, placing a hedge around to protect from animals; he built a tower for a watchman to stay to guard against thieves, and a vat was made for the pressed out juice. Then the owner went to a far country, leaving men in charge of his fine vineyard.

When it was time to gather the fruit of the vineyard, the owner sent a servant to receive his share. But the keepers were dishonest men who wanted all for themselves, and they treated the servant roughly and would not give him any share of the fruit.

The owner sent another servant, whom they treated still more roughly and threw stones at him, and gave him no fruit. Yet the owner was very patient with those keepers, and sent other servants to them, but the keepers became even more cruel, and hurt and killed them.

The owner had one son whom he said the keepers would be sure to treat well, and he was sent to the vineyard. But when the keepers saw the son had come, instead of giving him his father's share, they said to one another,

"This is the heir, Come let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours." They killed that son, and threw him from the vineyard.

This was a sad story, or parable, and it had a sad meaning hidden in it. The men to whom Jesus told it, were leaders of the people of Israel at that time. Their nation was called "a vine" for the Lord. He had led them from slavery, and "planted" them in the good land of Canaan (Palestine). He had protected them from enemies, as the watchman did the vineyard. He had chosen men to be leaders of the people, as "keepers." The "fruit" the Lord wanted in return, was the love and joy of the people. He sent men called prophets to tell them His words, but the leaders had treated them cruelly, and would not listen to His words; they were like the rough keepers of the vineyard.

At last God sent His beloved Son to tell His messages to the people, and see if they would give Him honor.

We know the Son who came to tell His Father's words, was Jesus, and the men who would not welcome Him or believe His words, were the most wicked of all the "keepers": those men who listened to His parable were even then trying to find a way to take Him when the people would not know it. They rejected Him, as the builders, the stone, but God will give Him the place of honor, as the corner stone of the building. (Psa. 118:22,23).

ML 05/21/1944

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 12:28-37, Another Question:

One of the scribes, who made copies of the Scriptures and also taught the people, asked Jesus this question: "Which is the first commandment of all?"

He meant, Which were most important of the words given by God for the people of Israel on Mt. Sinai? These were first carved on stone slabs and kept in the gold-covered chest, or "ark," many hundreds of years. They were perfect instructions for the people who had asked for God to tell them what they should do (Deut. 5:27).

Two Key Categories

No doubt that scribe had copies of those words, called the Ten Commandments, and seemed to think some were not important. But notice, Jesus divided them into only two parts: one part telling what the people were to do for God, and the other part, what they were to do to others. He said, “The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

“And the second is ... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other ... greater than these” (vss. 29-31).

The last commands were all included in “the second” by Jesus, for if each “loved his neighbor as himself,” as He said, no one would “kill” or “steal” or do any wrong to others. So the answer of Jesus showed all God’s words were important, although the scribe should have known they should first give themselves heart, soul, mind and strength to God, to whom they owed all (Deut. 6:45).

Jesus was the only person who fully kept those holy laws. He once said, “I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill” (Matt. 5:17).

The answers of Jesus made the men of the temple know that they were not keeping God’s words. Nonetheless, they did not welcome Jesus, the righteous One, and did not ask Him any more questions.

Jesus’ Question

But He asked this question: “How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?”

The scribes read the writings of the prophets, which told of the Messiah, the anointed One from God, to be son, or heir, of King David (Psa. 132:10-11; Isa. 9:7). The title, the Christ, means the same, in the New Testament.

Yet Jesus said that David wrote of this great One to come as “his Lord” (Psa. 110:1). Jesus asked how that could be. The question is not answered here. He had before told them that He came from God, and the prophet John had told them Jesus was the One to come. As a man on earth, He was of the family of David, heir to the throne. But He was also the Lord from heaven, so David’s Lord.

Jesus will at last take that place as Ruler over men, but if we trust Him as Saviour, He is even now our Lord.

These verses teach us more about those commandments:

“The law has been our tutor [teacher] up to Christ” (Gal. 3:24 JND).

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom. 10:4).

“Ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14).

1. What can we learn from the Ten Commandments in this day of grace?

2. To further consider Jesus’ question, you might find it helpful to read Revelation 22:16.

3. Consider reading The Moral Content of the Ten Commandments by C. H. Brown.

4. You might find it helpful to listen to Grace Reigning by R. Thonney.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 12:18-27, A Question for Jesus:

When men of Jerusalem asked questions of Jesus, it was not because they wanted to learn, but to try to puzzle Him and show Him to be wrong. But, instead, they were proven wrong. His answers were so plain that we may now learn from them about the most important things we could wish to know.

One question the men asked was, If a woman’s husband died and she married again, whose wife would she be when the dead rise?

Those men did not believe that the dead ever rose, or that people had a life that did not end. They spoke in ridicule of such a hope, although they quoted from a law given by God (Deut. 25:5). They should have known the law was for life on earth, not for heaven.

Jesus answered that they were wrong, because they knew “not the scriptures, neither the power of God.” He said that the dead shall rise, but that there will not be family relationships as on earth. He said, “They neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.” (See also Luke 20:34-36).

God has given us those we now love so much, and we can be sure it will be far more wonderful as His family in heaven — all dear to all.

Proof From Scripture

To prove to the men that those who believe God would rise, Jesus repeated words God said to Moses, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Ex. 3:16).

Those men were dead when God said the words, and Jesus said that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Therefore, those men were living, although not in bodies on earth, but with God (Eccl. 12:7).

The “everlasting” promises were not yet fulfilled, but must be, so their bodies must be raised (Gen. 17:7-8).

The men who asked the question had the writings by Daniel and others about resurrection: “Them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and contempt” (Dan. 12:2; see also Job 19:25-27; Psa. 17:15; Isa. 26:19).

Resurrection

At another time Jesus told them much the same words as Daniel used. He said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of [judgment]” (John 5:28-29).

It will be the voice of the Lord Jesus, the Son of Man, that they shall hear, but the last book of the Bible tells of time between the resurrection of those who believe God and those who do not (Rev. 20:5-6, 12-14).

The Lord Jesus also said He was the resurrection and the life. Therefore it is by Him that those who believe God have life with Him. Also because of Him, their bodies will be raised (1 Cor. 15).

“God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” (1 John 5:11).

1. What other Bible characters asked insincere questions?

2. On what occasion did Jesus say, “I am the resurrection and the life”?

3. Some helpful comments on resurrection can be found in The First Epistle to the Corinthians by H. Smith.

Food for the Flock: Volume 1, Arise, and Take Up Thy Bed

AR 11:1-2{

God

Man

She takes the lowest place to get a claim on Him; she says, I am content to be a dog if only I may have a crumb. Then, He says, you have got a claim, aid more than one; great is thy faith!

Here we get a case of utter powerlessness; palsied man; so a new principle comes in that is not mentioned in the previous miracles, and that is faith. Where one can do nothing-where there is least power,-there there is most faith. "It is of grace that it might be by faith." The thief on the cross is a wonderful sample of faith to us;. he recovers what was lost' in the garden of Eden; he is the first man who turned the corner in that way, so to speak; he gained the power of God where the power of man had been lost.

So here with the palsied man. He has not a particle of power; he cannot come to Christ himself, and the moment others attempt to bring him, they are hindered by the press; but " when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.” There is nothing that will really stop faith; faith wants to reach its object-an object outside itself. They want to get to a Person, and they find obstacles in the way, but faith is not hindered by obstacles; it is like a river that is dammed; it swells until it gets over the barrier.

There are two things I would now bring before you: first, what Christ does for a soul, and next, what a soul does for Christ: what is done for me, and what is done in me; and I must not confound the two.

What is done for me is the first thing. The palsied man is laid before the Lord; but He does not say a word about his palsy; He says, "Son, thy Sins be forgiven thee." Why is this? Because. He comes ‘out to meet the greatest enemies first; it is not the palsy He is looking at; and as to his sins, it is not one or two of them, nor three or four, but all; when He accomplished the work He removed them all. If he had only removed twenty out of twenty-one, I -should be lost, for the one; but it is " the forgiveness of sins,". of all of them: And not for past sins only: as has been said by another, there is not a sin of ours, but has been committed since. Christ died, so that we are in a poor position if He has not died for them all. I must see that He is the Person who has done away with all my sins; He has not to die for my sin every time I commit one; if He did not die for them before I committed then who is to die for them?

God says, I will meet the case. It is plain we could not meet it ourselves. I ‘may say to one of my children, you have broken this beautiful pane of glass, and you Cannot mend: it but I will repair it myself in a Perfect way. It 'is just so between ourselves and God; We cannot meet our sins, but He has met them in a -perfect way. Suppose a man owes me, money arid: cannot pay -it, and I say, You can never pay me this, so I will pay it myself! It is thus that God has dealt with us. He has "laid help upon One that is mighty;" He has taken away through Him- the thing that offended His holy eye, so that He might have me in His presence forever. And He cannot lose sight of the efficacy of what He has done; I may lose sight of it, but He never can. God comes forth of His own self, and says he loves the world; Jesus says He takes away the sin of the world. " He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." I look to Min as I walk, and I say, The man on that side of the road ruined me; I belong to the Man on this side; so I turn my back upon the one, and I turn my face to the other-I turn my eyes to Him. One man is the man that ruined me; the other is the Man that has wrought deliverance, and therefore He says, " Look unto Me, and be ye saved.' The lamb in the Levitical order only showed what God required; so Christ, as the Lamb of God, takes away the sin of the world; and, the moment a man has faith in Him, He rises to the height of grace, and says, " Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

Well but, says some one, I have committed a great many sins since I have been converted, and do not doubt you have; but you have now to regard your sin as a child, and not as before, as a vagrant, As a child of God I say, when I sin, I have no right to have done such a thing as this I repudiate it; I confess my sins, and then " He is faithful and just to forgive me my sins, and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness." "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," and, " your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more." Do you believe that God really ever spoke those words? God cannot impute sin to a believer. You may have a sense of having committed sin, but God will never lay it to your charge. When I sin what do I find? Why, that the moment I go into God's presence I am humbled, and have to confess it; but, as I do so, I say that God did away with it all at the cross. God says, you must get rid of all this black that is upon you. Like a naughty child I have gone down into the cellar and got myself soiled; but God says, You must collie up out of that place and be made clean again-be made fitting to the place I have set you in.

And what a place that' is! I am now a brother of the risen Man! (See John 20) And I love to think how that I am more distinctly a brother to Christ than I am a brother to the old nature-the Adam nature in which I was born; I am more distinctly by divine power in the new creation than I am in the old. A new and more wonderful creation has been wrought in me-poor creature though I am in myself-than has been in the making of this world, this sky, these stars, which we all admire so much. In the new creation I am a brother to the glorified Christ! I never was a brother to Christ on earth. It was not until He was risen from the dead that He could say, " Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." I am a brother to a risen Christ, and though I have belonged to the old man, the cross has broken me off from him-and united me to this risen Man.

What I pray of you is, to keep your eye upon Him, for that is everything. Do you say, How am I to keep my eye on Him? I reply, Keep your eye off everything else and you will soon see Him All depends on the eye of faith being kept on Him—How simple it is! So far for the first part.

Now they raise the question, " Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive Bins but God only? ' And Jesus says, " Why reason ye these things in your heart? whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed„ and go thy way into thine house." Now comes out the power in us. And what I want you to see, beloved friends, is that you have nothing to say, or to do, as to the first of these two things, whilst you have everything to say to the second. People are continually confounding the two. God does the first entirely for you, but having done it, He does not leave you there; it is said, " The same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost;" He imparts a new power to you.

How shall I know when I have a new power? I will tell you. Whatever 'you are most singularly defective in in nature, there you will be most singularly superior in grace; in other words, you will carry your bed. In everything it is so. Here is a poor weak man who says he cannot do without his bed. Well then, that is the very thing he is to carry. Whatever you are notorious for in nature that is the very thing you will be the reverse of in grace. A man is covetous: he will become the very opposite in grace; he will be generous.

Christ now in the place of power; He is at God's light hand, and fie says, I am going to give you a power that shall enable you to show me forth in spite of all that is around you and within you to hinder it. But, you say, I am in the old creation!-I know' you are; but remember that the Head of the new creation is the Lord of the old. " And if you have this power it will manifest itself most where there has been most carnality-Most of the old man; there it-will express itself most distinctly.

How do I learn my besetting sin? By seeing how the Lord watches me, by seeing how the Word touches me, and by seeing how the Lord exercises me. There is not a person who walks with the Lord but he finds out what is his bed—what is his weak point.

What does Christ want to do with you, beloved friends? what does He want to do with you upon earth? He waists that He Himself-Christ-may be seen in you. But there is that in you which hinders the expression of. His grace. Now what will He do to get rid of this hindrance? He' will bring in a power that will entirely overcome it—to such a degree that that man's body here upon the earth, which was the very soil in which all the seeds of Satan were sown to his cost-that body is to be the garden of the Lord; it is to bring forth fruit for the Lord; so that people may well say, "We never saw it on this fashion." It is a-new point set forth in Christianity-that the body is the Lord's.

Look at the history of any saint walking with: God, and -you will see how, in grace, he becomes superior to what distinguished him in nature. If he be 'in nature an ambitious man then that is the -very thing not be now, because that was what ministered to his infirmity-that is his bed...People say, I cannot do without reading light, books, newspapers, and so on. I answer, that is the very thing that ministers to your selfishness-to your nature-; and when you get power you will carry it. It is the very thing that you were most notorious for in nature, as a man, that in grace you will be made most superior to; for now, instead of being under its power, you rise above it; instead of letting yourself down to it, you are superior to it-You carry your bed.

Just turn to Eph. 4:28. " Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

Now here is a case, that is very remarkable. You see it is a very bad case. " Let him that 'stole steal no more "-that is where most people stop; and, in doing so, they: make it only the law, and nothing more. But what will this divine power make of a thief? A: thief is a taker; but grace makes him a, donor. " Let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he "-may be able to support his family and take care of himself? Not a bit! but, " that he may have to give to him that needeth."

I can bring you instances enough to show you that saints have been distinguished for the very thing in which by nature they failed. Take Peter. He was so active-always foremost in everything. He ends by being carried, and that too where in nature he would not like to go.

In Hebrews we have another example of grace making strong the very spot that was weak. We all know what Jacob was, a most grasping man, always looking out for the present, always thinking of himself. God took him up as the most perverse of men just to show what grace can do. Here at the end of his life he is found leaning on his staff, a worshipper.-Now a worshipper is one whose heart is detained by the object that controls it-adoringly occupied with that one object. And he was not only worshipping-occupied with another instead of himself; but he was also blessing the sons of Joseph-thinking of things future instead of planning for the present. And thirdly, to complete the picture, we find in Genesis what we do not get in Hebrews, that, when he looks at himself, all that he can say is: " As for me, 'Rachel died by me in the way." He says, I can bless you as to the future, but, as for me; the whole scene is a blank here; death has cast its pall upon it.

He is brought out at the close of his life to show how grace has turned him right round, and made him the very opposite of all for which he was notorious as a man. He was thinking of others; he was not moping, though all was a blank; Rachel died by the way. All is the very reverse of what it was. Is this the Jacob we used to know?, Yes, indeed! he is carrying his bed!

We make so little of divine power. People Often indeed go on just the same after they are in Christ as they used to do before. But a Christian is a man who is exemplifying a Man who is in heaven, whilst he himself is on earth. And I cannot do this-I cannot learn Christ here upon earth, but as I know Him where He is. As the apostle says: " To me to live is Christ." That is not a man of whom men can say, Oh, that is a very nice man; Christianity Ms improved him -lent a burnish to him-a polish to him. It

is not that at all. But Christianity has 'turned him right round-made a new man of him altogether. That is what divine power is: not to make him a good man, but to make him like Christ. People are all for humanizing Christ, and Christianizing men, and there is nothing I fear more for saints than that. To humanize Christ is to bring Him down to man's level; and to Christianize a man is to 'Make a good man of him I am sure I say it humbly, that I often do not know how Christ would do, a certain thing. I often think and know how a man-and how a nice man would do something; but the thing is how would Christ do it? It is easy to find out how a man would like a thing done? If I say, How would people like this to be done? I am going wrong. That is not the way to do it., The question is, How would Christ like it done? It is another order of things altogether. I feel for my own part how ignorant I am about it, but I am glad 'to -say I think about, it, and am exercised about it.

If I am to have power, I, must know a glorified Christ seated in heaven at the right hand of God. What would that make me? Why it would make me like Christ. It is as plain as can be to me; I am carrying it out very; little, but the fact is plain, that divine power would give me that divine shape, that divine attitude, that divine conduct, that would be His if He were standing in the very place in which I now am. Therefore the apostle says: " Christ shall be magnified in my body."There are two parts in Christianity. First there is the Deliverer; He brings you to God through His own work on the cross. And second, being delivered, you are to be like the Person who delivered you.; you are to be the expositor of the One you belong to. You are to express nothing of yourself; you are a thorn in the hedge, but a thorn that is to bear a rose. I am in myself but a briar in a hedge, but I have been engrafted; and the consequence is I bear what is not natural to me, a rose; and thus, though my stem is hut a briar, the fragrance that I shed around, is that. of a rose of Sharon.

Divine power is to be manifested in -the one who is absolved from his sins-in the one to whom it has been said: " Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." The man that is naturally avaricious, when grace works in him, will cease to amass for himself, and will end by being a giver. The man who is ambitious will be brought down in every direction. The Lord-will not let a man glory in flesh.

May the Lord in His grace make it plain to your hearts, first, that Christ's blood shedding washes you completely before a holy God from everything that could rise Up against you;-and God has never lost His satisfaction in Christ, and never can lose it, and therefore He can never lose His satisfaction in me who am in Christ. And secondly, that divine power has -come to make me much more marked with the power of Christ, than vas even that man who carried his bed in Jerusalem. There is not one of you but has a bed; and the work of God is just hindered in you because you will not carry it. This man was not to carry it about the streets either; he was to take it to his house. A Christian husband is to be a peculiarly good husband; a Christian wife, to be a peculiarly good wife; a Christian child, to be a peculiarly good child. It is at home that people always fail-it is in the inner circle that failure first comes in-because there they are off their guard.

As I have said, what I want the Lord in His mercy to keep before our hearts are these two things. One, what Christ has done for me-that He has removed everything' by his own work that stood between God and me, so that nothing can ever come between Him and me again. And the other, that there is a power which can make you superior to everything in -yourself.

I do not know what our bed is; I know very well what mine is; and God says, I will crush it, snap it, do anything to it to put it down; because it is every bit of it the flesh in me, that it hinders Christ from shining-forth in me. The thing here is not to get Christ in to me, though: that must of course come first, but- to get Christ out of me. That is the thing!

And “they were all amazed! " It does make people amazed to see Christ come out of such poor creatures-to see divine power act through such weakness. Christ says: The body is mine; and now it is to grow beautiful' flowers for me.- Your very countenance is to shine! Is it to be sorrowful? No! " always rejoicing."

The Lord lead you to see what this grace of God is-what this divine power. That is all that I desire. The power that wrought in Christ Himself is the very power that is working in me to bring me now. to His image, to which I shall be conformed entirely when He appears.

Bible Treasury: Volume 2, Question and Answer: The Prayer of Faith

Q. Is there any connection as to the promise in these verses “whatsoever,” be., with the prayer of faith? (Mark 11:24.) T. T.

A. Mark 11:24 gives the principle on which we are to pray in all cases. The disciples should have asked God then; we, Christ in His lordship and power, or the Father now: all prayer should be with faith. Praying in the Holy Ghost is now connected, in our present state with Christ's words abiding in us, though there be the distinct element of the energy of the Holy Ghost in us, not merely the words of Christ forming our desires and mind. But, then, as a general principle, the Holy Ghost will, if our hearts be right, keep these words in our mind.

Things New and Old: Volume 33, Correspondence

11. . ., Liverpool. (a) It helps us to understand our Lord’s cursing the fig-tree to examine what the prophets did to bring some fact or some prophecy vividly before the people. Take, for instance, Jeremiah. He had long prophesied to the people without effect, he was then told to do something in the presence of the ancients, or elders, of the people and of the priests. He was told to take a potter’s earthen bottle, and to carry it forth to the valley of the son of Hinnom, and there to prophesy. Then he was to break the bottle in the sight of the men that went with him, and say, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter’s vessel, that cannot be made whole again.” (Jer. 19:11.)

The Lord Jesus came to His own people and they would not receive Him. The day previous to cursing the fig-tree He had entered into Jerusalem with the people crying, “Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest,” This fulfilled the prophecy, “Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass.” (Matt. 21:5.) The Jews should have remembered this prophecy and should have thus seen its literal fulfillment: but instead of this we read that “when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did [He had just healed the blind and the lame], and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the

son of David; they were sore displeased." (Ver. 15.) Then we have the emphatic words, "he left them."

The next morning our Lord being hungry, and "seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever." (Mark 11:13, 14.)

Our Lord knew perfectly well there were no figs on the tree before He went to it, and to denounce it would seem an action unworthy of Him, unless in His so doing there had been an important lesson for them to learn. He had often spoken to the people, and had just been presented to them as their king; but the heads of the nation were only sore displeased at Him. He would now do something that, had they eyes to see it, would vividly portray their coming desolation and destruction.

Israel is the fig tree: this they should have recognized from their own prophecies; see Hos. 9:10 and Joel 1:7. It was quite according to God that when our Lord was here He should have looked for fruit; but, alas! He found none. We are told that the natural fig tree produces fruit before its leaves; and therefore there was, as it were, a pretension of fruit, because the tree had leaves. Israel boasted of being the children of Abraham, of having the law, &a, and despised the nations around as unclean; but it bore no real fruit to God.

It may seem strange, if this is the teaching of the miracle, that our Lord did not explain its meaning to the people, as Jeremiah did when he broke the bottle; but our Lord had already brought before them the fact of their unfruitfulness, and this by the type of a fig-tree. (Luke 13:6-9.) The owner had come for three years seeking fruit, but had found none, and ordered it to be cut down, when the dresser begged for it to be spared for one year more, and then if there was no fruit it should be cut down. Surely this was a type of Israel. Our Lord had labored among them more than three years, and still there was no fruit. He left them, and the tree was cursed.

"Some writers speak of the early spring fig as being an especial delicacy, and Isaiah speaks of the hasty [or early] fruit before the summer, which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up." (Chap. 28:4.) And the cursing of the fig tree would appear to have been near the time of the passover in the spring. Whereas when our Lord speaks a parable of the fig tree in another connection, he says, "When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh." So that literally the usual time of gathering figs had not arrived, though where there were leaves there should have been fruit.

So in Israel, the time of figs was not yet. There should have been figs, because there were leaves; but the time when Israel will bear fruit for God is yet future. No one could eat fruit of that old stock forever, and yet there will be a shoot of it that will be planted again in that land, that will produce fruit to God; but it will be when they own the One who came seeking fruit and found none. Then will be the time when God will bless Israel, and that will be "the time of figs."

(b) It is said of John the Baptist that there had not been a greater born of woman (our Lord excepted, of course), but it is added, "notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11.) This surely implies that John was not in the kingdom, that which our Lord was announcing. Another passage confirms this: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." (Luke 16:16.) The kingdom of heaven cannot be said to have really begun until Christ was in heaven. When Jesus began to preach He said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and when He sent forth the twelve it was still the same. He told them to say, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17; 10:7.) Israel was taught that, instead of expecting an earthly kingdom at that time, their eyes should be directed to heaven: their Messiah, being rejected by them, could only be found there.

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Tree Without Fruit, A

Marl-11:12 to 26

When Jesus and the disciples were going from the town of Bethany to Jerusalem, Jesus saw a fig tree leaved out and went to it to see if there were any figs on it, as He was hungry, but there were none, only leaves. This was in the spring, and not the time of ripe figs. Yet, since the leaves were out, there should have been figs on the tree, although perhaps, green. Because, a fig tree is not like other trees, its fruit starts to grow before the leaves.

The leaves of the fig tree give shade from heat, yet the real purpose of the tree is for fruit, and is depended on for food in that land, and spoken of many times in the Old Testament (1 Kings 4:25; Mic. 4:4). So this tree was not a good one, but useless. And Jesus said that it should never have fruit.

The next day, when the disciples passed that way, they saw that fig tree was dried up from the roots. A fig tree is a very sturdy, strong tree, and the disciples wondered this was so soon withered, (Matt. 21:20). They spoke to Jesus to look at it, and He said to them, "Have faith in God."

His answer showed that the spoiling of the tree was not natural, but by the power and judgment of God. And it was for a purpose; not to please Himself, but to teach a lesson to the disciples and us, who now read the story. Since Jesus knew all things, He knew before that the tree had no figs, but He went Himself to prove it. This shows how careful He is as Judge nothing will ever be unjustly judged by Him.

And we notice it was a tree, not a person He cursed, or judged: He has great mercy for men, women, boys and girls, and is ready to bless them. But things which are said to be for God, but are only a display, without true love, and work for Him, will be judged. The nation of Israel had been like a tree, to grow and bear "fruit" for God. Jesus, the Son of God, came Himself to see if there were "fruit," true service, but found none, only a display of sacrifices and laws. From that time it was no longer a nation for God, but "withered away."

Jesus also told the disciples to have faith, believe, that God would do what they asked of Him, even so great a thing as to remove a mountain and cast it into the sea.

But the withered fig tree seems to specially teach of what would be prayed for in judgment. Christians do not pray for God to judge, because He is now waiting to bless. But the Psalms give prayers of the people of God asking for judgment: men, like the disciples, of the same nation, in their greatest trouble will pray for punishment on their enemies, which will then be for His honor, and their faith is to be in God (Psa. 143:12). The Lord Jesus also said,

“When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”

ML 05/07/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Ride of the King, The

Mark 11:1-12

When the Lord Jesus and the disciples came to the end of their journey, Jerusalem, a very special event took place: Jesus rode into the city and up its streets, to offer Himself as the Great and Holy King for Israel, promised by God (Zech. 9:9).

Most kings in those times rode on horses, or with horses and chariots, but the kings of Israel, when crowned, rode on asses or mules. These are not swift as horses, but patient, sure footed and safe. A horse was used for battle, an ass for work and to carry loads. The king of Israel was to come peacefully, not as for battle, nor as a conqueror over the people, but to help them. He was chosen by God, and meant to rule for God (1 Kings 1:32-39).

That was the reason Jesus, as rightful King, chosen by God, rode on an ass into the city where the kings had lived and ruled. Jesus and the men with Him had no doubt walked from Galilee, and He had no animal to ride: one had to be borrowed. Jesus knew where to send the disciples to get one, and they were to tell the owner, that the Lord had need of it.

The animal is spoken of as a colt, perhaps we would have called it a donkey: it must not have been very little, but was young, and had never been ridden on. Usually a young animal not trained to be ridden, would not let a stranger on it. But that colt let the men place the garments on its back, and let Jesus ride into the city and up the streets and must have gone obediently, showing Jesus had power over, the animal, the same as fish and the wind and sea obeyed His will.

This ride was made a few days before the feast of the Passover, when people of Israel came to Jerusalem from all countries to keep the feast. So there were many to see Jesus as HE rode through the city. Many had come from Galilee and towns along the way, who had seen the wonderful cures of the sick, blind, and lame, and other great miracles; some had been raised from death.

No other could do as He did, or had such wisdom, and the people wanted to honor Him: some spread their cloaks along His way, others cut branches from trees, probably, palm branches, much used to welcome great heroes. They were under the Roman nation, with no king of their own, and would have gladly made Jesus King. They sang from the psalms,

“Hosanna,” which’ meant, “Save, we beseech Thee.” And,

“Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Psalms 118:25,26.

This was true of the Lord Jesus: He came in the Name of God, His Father, not by His own authority. When He came to the Temple, the leaders there should have crowned Him the Great King, chosen by God. But they did not, nor welcome Him, nor give Him a place to stay the night. Mark wrote, “Jesus entered into the Temple: and when He had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, He went out unto Bethany,” (a village near).

ML 04/30/1944

Miracles of Our Lord, Miracles of Our Lord: No. 4 - Mark 2:3-12

" And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four" Here is a picture of man in his utter helplessness. So helpless he had to be borne of four. We have seen man under the power of an unclean demon. We have seen him also in the picture of the leper, wholly depraved: his very nature sin. And with all man's pretense and religiousness and morality, there is no truth or honesty until we own that we are utterly loathsome and depraved. The word of God says it is so, and our consciences and experience bear witness to the truth in all its terrible malignity. But what is even still more distressing to a soul, if possible, is this: that when a soul is awakened by the Spirit of God to its real condition, and longs to do right, it yet finds it has no power. The man sick of the palsy was just a picture of this. He was in a bad helpless case, and he longed to be healed. His friends took pity on him, and (well for him) they brought him to the only One who could give him strength. Oh, that many a helpless soul may get a lift to Jesus in reading this paper, as he did by his friends.

It is most uncommon to bring a helpless soul straight to Jesus. He is generally told to do the best he can. Or he is taken anywhere rather than to Jesus.

It may be fairly asked: But do the scriptures teach that man is helpless as to the things of God? Indeed, they do most distinctly: " For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom. 5:6.) Yea, as to all that is good, we were "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13.) “And you being dead in your sins." The condition also of man under law is fully described in Rom. 7:5-23. And though quickened, he has to say: " how to perform that which is good I find not.” Such is the condition of man; and the law cannot help him. " For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Oh Lord, Thou knowest that by nature this is the troth, men are slaves of Satan, full of sin, and have no power; and Thou, Lord Jesus, alone couldst meet our threefold lost condition.

Whether we are sick of palsy or sick of sin, we cannot make a single movement to save ourselves. Is your case as bad as this? Do not say, My case would be too bad for Jesus. There are no cases too bad for Him. They brought this desperate, helpless case to Jesus. There were difficulties in the way: what a crowd to get through then, and what a crowd to get through now. Faith overcomes all difficulties. See how they resolutely push through the crowd. If you would bring a helpless sin-sick soul to Jesus, you must pass through the crowd of popes, councils, bishops, priests, &a, and bring him to Jesus: do not stop short or he is lost. " And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it tip, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay." That was earnest, overcoming faith. It was that faith which is the gift of God, and Jesus knew it. Just see, they not only let the man down, but they let down the very bed on which he rested. Down he went, and down it went, down to the feet of Jesus.

Oh it is a great thing to be let down, and the very thing on which we have been resting also let down to the feet of Jesus. What is your bed, reader? Is there anything on which you rest? Though you have to be carried to the very top of the house where Jesus is—and what a house Christendom has become—the roof must be uncovered, and down you must go. It is not up you must rise; no, down you must go to the very feet of Jesus. How many make a bed of baptism, how many more of what they call holy communion, others of religiousness and formality. Whatever it is you rest in or on, whatever is your bed, it must go down; both you and it must lie at the feet of Jesus.

But hark, there was something this poor helpless man needed even before power to walk, and Jesus knew it. You, too, may be earnestly desiring power to walk in the commands, and according to the will of God; but there is something Jesus knows you want first. What is that? Let us hear what He says to the helpless one, sick with the palsy: " Son [or child], thy sins be forgiven thee." Another word is added in Matthew: " Child, be of good cheer [or courage]; thy sins be forgiven thee." (Matt. 9:2.) This was the first thing he needed, is it not the first thing we need? He did not say, Rise and walk, and then I will forgive thy sins. He does not say to us, Arise up first and walk in my commandments, then I will forgive thy sins. Yet have you not thought it was so; yea, that that was the gospel? He needed strength to walk; but the deepest need of man's soul when brought to Jesus is first the forgiveness of his sins.

It is a blessed thing then when a helpless sinner, without strength, is brought and let down with all that ever he rested on at the feet of Jesus. None around him but Jesus may hear or know the deep groan of his heart burdened with sins. Jesus knows it. He speaks straight to the point at once—what cheering words: " Child, have courage, thy sins be forgiven thee." Oh what peace, what blessedness! How sad to think that this blessedness has been lost for long centuries to thousands. It is the privilege, and mark, of the youngest child of God. " I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." (1 John 2:12.) Thus if your sins are not forgiven, you are not one of the children of God.

This must be so, as forgiveness of sins is preached through the death and resurrection of Christ. This is the very glad tidings of God. For this Jesus died and rose again, that our sins might be forgiven—surely much more than this. All believers knew their sins were forgiven, for God had proclaimed this forgiveness to them, just as Jesus said: " Child, be of good courage, thy sins are forgiven thee." So the Holy Ghost by the apostles, ever proclaimed the same. This was the very commission of Christ. " That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47.) Yes, first His death and resurrection; then repentance and remission of sins. And this they ever did. Peter thus preached at Pentecost, and again to the Gentiles: " To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Thus did Paul preach at Antioch: " Be it known unto you therefore.... that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things," &c. (Acts 13:38.) This was the known blessing of all believers. a Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:24.) Yes, they could all say: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” (Eph. 1:7.) They believed God who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; " Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification and they had peace with God.

So that the words of Jesus to the poor man sick of the palsy were the exact expression of this grace, the unmerited, free favor of forgiveness of sins. He who died for our sins has the undoubted title to say: “Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Do you believe the words of Jesus to your soul? No doubt this did, and still does, give great offense to scribes and Pharisees. Nothing has been more distinctly rejected than this free forgiveness of sins. The moment we reason in our hearts, we say, Are we worthy of such a favor? If we were worthy it would be no free,, gracious favor at all: would it now?

Jesus speaks again: " Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise., and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."

He who died for our sins freely forgives, and then gives strength and power for holiness of walk. Never before had it been seen on this fashion; man's way is always the opposite of God's way. If we could walk first in the commandments of God, and then have forgiveness after, should we not merit that forgiveness? Oh, how our poor proud hearts long that the merit might be our own. If we believe in self, we find that self is powerless to walk.

If let down to the feet of Jesus, and all in which we have ever sought to rest, all down, down to His feet; then we not only hear His precious words of infinite love forgiving our sins, but in the power of His resurrection, and by the Holy Spirit, we have immediate strength to walk. Yes, then we can take up in our arms the very bed on which we rested and carry it away.

Compare this miracle with the preaching of the gospel in the Acts, and its effects in the epistles, and we find invariably, it is forgiveness of sins first; and then, rise up and walk. Thus has God revealed His love to us: " For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." " But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace ye are saved." (Rom. 5; Eph. 2)

Correspondence, Correspondence: Fruit; Jews; Mark 11:25-26; Bishops etc.; Meetings, Headships

Ques. Is it possible for one to be a believer in Christ, and not bear fruit? N.

Ans, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." We are glad to see fruit, but fruit is for the Father, and He can see what we cannot see. Fruit makes no noise; it is the life of Christ seen in our behavior (Gal. 5:22, 23). Even Lot is called a righteous man (2 Peter 2:7, 8), but he was not a happy saint.

Ques. What will become of the Jewish people who die without Christ in this present time? R.

Ans. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on Him." John 3:36.

Ques. What will become of the Jews after the Church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air? O.

Ans. Both Jews and Gentiles may hear the gospel of the kingdom, and become true subjects of the King of kings, and live to people the earth during the reign of Christ.

But the Jews or Gentiles and the professing Church which will be left behind,-all these who neglected, refused, or despised the gospel when they heard it,-will fall victims to the strong delusion, and will be eternally lost.

Ques. Please explain what Mark 11:25, 26 means? N. Y.

Ans. We can easily see in these verses that an unforgiving spirit is a sad hindrance to prayer. It is a remarkable thing that when we get into the presence of God, our failures begin to come up before us. And in this scripture we are exhorted to deal with every unforgiving thought against any person, that our prayers be not hindered.

We also see that such forgiveness is of a governmental kind. It is not eternal forgiveness. This we have once for all (Heb. 10:14), but it is what is needed to keep us going on in happy communion with the Father. It is therefore of great importance for us to see that we are not harboring unforgiving thoughts toward any.

“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:32.

Ques. What are bishops, deacons, and prophets in the New Testament? A. N.

Ans. Bishops, elders, overseers, are the same (Acts 20:17, called elders; ver. 28, called overseers). Their character was to be as in 1 Tim. 3:1.7, and Titus 1:6-9. They were to look after the spiritual state of the Assembly. It does not say how many were appointed.

Deacon is a servant to minister to needy ones, and to serve tables, as in Acts 6. Their character was to be as in 1 Tim. 3:12, 13. They were chosen and appointed by the apostles or their delegates Timothy and Titus, but not by the Assembly. The scriptures were not completed and collated at that time.

We have no appointment of elders and deacons now. We have no authority to appoint them, and the assembly now is broken outwardly into sects, which the Word of God deplores (1 Cor. 1:12, 13; 3:3-5).

A prophet now is only one speaking the truth. Prophesying now is speaking unto men to edification, exhortation and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3, 29). We have no revelations now, for the Word of God is completed (Col. 1:25). There is no need therefore of tongues of interpretations. We are now living in the last day, and awaiting the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let our loins be girded and our lights burning.

Ques. What meetings are Assembly meetings where we can count on the Lord Jesus being in our midst? Please make it plain about any other meetings also. C. M. S.

Ans. All meetings arranged by the gathered saints where all, both sisters and brothers, are to be present, are Assembly meetings with the Lord in the midst, as in Matt. 18:20.

The Lord's day meeting to remember the Lord in His death, in worship and adoration, is the highest.

The prayer meeting ranks next; there we express our interest in all that are His, and desire mercies from Him.

The reading meeting is for instruction, yet we count on Him to teach us through whom He will. Sisters are to be silent.

Meetings for addresses where two or three only are allowed to speak (1 Cor. 14:29), there also we should wait on the Lord for His ministry.

Meetings for discipline, called specially by the Assembly, are also to be carried out by the Lord's presence as our authority, we waiting in prayer on Him for what is to be done in His name (Matt. 18:18-20; 1 Cor. 5:7, 12-13).

Brothers' meetings are useful to conduct business matters, to consider questions that may arise, to gain information that needs to be brought before the Assembly, but they have no authority to act. Their action, if any, is not the act of the Assembly. We must therefore be careful not to set aside the authority of the Lord Jesus in the midst of His gathered saints. Brothers' meetings are not Assembly meetings.

Ques. What does 1 Tim. 5:25 mean? C.

Ans. From verse 22 we see that carefulness was urged upon Timothy about those he might receive. If he laid hands on (that is identified himself with) people too quickly, he might find himself associated with evil workers. Verse 23 is remarkable as showing that God allows us to take what we think necessary for our health, and thus does not set aside the use of medicine for those who are afflicted. Then in verses 24 and 25 he returns to the subject of carefulness in receiving. Some men's sins go beforehand, can easily be seen; others are not so easily seen, they follow after. And the same applies to the good works of some that are manifest; others who do not tell what kindnesses they do, but they cannot be hid. How wise the scriptures are!

Ques. Has the Lord Jesus Christ one Headship as the Creator, and another through resurrection? C. W. Ans. Yes. In Col. 1:15 to 17, His glory as Creator and Sustainer of the universe is unfolded, and there He is spoken of as "The firstborn of every creature", or all creation. "Firstborn"

means the highest or Head of it. He took part in it at His birth as Son of God (Psa. 2:7; Luke 1:35), that is, His holy humanity, God manifest in flesh. He was also the Son of God from all eternity with the Father (John 1:1.3; Heb. 1:10, 12).

Then in Col. 1:18, He is the Head of the body, the assembly, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence (compare John 12:24). It is thus that He is the beginning of the creation of God (Rev. 3:14). As "the Faithful and true Witness" He is alone, but in resurrection we are raised with Him, and united to Him,-one Spirit with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17).

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 11:15-33, Sent From the Temple:

For many years the great temple of God in Jerusalem was the place where people who believed God came to praise Him. It was the only place where animals could be sacrificed, as God had said must be done, because of sins.

God had given directions for all that was to be done there, for the work, the dishes to be used, and all else. Many of those laws were in the books of Exodus and Leviticus, and men, called priests and scribes, were to instruct the people and see that all was done as God had directed.

Thieves

The temple was large, with rooms and courts and lots of space. Instead of keeping it in the order told by God and to honor Him, men used it as a marketplace to buy and sell for their own profit, and not only that, they were dishonest in their dealings.

Some men sat at tables where, for a fee, they would change the Roman or other coins of the people to the temple money, as no other could be used in gifts for the temple. One gift was always a certain small coin (Ex. 30:13-16; Ex. 38), but the men who made gain by this had no right in the temple (Psa. 15:5).

At the time Jesus was on earth, many men of Israel lived in other countries and came to the temple at the feast time, so at those times a great number of doves, sheep, goats and cattle were needed for sacrifice. There were many coins to change, and the selfish men had plenty of business.

Jesus saw the wicked dealings of the men and told them the words of God, “My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer.”

But He said they had made it “a den of thieves.” His words tell how very wicked they were, and He sent them from the temple.

The True Sacrifice

The priests and scribes were willing for the dishonest selling to be done. So they were more angry than ever at Jesus when He stopped the men. It was only a few days after this that Jesus became Himself the great sacrifice for sins by His death on the cross. And no more animals for sacrifice were required by God, as these verses tell: “Nor yet that He [Christ] should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; ... but now once ... hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:25-26).

“Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many” (Heb. 9:28).

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Heb. 10:3-12).

The offerings of the animals had to be done over and over, whenever a person sinned and also on special days. The people were so careless about their sins that the men in the temple sinned even with buying and selling the animals and were not honest.

But the life of the Lord Jesus was so precious, He suffered only once for sin, and all who believe in Him may know their sins forgiven. The cleansing of the temple teaches us of the holiness of God, and selfish and wrong acts in work for Him dishonor Him as much now as then.

1. What were the different kinds of sacrifices that the people offered?

2. Who could offer sacrifices in those times?

3. You would find Christ as Seen in the Offerings by R. F. Kingscote to be an excellent source of meditation on the different kinds of offerings in the Old Testament.

Young Christian: Volume 27, 1937, Bethany - Response: Part 1

(Mark 11:11; Jeremiah 7:11)

Part 1

Leaving the temple, its ritual and ceremonies—the falsity of mere profession seen and appraised by Him as hateful (compare Col. 2:19-23), Jesus turns away to Bethany, characterized in the sight of heaven as “the town of Mary and her sister Martha” (John 11:1), to find response to His love that ever cheered the “Man of Sorrows.” The place where His loved ones lived was dear to His heart.

After rising from the grave triumphantly, we find the Lord giving His company to humble followers in an “upper room,” rather than in temple courts, further emphasizing His own words as to the gorgeous temple:

“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matt. 23:38).

He still “looks round about upon all things,” seeing not only the profane and immoral, but also the worldwide nauseous religious profession that ignores His Person, love and claims. Away from all such semblance of devotion He would lead the “little flock,” and give His company to hearts drawn by His love to render response He values.

In our days those all-seeing eyes still behold the secret intents of every heart: He sadly, yet lovingly, looks upon those of His own redeemed ones who choose the company and pursuits of His defamers, as He looked upon Peter, in order that they too may “weep bitterly” for having wounded His loving heart, even though delivered from the terrors of the damned, rescued from the horrors of an endless hell, and claimed by the love that sought and found their lost souls. His look of love assures recovery to Bethany; produces the heartfelt response toward Him which His loving heart desires. Thus the restored soul with kindred spirits may consort, that the repast prepared for Him at Bethany long ago, may still be spread to refresh the “High and lofty one” who yet deigns to abide with “humble, contrite spirits” found at the Bethany He loves.

Bethany afforded Him, of old, His last resting place on earth. Not from the temple or confines of Jerusalem, but from Bethany, He ascended. As from Bethany still, as from the hallowed presence of the Lord, loyal hearts may be found viewing the world’s religious and irreligious disregard for His Person, work and Word; and feeling, besides, the deeper grief to His heart occasioned by the cold indifference of any of His own, whose first love He laments as “left” (compare Rev. 2:4). Such loyal hearts, such sharers of “His reproach,” turn away from “the camp” (Heb. 13:13), in order to welcome Him in, as Martha did into “her house”; adopting the young believer’s answer “every room,” when asked the question, “Have you any room, for Jesus?”

The blessed Lord comes when and where He is wanted. May we “perceive” in the “Holy One” (as the Shunamite did in the “holy man of God,” 2 Kings 4:9,10) such attractiveness as may lead us to desire His company; to make for Him a “little chamber” on the “wall” of separation; to minister to His rest (the “bed”); obediently to learn at His feet (the “stool”); and to have the light of His Word (the “candlestick”) dismiss all darkness from the chamber, from the heart, He occupies. Such chambers will not be tenantless.

John 14:23 tells us that abiding occupancy by the Father and by the Son is assured. Our Beloved’s communings He directs to hearts (Luke 24:32), not to intellects. A heart for us how wondrously He has evidenced! Those who have a heart for Him yield refreshing to the glorious God, who by every right lays claim to undivided hearts.

A sanctuary we may provide as we answer our Father’s plea, “My son, give Me thine heart” (Prov. 23:26); the plea of Christ our Lord, “that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Eph. 3:17); and welcome the entrance of the Spirit, “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts” (Gal. 4:6); and enjoy His love, “because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts” (Rom. 5:5); and seek to honor the sacred Word of the living God,

“Thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee.” (Psa. 119:11).

(To be continued)

Young Christian: Volume 19, 1929, Have Faith in God

The following episode was told me by a patient a short time ago. May it serve to strengthen the faith of any who are in difficult, trying circumstances.

A lady occupied in Christian work accompanied an inmate of one of the homes where she labored to Station. Having bought her her ticket and seen her safely off to her destination, she took a bus to her own part of the city.

When the time came to pay the fare she discovered that her pocket had probably been picked, for her purse was gone. As she had no money she was obliged to leave the bus. Not being at all strong she could not walk the long distance, and she knew no one in the neighborhood. She had left the vehicle, and walked slowly up towards the park, praying to her God and Father, and telling Him of her difficulty which was a very real one indeed.

Arrived at the park, she sat down on one of the seats, wondering how God would come to her help. She knew He would not fail her, so she was kept in peace. In a seemingly idle way she wrote on the gravel with her umbrella the words “God is love,” and as she got to the last letter of the word “love,” she turned up a coin that was black with lying there in the gravel.

Thanking God for sending her just what she needed, and had asked for, she continued her journey. The next conductor remarked on the state of the coin, and she said that it was indeed a very discolored one, but that it had been sent her in answer to prayer by her God and Father. She was not ashamed to tell him before the other passengers how she had come by the money.

Reader, you may think this finding of a coin pure coincidence? But why? The same God who said: “I have commanded the ravens to feed thee,” can direct His child’s steps to the seat, and her hand to the lost piece of money. No. Rather underline in your heart the last word of the text that heads these few lines: “HAVE FAITH IN GOD”

Young Christian: Volume 18, 1928, Extract From a Letter On

“And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea: and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

I have found, Mark 11:22-26, of great benefit to myself and others in this connection. Here we have:

1. Faith. – The “faith of God,” that is, faith that takes its character and strength from God as its object – faith that brings God into the difficulty. There is a mountain to be removed. God only can lift a mountain up, and throw it into the sea. But He is greater than the mountain, and if you can bring Him into the matter, the mountain must go.

2. Prayer is our proper attitude – what expresses our dependence on God; but the prayer of faith only is effectual.

3. There is a condition, that is, this prayer of faith is conditional on a certain state in us, and that is the spirit of forgiveness. “When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have aught against any.” It is not here going to one who has wronged you, and telling him you forgive him. In such a case the word is: “If he repent, forgive him.” But here it is the state of our hearts toward our brethren when we are in the presence of God. Suppose I am praying to God, who has forgiven me ten thousand talents in absolute grace, and am holding something against one who may have wronged me, God will not hear me. I am not in communion, my state is wrong, I am not in the current of God’s thoughts, and will not be able to exercise faith.

A person says: “I cannot feel right towards

Mr. -.” That is, he has hard feelings toward

Mr. -. But can I think of God in this way?

Can I speak of Him as having “hard feelings” toward anyone? Never. When we were His enemies, He gave His Son.

Now my heart is to be in the same state as His that is, my feelings and desires are to be formed by what flows down in communion, through the Word, from His heart into mine. And if this is my state when I pray, I will forgive if I have anything against anyone, and my heart will be free in God’s presence; and, however my brother may have erred, I will be able to seek his blessing and restoration.

In ease of personal difficulties among saints, if this state is reached in God’s presence, it is wonderful how soon difficulties melt away, because it is God Himself coming in to act in grace.

“Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32.

Christian Truth: Volume 36, Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By

"And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging.

"And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth; he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

"And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

"And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, "Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee."

"And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

"And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." Mark 10:46-52.

We frequently find incidents in the gospels such as our story of blind Bartimeus which illustrate the way in which a sinner lays hold of Christ. Here we have a lovely picture of how a seeking Savior meets a seeking sinner. In Luke's gospel is the text of the sermon preached, as it were, to this blind man. It is a very short sermon "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

Bartimeus had come to the turning point of his history, for had he missed the Savior that day, he would never have had his eyes opened. Jesus never passed that way again. That day He was on His way to the cross where He accomplished the work of redemption, shed His precious blood, died, and rose again; now He is on His way to execute judgment and bring in the glory.

Because judgment is coming, I urge every unsaved soul to be like Bartimeus. He seized immediately his one and only opportunity. How often moments like his in the history of souls are slighted, and they never return. Procrastinators lose their opportunity by saying, "I shall have plenty of opportunities; people do not often die as young as I am." They float easily down the stream of time; they go quietly out of the world, perhaps without any fear of hell. Some are exercised, and for a time are in an agony of conviction, but many slight the warning as to the eternal judgment ahead.

There comes a moment in a person's life when God says, as it were, "Let him alone," and his heart is hardened. This hardening of the heart is a solemn thing, and it is more solemn when we think of God's doing so. We have an example of this in Pharaoh. God warned him in nine solemn judgments and then, as it were, gave him one more chance. Pharaoh did not yield his will to God; he hardened his heart against God, and God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he went to destruction. In the face of such a fact, I press upon you the need of promptness in the matter of salvation. The Lord is long-suffering; He waits on His road to judgment, but at any moment the day of grace may be closed.

Bartimeus was blind, but he heard that Jesus passed by. God's resource for the blind sinner is the "hearing of faith." This was the avenue to his soul. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. Notice the little word "when" (v. 47). Bartimeus might have said, Here is a golden opportunity; I will receive much today from this multitude. Perhaps crowds like this were not often seen on the roadside between Jericho and Jerusalem. The great multitudes were following Jesus that day; He had many followers, but few friends. Bartimeus might

have reasoned: I will speak to Jesus some other time, and gather the silver coins today. Such an opportunity will not come again, and Jesus may be met at any time. But he did not reason thus. And yet how many do, saying, "I will give myself to getting rich now through one enterprise or another, and then I will retire. I wish to be saved, but I must attend to other things now; later I will look after my soul.

Bartimeus felt that the present was too great an opportunity to lose. "When" Jesus passed by he cried out. He was in earnest, and his promptness to seize his opportunity is lovely to behold. It was his turning point. Saints and sinners all have their turning points. If he had missed his, the opportunity would never have come again. We boldly say this, for Jesus never passed that way again. He was on His way for His last entry into the City of Solemnities, Jerusalem, from where after a few days He was taken out and crucified.

Have you an unsatisfied need in your heart? Then cry out, and Jesus will hear. Your cry of need will arrest His steps just where you are this moment. Be like Bartimeus who, when Jesus was passing, cried out, "Son of David, have mercy on me." When was there a cry of need on earth which He refused? Will He refuse the cry of need now that He is in the glory? Will He not stay His steps this moment and meet the need-fill the void of your heart?

"And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called." In each of the three gospels which tell the story of Bartimeus, His "calling" is given in a different way. In Matt. 20:32 it is simply "Jesus... called." This is the sovereign call of mercy through grace which belongs to God alone. In Mark 10:49 Jesus "commanded him to be called." This shows the instrumental call, the call of the preacher. What a word of exhortation this is for those who preach the gospel. They are the "commanded" ambassadors of God's grace. In Luke 18:40 Jesus "commanded him to be brought unto Him." This was done by the earnest, effectual guiding hands of others. It encourages the believing wife to bring her unbelieving husband under the sound of the gospel, the parent to bring his child and the child to bring his parent, if still unsaved. It suggests, too, the work of the Spirit of God to bring souls to the Savior.

How often has the Lord answered the faith of those who have brought others to hear the word of grace preached by saving the souls of those who have been brought! It is sad indeed to see the empty seats in many meeting rooms where there is an earnest preacher who longs to bring souls to Christ.

But "many charged him that he should hold his peace." v. 48. They tried to hinder his coming to Christ. The devil always finds ready instruments for this service. Those who labor beside an anxious seeking soul in the factory, in the office, etc. are ready to scoff at him. But there are many ways of hindering besides the open taunt. One of them is Christians criticizing the gospel that is preached. I remember reading of one case in point. A Christian lady brought her unconverted husband to hear a preaching of the gospel. The servant of the Lord who spoke that night was "no great preacher," as people say. On their way home she remarked about the failures-the poverty of the address. She was pulling the whole thing to pieces, but on turning to see why she got no response from her husband, it was to see the tears coursing down his cheeks. On asking him what was the matter, he replied, "Ah, I found Christ tonight in that preaching." That gospel was God's quickening word to the soul of her husband. Oh, take care how you criticize the measure of gift of a preacher. Remember the preaching of the cross, and not the gift of the preacher, is the power of God unto salvation. Believers can hinder souls after a gospel meeting or at any time by careless ways or careless speech.

The failure of saved sinners does not excuse the lost sinner in the least. He is responsible to come to Christ, and God will hold him so. He does not come because his will is against God. In the judgment scene of Matt. 25, it is the absence of good, not the commission of evil, for which the sentence is passed. "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me."

And "Jesus stood still." v. 49. Thus He waits on you in grace because "He delighteth in mercy." Mic. 7:18. And Bartimeus, "casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus." How many things are allowed to hinder the soul in coming to Jesus! Perhaps it is some garment, a habit or some secret indulgence which must be cast aside.

And Jesus answered and said to him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Jesus expected nothing from him. But hear what Jesus says: "What wilt thou?" Have you a desire? He who came from heaven, died and rose, now waits in heaven to save and to serve the poor sinner who comes with his need.

What is the request of Bartimeus? "Lord, that I might receive my sight." And Luke (chap. 18) tells us of the echoing reply from the heart of God.

"Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee." Faint and tremulous was the request of faith, but clear and blessed the response of the Lord. Not a doubt remains; his eyes are opened, and he is saved.

Have you a need to bring to Him? Will you trust Him? God's heart will bless you to the full. It was so with the poor prodigal (Luke 15). He hoped for a servant's place, and the father's heart exceeded all his expectations. He kissed him and received him as a son. It was more than the echo of the desire; the answer of grace ever exceeds the request of faith. It was so with the thief on the cross. He asked for a place in the kingdom, but received one in paradise that very day!

When Bartimeus opened his eyes, the first object before him was the Lord. He saw beauty in the Lord, his Object for eternity. What will the joy of the most blessed saint be throughout eternity? Surely the same Object-Jesus! Jesus only! And he "followed Jesus in the way." It was then the way to the cross; it is now the path of rejection leading to the glory. He is on His way to the kingdom and glory. Like Bartimeus did, follow Jesus in the way; suffer with Him; be true in heart to Him in the day of His rejection, and when He takes His place as "King of kings," you shall reign with Him.

The Gospel Messenger: Volume 19, Ruler and the Beggar., The

(Read Mark 10:17-34, 46-52.)

THERE is a very striking contrast between the two men whose history the Spirit of God gives us in this chapter. The rich man and the poor man present an immense contrast, and think if you see the point of the contrast, you will Cake your place with the poor man, because the rich

man declined to get rid of the thing that was the hindrance to his getting eternal life.

Now I daresay you would like to have eternal life. You say, “Oh, yes!” But how are you going to get it? —that is the question. Perhaps you will say to me, “How are you going to get it?” Thank God I have it. “How did I get it?” I took simply, in faith, what God’s love presented to me in the person of Jesus.

“The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). What God gives I took. That is how I got it, and I should like you to get it too. Do not think you must work for it.

You do not deserve it, you cannot buy it, you cannot earn it, and yet you can get it. Let Jesus have His own way with you, and you will surely get it.

Get hold of this distinctly, that the Jesus who now sits crowned with glory at God’s right hand is the same Jesus of whom this gospel tells us. There is no change in the Lord. His circumstances are changed, His surroundings different, but He Himself is the same. The Jesus I know is the Jesus Bartimæus saw. I have not seen Him yet: I am going to. And you too are going to see Him, because Gods says, “Every eye shall see Him.” Godless reader, get hold of this— “Every eye shall see him” (Rev. 1:7).

“When?” That is another question altogether.

“When will Christians see Him?” When He comes into the air for His saints (see 1 Thess. 4:15-17), and one of these days He will come. Will you meet Him then? If not, you will see Him by-and-by at the great white throne, and then it will be in the character of Judge.

But before any of us see Him we have to get our eyes opened. You say, “How do you know?” Because for many a long day I was as blind as Bartimæus, but one night the Lord opened my eyes. Oh, that He may open yours now. You would like to see Jesus and have eternal life? How are you going to get these blessings? The young ruler shows how they are not reached. Truly he is a beacon. God has told us this tale that we may say, “I will not try to get eternal life that way.” Observe how he came to the Lord; it is very interesting, and I do not know that I could find two men who were more in earnest than he and Bartimæus. The young ruler came “running”—not with stately pace, moving slowly, as though his quest was not of any importance. Note this, “Then came one running, and kneeled to him.” And he was not ashamed to get down in public on his knees before the Lord. Were you ever yet seen down on your knees looking to Christ? You say, “No; I would be ashamed.” Ah, the day of your real shame and the day of your damnation will go together by-and-by if you are not careful.

The young ruler both ran and kneeled—no man could say he was not in earnest. Observe his query, “Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” That question of doing comes twice in this chapter. The rich man says, “What shall I do?” and the Lord says to the blind beggar, “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” “Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” conveys the conviction that he thought he was capable of earning it. How does the Lord answer him? First all He says, “Why callest thon me good? There is none good but one, that is God.” He wanted to see if he knew who He really was. “There is none good but one, that is God,” gave him his opportunity. If he had really known who Christ was, he would have acknowledged His Godhead; but he did not believe that He was God, and perhaps you do not believe it. He was mistaken, and you are mistaken. Jesus is God. If that man’s eyes had been opened to the glory of Christ’s person, he would have said, “Thou art God.”

The Lord then adds, “Thou knowest the commandments,” and He names them. The young man replied, “All these have I observed from my youth.” He had been outwardly most proper; there had not been the slightest thing that anyone could put his finger upon. You, my reader, may be all right outwardly; but what are you inwardly? Are you a sinner? Well, sin is a very serious question. The will of the creature is a very serious thing, and “the wages of sin is death.” You may glibly talk about getting eternal life; you are going to get the wages of sin, death. I want you to face that. Through sin you have forfeited your life upon earth, hence you are a dying man. And you talk about eternal life. Stop—what about your sins, those many sins of thought and action? “You say, Nobody saw them.” God saw all of them. And your conscience knows they are many. You will have to get that question of sin settled.

This young man proposed to get eternal life by “doing.” Very well, says Christ, you know what you should do. He replies, “I have done all that. I have not infringed the commandments with regard to God or my neighbor.” He did not know himself. Now there are two tables of commandments. One relates to God, the other to one’s neighbor. The Lord tested him and exposed him to himself, by the latter. He could not have loved his neighbor as himself, for he was a rich man. 1f he had loved his neighbor as himself, he must have shared his riches. Hence Jesus said to him, “One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.” This meant, “If you mean to get eternal life by doing, do not make a long business of it; get it done right away. If that is the ground you are on, take action at once.” Alas! he thought more of his money than of eternal life. This rich man was told to follow Christ, and he would not. The blind man was not told, and he did it. My heart always warms up to Bartimæus. The Lord says to him, “Go thy way”; and his reply is, “Lord, Thy way is my way from this day forward.” Because he had tasted the grace and love of Christ, had come under the hand of the Lord, and got his eyes opened by Him, his heart was attached to Christ, and he followed Him untold.

“One thing thou lackest” is a solemn indictment. Is that true about you? You may have respectability, religion, money, station, but if you have not Christ “one thing thou lackest.” Do not avoid this statement. If God were to cut short the pulse of life in your case, and you were to pass into eternity without Christ, what would you lack forever? Christ, the knowledge of Christ, and the enjoyment of the love of Christ. Let me beseech you, be in earnest. If Christ says, “One thing thou lackest,” let your heart be saying, “That one thing I should like to have just now.” And what is it? Christ Himself. Be not like the young ruler. We read, “And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved.” The fact was this—Christ tested him. You will always find that the Lord took people up on the ground upon which they approached Him. If there was reality they would learn from Him, but if not they would turn away from His ministry, like this poor fellow, who valued his possessions more than eternal life. They gave him a status, a place in this world. If a man be a millionaire people will run after him. A man who is poor is neither wanted nor waited on. That is the world. The ruler, in effect, said, I should like eternal life, but I have something that gives me a position in this life. Get rid of that, says Christ. He could not. He valued his money more than eternal life. He is not the only person who has acted similarly.

Perhaps you are exactly like him. You know you are a guilty sinner before God, and the question of eternal life is unsettled, and your relationship with God unsatisfactory. But you think, If I have to give up the world I am not prepared for it yet. Do not think that I am telling you

to give up the world to get Christ. I never know a Cree that had much difficulty in shedding its leaves in autumn, because the sap had ceased to flow, and the leaves very easily fall off. If you get Christ, get to know His love, get the sense that He loved you, and gave up everything for you, all becomes simple. He does not ask you to give up anything for Him, He does not bid you give up, He says, “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” He wants you to let Him act after the dictates of His own heart. He gives life, you receive it and then follow Him. Eternal life is the gift of God, and you get it not by works, but just as the blind man got his sight. The grace of Christ conferred sight on him, and life to you when you trust Him.

If you want to know how to be saved, you will have to learn that you cannot save yourself, but that what is impossible with men is possible with God. His mind, His attitude, is that of a giving God. So said the Lord to Samaria’s daughter, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water” (John 4:10).

Now let us look at the beggar. “And they came to Jericho,” the place of the curse, and there sat blind Bartimaeus, begging. A blind beggar moves one to pity. There sat this man, and as the crowd came along he heard their voices, the hum of the multitude, the clatter of their feet, and he wondered what it was all about. He asks what it meant, and is told, “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” This was lovely gospel for Bartimæus. Forget not also that He is passing by you today; will you have Him, will you receive Him, will you believe Him? You had better. He had passed by Jericho once before; but He never passed through it again, and as Bartimæus heard it that day, see how it moved him. The Lord sometimes puts Himself in people’s way, and if they miss Him they do not get the chance again. I could tell you of many who have had an opportunity and missed it. Do not you be like that; but be like Bartimæus who, right away, says, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.” He had heard of His love, His mercy, His goodness, of His raising the dead, healing the leper, and opening the eyes of the blind. All that stirred him to action. Have not you, too, heard wonderful tales about Jesus of Nazareth? Have not you heard of that worldly friend of yours getting converted. You say, “Yes; but I do not believe it.” You have an opportunity now of receiving Jesus— I would urge you to it.

As Jesus passed by, Bartimæus lifts up his voice and cries with all the energy of his soul, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.” I think I behold that scene—the crowd passing on, and the Lord in the midst. There is the hum of many voices, but above all the noise one clear, shrill voice is heard, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.” What does Jesus do? He “stood still.” Blessed Lord. I believe that if just now He were gathering up the folds of His garments to leave the Father’s throne, and descend into the air, to catch His beloved people up, and heard from earth an anxious sinner’s cry, “Jesus, have mercy on me,” He would pause to let that one get to His feet and get the blessing. Mark—He is coming, and coming quickly, and then when He has come into the ah, there will burst from your lips, my procrastinating friend, a piteous cry for “mercy”; but there will not be an echo to bring it back, and no record in your case that the Saviour “stood still.”

Someone carried the gospel to Bartimæus that day, and I have the privilege of telling you it just now; but you must avail yourself of the gospel and come into contact with Jesus yourself. That day the people rebuked Bartimæus, and told him to hold his peace; but he would not, he was in such earnest. Do you say that he was excited? Forget not that men in numbers go down to hell quietly, respectably, and unmoved as regards their souls need. Why is this? They are blind, but know it not. Bartimæus was blind, knew it, and desired his sight. I am not surprised that some said, “Hold your peace.” There never is a knock at heaven’s gate that the echo does not ring through hell, and out comes every demon to try and stop the knocker. But Bartimæus “cried so much more a great deal.” The man was in downright earnest, and he got what he wanted. The reason you have hitherto not got God’s blessing is that you have not been in earnest.

And now “Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be brought.” That is lovely—the blessed Lord understood what he wanted, and commanded him to be brought.

And now they say to him, “Be of good comfort.” Are you an anxious sinner? “Be of good comfort.” A minute ago it was “Hold your peace,” and now it is “Be of good comfort. Rise; he calleth thee.” Does He not also can you? Indeed He does. He calls you now. He has His eye upon you, knows the deep need of your soul, and the writings of your conscience, and He wants you to get near Him. Imitate Bartimæus. “And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus.” Mark that word, “casting away.” I have no doubt something has hindered you up to now; but this man is very wise, he says: “I want to get to Him; my garment may hinder me: I will fling away everything.” The rich ruler, rolling in wealth, will not give up anything, and loses everything; the poor beggar gives up his little—his purse would be in his garment—that it might not hinder him, and he gets everything. He was in downright earnest.

If you were in earnest, you would get blessing likewise. You know what is the hindrance. “I should like to be saved,” says a young woman, “but I am keeping company with a young man who is not converted, and if I got converted what would he say?” This has hindered many a soul coming to Jesus. To all such I say, “Look at Bartimæus.” “And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus.” Many a young man says, “If I turned to Jesus, I should be laughed at in the shop, at the warehouse, and by those at home.” What others will say is his hindrance. Bartimæus would not be hindered; so “casting away his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.” That is the kernel of all blessing. Have you come to him yet? Come just now. Where you are hear the sweet news, “He calleth thee.”

Now look at this scene. There stands the poor, sightless beggar, and there stands the blessed Son of God—God incarnate, God manifest in flesh. “And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” It is not what shall Bartimæus do, but Jesus saying, “What shall I do?” Put yourself in that scene, get into His presence, and hear Him say, “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” What is it you want? Bartimæus wanted his sight, and simply replies, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.” First of all he said,” Jesus, thou son of David; “but as he got near Him, and before he got his eyes open, he got a sense of the glory of His person, and said, “Lord.” Have you ever noted these words, “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved”? When on earth Jesus had spoken about dying and rising again the third day. It has all taken place now, and the Holy Ghost has come down to say, “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:9, 10).

Now note the Lord’s response to the earnest, needy seeker. “And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.” He no sooner told the blessed Lord what he needed, what he wanted, than he got it. Do you want Christ? Then do not sleep tonight till you get Him. When you see that God is made known to you in Jesus, and that He has died on the cross to bear your sins, and blot them all out, your eyes will get opened, and you will say, “I see.” So it was with the beggar, “And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.” Luke’s Gospel puts it this way, “Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him,

glorifying God."

His eyes were opened to see Jesus. I think that is very beautiful. The first object that poor man saw when his eyes were opened on earth was the Person of the blessed Son of God—a Man, in grace come down to meet all his need. And Jesus would act the same to you, and you may be saved now. Can you trust Him? Can you believe Him? Will He not be as good as His word? Will He not surely receive, bless, and pardon you? Most certainly. Come then, this very hour. You trust the Lord Jesus Christ and He will receive you, and give you what you want. Come to Him, trust Him, and then follow Him, as Bartimæus did.

Edification: Volume 5, Life Surrendered., The

(From notes of Addresses on Mark 10:46-11:11)

WHEN first we came to the Lord Jesus Christ, we came because we had a need of Him: that is the thing that brought us. We had a need that only He could meet. We have an illustration of this in the well-known instance of Bartimaeus. It says, "they brought him to Jesus." He was not long in making a decision when he heard who was passing by. He cried out in very great distress, and the cry of distress always gets an answer from the Lord. It does even today. Bartimaeus came for what he could receive from the Lord.

Now in the incident concerning the colt it is just the other way about. You notice the expression, "the Lord hath need of him." Did it ever occur to you that our Lord has a need that you can meet? I think I might also add that He has a need that only you can meet. What a wonderful privilege is ours, who have come to Him and had had our desperate need met, that we should have an opportunity of meeting a need that He has.

The story of the colt is very simply told. First, it was standing in a very significant place, "where two ways met." It stands, as it were, at a crisis, just as we reach a spot where we must make up our minds — we must come to a decision one way or another. We come to a spot where the road divides.

Secondly, it was a colt, "whereon never man sat." It had never before been controlled. It was unbroken, self-willed, and thus fittingly illustrates the natural willfulness of man in the flesh. The mind of the flesh "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

Thirdly, it was tied. It was in bondage and needed to be liberated before it could be of any use to the Lord.

These three things, which were true of the colt before ever it was requisitioned, supply us with features which we shall without difficulty recognize as applying to ourselves.

If this little colt was the firstling of an ass, it had been at the fork of the road before. In Exodus 13:13, you find that the moment it was born the question had to be decided if it was to live or die. It was dependent upon the death of another, a lamb; otherwise it could not live. There was that crisis in its very earliest history. We have to face a similar crisis, for a more significant than flattering statement follows, "all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem." It is not very flattering that we should be put along with asses! Yet redeemed we must be by the blood of the Lamb of God if we are to live and be of service.

It is useless, my dear friends, your attempting to take up Sunday School work, or any other kind of "Christian" work, until you are in the benefit of Christ's redemption work. That is where we begin, and having begun we come to a place where we have to decide whether we are going in God's way or in our own.

The question is, how is this colt to be used, and who is to use it? There is a life that has been spared, and given for service. Who is going to get that life of service? There are two that are putting in a claim for that life of service. There is the old master and a new One.

Who is the old master? Not exactly Satan this time. There is another bondage that Scripture speaks of: there is the bondage of SIN. So we find people who have been redeemed, who would like to be of service, yet they are in bondage. They have to confess, "When I would do good, evil is present with me"; until out of bitter distress the cry is raised, "Who will deliver me?" We read of that in Romans 7

Sin, then, is the old master. In the space of about sixty verses (Rom. 5:12 — 8:3) you find the word "sin" occurs about forty times. Look, for instance, at verse 14 of chapter 6, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." It is "sin" you notice, not "sins"; not the wrong things that we do, but the evil principle within us, from which springs every wrong thought and word and deed. So we read, "Ye were the servants of sin."

How can we get free from the dominion of sin? There is only one thing that can set me free, and that is death. "He that is dead is freed from sin," as Romans 6:7 says. A slave dies and you say, "What a relief!" for his death has secured his deliverance from unbearable conditions. The biggest slave would not be troubled by sin if he died, for there is an end to that state of things. But in what way can that apply to us who are not actually dead? How can a man die and yet be living here? Can a man's history close without actually dying?

Yes, it can. Let me use this illustration. I met a young lady one day who said to me, "I am going to see the end of Miss—." I said, "I did not know that she was ill." She replied, "She is not ill, she is going to be married, and therefore won't be Miss— any longer." Her history as Miss— was terminated without her actually dying. Just so our history in connection with Adam, and with sin, that overbearing master, can terminate without our actual death.

The death of Christ has terminated our history in connection with our old master, for, "our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." This is how God takes account of the situation. Our "old man" signifies all that sticks to us as coming down from Adam, all that we were as connected with him. So closely were we identified with the cross of Christ that His death was our death in God's reckoning. He died to end sin's rule and authority over you, so that you may have a right and title to say, "I have no more to do with that old master. You may perhaps say, "But I don't experience that!" No, neither did you experience His dying for your sins. But He did both. The Word of God assures you that in His death you died. If your faith enables you to say, "He died for me," it

should enable you to say, “I died with Him.” Then you are done with servitude to sin.

Not only have we died with Christ but we are risen with Him. So we are to reckon ourselves “to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:11). We now have a life that is beyond death and beyond the dominion of sin, and we have a perfect right to say so. Consequently we are to be loosed from all bonds and let go that we may serve the Lord.

“Yes, that may be all right to faith,” some may say, “but when it comes to experience sin does not seem to have done with me, for I find I often do just what I used to do when sin was my master.” You feel yourself tied like the colt, or bound with grave clothes like Lazarus was when brought alive out of the tomb. God is allowing you to find out how fearful a thing sin is in His sight. It is a terrible discovery.

What am I to do? As Romans 6:13 says, “Yield yourselves unto God.” In this verse the word “yield” occurs twice, and there is a change in the tense which is very difficult to render in English. If we are allowed to give a free translation we might put it, “Neither be yielding at any tithe your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but be yielded definitely to God... as instruments of righteousness.” If we have yielded ourselves to God as a once accomplished act, we shall find power to preserve us from daily yielding to sin.

Let us go back to the colt, as an illustration of this matter. It was loosed, set free for the Lord to use. Three steps can be traced.

Admit

Submit

Transmit

The owners of the colt admitted the Lord’s claims. That clearly was the first step. What have you to admit? Well, you have sprig before now,

The One that loves you has a claim upon you. I ask you in His presence, Are you prepared to admit His claims paramount over you? Thank God! if your answer is, “Yes.”

Then the next thing is, submit. The colt was brought to Jesus that He might use it as He pleased. What did you sing?

Did you mean it? If so yours is a surrendered life. You have been brought to Jesus that you may go in the way that He pleases.

What is the last thing? They put Jesus on the colt. Once it had been an uncontrolled thing. Nobody had ever controlled it before. Now it is controlled by Him, and transmitting Him as He pleases. That was what He wanted the colt for.

Do you know what He wants your life for? He wants you to carry Him victoriously into the kitchen, into the workshop, behind the desk, into the workroom, behind the counter, into the Mission-field — anywhere that He wants you to go. You may have the Honor of bearing Christ. He has got somebody working at your elbow. He wants you to take Him there. His name is on you. You may take the virtues of Christ with you.

Years ago I was having breakfast with a friend in Kent. One of his boys was misbehaving at the breakfast table. He said, “Come here, my boy. What is your name?” The boy replied, “Father, you know my name.” He said, “What is your name?” He replied, “Paul.” “What is your other name?” and he told him his other name. “My boy, that is my name. Paul, if you behave at school this morning asp you have behaved at this breakfast table the last twenty minutes, you will get my name in the black books at school. Would you like that?” He said, “No, Father.” I was listening to that. Oh, I thought, many times I have to grieve over getting the sacred Name into the world’s black books. When you show an unchristian way or habit, they will say, “There’s your Christian!” The whole shame of that will come back on the sacred Name that you are carrying.

Take the name of Jesus with you. You could not do anything else. He wants you to carry Him into the sphere in which He has set you to live and walk. May we all have grace to do so.

Art. Cutting.

The Gospel Messenger: Volume 3 (1888), How to Get the Blessing.

SOME young people were having a lesson on. Mark 10:17, about the young man who came to Jesus with the question, “What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” and how he had gone away again without the blessing.

When the lesson was finished, their teacher told them to read the four verses which precede the 17th, about the young children who had been brought to Jesus. He then asked them, “Did the children get the blessing?” “Yes,” they all answered. “And what did they do to get it?” “They let themselves be brought to Jesus,” said one girl. “Did they do anything more?” asked the teacher. There was a short pause, and then the youngest present answered, with simple earnestness, “Yes they let Jesus bless them.”

What a beautiful answer, and how true! “Then took he them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them,” and they let Him do it.

Have you been brought to Jesus? and have you let Him bless you? If not, you do not yet know what true happiness is. Take heed that you do not stumble at the simplicity of the gospel. Remember He says, “Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein” (Mark 10:15), Y. Z.

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Rich Young Man, A

As Jesus was leaving a city on His way to Jerusalem, a young man came running to ask Him a question. This man was a leader, or ruler, of the people, and no doubt had heard of Jesus and His miracles which could be done only by the power of God. Yet he did not speak to Jesus as One from Heaven, only as “good Master,” meaning Teacher. He knelt down, but that seemed in honor of a teacher, not worship to the Lord.

His question was, “What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” All life on earth has an end, but eternal life has no end; such a life for God’s people was written of in the scriptures, which the man knew, as Psalms 16:11; Psalms 23:6; Daniel 12:2. But it must be given by God; the Eternal One (Deut. 33:27).

The young man thought he could do something to obtain that life, and Jesus spoke to him of the laws God had given that people to do. The man said he had kept all those laws from his youth.

Jesus knew the man had not perfectly kept all God’s words, which said to give God the first place and to do for his neighbor as for himself. The man was very rich and there were many poor among his people, and Jesus told him to sell what he owned and give to the poor, and promised him treasure in Heaven, and invited him to follow Him.

But this man did not care as much to have treasure in Heaven, as he did to have his treasures on earth, and He did not value the invitation to follow Jesus, wonderful as it was, because He was the Son of God.

Jesus loved the young man, but he did not love Jesus, and went back to his riches instead of going with Jesus. But his riches could not make him happy, he went away sad. He had come running, and it is right to hurry to come to Jesus; but it seems he had not hurried to know Jesus, but fearing to miss something for himself.

Perhaps the man would have been willing to give some of his property to the poor, but he could not part with all, as Jesus said. The Lord Jesus lived as a poor man on earth, and the young ruler could have had the great honor to have given for His needs, as some others did (Luke 8:3).

When the man had gone away, Jesus said to the disciples,

“How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

Efforts have been made to refer “The eye of a needle” to a wicket gate, through which a camel can pass, by only with great difficulty, but the Lord speaks of it as something “impossible” except to God. Doubtless a common needle was alluded to.

The richest man cannot buy eternal life, nor carry his wealth into the holy kingdom of God. No man, rich or poor, can enter by anything He can do. All must come the way God made possible, by the work of His Son.

ML 04/16/1944

Messages of God's Love: 1944, Love for Little Children

Mark 10:1-16

Jesus, with the disciples, left Galilee to go to Jerusalem, a journey of sixty miles, or more. The people in the towns on the way, had before heard of Jesus, or had seen Him, and very many came to Him to have some question explained. He answered all carefully and taught them.

At one place little children were brought for Him to bless them, which meant to speak words of peace and promises of good. The disciples thought the people should not trouble Jesus with the little ones, and were sending them away. But Jesus saw them and said for them to let them come to Him. He took those little children in His arms, put His hands on their heads and spoke words of blessing to them.

The Lord was not too busy to have time for the little children and show His tender love. The disciples should have known to be kind to those little ones, and known that Jesus would want to bless them, because, before they left Galilee, He told them to receive children in His name, or, as He would. He had then lifted a little child and set it where they could all see, showing them there were none too young or too humble for Him to receive.

He also told how great a sin it is for any one to “offend,” sin against, a child who believes in Him. No doubt the greatest wrong to be done to children is to keep them from learning of the Lord, or to tell them His words are not true (Mark 9:36,37,42).

Jesus said that anyone who would be in His holy kingdom, must be as a little child. How can a grown person be like a child? You know a tiny child believes right away whatever it is told, and trusts; if it is offered a gift, it holds out its hand to receive it.

So to have a place with the Lord Jesus people must believe His words just as simply and honestly as a little child, and accept His love and care. If we are too proud to believe God’s words, and think we can come our own way to Him, we cannot be saved, or learn more of Him.

We know from Jesus’ words that He loves all children, and wants them told of His love. It was for them as much as for grown people that He made that last journey to the city where He died to save them from the punishment of sins.

If you have a little brother or sister, tell it of Jesus, who now in Heaven, sees and loves it. You will find hon simply it will trust Him. Sometimes older ones tell what is not true to little ones; when the little ones see that, thee do not trust them, but they can always trust the Lord Jesus.

In one of the answers of Jesus on this journey (Mark 10:6), He spoke of “the beginning of the creation” when “God made” the first man and woman, giving this fact the same as was written in the first book of Bible (Genesis). These words of Jesus prove that the account of Genesis is true. Those who say that man began by chance, or by a gradual growth of cells, or some other way, not as written there, speak falsely. They have not believed God’s words as little children.

ML 04/09/1944

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 10:32-52

Verses 32-34. And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them; and they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid. He saw their fear and tells them deliberately what is going to happen to Him. We afterward see how little they received it. "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him; and the third day He shall rise again." He was to die; first His own people would condemn Him, then the Gentiles would put Him on the cross, but the third day He would rise again.

Verses 35-40. James and John make a special request, "Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory." They knew that He was the King of Israel, they had seen Him on the mount of transfiguration, their faith owned Him. They did not seem to understand that His sufferings must come first. With selfish motives James and John seek to get the nearest and chief places, and perhaps they thought they deserved them. The Lord turns it to instruction; they would share His sufferings. He said unto them, "Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" And they said unto Him, "We can." He replied, "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: but to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not Mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared." He is alone in the work of atonement, but they could suffer rejection and martyrdom, and they would; the place in the kingdom would be given to the ones for whom it was prepared, and as the One who will give it knows to whom to give it according to what they have passed through in this world for Christ.

Verses 41-45. The. ten heard it and began to be much displeased (indignant). That showed the ten were just as selfish as the two. Jesus as the lowly servant,. would not take the right to give James and John their places, and now the same lowly One teaches them the lesson of lowly love. The world seeks to be great in its own eyes and in each other's sight, but the servants of Christ must be like Christ, the greatest is the servant of all. He came down to the lowest place. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:5.)

“For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." He who is the truest servant of Jesus is small in his own eyes, and he is the greatest, because he is more like his Lord in humility and love.

Verses 46:52. They came to Jericho. He is now nearing the end of His earthly journey. It is the city of the curse, and we are reminded what the Lord passed through on the cross for sin. (Josh. 6:26, Gal. 3:13.) His ministry as prophet is over. He has yet to present Himself as Son of David, the King. We might find Israel's picture in the young, moral, law keeping, rich ruler (verses 17-22), but here is the picture of the blind and, therefore, needy believing remnant-a picture, too, of a needy sinner. "And as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging." Here is a picture of need. "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry cut, and say, Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." There was true faith, the despised Nazarene was to him the king, the true Son of David. Opposers he had plenty, for many charged him to hold his peace: he was only a blind beggar, not of any importance, but he cried the more a great deal, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Yes, there is mercy and grace for those who do not deserve blessing, but only judgment; it is abundant mercy for the Jews. (1 Peter 1:3.) Jesus stood still at the call of a blind man. It was in the Lord's heart of love to bless him. Jesus commanded him to be called, and willing servants carry the message. "Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee." And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus. He lets nothing hinder him, away goes his garment. The young man wrapped his tighter around him (verse 22), and turned back to eternal destruction; the blind man let everything go. (Phil. 3:4-7.) Jesus said unto him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Well He knew, but He loves to heat' us tell Hint our need. And the answer was ready before the request was made. so will it be again with needy Israel. (Isa. 65:24.) "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." Bartimeus answered, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." And Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way. He is like Paul again. (Phil. 3:7.) The laying aside of hindrances, was true at his conversion, but Verses 8 to 14 tell us he found in Christ an all-absorbing object for his heart. So with the blind man, Jesus said, "Go thy way," and in perfect liberty he follows Jesus. This is the true good works, scripture speaks of, telling of gratitude to Him who loved us first; and by it serving according to the law of liberty.

(Continued from page 107)

Scripture Study, Scripture Study: Mark 10:1-31

Mark 10.AR 10{

Verse 1. The Lord comes into the coasts of Judea near the Jordan, and the people resort unto Him; and, as He was wont, He taught them again, unwearied in His service.

Verses 2-12. The Pharisees came to try Him, by the question: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" In return He asks them: "What did Moses command you?" And they said, "Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away:”

The Lord uses this to teach us the sacredness of the marriage tie, the mystery of two becoming one flesh, as instituted of God at the beginning. Moses, for the hardness of their hearts, suffered them to put away their wives. But from the beginning God made them male and female. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh. so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Here the Lord puts the marriage tie in its real and original place, and makes it thus binding on all Christians. God's creative hand formed the union, and does still. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. It is very emphatic, His "I say unto you.”

In the house the disciples inquired more about this. He explained to them the seriousness of putting away.

“Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”

Matt. 5:32, and 19:9, makes an exception in putting away, that is: In case of fornication the offending one might be put away, it does not say must, but to marry her that is put away is committing adultery (Matt. 19:9), or to marry another after putting the one away is to commit adultery (Mark 10:12). How serious and sacred then is the marriage tie. Accordingly God has instituted it. (Heb. 13:4.)

The law of Moses, for the hardness of men's hearts, allowed it to be broken. The law of countries may and does allow it now. But the man of God will abide by God's institution, and refuse to take advantage of the legal deflection from the truth to gratify his fleshly desires. Like his Master, and precious Exemplar for his path, he will say, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4.)

Verses 13-16. And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased (indignant), and said unto them, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of God." How different are the disciples in their feelings from the Lord. How deeply He is interested in their welfare. He looked with God's compassionate eye upon them, and those who brought them and He was indignant that His disciples should treat them as they did. He saw in those dear children, the simplicity and confidence that was characteristic of all suitable for the Kingdom of God, those who would trust Him implicitly: they had not yet learned the deceitfulness of this world. God values the simple confidence of implicit trust in Him. "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”

Verses 17-22. As He went on the way, "there came one running and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" This man was honest, moral, instructed in the law, a lovely character, amiable and well disposed, yet altogether blind to his real condition before God. He takes Jesus as a teacher who can inform him just what is lacking to make himself perfect to obtain eternal life. Jesus was only a man to him, so He answers, "Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." This should have let him see his own sinfulness, and that Jesus is God. The Lord adds, "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother." The man answered, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Jesus, beholding him, loved him. Such a fine disposition, and yet the Lord saw in him that his heart was in his possessions, so said unto him, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." This disclosed his heart's object, it was earth and possessions, rather than Christ and heaven. A cross here, and glory with Christ above, did not suit him, and one so amiable and moral turns his back on Christ and heaven, and chooses earth, and at the end the lake of fire.

Reader, what is your object? Is it Christ or self? Is your destiny heaven or the lake of fire? 'Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Be warned by this young man who had great possessions; but only for time. He wanted to serve God, but just for his own benefit, though he would not if it took his riches away. His righteousness was all his own work and devising., (Rom. 10:3:)

He is the opposite of Paul who counted all things but loss for Christ, and the excellency of the knowledge of Christ eclipsed everything else. He pressed on that he might win Christ, and be found in Him, with nothing of his own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith. (Phil. 3:7-11.)

Verses 23-27. Jesus looked round about on the astonished disciples, and said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!" He answered their astonishment by saying, "Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." The disciples thought a rich man had the best opportunity, and say, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." God can humble the richest and proudest of men to take their place as lost, ruined sinners. The proud, rich Nebuchadnezzar experienced this. (Dan. 4:34-37.) He filleth the hungry with good things, the rich He sends empty away. (1 Sam. 2:6-8, Luke 1:53.) The rich man must become poor in spirit, he must feel his need before God or he cannot be saved. He cannot save himself, nor help to save himself. If he attempts it, it is but "dead works." "filthy rags." (Isa. 64:6.) The grace of God brings salvation; those, who feel their need will accept it. (Titus 2:11.) They have nothing to recommend them but their need.

Verses 28-31. Then Peter began to say unto Him, "Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee."' Jesus answered, "Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come life everlasting." The hundredfold is the compensation the soul experiences, given to all that put Christ first, both now and in the future. Israel's "world to come" is the reign of Christ over the earth. We have the promise, in godliness of behavior, of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (1 Tim. 4:8), not of wealth in this world, but of the enjoyment of communion and favor of God that sustains now in the midst of opposition or persecution, and gives a reward in the future. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first. We must leave the dispensing of rewards to the One who can rightly value what is done, and give each his place in the kingdom according to His divine wisdom, and not as we would think.

Whither Bound?, God's Grace

A poor woman was in great financial difficulties. A kind-hearted gentleman called on her, intending to help. After knocking at her door for some time and receiving no answer, he concluded that she was not at home, and went away. Meeting her soon afterward, he told her that he had called to see her, telling her his errand. “Oh!” she replied, “was it you, sir? I am sorry. I thought it was the landlord who had come for the rent, and I was afraid to answer the door as I had not got it.”

As this poor woman treated her would-be benefactor, so thousands are treating God today. They think that when He knocks at the door of their hearts He has come to demand something from them, but what a mistake. He comes to give, not to claim the debt they owe. He comes

to deliver from distress, and to give eternal life. “The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock”—Behold the Saviour at the door!He gently knocks — Has knocked before;Has waited long — Is waiting still;You use no other friend so ill.

The Servant's Heart: Bible Talks on Mark, Mark 10:46-52, Rise; He Calleth Thee

This is the story of a poor, blind beggar. He sat beside the highway near a city which Jesus passed through on His way to Jerusalem. His name was Bartimeus, which meant “blind son,” so he must have been blind when he was born. He was very poor, or he would not have sat beside the road to beg.

This man seems to have heard before about Jesus and the great things He had done, and he believed Jesus could cure his blindness. He also believed that Jesus was the King to come from the family of King David, as promised in the Scriptures. When he learned that Jesus was then passing along the highway, he began to call to Him, saying, “Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.”

There was a crowd on the highway, and persons near the blind man tried to stop him from calling. But Bartimeus was so anxious to have his sight and so sure Jesus could help him that he called out even more.

The Master’s Call

Jesus heard his cries and stopped and said he should be brought to Him. Then the people near the blind man told him, “Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee.”

The poor man did not wait to obey. He threw aside his cloak, to go more quickly, and came, or was led, to Jesus.

Jesus kindly asked what He could do for him. Jesus knew what the blind man needed, but it seemed He wanted people to tell Him their needs. When Bartimeus heard the voice of Jesus, he knew this One, who would be King, was the Lord, and he answered, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.”

Jesus caused him to see and told him that he could go his way. But the man did not go his own way; he followed Jesus on His way to Jerusalem.

We need the mercy of the Lord, His pity and power, as much as the poor, blind man. He could not give himself sight; we cannot save our souls from sin. There were some things the blind man could do: He called, he rose and came to Jesus, he asked for mercy, and he confessed Jesus to be his Lord.

The Lord’s Call to All

We must do the same, must call or want His mercy, must rise and “come” to Him (believe His call), and must confess Him as our Lord, the One with all power and right over us.

You may think that He has not called you to come, but the last chapter of the Bible gives His call to everyone. It is, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17). “Rise; He calleth” you.

No more was told of Bartimeus, but when he went on with Jesus, he would learn that Jesus was refused as King. Jesus again told the disciples He would be King, but first He would be cruelly treated. So they were afraid to go on, but “Jesus went before,” and they followed Him (vs. 32). He kept on as the obedient, holy Servant for God, all the time doing good to the people. He wanted the disciples to do good and serve one another, and He said, “Even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister [serve], and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

1. Why do we tell the Lord our needs in prayer when He already knows all about them?

2. How can we respond to God’s call if we are “without strength”?

3. For in-depth help on this Gospel, you might find An Exposition of the Gospel of Mark by W. Kelly a challenging but helpful book.

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