



God's Saving power in the Things That He Made

The Everlasting Gospel

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Originally published in:
The Present Truth
June 23 to December 22, 1898

Editor's Note:
I have included Related Articles
in a separate section at the end.
These were written in the same issues
as the main series,
and seemed to be part of the theme,
as the same thoughts were continued.

Fonts used:
Calligraphiti
Liberation Sans Narrow
Linux Biolinum G
Linux Libertine G



June 2018
www.srac.info
www.practicaprophetica.com

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The Everlasting Gospel

*God's Saving Power
in the Things That Are Made*

1. WHY WAS THE CREATION STORY WRITTEN?

Luke 2

¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

¹² And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

LET the following facts that are stated in this text be carefully noted and remembered.

1. The “good tidings of great joy,” that is, the good and joyful news, which is what the word “Gospel” means, consists in the announcement of a Saviour.
2. This Gospel or good news of salvation is to “all people.”
3. This Saviour of the world, over whom “a multitude of the heavenly host” were rejoicing, was but a helpless babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger because its parents were not able to command a better resting place.
4. From this last fact we may learn that:

1 Corinthians 1

²⁷ God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty

²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are;

²⁹ That no flesh should glory in His presence.

³⁰ But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;

³¹ That, according as it is written, He that glories, let him

glory in the Lord.

Nothing in this world is weaker than a new-born baby, and no one was more despised than Jesus was by the world, nor was any baby ever born whose birth attracted less attention by the world; yet He was “the power of God and the wisdom of God,” the One whom God makes our wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

So as no flesh has any cause to glory before God, no flesh has any ground for discouragement. No flesh can be weaker than was the Saviour of mankind. Even when grown to manhood He said:

John 5

³⁰ I can of my own self do nothing.

Revelation 14

⁶ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

In this text let us note:

1. This everlasting Gospel is to all people, just as the angel said to the shepherds.
2. Since there is but one Gospel (*Galatians* 1:7-8), we know that this everlasting Gospel, which is to “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,” is the good news of a Saviour, “which is Christ the Lord,” who shall “save His people from their sins.” *Matthew* 1:31.
3. This Gospel calls for the glory—all glory—to be given to God, to whom alone it belongs. See *Matthew* 6:13. As already learned, we are to give Him the glory, because there is nothing that man has wherein to glory.

4. We are to give God the glory, instead of man, because “it is He that has made us, and not we ourselves.” *Psalms* 100:3. He is worthy of all glory, because He is the Creator of heaven, and earth, and all things that are in them. Our acknowledgment of His glory as Creator puts us into the right relation to Him—we as His subjects, and He as our Saviour.

Romans 1

¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believes.

As we read this, let us remember that the Gospel of Christ is the good news that Jesus is a Saviour from sin. The power by which He saves, is the power of God working in Him.

He came as a helpless babe absolutely unknown to the world. He had no beauty, that anyone should desire Him, and was “despised and rejected of men.” *Isaiah* 53:2-3. By taking our flesh, He voluntarily assumed a place where He was unable to help Himself. Yet we need not be ashamed of this Christ, weak and despised as He was, because He was “the power of God,”—the perfection of God’s power shown in weakness.

Romans 1

¹⁹ That which may be known of God is manifested in them (that is, in ungodly men); for God manifested it unto them.

²⁰ For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity; that they may be without excuse.

This text should be studied with great care, until the following facts contained in it are indelibly impressed on the mind:

1. Ever since the creation of the world, the invisible things of God,—all that may be known of God—are clearly to be seen.

2. The things which may be known of God are His everlasting power and Divinity.
3. These things are manifested in “the things that are made,” that is, in creation.
4. Since we have seen the Gospel—the everlasting Gospel—to be the power of God unto salvation, and God’s everlasting power is revealed in the things that are made, it follows that the everlasting Gospel is preached by every created thing. That is, by everything that God has made, He shows us His Divine and everlasting power to save us from our sins.
5. That is why no one has any excuse for ungodliness. “His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.” *2 Peter* 1:3.

Taking all these texts into consideration, we can understand why the preaching of the everlasting Gospel from heaven calls upon us to “worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” In them is seen the power of God unto salvation. Whoever recognizes that fact must worship God, because “power belongs unto God.” *Psalms* 62:11. No man has any power, nor anything in which to glory.

1 Chronicles 29

¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as Head above all.

¹² In Your hand is power and might; and in Your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Lastly, let us ever remember that, since all things that are made reveal the power of God;—since the power that is manifested not simply to create but to uphold everything in the universe is the power that is working to save men;—and we see the Gospel in all creation, the story of creation was writ-

ten for no other purpose than to teach us the Gospel, to show us God's power to save us from sin.

2. THE BEGINNING

Genesis 1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

WHO was in the beginning? What did God do? Who created? When did God create? When were the heaven and the earth created?

From the texts in the preceding lesson recall and state the reason why the story of creation was written.

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² The same was in the beginning with God.

³ All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that has been made.

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Psalms 33

⁶ By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

⁸ Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

⁹ For He spoke, and it was [done]; He commanded, and it stood fast.

1 John 1

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life:

² (for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us);

³ That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you.

1. The Gospel of John, which is wholly devoted to telling us how we obtain life through Jesus (*John* 20:31), begins just where the story of creation begins: “In the be-

- ginning God—the Word—created all things.”
2. The Word was in the beginning.
 3. Life was in the Word, and the Word itself was life,—the Word of Life,—that eternal life which was with God in the beginning. That which was in the beginning was Life.
 4. All things came from this Word, that is, from the Life.
 5. We are saved by the Life (*Romans* 5:10), that same Word of life which was in the beginning, and by which all things were created.
 6. The Word, without which not one thing was created, “was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (*John* 1:14); “and this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.” *1 Peter* 1:25.
 7. By the Word were all things created, and by the same Word of power are all things still upheld. *Hebrews* 1:3. But this eternal power,—the power of an endless life,—that is manifested in the things that are made, is the power which God uses to save believers.

So the story of creation is the preaching of the Gospel. The power that we see working in all nature is the Gospel in visible form.

Colossians 1

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;

¹⁶ For in Him were all things created, in the heavens, and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him;

¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning.

1. We have redemption through Christ's blood, that is, through His life (*Leviticus* 17:11), the same life that was in the beginning, and from which all things proceeded.
2. Not only was Christ in the beginning, but He is the Beginning. He is "the Beginning of the creation of God." *Revelation* 3:14. All things originate in Him.
3. Christ is "the image of the invisible God." But the invisible things of God are seen in the things that have been made. *Romans* 1:20. Therefore in everything that has been made, Christ is to be seen. There is a worldwide difference between this truth and pantheism. The truth is that every created thing reveals God's power; the men of old "changed the truth of God into a lie" by saying that every created thing is God. So they worshiped and served the creature instead of the Creator.
4. The fact that Christ is to be seen in every created thing is also shown by the truth already learned, that Christ is "the power of God" (*1 Corinthians* 1:24), and the eternal power of God is seen in "the things that have been made." *Romans* 1:20.
5. We have redemption in Christ, because in Him all things were created. Thus we see that the power of redemption is the power of creation. The work of redemption is indeed nothing less than creation.
6. In Christ all things hold together; every tangible thing is held in permanent form by Him, and in Him alone men are complete.
7. The Head of creation is the Head of the church.
8. Christ is the Beginning and the end. Nothing can be begun or completed without Him. "In the beginning God." Christ is "the Beginning." This is the story which every created thing tells us. Let these words be so deeply engraved in the mind, that it will be impossible to think of undertaking anything apart from Him. Let Him have His rightful place as the Projector and the Accomplisher,

—the One who works both to will and to do.

3. POWER AND WISDOM

Psalm 62

¹¹ God has spoken once, twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God.

Matthew 6

¹³ Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

Romans 13

¹ There is no power but of God.

John 19

¹¹ You could have no power at all against me, except it were given you from above.

Isaiah 40

¹⁵ Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust in the balance: behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing.

¹⁷ All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity.

1 Chronicles 29

¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as Head above all.

¹² Both riches and honor come of You, and You reign over all; and Your hand is power and might; and in Your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Isaiah 40

²⁹ He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength.

1 Corinthians 1

²⁴ Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Colossians 2

² ...Christ,

³ In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowl-

edge.

Isaiah 40

² The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Jeremiah 10

¹⁰ The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King.

¹² He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion.

Matthew 28

¹⁸ Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Romans 1

²⁰ The invisible things of Him,...even His everlasting power and Divinity,...are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made.

2 Peter 1

³ His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue.

Isaiah 53

¹¹ By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many: for He shall bear their iniquities.

READ these texts until you cannot possibly forget what they say. Take them just as they say, and do not imagine that they mean something else. If the Lord had meant something else, He would have said it, instead of saying what He did. He who “gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding” (*Daniel 2:21*), knows how to say what He means.

Know then, and understand, that there is absolutely no power in the universe, except the power of God. Man has no power whatever in himself. Man is one of the things that God

has made, and so the power that appears in him is the power of God, just the same as in the rest of creation.

Whatever power the faint receive, comes from God. It is His own power. God is the strength of His people.

Isaiah 12

² The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.

Even the power that exalts itself against God, is God's power perverted. The kings of the earth and the rulers, with the people, moved by the devil, put Christ to death; but the power which they used so wickedly came from above.

Jesus Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Remember, He is the power and the wisdom. *1 Corinthians* 1:24. His Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of counsel and might. *Isaiah* 11:2.

Jeremiah 10

¹² He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom,

The Lord made the heavens and the earth by His power and His wisdom. That is, He made all things by Jesus Christ. Without Christ, the Divine Word, the Power of God, not one thing was made; and He still upholds all things by the Word of His power. *Hebrews* 1:3.

Thus all the power in heaven and in earth is His. There is no manifestation of power, force, or energy, as men call it, in the universe, except the personal presence of the living Christ, by the Spirit of power. His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in all things.

His Divine power has given us all that is necessary to enable us to live godly lives. That is to say, The power which is given us, to enable us to live godly lives, is the Divine energy that is manifested in all created things, whether in heaven or

on earth. He who is the wisdom and the power of God, and who is revealed in all the things that are made, is:

1 Corinthians 1

³⁰ ...of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

Thus all the power of God manifested in all creation, is available for our salvation. It is by the power and wisdom that made the universe, that the Lord justifies us, because He who bears all things bears our iniquities.

This power that works in heaven and in earth, in every created thing, is the power that is given by the Holy Spirit to all who yield themselves absolutely to the Lord. This is the power with which He sends them forth to teach all nations His truth.

That hand which bears creation up
Shall guard His children well.

1. POWER AND MERCY

Psalm 111

² The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

³ His work is honorable and glorious; and His righteousness endures for ever.

⁴ He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

Psalm 36

⁵ Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds.

Psalm 62

¹¹ God has spoken once; twice have I heard this: that power belongs unto God.

¹² Also unto You, O Lord, belongs mercy.

Psalm 119

⁶⁴ The earth, O Lord, is full of Your mercy; teach me Your statutes.

Psalm 32

¹⁰ He that trusts in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

Lamentations 3

²² It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.

²³ They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

Colossians 1

¹⁷ [Christ] is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Psalm 130

⁷ Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption.

⁸ And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Ephesians 2

⁴ God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,

⁵ Even when we were dead through our trespasses, quickened us together with Christ (by grace have you been saved),

⁶ And raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 40

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking.

Psalms 95

⁴ In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also.

Isaiah 40

²⁷ Why say you, O Jacob, and speak O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding.

²⁹ He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength.

³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall;

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

IF you cannot at first see the things that here follow, in the texts just quoted, read the texts until you can. Take the truth direct from the Scriptures themselves.

Note that the Lord makes His grace and fullness of compassion known by making His wonderful works to be remembered. That is, His wonderful works reveal His graciousness and compassion.

Power and mercy are combined. Both belong to God, and

cannot be separated. Just as all the things that are made reveal the power of God, so all of God's works show His mercy. His power is merciful, and His mercy is powerful.

God's mercy is everywhere, in the heavens and in the earth. The earth is full of it. It is not merely on the earth, but it is in it. All the power that is seen in the things that God has made, is His mercy in action.

It is by the mercy of the Lord that we live. It is His mercy that keeps us alive.

Lamentations 3

²² It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

Thus we see that mercy is power, for it is His power that keeps us.

It is in Christ that everything holds together. That is, "cohesion," which is but another term for "holding together," is God personally working to uphold all things. If matter did not hold together, we should have no place to stand on, and we ourselves would have no existence. So since it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, we see that cohesion is simply a manifestation of the mercy of the Lord. Cohesion is Christ, the power of God, working in nature. It is the word of His power upholding all things.

Think of the marvelous force that holds the mighty rocks in huge masses. What infinite energy is constantly working in every particle of matter in the universe, in order that there may be form and solidity. Can you fail to see the hand of God in it?

Men tell us that this force is "cohesion." Now "cohesion" simply means "sticking together." Therefore when they tell us that particles of matter, atoms, are held together by cohesion, it is the same as though they told us that matter is held to-

gether by holding together. “Cohesion” simply describes what is done, but does not tell what does the thing. The Bible tells what does it. It is Christ the power of God.

Thus it is that God shows us His power to save. He saves us by His mercy, in which He is rich. With Him there is plentiful redemption. *Psalm* 130:7. How much? As much as there is force in the universe. In His hand are the deep places of the earth (*Psalm* 95:4); all the force, even to the very center of the earth, is the working of the Lord’s own hand. What has the Lord said of the safety of His sheep in His hand?

John 10

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

²⁹ My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.

But God’s mercy is in the heavens as well as in the earth.

Isaiah 40

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high...

...and see the stars. It is His power, His mercy, that keeps them in their places. His own hand guides them in their orbits. Because He is strong in power, not one is lacking. It is God’s powerful mercy that, prevents them coming in collision. Or falling upon this earth and crushing it.

What is the force that operates between the heavenly bodies? Men call it “gravitation;” the Bible tells us that it is God’s own power, that is, it is the working of the “Saviour which is Christ the Lord.” *Luke* 2:11.

If the words “cohesion” and “gravitation” hide the personal presence of the Lord, don’t use them. In any case, don’t say that cohesion, gravitation, chemical affinity, etc., do certain things. Don’t think that the thing done is the One who does it.

Don't forget that God's everlasting power and Divinity are revealed in the things that are made.

Does not this help you to grasp the reality of the power that is put forth to save us? The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. So in everything that God has made we may see the Gospel, if we do not close our eyes in unbelief. Not only in every living thing, but in every rock, and in every grain of sand, as well as in the sun, moon, and stars, God shows us the power that redeems those who trust Him,—the power of the life of Christ, the power of the cross.

How can men who live on the solid earth, and who even dare trust that the unstable water will hold together sufficiently to bear them up, refuse to trust the Lord, whose all-pervading presence makes it possible for them to live at all?

2. THE SPIRIT'S WORK

Genesis 1

² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Psalms 139

⁷ Whither shall I go from Your Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Your presence?

⁸ If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

¹⁰ Even there shall Your hand lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

John 14

¹⁶ I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever;

¹⁷ Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you.

¹⁸ I will not leave you comfortless [or orphans]; I will come to you.

John 16

¹³ When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself...

¹⁴ He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

¹⁵ All things that the Father has are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.

Romans 8

¹⁰ The Spirit is life because of righteousness.

John 6

⁶³ It is the Spirit that quickens;...the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.

Ephesians 3

¹⁴ I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
¹⁵ Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
¹⁶ That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might, by His Spirit in the inner man.

Matthew 28

¹⁸ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
¹⁹ Go you therefore...

Acts 1

⁸ You shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses.

1 Corinthians 12

⁴ There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
⁵ And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord.
⁶ And there are diversities of workings, but the same God who works all in all.
⁷ But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal.
⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit, the word of wisdom; and to another, the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit;
¹¹ But in all these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally as He will.

THE word “moved,” in *Genesis* 1:2, is from a Hebrew word signifying “to cherish one’s young, to brood or hover over, as the eagle its young.” It occurs in *Deuteronomy* 32:11. The Syriac equivalent, which is far more common,

“is used of birds which brood over their young; of a mother cherishing her infant; of Elisha cherishing the dead body of the child; also of a voice descending from heaven, and hovering in the air; also to pity.”¹

There is no spot in the universe where the Holy Spirit of

¹ Gesenius’ Hebrew and English Lexicon.

God is not. Read this in the second text quoted in this lesson.

Read the texts that tell plainly that the Holy Spirit is the direct Representative, the personal Presence of God, both Father and Son. So God is present in every place by His Spirit.

Jeremiah 23

²¹ Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

This is the Scripture teaching as to the “Real Presence.”

The word “hell,” in *Psalms* 139:8, which occurs so often in the Bible, is really the same as our common word “hole.” Both are from one and the same Anglo-Saxon word. The Hebrew word from which it is translated is often rendered “grave,” or “pit.” It signifies, as will readily be seen, the portion of the earth under the surface, the hidden, secret part. So we learn from the text that there is no place, even in the inner part of the very earth itself, where the Spirit of God is not.

Psalms 95

⁴ In His hand are the deep places of the earth.

When God strengthens one with might, it is by His Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the power of God. We have already learned that Christ is “the power of God,” and this lesson tells us that the Spirit takes the things of Christ, and shows them to us.

So it is that “the invisible things” of God, “even His everlasting power and Divinity,” which “are clearly seen” in “the things that are made,” become plain to us by the working of the Spirit. *Romans* 1:20. He shows Christ, “the power of God” to us in the things that are made.

The Spirit is everywhere, in heaven and in the lowest and most remote parts of the earth, always the same Divine power. He is Christ’s Representative, simply revealing Christ’s power. Thus we see that in the most literal sense “all power” “in heaven and in earth” is given unto Christ, “the Author of eternal salvation.” Remember that the Gospel of Christ is the

power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

A man can do a great many different kinds of work with the same strength. The same steam power can be applied in a great variety of ways. The power that pushes, can also pull. The same power that lifts up, can also cast down. So,

1 Corinthians 12

⁶ There are diversities of workings, but the same God who works all in all.

This that is said of the power that works in the church, is as true of the power that appears in creation, since the power that is revealed in the things that are made, is the power by which God saves those who believe. All the power, or force, as it is usually termed, that is seen in matter whether in earth or heaven, is but the working of the one Spirit of God.

Men have changed the truth of God into a lie. *Romans* 1:35. Instead of recognizing God in His works, they said that the works themselves were God. So they “worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.” *Romans* 1:25.

Not only so, but the ancients, in their limited idea of God, thinking that He could do but one thing, made every different work, and every different manifestation of energy, a different god. They had a god of the heavens, and a god of the earth; a god of the winds, and a god of the waves; gods for trees, and gods working different things in men.

1 Corinthians 8

⁶ But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.

The foolishness of the men of old who could not see the power of the one God in all things that exist, is perpetuated unto this very day, by the men of earth who profess to be wise. Every distinct manifestation of energy is regarded as a different power or force, and to each one a different name has

been given, as gravitation, cohesion, chemical affinity, electricity, etc.

Men will tell us that such and such a thing is accomplished by the power of gravitation, and another thing by electric force, and another by chemical affinity, as though there were so many different gods working. It is as though they should say that it requires a different power to plow the ground from what it does to sow the grain, and that a still different power is needed to reap it, and another to thresh it, and still another to lift the bags of grain into a cart.

But we all know that one man, with the strength that is given him, can do all these things. Even so one God by one Spirit shows His power in an infinite variety of ways in all creation.

The Spirit of God hovered or brooded over the face of the waters in the beginning, and brought order out of chaos. Matter was thus as it were impregnated with force, because the same Spirit of power still works in it. The so-called different forces, cohesion, gravitation, etc., are not different forces, but different manifestations of the one Spirit's power, working to preserve the earth, and make it a safe dwelling place for men.

The Word of the Lord is Spirit and life. So the power of the Spirit in all creation is the power of the Word that upholds all things. God's Word is not a dead letter, but a living Spirit.

Recall the last lesson, in which we found that power is mercy. The power of God, which is seen in all creation, is the mercy by which He saves us through "the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly." *Titus* 3:5.

Recall also the fact that the word rendered "moved," which describes what the Spirit of God did to the unformed earth, has also the idea of "to pity."

Thus we may know that God, in filling the earth with His power, has filled it with His tender love and pity for mankind. The whole earth is full of His mercy. *Psalms* 119:61. The power by which the earth holds together,—the force that is seen in all created things, whether in heaven or in earth,—is the power by which the Lord protects His people, when He gathers them as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings. *Matthew* 23:37.

Psalms 36

⁷ How excellent is Your loving-kindness, O God therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

Psalms 91

¹ He that dwells in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

⁴ He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings shall you trust.

How true it is, that God has stretched out His hand, and caused “all the ends of the earth” to see His salvation.

When all Your mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I’m lost
In wonder, love, and praise.

3. THE POWER THAT DRAWS

Genesis 1

² The earth was without form, and void;...and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Psalms 139

⁷ Whither shall I go from Your Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Your presence?

⁹ If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.

Jeremiah 23

²³ Am I a God at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off?

²⁴ Can any hide himself in secret place that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth?

Isaiah 40

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking.

Job 26

⁷ He stretches out the North over empty space, and hangs the earth upon nothing.

Psalms 48

¹ Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain.

² Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North [or, more literally, is Mount Zion, the extremest North), the city of the great King.

³ God has made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge.

Isaiah 14

¹² How are you fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the morning! how are you cut down to the ground, which did lay low the nations!

¹³ And you said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: and I will sit upon

the Mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north;

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.

John 6

⁴³ Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

⁴⁴ No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him.

John 12

³² I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] unto me.

Jeremiah 31

⁹ The Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you.

READ these texts until you can see the following facts clearly stated:

It was the Spirit of God, brooding over the face of the waters in the beginning, that brought order out of chaos.

God's presence by the same Spirit is still in every part of the universe. He fills heaven and earth. Hell, that is, the inmost recess of the earth beneath, "is naked before Him." *Job* 26:6.

Lamentations 3

²² It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.

²³ They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

The present continual working of the Spirit in every place, even in each individual particle of matter that compose the earth, is what still makes it a safe place to dwell on. That power causes the atoms to cohere:

Colossians 1

¹⁷ ...in Him all things hold together.

So that the earth is a solid body, instead of a vast number of scattered particles.

God is not only near at hand, but He is “afar off.” It is His power that is doing the work which men call “gravitation.” It holds the innumerable heavenly bodies in their places, so that not one is lacking.

It is a fact that there is an attractive force, a power that draws, in everything. Suspend two ivory balls from a height, and it will be seen that the distance between their centers is not so great as the distance of the two points from which they are suspended. If a ball be suspended a few inches from the face of a high cliff which ascends perpendicularly, it will be found that the ball is drawn toward the rock.

In every solid there is a strong force at work holding the particles together. The particles of water are not held together so closely. This drawing power is seen most clearly in what is called a magnet, and in the needle of the compass, which always, in the most mysterious manner, points toward the north.

There is something mysterious in this attraction to the north. The word in the Hebrew Bible, which is always used for “the north,” signifies, “hidden, secret, concealed.” God stretches out the north,—the hidden, secret place,—over empty space, and hangs the earth on nothing. *Job* 26:7. That mysterious power emanating from the north, holds it in its appointed place, and likewise holds all the other heavenly bodies.

This mysterious power is the power of God, whose dwelling place is “in the uttermost parts of the north.”

Jeremiah 1

¹⁴ Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

It is from the temple of God that the plagues of the wrath

of God are sent forth. *Revelation* 15:1, 6-8; 16:1. Only those who dwell “in the secret place” of the Most High, will be kept safe from the plagues. *Psalms* 91:1-11.

Psalms 62

¹¹ ...power belongs unto God.

His everlasting power is seen in the things that are made. *Romans* 1:20. Christ is the power of God (*1 Corinthians* 1:24), and the Spirit is His Representative everywhere. All power in heaven and in earth is in His hands. *Matthew* 28:18. The power that directs all the heavenly bodies in their orbits, leading them forth and drawing them back again, so that there is not the slightest confusion, is the power of the Spirit of God. The attractive power of God’s own personality everywhere present, is that which holds the universe in order.

The cross of Christ is the power of God, for Christ, the power of God, is set forth only as the crucified One. Christ cannot truly be preached except as “Christ crucified.” Therefore every manifestation of power in the universe is but the manifestation of the power of the cross. The cross is the center of salvation because the crucified Christ, the power of God, is the center of the universe. So the power which is actively working in every particle of matter, and which is so visibly at work everywhere, is the power of the cross, by which God is working to draw all men to Himself.

God is real, and His salvation is real. When He tells us about the power of His salvation, He does not leave us to our imagination, nor does He refer to something vague and indefinite and intangible, but shows the power actually working before our eyes, and even in our own bodies. The Word which is preached unto us, and which we are to proclaim to others, is:

1 John 1

¹ ...that which was from the beginning, which we have heard,

which we have seen with our eyes.

Therefore,

Ephesians 3

²⁰ Unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

²¹ Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

4. THE LIGHT

Genesis 1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

² And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

Psalms 119

¹³⁰ The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding unto the simple.

Proverbs 6

²³ For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.

1 John 1

⁵ This is the message which we have heard from Him, and announce unto you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

2 Corinthians 4

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

Psalms 70

¹⁹ Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause Your face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Psalms 139

¹¹ If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

¹² Yea, the darkness hides not from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.

Psalms 112

⁴ Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness.

Micah 7

⁶ Rejoice not against me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto

me.

Psalm 27

¹ The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

John 8

¹² I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not
walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

NOTHING in the world is clearer or more easy to be seen than light; and the Word of God is light, the proof of this being that when He spoke, immediately there was light. Therefore if we take the texts of this lesson as the pure Word of the God who is light, and who is “the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning” (*James 1:17*), we shall find them very plain and easy to understand, and wonderfully enlightening to our eyes.

The Spirit of God brooded over the face of the deep, in the beginning, and brought order out of chaos, and caused the light to shine forth. God’s Word is Spirit and life, and the Word is light. So it came to pass that when the Word went into the darkness, the light shone forth.

Take notice that it is no figure of speech when it is said that the Word of God is light. It is real light, such as “is sweet” (*Ecclesiastes 11:7*) to behold. The light which we have by day, and by night too, is the light that comes from the Word of God. There is no light in the world except that which comes from God’s Word.

1 John 1

⁵ ...God is light.

Christ is the Light of the world. He is:

John 1

⁹ ...the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

The light by which every man in this world sees, is the shining of the Lord's countenance.

"If we walk in the light as He is in the light" (1 *John* 1:7), that is, if we recognize the Presence of God in the light that shines upon us every day, then we shall walk in the light of His countenance, and in His name shall we rejoice all the day, and in His righteousness shall we be exalted. *Psalms* 89:15-16. Thus we shall have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ. 1 *John* 1:3, 5, 7.

He who knows "the joyful sound" of God's Word, knows that it gives light, and while he listens to it he cannot possibly walk in darkness; for the Lord God will enlighten his darkness. *Psalms* 18:28.

Men have discovered this much of truth, that light is motion.

Waves of light, though they can pass through air, are not waves of the air, as sound waves are. Waves of light can cross the most perfect vacuum; they travel thousands of miles in the vacuous space between the stars. They are waves of another medium which, so far as we know, exists all through space, and which we call, using Sir Isaac Newton's term, the ether. If you ask me what the ether is made of, let me frankly say, I do not know.

But if light consists of waves, and if those waves can travel across the millions of miles that separate the stars from the earth, then it is clear that they must be waves of something; they are not air-waves, nor water-waves, because interstellar space is devoid both of air and water. They are waves of a medium which, though millions of times less dense than water or air, has yet a property that resists being torn or sheared asunder; exceeding the resistance to shear even of hard-tempered steel.²

Only the one who reads and with all simplicity of mind be-

² *Light Visible and Invisible*, by Dr. Sylvanus P. Thomson, page 108.

lieves the Word of God, knows that this motion is due to the Spirit of God. Force energy, life, is motion, and so far at least as this world is concerned, the beginning of it all was when “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” How richly God has endowed the world with the gift of His Holy Spirit!

Psalm 107

⁸ Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

What more could God do than He has done to impress upon man the reality of His saving power? The “Word of Truth,” the Gospel of our salvation, is the Word which commanded the light to shine out of darkness. If we believe, then we receive that Word into our hearts, and so the light shines in:

2 Corinthians 4

⁶ ...to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

That Word which is proclaimed unto us, is the Word “which was from the beginning.” It was light then; it is light still. So every ray of light that comes to this earth,—and this means actual light, that enables us to see,—is a Gospel sermon.

In this connection read the nineteenth *Psalm*. “The heavens declare the glory of God,” and preach the Gospel; for the Gospel message consists in this:

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God, and give glory to Him...

Their words have gone to the end of the world, so that every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people have heard the Gospel. Compare *Psalm* 19:4 with *Romans* 10:15-18.

In the Gospel the righteousness of God is revealed. *Romans* 1:17. And the law of God is His righteousness. *Isaiah* 51:7.

Therefore the heavens in proclaiming the Gospel of light, make known that

Psalm 19

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

⁸ The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Thus it is a reality that the Lord has made bare His Holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

But the declaration of the heavens is not sufficient. When in addition to the preaching of the voiceless creation, the Gospel of the Kingdom, whose rule is “the perfect law of liberty” (*James* 1:25), is proclaimed in all the world by creatures to whom God has given tongues, then, and then only, will the end come.

Matthew 5

¹⁴ You are the light of the world.

¹⁶ Let your light shine.

5. THE LIGHT OF LIFE

Genesis 1

² Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

⁵ And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John 1

⁹ That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

John 9

¹ And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth.

⁵ And Jesus said, As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.

⁶ When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent).

⁷ He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

¹⁴ And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

1 John 1

² The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.

Psalm 36

⁹ With You is the Fountain of Life; in Your light shall we see light.

Matthew 5

¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine, for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

² For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you.

³ And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Isaiah 49

⁶ I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, that you should be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Ephesians 5

¹³ All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever makes manifest is light.

John 3

¹⁹ This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

²⁰ For every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

²¹ But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Philippians 1

⁹ This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

¹⁰ That you may approve things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.

LIGHT comes only from the Word of God, as in the beginning. Apart from the Word of God, there is no light.

There is no light in the world except the light that comes from God's Word. Therefore those who reject the Word of the Lord are walking in darkness, and if they persist in that rejection, there is nothing for them in the future but "the blackness of darkness for ever." *Jude* 1:13.

The Word of the Lord is Spirit and life. So, as we have seen, the light that shines upon the earth is light from the Spirit of God. There is therefore no need for anybody's being in ignorance of the Spirit.

The word which gives light is the Word of life. The Word is life, and the life is the light of men. The light by which men walk in this world, is the life of Christ. The condemnation is that the life has been manifested, and all men have seen it, and yet few will recognize it.

The life of Christ,—the true light,—lights every man that comes into the world. *John* 1:9. There is not a man in the world who can plead ignorance of the life of Christ. It will be no excuse to plead that we did not know that the light was the life. The Bible has told us.

Even if we did not have the Bible, we know that light is life, not only for man but for the lower animals and plants. That light gives life is apparent to everybody. And as to the source of light, we know at least that we did not make it. It was here before we were. It is a free gift to us, as free to the poor as to the rich.

This of itself is enough to show that it is not from man; for nothing that man makes is "without money and without price." But every free gift is worth thanks. The least and the only return that we can make for so wonderful a blessing as light, is to give thanks for it, not once, merely, but as often as we receive it, which is all the time.

Now if we look about to see whom we are to thank for the

light, we shall at once discover that, like every good and perfect gift, it is “from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.” *James* 1:17. So by continually giving thanks to the Giver of the light, we should be kept in the right way; for the promise is:

Proverbs 3

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

The life of Christ is given to the world as freely as the light, for the light is His life. No one need fear that there is not enough to supply everybody to all eternity. When people say that they cannot think it possible that the Lord can save them, they virtually say that they do not think that the Lord has life enough for everybody.

But this doubt has been answered before it could be made, for the light is inexhaustible. If there were a thousand times as many people in the world as there are now, not a soul would have any the less light. By using the light, we do not deprive anybody else of it. A thousand candles may be lighted from a single candle without diminishing its light in the least. So the life of Christ is inexhaustible. He can give the whole of it to ever one in the world, and still have it all left.

Proof that Christ is literally the light of the world, is given in the case of the healing of the man that was born blind. There was a man who had never seen the light. Jesus said that He was the light of the world, and to demonstrate the reality of the saying, He made the man see.

This shows us that the light of day is the light that comes from Christ, and that by it we may receive salvation, if we receive it in faith. It shows us also that the Lord has not only life enough for everybody, but that He can give the light of life to those who have not the power to see.

With the Lord is the Fountain of Life. If we drink from that fountain, receiving the life by faith, we shall also be light. As Christ is the light of the world, so He says to His disciples,

Matthew 5

¹⁴ You are the light of the world.

We have no light, however, except that which comes from the Word. We can shine only by the light of the glory of God. This is given to us, as we have already learned, by the Word which commanded the light to shine out of darkness. We do not make the light. We can arise and shine, only because our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon us. *Isaiah* 60:1.

The Lord gives us light, not merely that we may enjoy it, but that we may be light and salvation to others.

We are exhorted to be sincere. The word “sincere” means literally “without wax.” It is derived from the terms used in ancient times in the preparation of honey. When it was perfectly pure, without any wax in it, it would stand the test of the light; if held up to the light, no foreign matter could be seen in it. The light would pass through it. The honey was then sincere, that is, pure, without wax.

Ephesians 5

¹³ Whatsoever does make manifest is light.

If we allow the life of Christ to dwell in us and control us, then on coming to the light it will be manifest that our works are wrought in God.

There is nothing that is not manifest to the light of the Word:

Hebrews 4

¹³ ...all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

¹² The Word of God...is a discerner of the thoughts and in-

tents of the heart.

The Lord has not left us without practical demonstration of this truth also. The so-called “x-rays,” enable us to see through material that is ordinarily opaque, as wood or iron. Human flesh offers no obstruction whatever to these rays of light. And yet the rays themselves are invisible.

Nobody can ever understand the secret of it, because nobody can ever fathom the mystery of the life of God; but God has allowed us to have this additional demonstration of the fact that nothing can hide away from the light of His countenance. His light, and the sight of His eyes, can pierce even to the depths of the earth.

Jeremiah 23

²⁴ Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

This should move us to ready confession of our sins, since they cannot possibly be hid from Him. It is also most encouraging to us, because, since it is the life of Christ that saves, and the life is the light, we may know that we cannot possibly have sunk so low that the life cannot reach us.

Psalm 90

⁸ You have set our iniquities before Yourself; our secret sins in the light of Your countenance.

Thank the Lord for that, instead of cringing at the thought, and vainly trying to hide the sins from the light of His countenance. Why? Because in His glance the sin will be driven away and consumed. Evil shall not dwell with Him.

Psalm 5

⁴ For You are not a God that has pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with You.

Ah, then if we do not shrink from His presence, the sins must flee. It is the work of light not only to reveal corruption,

but also to remove it. Disease germs are destroyed by light. Thus God would show us how the light of His countenance cleanses from iniquity.

1 John 1

⁷ If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

6. CLOUDS AND RAIN

Genesis 1

⁶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

⁷ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.

⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

Psalms 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament shows His handiwork.

Ephesians 2

¹⁰ We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

Psalms 97

¹ The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

² Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne.

Psalms 104

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty.

² Who covers Yourself with light as with a garment; who stretches out the heavens as a curtain;

³ Who lays the beams of His chambers in the waters; who makes the clouds His chariot; who walks upon the wings of the wind.

Nahum 1

³ The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm; and the clouds are the dust of His feet.

Jeremiah 10

¹⁰ The Lord is the true God He is the living God, and an ever-

lasting King...

¹² He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion.

¹³ When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings with rain, and brings forth the wind out of His treasures.

Job 36

²⁶ Behold, God is great, and we know Him not; the number of His years is unsearchable.

²⁷ For He draws up the drops of water, which distill in rain from His vapor;

²⁸ Which the skies pour down and drop upon man abundantly.

Job 37

² Hearken you unto the noise of His voice, and the sound that goes out of His mouth.

³ He sends it forth under the whole heaven, and His lightning unto the ends of the earth.

⁴ After it a voice roars; He thunders with the voice of His majesty; and He stays them not when His voice is heard.

⁵ God thunders marvelously with His voice; great things does He, which we cannot comprehend,

⁶ For He says to the snow, Fall on the earth; likewise to the shower of rain, and to the showers of His mighty rain.

Job 36

³⁰ Can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, the thunderings of His pavilion?

³² He covers His hands with the lightning; and gives it a charge that it strike the mark.

Job 37

¹⁶ Did you know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge?

Job 26

⁸ He binds up the waters in His thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

READ these texts as the living words of the living God. The whole of understanding them is in believing that they mean just what they say.

Man, as well as the firmament, shows the handiwork of God. In Christ are all things created, and we also are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. If we believe that God is personally present “in the firmament of His power” (*Psalms* 150:1), then when we consider the power that is revealed there we shall know and rejoice in “the power which works in us.” *Ephesians* 3:20.

Look in the margin of the Revised Version, in *Genesis* 1:6, and note that the word rendered “firmament” is the Hebrew for “expanse.” God made an expanse, a vast space to divide the waters from the waters. The stars are set in the expanse of the heavens. This idea of an expanse is found in *Psalms* 104:2: “who stretches out the heavens like a curtain.”

That God is actually and really present “in the firmament of His power” (*Psalms* 150:1), is seen in the statement that He “makes the clouds His chariot” (*Psalms* 104:3), and...

Nahum 1

³ ...has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the, dust of His feet.

Isaiah 19

¹ Behold, the Lord rides upon a swift cloud.

Jeremiah 10

¹³ When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens.

Job 37

⁴ ...He thunders with the voice of His majesty.

⁵ God thunders marvelously with His voice; great things does He, which we cannot comprehend.

If children were taught the truth about the thunder and the storm, “as the truth is in Jesus,” they would never cower in

terror when the voice of God is heard in the heavens.

Psalm 89

¹⁵ Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Your countenance.

¹⁶ In Your name shall they rejoice all the day; and in Your righteousness shall they be exalted.

Job 38

²⁸ Has the rain a father?

Has it? Read the answer in the Bible. Where does the rain come from? From the clouds. How does it get there?

Job 36

²⁷ He draws up the drops of water, which distill in rain from His vapor;

²⁸ Which the skies pour down and drop upon man abundantly.

Is the poor Indian, whose untutored mind sees God in the cloud, and hears Him in the wind, to be pitied for his ignorance? Is he in reality so “untutored” as the civilized man whose learning has caused him to leave God out of all his so-called science?

Job 36

²⁹ Can any understand the spreadings of the clouds?

Job 37

¹⁶ Do you know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous workings of Him which is perfect in knowledge?

These are questions to which no man even in these days is presumptuous enough to say, “Yes.”

Job 26

⁸ He binds up the waters in His thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them.

No scientist can explain the power by which the clouds are upheld in the sky. Only the first and only book of science, the Bible, tells us what it is. It is the “eternal power” of the Cre-

ator, which is clearly seen in the clouds as well as in all other things that He has made.

By a little calculation we can form a slight idea of the wonderful power by which the waters are bound up in the thick clouds so that the cloud is not rent under them. This calculation can easily be made if we remember that a cubic foot of water weighs sixty-two and one-half pounds. Let us take a comparatively small space. Perhaps the area best known by all is the space covered by the Parliament buildings. A cloud holding sufficient water to cause it to rain to the depth of just an inch over that space alone, would contain over twelve hundred and fifty tons of water.

A better idea of this weight can be obtained if we consider it as coal instead of water, for we are accustomed to seeing tons of coal. Think then of twelve hundred and fifty tons of coal being suspended over that small area. And think of the great clouds that send down their contents over miles and miles of country. What an infinite weight of water is floating about in the air over our heads!

What holds this water thus suspended? There can be but one answer: It is the hand of God.

Isaiah 40

¹³ [He] has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand.

Job 37

¹⁶ The balancings of the clouds [reveal the] wondrous workings of Him which is perfect in knowledge.

Jesus said:

John 12

³² I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Now we know that the power by which He draws is very real. It is power that is constantly in operation before our

eyes, drawing up the drops of water, “which distill in rain from His vapor.” *Job* 36:27. It is a real, tangible power, to which we are to submit. Why should we not quietly yield to this power that tends to draw us upward to God, instead of, by our stubborn resistance, compelling it to “strive” with us?

When the Apostle sets Christ forth as the One who by Himself purges our sins, he speaks of Him as “upholding all things by the Word of His power.” *Hebrews* 1:3. The clouds of water give us something tangible by which we can grasp the power that saves us when we believe. We may trust Him, because “all power” “in heaven and in earth” (*Matthew* 28:18) is His. Then:

Psalms 150

¹ Praise the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power.

² Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness.

Psalms 148

⁴ Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, and you waters that be above the heavens.

⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded, and they were created.

⁶ He has also established them for ever and ever: He has made a decree which shall not pass away.

In the latest rendering of the Psalms, this last verse, as it is also indicated in the margin of the Revised Version, reads thus:

⁶ He established them for ever and ever: He gave them a law which they may not transgress.

7. RAIN AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

Job 38

²⁵ Who has divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

²⁶ To cause it to rain upon the earth where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein is no man;

²⁷ To satisfy the desolate and waste ground: and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

²⁸ Has the rain a father? or who has begotten the drops of dew?

Jeremiah 2

¹² Be astonished, O you heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be you very desolate, says the Lord.

¹³ For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Psalms 36

⁸ They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Your house; and You shall make them drink of the river of Your pleasures.

⁹ For with You is the Fountain of life.

Revelation 22

¹ And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.

Revelation 5

⁶ And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 7

¹⁷ The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.

Psalms 65

⁹ You visit the earth, and water it; You greatly enrich it with

the river of God, which is full of water; You prepare them corn, when You have so provided for it.

¹⁰ You water the ridges thereof abundantly; You settle the furrows thereof; You make it soft with showers; You bless the springing thereof.

Psalm 89

¹⁴ Righteousness and judgment [justice] are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth shall go before Your face.

Hosea 10

¹² Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you.

Isaiah 45

⁸ Drop down, you heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it.

Hosea 14

⁵ I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

THE rain has a Father, for it is God Himself who has begotten the drops of dew. He draws the drops of water to Himself, and sends the rain upon the earth by His Word.

God is the Fountain of living waters. With Him is the fountain of life. This is not a figure of speech, but an actual fact, for out of the throne of God and of the Lamb proceeds the river of life.

The Lamb slain,—Christ crucified,—is in the midst of the throne. Therefore the river of life proceeds from the crucified Saviour. So “the glorious Lord” is in reality “unto us a place of broad rivers and streams.” *Isaiah* 33:21. All who live in Him cannot fail to be led unto “living fountains of waters.” “The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall” be their Shepherd. *Revelation* 7:17.

Psalm 23

¹ The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

Where does the rain come from? Read *Psalm* 65, and see. God waters the earth and enriches it with the river of God, which is full of water. How is it that it is full of water? It is the life of God Himself, who is infinite.

Don't argue with this text, and try to reason it out, which means to reason it away. Believe what it says, that the rain which waters the earth and makes it fruitful comes from the river of God. The rain certainly does not create itself. It is not self-existent. No; it has a Father; it comes direct from the bosom of God. Truly,

1 John 1

² The Life was manifested, and we have seen it.

God is "the living God." His throne is a living throne. See the first chapter of *Ezekiel*. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of it. God's law is His righteousness. *Isaiah* 51:7. So the foundation of the throne of God is His living law, His own life. See this indicated in the ark of the sanctuary, in which were the tables of stone.

Christ is in the midst of the throne. He is the "Living Stone." *1 Peter* 2:4. The law of God is in His heart. *Psalm* 40:8. So Christ, the life of God, is the foundation of His throne,—the Living Stone, on which is written the living law.

It is from this "sure foundation" the Rock, that the river of life flows. *Exodus* 17:6. It springs forth from the living law,—God's righteousness. Thus it brings the righteousness of the law—the righteousness of God—with it.

The rain that waters the earth comes from the river of God. It is the life of God in visible form. So it is a literal fact that

God rains righteousness upon us, and the skies pour it down. No soul has any excuse for ungodliness and unrighteousness, for “abundance of grace and of the gifts of righteousness” (*Romans* 5:17) has been bestowed on all.

Matthew 5

⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Why then are not all saved, whether they believe or not? Since righteousness is literally rained down upon all mankind, why is it necessary to believe in order to be saved? Because believing is receiving. Believing is breaking up the fallow ground. If the ground is not broken up, then the rain runs off without producing any crop.

Hebrews 6

⁷ For the earth which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it, and brings forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God:

⁸ But that which bears thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

⁹ But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation.

Psalms 145

⁹ The Lord is good unto all; and His tender mercies are over all His works.

See how abundantly, how lavishly, God bestows His gifts. He has enough, and to spare. He does not need, even if He had the disposition, to measure out the gift of life, lest the supply should run short.

John 3

³⁴ God gives not the Spirit by measure.

This He demonstrates to us, in that He causes it to...

Job 38

²⁶ ...rain on the earth where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein is no man;

²⁷ To satisfy the desolate and waste ground.

He lets the rain fall on the barren rock, and on the wide expanse of ocean. So freely does He bestow His life upon mankind.

8. THE RIVER OF LIFE

Isaiah 33

²⁰ Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; your eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

²¹ But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams.

Revelation 22

¹ And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb.

Revelation 5

⁶ And I saw in the midst of the throne...a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 7

¹⁷ The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life.

John 19

³³ But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs;

³⁴ But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

1 John 5

⁸ There are three that bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one.

John 7

³⁷ Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

³⁸ He that believes on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

³⁹ But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on

Him should receive.

Isaiah 44

³ I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your offspring;

⁴ And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

Psalms 51

¹² Restore unto me the joy of your salvation; and uphold me with Your free Spirit.

Titus 3

⁴ When the kindness of God our Saviour and His love toward man appeared,

⁵ Not by works done in righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost,

⁶ Which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Psalms 1

¹ Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night.

³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he does shall prosper.

GOD Himself is a place of broad rivers and streams. The river of life flows from Him. It is a real stream, because from it comes the rain upon the earth, as we saw in our last lesson. It is the life of God in visible form.

Christ crucified is in the midst of the throne, whence the water of life flows, so that the water flows direct from the cross.

The law of God was always in the heart of Christ, even

when He was here in the flesh, so that He Himself was the throne of God. He has told us that His body was the temple of God. *John* 2:19-21. So it was fitting that the water of life should flow from His side as He hung on the cross.

On the cross Christ gave His life for us and all mankind. So the water that flowed from His side was the water of life. It was mingled with blood, for the water and the blood are one. So we see that the river of water of life is also the blood, the life, of the Lamb. The Lamb slain is in the midst of the throne, the source of the river of life.

1 John 5

⁸ ...the Spirit, and the water, and the blood...agree in one.

All three are life. So the water of life flowing from the throne of God,—from the slain Lamb,—is the Spirit of God. Christ Himself has told us this in so many words.

The world cannot receive the Spirit of God, “because it sees Him not.” *John* 14:17.

1 Corinthians 2

¹⁴ The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Our physical eyes are not adapted to see spiritual things; therefore if we could be permitted to enter heaven just as we are, we could not see the throne of God, nor the water of life, any more than we can see them where we are. But at the resurrection we shall receive a spiritual body (*1 Corinthians* 15:44-51), and then we shall see the river of life, which is the Spirit of God. We can then see the Spirit as plainly as we now see our earthly friends.

But God gives us the Spirit, in order that, receiving Him by faith, we may become spiritual, and thus with our spiritual eyesight, that is, by faith in the words of God, we may see the

Spirit in the gifts of God. The world cannot receive Him, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him:

John 14

¹⁷ ...but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you.

The Spirit is the water of life, and so it is always spoken of as being “poured out” upon us. The reality of the gift of the Spirit, and the freeness of the gift, is shown to us by the rain, the life of which is the Spirit. The fullness of the salvation of God is made known to us in the rain that refreshes the earth, and by which we have life.

1 John 1

⁷ If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

The blood of Christ is the water of life, and is also the Spirit, and so it is that we are cleansed by...

Titus 3

⁵ ...the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

All the water that is in the heavens and earth comes from the throne of God, from the river of life. Water cleanses. This everybody knows. Thus it is that God makes us see the reality of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

The water that Christ gives is “living water.” It is flowing, not stagnant. Flowing water, living water, is pure. Even if impurity be thrown into it, it soon becomes pure. All the sewage of the city of Paris flows into the Seine, yet forty miles below the city there is not a trace of impurity in the water. And this is in this sin-cursed earth. With what confidence then may we not come to the...

Zechariah 13

¹ ...fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabi-

tants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

And the reality of this cleansing is made known to us afresh every day, as we wash our bodies in water, or use water for the cleansing of our garments.

How freely and literally God has bestowed—“poured out”—His Spirit upon all flesh! Why will not all men receive Him? Read again the words of the scriptures that compose this lesson, and see how easily we may receive the Holy Spirit simply by believing. Do you believe?

What a wonderful blessing is promised to those who meditate in the law of God. What is the law of God? Can you not see that it is His life, and that it is in everything that He has made? What a grand thing to be sure of prosperity in every undertaking!

Let us then meditate in the law of God as revealed in His works. Let us pray,

Psalm 119

¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law.

Psalm 13

⁴ You, Lord, have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands.

9. THE AIR

Genesis 1

⁶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters...

⁷ ...and it was so,

⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven.

Psalms 57

¹⁰ Your mercy is great unto the heavens, and Your truth unto the clouds.

Psalms 36

⁵ Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds.

Psalms 33

⁶ By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Genesis 2

⁷ The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into His nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

John 14

⁶ Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

Acts 17

²⁴ God that made the world and all things therein...

²⁵ ...gives to all life, and breath, and all things.

²⁸ For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.

Job 12

⁹ Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this?

¹⁰ In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

Job 27

³ All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils;

⁴ My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter

deceit.

Job 34

¹⁴ If He set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself His Spirit and His breath;

¹⁵ All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

Exodus 14

²¹ And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

Exodus 15

⁸ With the blast of Your nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as a heap, and the waters were congealed in the heart of the sea.

Ezekiel 37

⁹ Then said He unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy son of man, and say to the wind, Thus says the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

¹⁰ So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived.

John 20

²¹ Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father has sent me, even so send I you.

²² And when He had said this He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive the Holy Ghost.

ALL things have come into existence by the breath of the Lord; there is nothing that is not the offspring of His own life.

Lamentations 3

²² It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.

²³ They are new every morning: great is Your faithfulness.

But for the breath that God gives us, we could not live a moment; so it is because the Lord gives us breath, that we are

not consumed. The air that God gives us is an expression of His faithful mercy and compassion.

Thus it is that God has surrounded the very earth with grace and mercy. The air is an atmosphere of mercy. Everybody on earth lives and moves in the atmosphere of God's grace. If we believe this, and take the constant gift as coming from Him, we shall breathe in righteousness; as well as drink it.

Romans 1

¹⁷ The just shall live by faith.

But everybody in the world lives by breathing. Breathing is something that cannot be omitted for a moment. It must be kept up constantly. Now if we glorified the Lord not only with our breath but in our breath, if we acknowledged that the breath which we have is His, thus allowing Him to direct the life that comes by breathing, our life would be one of faith, and it would be righteous.

The just therefore live by faith only by breathing faith. Jesus is the truth and the life. There is no life but His. We live by breathing. Therefore we breathe His life.

Acts 17

²⁸ In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

This is true of everybody; but only those who recognize the fact get any real benefit from it.

Psalms 49

²⁰ Man that is in honor and understands not, is like the beasts that perish.

The air we breathe is the breath of God. The wind that gently moves the leaves of the trees, or that stirs the sea to its depths, is the breath of His nostrils.

In the beginning God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. But we live by the very same means, and in the

very same manner that all mankind have always lived. We have exactly the same air that Adam had. Therefore we also breathe by the breathing of God. The Spirit of God is in our nostrils. This is as plain as the Word of God. Read again the scriptures that teach us this. Let them be firmly fixed in mind. Learn to live by faith.

How wondrously free are the gifts of God! How free is the gift of God's Spirit, God's life! "As free as the air."

Psalm 107

⁸ Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.

⁹ For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry souls with goodness.

Psalm 150

⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

10. THE SEAS

Genesis 1

⁹ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so.

¹⁰ And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good.

Revelation 14

⁶ And I saw another angel fly to the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people,

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Psalms 96

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof.

¹² Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

¹³ Before the Lord; for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.

Psalms 33

⁶ By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the depth in storehouses.

⁸ Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

Psalms 104

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty,

² Who covers Yourself with light as with a garment; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain;

³ Who lays the beams of His chambers in the waters; who makes the clouds His chariot; who walks upon the wings of the wind.

Jeremiah 5

²² Do you not fear me? says the Lord; will you not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.

Job 38

⁸ Who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth, as if it had issued from the womb?

⁹ When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it,

¹⁰ And prescribed for it my decree, and set bars and doors,

¹¹ And said, Hitherto shall you come and no further; and here shall your proud waves be stayed?

Isaiah 40

¹² Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand?

Psalms 139

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the seas,

¹⁰ Even there shall Your hand lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

Psalms 65

⁵ By terrible things will You answer us in righteousness, O God of our salvation; You are the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are far off upon the sea;

⁷ Which by His strength sets fast the mountains, being girded about with light; which stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of the waves, and the tumult of the people.

Isaiah 51

¹⁰ Are You not it which has dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that has made the depths of the sea, a way for the ransomed to pass over?

¹¹ Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Psalm 95

⁵ The sea is His, and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land.

⁶ O come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

THE Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. The everlasting power of God is seen in the things that are made.

Psalm 95

⁵ The sea is His, and He made it.

Therefore the voice of the sea, whether audible or inaudible, proclaims the Gospel. The vast expanse of the sea, which God measures in His hand, shows us the greatness of His power, which is mercy, because it is salvation. So it is not more, but less than a full statement of the truth, that:

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea.

The mighty power of the sea is but the manifestation of the merciful power of God to save us from our sins. If we but listen to His voice, our righteousness will be...

Isaiah 48

¹⁸ ...like the waves of the sea.

What power can pluck us out of the hand of Him who measures all the waters of the sea in the hollow of His hand?

God's power over the raging of the nations of the earth, is as great as His power over the sea. He can still them just as easily. See *Matthew* 8:26. This is to be the confidence of the people of God in times when...

Psalms 2

¹ ...the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing;

² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying,

³ Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

God's power over the sea is an assurance to us of salvation. Because He rules the sea,

Isaiah 35

¹⁰ Therefore the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion.

When the Lord comes, it will be for the salvation of His people. But that will only be the consummation of the salvation which He accomplishes for them day by day.

In view of His coming to judgment, the sea roars out its joy:

Psalms 96

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof.

¹³ ...for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.

The sea speaks the mighty power of God. If we but learn to understand its language, then we shall experience the power which it reveals, and shall also rejoice at the thought of the coming of the Lord, because we know the joy of His presence.

11. SOWING THE SEED

Genesis 1

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth; and it was so.

¹² And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

Mark 4 [RV]

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth,

²⁷ And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knows not how.

²⁸ The earth bears fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.

²⁹ But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he puts forth the sickle, because the harvest is come.

1 Peter 1

²² Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently;

²³ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides for ever.

²⁴ For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.

Galatians 3

¹⁶ To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to your Seed which is Christ.

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

⁴ In Him was life...

¹⁴ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

Matthew 13

³ Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

⁴ And when he sowed, some [seeds] fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up;

⁵ Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth;

⁶ And when the sun was up they were scorched: and because they had no root, they withered away.

⁷ And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them;

⁸ But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.

⁹ Who has ears to hear, let him hear.

¹⁸ Hear therefore the parable of the sower.

¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and understands it not, then comes the wicked one, and catches away that which was sown in his heart.

²⁰ This is he which received seed by the wayside.

²¹ But he that received the seed into stony pieces, the same is he that bears the Word, and anon with joy receives it; yet has he not root in himself, but endures for awhile; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, by and by he is offended.

²² He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that hears the Word; and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becomes unfruitful.

²³ But he that received seed into the good ground is he that hears the Word, and understands it; which also bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.

Isaiah 61

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

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the

Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

FROM *Mark 4:26-29* we learn that in the growth of corn from the sowing of the seed to the harvest we have a visible and perfect presentation of the kingdom of God. From the visible we learn of the invisible. The power of God, which is the Gospel, is seen in the things that are made.

“The earth bears fruit of herself,” that is, literally, “automatically.” But an automaton, so-called, does not manufacture its own power. The power which runs an automaton is furnished by a spring that is wound up, so that although no application of power can be seen, the machine acting as a living thing, there is in reality a constant application of power from without. Through the spring, the force of the man who wound it is being constantly exerted.

Psalm 62

¹¹ „power belongs unto God.

Romans 13

¹ ...there is no power but of God.

The earth therefore brings forth by the power of God.

Something is necessary before the earth can bring forth fruit of herself, and this is set forth in the parable. It is this: seed must be sown. The earth bears fruit of herself, but not until seed has been placed in it. If there were no seed in the ground, the earth could never bring forth anything.

Now when the earth was first created, there was nothing in it. When the dry land was separated from the water, it contained no seed, and had it been left alone, it would never have brought anything forth. What did God do, in order that the earth might bear fruit? He spoke to it. He sent forth His Word into the earth. The seed, therefore, whence everything comes, that grows out of the earth, is the Word of God.

Take a handful of corn, and cast it upon the ground. If the conditions are favorable, it will spring up and bear fruit. What is the life of the seed,—that which gives it germinating power? It is the Word of the Lord. The real seed of everything that grows is nothing other than the living Word of the living God. We see therefore that the Word of God is very real, although we cannot see it. There is nothing real except the Word.

Thus we find that when we are told that the new birth is effected by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever, it is not a figure of speech, but the statement of an actual fact, and the reality of it is shown to us by the corn growing from the seed that is cast into the earth.

The fact that we cannot see the seed which God places in us for our regeneration, and that we cannot explain how it is done, makes no difference with the fact, nor with our faith. We cannot see the life of the seed which we cast into the ground. Nobody can tell by looking at seed whether it has life in it, and will germinate or not. And when it is sown, nobody knows the mystery of growth.

Mark 4

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

²⁷ ...and the seed should spring and grow up he knows not how.

No farmer refuses to sow seed, because he cannot tell how it grows and multiplies; but if he should refuse to sow seed until he could understand and explain all about how it grows, he would be no more foolish than the man who refuses to accept the Lord until he can understand how the Lord can speak righteousness into his soul, and cause it to grow and multiply.

Christ is the Word, and the Word is the seed; hence Christ is the Seed. This is true in every sense. The Word from which everything grows which God has made, is the life of Christ.

So it is that in eating bread (good bread, of course) we are eating the body of Christ.

God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth just as the earth brings forth her bud, that is, by speaking to the souls of men, just as He does to the earth. They who hear shall live. If we consciously yield to the Word of God as completely as the earth does involuntarily, we cannot fail to bring forth fruit unto eternal life.

12. THE SEED QUICKENED

John 12

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.

²⁵ He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

1 Corinthians 15

³⁶ That which you sow is not quickened, except it die;

³⁷ And that which you sow, you sow not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind;

³⁸ But God gives it a body, even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own.

Galatians 3

¹⁶ To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your Seed, which is Christ.

Galatians 3

²⁷ As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

²⁹ And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

1 John 4

¹⁷ As He is, so are we in this world.

Matthew 27

⁴² He saved others; Himself He cannot save.

Philippians 2

⁵ Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,

⁷ But emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man;

⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself,

becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

⁹ Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name.

Hebrews 10

⁵ When He came into the world, He said, sacrifice and offering You would not, but a body have You prepared me.

Ephesians 5

³⁰ We are members of His body.

Romans 8

⁸ They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

⁹ Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

¹⁰ And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

¹³ For if you live after the flesh, you shall die; but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Philippians 3

⁸ For, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord...

¹⁰ That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.

Romans 6

⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.

Philippians 3

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait

for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;

²¹ Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.

ALL our knowledge comes from the Word. The statements that follow are not comments, but simply repetitions of what is set forth in the preceding texts. They are for the purpose of calling closer attention to the texts themselves. Let each reader ponder these texts until they are indelibly printed in his mind and on his heart. They should be as familiar to us as our own names. Then can we see not only the truths that follow, but much more that cannot be put into words.

The kingdom of God is like seed cast into the earth. *Mark* 4:26-29. We are God's husbandry, or tillage. *1 Corinthians* 3:9. The growth of a seed from the time that it is sown until the harvest, is a visible and constantly recurring manifestation of the truth of the Gospel as it affects men.

That which was placed in the earth in the beginning, to cause it to bring forth grass, herbs, and trees, was the Word of the Lord. The Lord, therefore, is the real seed, the life of all visible seeds. Christ is the Word, and He is the Seed.

If all men would remember one of the first and plainest truths concerning plant life, it would be their salvation. That truth is that the seed must die in order to live and multiply. No one ever gets back the seed which he sows, yet this fact does not cause the farmer to keep the seed, and not sow it. He who would keep the little quantity of grain that he may have, gets nothing from it; but if he casts it into the ground, seemingly throwing it away, he gets much more.

So the man who lives for himself, loses his life, while he who lives for others, giving his life for them, gets more abun-

dant life. Even Christ pleased not Himself, yet He has the most perfect satisfaction, and fullness of joy.

In coming to earth Christ “emptied Himself.” The word in *Philippians* 2:7, rendered “made of no reputation,” and “emptied” in the Revision, is the same that is rendered “made void,” in *Romans* 4:11 and *1 Corinthians* 9:15, and “of none effect” in *1 Corinthians* 1:17. Thus we can see that Christ not only gave up everything that He had in heaven, in coming to this world, but He most literally gave up Himself. God prepared Him a body, and made Him a perfect Man.

Matthew 27

⁴² He saved others; Himself He cannot save.

This intended taunt flung in the face of Jesus as He hung on the cross, was really His glory as the Saviour of men. Only by giving Himself, taking absolutely no thought for Himself, could He save others. He gave up His life, not simply when He was on the cross on Calvary, but constantly. His whole life was in giving of His life for others.

But in giving away His life, throwing it away, as it must have seemed to many, when He chose death rather than being made king, He not only gained it, but saved the lives of millions more. Any man who is thoroughly devoted to the salvation of others, thinking not once of himself, not even of his own salvation, will be made salvation to others, and will thereby have his own salvation assured; for only the presence of God with a man can work this perfect unselfishness which saves others, and that presence is the man’s own salvation. While we are looking out for others, God Himself is looking out for us.

God prepared Jesus a body, by the same power by which He prepares a body for every seed that is sown. And by the same power, He makes us members of Christ’s body. Just as the Spirit of God completely filled Jesus, so that His body was

only the instrument through which the Holy Spirit manifested Himself, even so it will be with all who give up their own lives for the sake of the Lord Jesus. God will prepare them a body fit for His own dwelling place.

1 Corinthians 6

¹³ The body is...for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

He will use the brain to think through, the vocal organs to speak through, and the hands and feet to act through. It will be God manifest in the flesh, for Jesus came to this world for no other purpose than to show us the possibility of this being the case with every man.

The life of the seed that is sown, as well as of the plant that grows, is the life of God alone. That life manifests itself through the form which we see, as a constant object lesson to us. If we are willingly as passive in the hands of God as the grain is involuntarily, His life will work in us the same as in Jesus of Nazareth.

This in “the power of the resurrection.” *Philippians* 3:10. The resurrection of Jesus simply declared Him to be the Son of God with power. *Romans* 1:1-4. He was the Son of God all His life, but the resurrection from the dead made it apparent to all; for it showed that the power by which he had lived a righteous life was the power that brings life from the dead. The very same power was manifested in His resurrection that was manifested in all His life.

The belief in the resurrection of the dead is nothing else than the belief in God’s perfect righteousness manifested in human flesh. Jesus was...

1 Peter 3

¹⁸ ...put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.

Romans 8

⁹ If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead

dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

This is a thing done not merely at the resurrection of the last day, but every day. For note what the consequence is of this quickening of our mortal bodies:

¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

Jesus said:

John 4

¹⁴ Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The water that He gives is the Holy Spirit. *John 7:37-39.*

John 6

⁶³ It is the Spirit that quickens.

When we come to the Lord, to receive wholly of His life, to live by Him, our bodies are prepared for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit quickens the body, so that instead of being dead in sin, it is alive unto righteousness. Our members then become instruments of righteousness.

The life of Christ manifest in mortal flesh gives not simply victory over sin, but over disease as well.

Psalms 103

² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits;

³ Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases.

It is this same life dwelling in us that, by the same power that it has over the flesh, quickens our mortal bodies into immortality at the coming of the Lord. The power that now works in believers is the power of the resurrection. Christ in us is the hope of glory.

The life of Christ in the flesh is of course the perfect example of the quickening power of the Spirit. But God has provided that we may have it continually before us. Every seed that sprouts, of whatever kind, is an illustration of the power of the life of the Spirit to triumph over difficulties.

Here is a seed enclosed in a shell that is so hard that a vigorous blow with a hammer will not suffice to break it. The shell is hard and dead. Is it possible that any life can come from that? Wait and see. Silently, without observation, the Word of life within operates, the dead, hard shell gives way before it, and the new life manifests itself. Even so, “the kingdom of God is within you.” *Luke* 17:21. It “comes not with observation” (*Luke* 17:20) but its power is infinite.

If we will but acknowledge that the kingdom is the Lord’s, and allow Him His own rightful place in His own kingdom, we shall “be conformed to the image of His Son” (*Romans* 8:29), and though our outward man perish, yet the inward man will be renewed day by day, in righteousness and true holiness. *2 Corinthians* 4:16; *Ephesians* 4:24.

13. ALL FLESH IS GRASS

Genesis 1

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so.

¹² And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

Mark 4

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground,

²⁷ And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how.

Isaiah 40

⁶ All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field;

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades; because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass.

⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.

John 15

¹ I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman.

² Every branch in me that bears not fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can you, except you abide in me.

⁵ I am the Vine; you are the branches; He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing.

Isaiah 27

² ...A vineyard of red wine.

³ I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

Psalm 121

³ He that keeps you will not slumber.

⁴ Behold, He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

Matthew 6

²⁸ Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

²⁹ And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰ Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

Hosea 14

⁵ I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

Psalm 92

¹² The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

¹³ Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

¹⁴ They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.

Isaiah 53

¹ Who has believed our report? and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.

Isaiah 9

²¹ Your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

²² A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation; I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

Isaiah 61

¹ The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek...

³ To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the gar-

ment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Colossians 2

⁶ As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him:

⁷ Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

THE statement that “all flesh is grass,” is absolute and unqualified. It is true that in *1 Peter* 1:24 we read that “all flesh is *as* grass;” but that does not in the least destroy the force of the statement in *Isaiah*. The Scriptures do not contradict themselves. All flesh *is as* grass, because all flesh *is* grass. We may contradict the statement, and say that we cannot see how we are grass, and that we do not think it means just that; but in so doing we shall never find out what it does mean, and shall deprive ourselves of all the comfort that there is in it.

There is comfort in the knowledge of the fact that all flesh is grass. The fortieth chapter of *Isaiah*, in which the statement occurs, is a message of comfort. The special message of comfort which God sends to His people, is that all flesh is grass. This is a part of the message that is sent to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord.

The other part is, “The Word of our God shall stand for ever.” We can never realize the full strength of the Word of God until we realize that we are but grass, as helpless as is the grass of the field; for as long as we imagine that we have any strength in ourselves, we cannot rest wholly on the strength of the Lord, on the Word that upholds all things; and to the extent that we depend on our own fancied strength, are we

useless.

This message, “all flesh is grass,...but the Word of our God shall stand for ever,” is only another statement of the message of:

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God, and give glory to Him,...and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

We give glory to God only when we acknowledge that He alone has the power, and that we are helpless; that in Him alone is life and righteousness; that in Him is everything, while in us is nothing. He is light, while we are in ourselves but darkness. When we hold fast this confession, and allow Him to work in us and to clothe us even as He does the grass of the field, men see our good works and glorify Him, because He does the works. Then we may be...

Philippians 1

¹¹ ...filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

To have the perfect righteousness of God, by the faith of Jesus Christ, is all that is needed to meet the Lord. So we see that the message which leads men to confess themselves to be as weak and worthless as the grass of the field, and God and His Word to be everlasting strength and righteousness, must be the preparatory message for the Lord's coming.

Note that in the Saviour's words in *Matthew* 6:28-30 the lilies of the field are counted as grass. There are many different kinds of grass that grow out of the ground, so that we have a large range of objects in nature to study in order to find out what we are, and how God would deal with us. Corn, as well as everything else from which bread is made, is simply grass. Let this be remembered, for it has a practical bearing on our study of the life of faith.

Do not fail to note the fine recognition of the fact that all flesh is grass, in the words of the Saviour. After calling our attention to the lilies of the field, He says, “If God so clothe the grass of the field,” etc. That which is ordinarily called simply grass, is grass of the field; men are a higher order of grass, destined for infinitely higher purposes, but grass nevertheless.

Not only are we grass, but we are designed to be trees,—trees of righteousness. Let the student recall the lesson on “The Fruit of the Light,”³ and he will see some of the lessons to be learned from the fact that we are called:

Isaiah 61

³ ...trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

If we constantly keep in mind the scriptures which tell us that we stand in close relationship with the grass of the field and the trees of the wood, and that the kingdom of God is like the seed that is cast into the earth, and grows to perfection, we shall be continually learning Gospel lessons; for we are seldom out of sight of something that is growing.

³ See *Related Articles*, “19. The Fruit of the Light”, p. 241.

14. THE POWER OF GROWTH

Genesis 1

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass...and it was so.

¹² And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit.

Psalms 104

¹⁴ He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth.

Isaiah 40

⁶ All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field:

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades; because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass.

⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.

1 Corinthians 3

⁶ I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

⁷ So then neither is he that plants anything, neither he that waters, but God that gives the increase.

Psalms 62

⁹ Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

¹¹ God has spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God.

Isaiah 40

²⁹ He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength.

1 Corinthians 1

²³ We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

²⁴ But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God.

1 Chronicles 29

¹² In Your hand is power and might; and in Your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Matthew 11

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls.

³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Lamentations 3

²⁷ It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

2 Corinthians 12

⁹ And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.

1 Corinthians 10

¹³ There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Matthew 17

²⁰ Verily I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Luke 18

²⁷ The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

2 Peter 3

¹⁸ Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Acts 1

⁸ You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon

you; and you shall be my witnesses.

REMEMBER that God's message of comfort includes the special cry, "All flesh is grass...but the Word of our God shall stand for ever." There is nothing that grows that is weaker than the tender grass; it is a synonym for weakness and instability. Just as there is nothing weaker than the grass, so there is nothing stronger than the Word of God. In this lies the comfort.

It is not an uncommon thing for people to acknowledge that they are weak. Even the strongest physically have times when they feel weak. Especially among professed Christians is a confession of weakness a common thing. Nevertheless they do not get comfort out of the confession. On the contrary, the fact that they are obliged to confess that they are weak, is a source of great sorrow to them. They are continually mourning their weakness. "I am so weak!" is the sorrowful cry. "Oh, if I only had more strength!" is their often expressed wish.

What is the trouble? Simply this, that their confession does not go far enough. They say that they are so weak, and wish that they had more strength, thereby showing that they flatter themselves that they have some strength.

But the facts are that all men together are lighter than vanity, and that God alone has power. He is the Almighty. That is, He has all might, so that there is no might outside of Him. Strength is an attribute of Divinity. If man had strength in himself he would be God. So just to the extent that men imagine that they have strength, do they imagine themselves to be God. As long as men think themselves to be gods, with strength in themselves, so long will they trust in themselves instead of in God. But,

Proverbs 28

²⁶ He that trusts in his own heart is a fool.

As long as a man thinks that he has the slightest particle of strength, there is continual failure and discouragement before him. What is the remedy? Simply this, to acknowledge the fact that there is absolutely no strength in him, but:

Isaiah 26

⁵ In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

And then to say:

Psalms 16

⁵ The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup.

Then he has the benefit of everlasting power and Divinity, although he himself is but helpless grass.

Walk through a cornfield in the spring time. Everywhere you will see little rifts in the ground, showing where the tender blades are pushing their way up to the light. All over the earth there is a general upheaval, more in the aggregate than any earthquake ever known, yet there is not the slightest sound or commotion. Men go about entirely unconscious of what is taking place. What causes it? It is the power of God's Word, which in the beginning and ever since said:

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass.

The word "dynamo" is simply the Greek word for power. We have another form of the same word in the familiar word "dynamite." All know what dynamite is used for, and what terrible explosions it causes. Well, this rifting of the earth by the growing grass is but an example of the working of God's dynamite. God's dynamite, contrary to that perverted form which man makes use of, works silently, and to upbuild, instead of, with deafening noise, to destroy.

When the poor woman who was dying from loss of blood came behind Jesus and touched the hem of His garment, and was instantly made whole, the Lord said:

Luke 8

⁴⁶ Somebody touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me.

This is the word just referred to. The power that went from Him can be conceived only by thinking of the force which men call dynamite; but, as already stated, it works quietly and to restore, instead of to destroy. It is what He gives to every one who believes on Him, and the illustration of the same thing is constantly before us in the power that is manifested in the growing grass.

Just as power—the power of the life of Christ—came into the poor woman; just as the power of the ever-living Word animates the grass of the field; even so does the Spirit of life in Christ come into us, and manifest itself as righteousness, when we believe in truth.

Look a little closer at that growing corn. Here we see not only a little crack in the earth, but a portion of it is raised up a heavy clod is tilted to one side, and stands on edge. What causes it? Look down, and you will see a tiny, white, tender blade of corn underneath it. That little spire of grass, that if removed from its bed has not strength enough to stand alone, is now not only standing bolt upright, but is bearing a load many thousand times its own weight.

Is grass then such powerful matter? No; it has no strength at all. At any rate, anybody can see that there is a power manifested here that is no part of the grass itself. What is it? The nearest that anybody can come to an answer without the Bible is that it is “vital force.” That is all right; it is the strength of life, for that is what vital force means. But the Word of God tells us that Christ is “the life.” The force therefore that is manifest in the growing grass is nothing other than the power of the life of Christ.

Now we may form some idea of the statement:

2 Peter 1

³ His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

If a man could lift as much in proportion to his size and weight as the tiny blade of grass does in pushing the clod of earth away from before it, it would not be so difficult a thing for him actually to remove a mountain, would it? But the mountains of earth are where the Lord has placed them, and do not need moving. The mountains that man needs for the most part to remove are the mountains of sin. This earth, and earth life, are upon him, holding him down.

The power which God gives him is first of all to be directed to the removing of this load. Let him now receive that word which said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," and in obedience to which the tiny blade comes forth, even though it must raise what to it is a mountain, and the world and all the lust thereof cannot any longer hold him down.

Let a man consciously and voluntarily submit himself to the Word of the Lord as completely as the grass of the field does unconsciously and involuntarily, and the same power that brings it to perfection as grass, will bring him to perfection as man, even...

Ephesians 4

¹³ ...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The only thing that hinders is man's pride, which makes him unwilling to acknowledge that he has no more power than the grass of the field. But that is the fact, and it is far better to acknowledge it and so be filled with Divine, everlasting power, than to deny it, and have no power at all.

15. INTELLIGENT ACTION IN PLANTS

Genesis 1

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit...and it was so.

Isaiah 40

⁶ All flesh is grass.

⁸ But the Word of our God shall stand for ever.

1 Corinthians 3

¹⁹ The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,

²⁰ The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

Romans 1

²¹ When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

2 Corinthians 10

⁴ The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;

⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

2 Corinthians 3

⁵ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.

1 Corinthians 2

¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Jeremiah 10

²³ O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps.

Proverbs 3

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your

paths.

Isaiah 55

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord...

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

Psalms 25

¹⁴ The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.

1 Corinthians 1

²⁴ Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

³⁰ Of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom.

Colossians 2

² ...Christ;

³ In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Proverbs 2

⁶ The Lord gives wisdom; out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

Daniel 2

²⁰ ...wisdom and might are His:

²¹ ...he gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.

Psalms 1

¹ Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law does he meditate day and night.

³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.

Colossians 3

¹⁶ Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

JESUS Christ is “the way, the truth, and the life.” As there is no life but from Him, so there are none of the manifestations of life that are not from Him. This does not make Him responsible for everything that men think and do, since they to so great an extent hold down the truth and the life in unrighteousness. They do not give the life free course, but pervert it, and the result is confusion and emptiness.

Christ is “the wisdom of God” as well as “the power of God.” Just as there is no power but of God, so there is no wisdom but the wisdom of God. The so-called wisdom of men who reject the Lord, is foolishness with Him.

1 Corinthians 3

¹⁹ The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

There is no right thought except the thought of God.

Isaiah 40

⁶ All flesh is grass.

Man has no more power to manufacture thought than the grass of the field has.

Acts 17

²⁸ In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

Our perfect gift is from above, and comes down. Muscles are the organs by which motion is effected, but they do not originate motion. If they had that power in themselves, then they would continue to move indefinitely at will. But all have seen muscles that could not act, and that not only in dead men. There must be a power to act on the muscles, else they are useless. That power is the life of the Lord.

So with the brain. It is the organ of thought, but it does not originate thought. A power entirely distinct from the brain must act through it, else it is useless. When that power is allowed free course, the thoughts are right; otherwise they are vague and perverted.

Jeremiah 10

²³ The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps.

Isaiah 55

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

But a man's ways and thoughts are all that make him anything more than a useless lump of clay. Does the Lord desire that a man shall forsake his ways and his thoughts, and be a nonentity? Not by any means. He offers him something that is far better.

God's ways and thoughts are as much higher than man's ways and thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. The Scriptures therefore teach us that it is possible for God to take complete possession of a man, and to think and act through him. This is God's design for man. Only as this is the case, is man a complete and perfect man.

The body is designed to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that means that all the organs of the body are to be simply the instruments through which the Holy Spirit will manifest Himself. This complete submission to the will of God will not destroy any man's individuality, but will on the contrary make it more marked. God is infinite. He who has made every plant "after its kind," each with a distinct characteristic of its own, will make every man perfect after his kind, if he will but be as passive to the Spirit of God as the plants of the field are.

Proverbs 16

³ Commit your works unto the Lord, and your thoughts shall be established.

Only by the Spirit of God can we know the things that are freely given us by the Lord. What has the Lord freely given us? All things.

Romans 8

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

1 Timothy 6

¹⁷ [He] gives us richly all things to enjoy.

James 1

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.

John 3

²⁷ A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.

Since everything is given us by the Lord, and we cannot know the things that are freely given us by Him except by the Holy Spirit, it follows that there is absolutely no real knowledge in the world that does not come from the Spirit of God. To reject the Holy Spirit is to reject wisdom and knowledge. If He does not think in us, we have no thoughts that are worth thinking. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

O what marvelous treasures of wisdom and knowledge there must be for all who are willing to humble themselves to admit that they know absolutely nothing, and to submit to let God think His own thoughts in them! Some of the possibilities for man when God's thought and Word has free course in him, are revealed in the plants of the field, which offer no opposition by self-sufficient pride.

In studying God's action in them, let us remember that He will do as much greater things in the man who is as submissive to Him, as the object for which man was created is greater than that for which the grass of the field was made.

16. THE GLORY OF THE HEAVENS

Genesis 1

¹⁴ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days, and years;

¹⁵ And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so.

¹⁶ And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; He made the stars also.

¹⁷ And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.

Isaiah 40

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking.

Psalms 89

³⁵ Once have I sworn by Your holiness that I will not lie unto David.

³⁶ His seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before me.

³⁷ It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.

Jeremiah 31

³⁵ Thus says the Lord, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divides the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name;

³⁶ If those ordinances depart from before me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall cease from being a nation before me forever.

Psalm 8

¹ O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! who has set Your glory upon the heavens.

Psalm 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.

² Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge.

³ There is no speech nor language, where their voice cannot be heard.

⁴ Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

⁵ In them has He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a strong man to run his course.

⁶ His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

Psalm 84

¹¹ The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory.

John 8

¹² Then spoke Jesus again unto them saying, I am the Light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Ephesians 5

¹⁴ Awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you.

Malachi 4

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

2 Corinthians 4

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

Matthew 5

¹⁴ You are the light of the world.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

² For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you.

³ And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Matthew 17

¹ Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up into a high mountain apart,

² And was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light.

Philippians 3

²⁰ Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,

²¹ Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.

Matthew 13

¹³ Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Daniel 12

³ They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

GOD'S everlasting power and Divinity are seen in the things that He has made, and in nothing do they more plainly appear than in the heavenly bodies. They are where they can be seen by all, and they speak a language that all can understand.

No sound is heard from the sun, moon and stars; that is why they can speak to the understanding of all. If they used any of the languages of earth, only a portion of the people could comprehend their speech; but by their silent shining forth of the glory of God, their words have gone to the ends of the earth, so that “all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God” (*Isaiah 52:10*); for God’s glory is His power, and His power is salvation.

The sun, moon, and stars did not create themselves. They are not the originators of the light which they send forth. It is God’s glory that they declare by simply letting it shine, as He has put it upon them. The light which they give to the earth is light direct from the presence of the Lord; it is indeed the light of His presence.

God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all; and Christ is the shining of His glory. So Christ is the light of the world. He is the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world. We cannot have the fact too strongly impressed upon our minds that Christ is the light of the world, that is, He is all the light there is. The light that rejoices our eyes every day, is really the personal presence of Christ with us. If these scriptures were but real to us, what a difference it would make in our lives. We should know that we are constantly in the presence of the Lord.

As Christ is the light of the world, so are His true followers. But it is only as His light is allowed to pass through us, that we are the light of the world. Christ shines upon us, and if we are sincere, that is, if there is nothing in us to obstruct the light, the light shines through us, and we share His glory. What a wonder, that Christ will let mortal men occupy the same relation to the world that He Himself does!

The same light which God commanded to shine out of darkness, is the light which He shines into our hearts. Do not

forget that the light that shines upon us new every morning is to enable us to behold our God. Jesus said:

John 17

²² The glory which You gave me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.

²³ I in them, and You in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent me, and have loved them as You have loved me.

The glory of God, which Christ has given us, marks us as sons of God, even as He is. We are joint-heirs with Christ, and the Father loves us even as He loves Him.

1 John 3

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

The glory is not now recognized in us as the glory of God, even as it was not in Christ, except on the mount of transfiguration; but when He comes, the glory of His grace, with which He has filled us, will shine forth, so that our bodies will shine like His glorious body. But His body shines above the brightness of the sun. And the glory in which the saints will at last appear, is but the glory which now is given to them in the form of grace and truth.

So the lesson that we are to learn is that the power that is revealed in the whole heavens, is the power that is given now, to enable us to live to the glory of God.

17. THE ANIMAL CREATION

Genesis 1

²¹ And God created great whales [literally, “sea-monsters”], and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl, after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

²⁴ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so.

²⁵ And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps upon the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

Romans 1

²⁰ The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity.

Job 12

⁷ Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you;

⁸ Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you.

⁹ Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this?

¹⁰ In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

Psalms 1 [RV, margin]

¹⁰ Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

¹¹ I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are in my mind.

Psalms 104

²¹ The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

²² The sun arises, they gather themselves together and lay them down in their dens.

²⁷ These wait all upon You; that You may give them their meat in due season.

²⁸ That You give them they gather: You open Your hand, they are filled [satisfied] with good.

Psalm 114

¹⁵ The eyes of all wait upon You; and You give them their meat in due season.

¹⁶ You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Matthew 10

²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

³⁰ But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

³¹ Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows.

Luke 12

⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

⁷ But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Proverbs 6

⁶ Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise;

⁷ Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

⁸ Provides her meat in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest.

Job 39

²⁶ Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?

²⁷ Does the eagle mount up at your command, and make her nest on high?

Job 39

¹³ Gave you the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?

¹⁴ Which leaves her eggs in the earth, and warms them in the dust,

¹⁵ And forgets that the foot may crush them, or that the wild

beast may break them.

¹⁷ Because God has deprived her of wisdom, neither has He imparted to her understanding.

Isaiah 1

² Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

³ The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not consider.

Jeremiah 8

⁷ Yea, the stork in the heaven knows her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.

⁸ How do you say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain He made it; the pen of the scribes is in vain.

⁹ The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken in, they have rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?

Proverbs 2

⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom: out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

Job 35

¹⁰ None says, Where is God my maker, who gives songs in the night;

¹¹ Who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

Job 36

²² Behold, God exalts by His power; who teaches like Him?

THE everlasting power and Divinity of God are seen in the things that are made. God has made the animal creation as well as the plants; therefore in animals we may see His presence and power displayed.

Remember that the worker is not the thing worked. There is an infinite difference between the Creator and the thing

created. The power that is seen in anything must not be confounded with the thing itself. Neither men nor any of the lower orders of creation are God, but His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in everything from highest to lowest. Nothing but sin cherished hinders its perfect manifestation.

From the beasts, the birds, and the fishes we are to learn lessons about God. From them we learn not only God's power, but His tender care and love of all the fowls of the mountains, and all the beasts of the field, not one is out of His mind. They receive their food directly from Him, and He never forgets to feed them.

Two sparrows were sold for a farthing in the days of the Saviour, and if the purchaser would take two farthings' worth, one bird would be given, and no account would be made of it. But although man made no account of it, God did not forget it. Not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without His permission.

We are of more value than many sparrows; how safe, then, we are in His care. Satan cannot come near one of God's children, to do him the slightest injury, without direct permission from God (see *Job* 1:8-12); and when this is allowed, God's power to sustain is so much more wonderfully manifested, that the sufferer can rejoice in the midst of it.

2 Corinthians 12

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

⁸ For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

⁹ And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

James 1

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience.

⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Man does not “make his own living” any more than the birds and beasts do. They gather what God gives them, and man can do no more. Man sows seed in the earth, and God makes it grow, and man gathers it. The seed which is sown is itself given to man.

The birds and bees work much more diligently to procure food for themselves and their young than men do; yet the latter boast of how they make their own living, and regard the former as being entirely supported by others. But all are alike supported from the same source.

No man can “make a living,” and therefore God has not given it to any man to do. God is the Author of life, and He alone gives it. God would have men without care, the same as the birds; not reckless, but trustful as they are. Our business is to glorify God, to allow Him to glorify Himself in us, by working His righteousness in us, and He will attend to our living.

Man gets wisdom from the very same source that the beasts and the birds do. In himself he has no more wisdom than they have; and when he rejects God, the source of all knowledge, he knows even less than do the dumb brutes. The most stupid beasts of burden have more real knowledge than does the man who rebels against God.

But God designed man to be inconceivably higher than any other creature, and will give the wisdom that will place him in

this position, if he will but acknowledge Him as the Giver of everything.

18. THE DUST OF THE EARTH

Genesis 1

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

²⁷ So God made man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

Genesis 2

⁷ And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Genesis 2

⁹ And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree.

Genesis 1

²⁴ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind.

¹¹ ...Let the earth bring forth grass.

Isaiah 40

⁶ All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.

¹⁵ Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; Behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing.

Psalms 62

⁹ Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

¹⁰ Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

¹¹ God has spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God.

Psalm 90 [RV, margin]

³ You turn man to dust, and say, Return, you children of men.

Genesis 18

²⁷ And Abraham answered, and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.

Job 42

⁵ I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You.

⁶ Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Psalm 51

¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Psalm 103

¹³ Like as a father pities his children so the Lord pities them that fear Him.

¹⁴ For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

1 Samuel 2

⁸ He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

Isaiah 52

¹ Awake, awake; put on your strength, O Zion; put on Your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto you the uncircumcised and the unclean.

² Shake yourself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem; loose yourself from the bands of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

John 5

³⁰ I can of my own self do nothing.

1 Corinthians 1

²⁷ God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are de-

spised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are.

2 Corinthians 12

⁹ And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Isaiah 40

²⁹ He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might, He increases strength.

³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

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

Isaiah 26

¹⁹ Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

OUT of the ground the Lord made man, the lower animals, and plants. All are from the dust, and all return to dust again. When they have returned to dust, it is impossible to distinguish between them. Their dust is all alike. That which makes the difference between them in life is the working of God in them.

Isaiah 40

⁶ All flesh is grass.

Even though man, contrary to the design of God, eats animal food, the animal which he eats lives upon herbs, so that not only the first man, in the beginning, but every man, even to this day, comes from the ground.

Genesis 3

¹⁹ Dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.

It is not necessary to make comparisons between man and any other creature. Go back to the origin of man, and consider him just as he is, namely, dust. What power is there in the dust? Look at the dust in the street; what can it do? Nothing. That is the power of man, for man is dust.

The lesson that we are to learn is that we have no more power or wisdom in ourselves than the dust has that lies under our feet. We are dust that has been fashioned by the hand of God into a certain shape, and the breath of the Almighty has come into us, giving us understanding. We have nothing to boast of over the dust that still lies in an unformed mass.

1 Corinthians 4

⁷ What have you that you did not receive?

A very insignificant part of the dust, too, is man. In the sight of God, as compared with His vast universe of matter, all the nations together “are counted as the small dust of the balance.” *Isaiah* 40:15. The dust that lies on the grocer’s balance, which is so fine that it is not perceptible, and which makes no material difference in the amount of that which is being weighed, bears the same relative proportion to the earth that all nations together do to the universe of God.

Psalms 8

³ When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained;

⁴ What is man, that You are mindful of him? and the son of man, that You visit him?

God makes no account of degrees and ranks among men. The prince and the pauper are both made from the same dust. Let the prince be buried in all his robes of royalty, and the beggar be buried in his rags, and when they have returned to dust no man could tell which was born in a castle and which

in a cottage.

Psalm 62

⁹ Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

Men of low degree in the estimation of the world, are vanity; that would probably be admitted at least by men of “high degree;” but men of high degree are a lie, because they seem to be something when they are nothing; in reality both high and low are all together “lighter than vanity.” Just as stated in the preceding paragraph, they are not of sufficient weight to make it worth while to blow them off the balances in which the universe is weighed.

Why should the spirit
Of mortal be proud?

Romans 3

²⁷ Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.

Man has nothing but what God has given him. He can be nothing of value, except as God makes him such. Just to the extent that man is anything different from what God’s own life in him would make him, is he a disgrace and a curse. Man has no more ground for boasting than has the dust that the wind whirls about; for all that makes him different from that is the life of God in him.

Men forget that they are dust, and consequently they put themselves in the place of God, and that is lawlessness. Then God turns them again to dust, or contrition (not “destruction,” as in the common version); that is, He allows something to come upon them to convince them that they are but dust, and absolutely helpless, and then He says:

“Come again, you children of men.”

Just as in the beginning He made man of the dust of the ground, and crowned him with glory and honor, so whenever a man will be as passive dust as was that in the beginning, God will make a man of him, of whom He can say that he is “very good.” God’s power to create is our hope of salvation.

This working of God in the beginning, to make man of the dust of the ground, and His continued working to make men new when they are willing to be counted as only dust, is the hope of the resurrection, for it is the same working. Those who dwell in the dust shall awake and sing at the coming of the Lord (*Isaiah* 26:19); but the song that they will then sing will be the very same song that God now puts into the mouth of those whom He lifts out of the dust and filth of the pit.

The power that converts is the power of the resurrection, the power of the world to come. It is the power that in the beginning made the heavens and the earth, and made man of the dust of the ground. What God has done, He can do, for His arm is not shortened, that He cannot save. *Isaiah* 59:1.

Much as it goes against a man’s natural inclination to regard himself as nothing but helpless dust, there is everlasting strength in the acknowledging of the fact, for it puts him where the Almighty Creator can lift him up to His own throne, and crown him with everlasting glory and honor.

Luke 14

¹¹ He that humbles himself shall be exalted.

19. MAN'S DOMINION

Genesis 1

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

²⁷ So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Luke 3

³⁸ Adam, which was the son of God.

Hebrews 1

¹⁰ You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Your hands.

Hebrews 2

⁶ One in a certain place testified, saying, what is man, that You are mindful of him? or the son of man, that you visit him?

⁷ You made him a little lower than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of Your hands:

⁸ You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

⁹ 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.

Matthew 8

²³ And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him.

²⁴ And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves; but He was asleep.

²⁵ And His disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us; we perish.

²⁶ And He said unto them, Why are you fearful, O you of little faith? Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

²⁷ But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the waves obey Him?

Matthew 9

² And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy: Son, be of good cheer; your sins be forgiven you.

⁶ That you may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins, (then said He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up your bed, and go unto your house.

⁷ And he arose, and departed to his house.

⁸ But when the multitude saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto man.

Matthew 28

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

¹⁹ Go you, therefore, and teach all nations...

²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Ephesians 1

¹⁸ That you may know...

¹⁹ What is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,

²⁰ Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,

²¹ Far above all principality, and power, and might, and do-

minion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

²² And has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

²³ Which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

Ephesians 2

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

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

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

Matthew 10

¹ And He called unto Him His twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease, and all manner of sickness.

Romans 1

³ Jesus Christ our Lord...was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

⁴ And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Psalms 2

⁸ The Lord has said unto me, Ask of me, and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession;

⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

1 John 3

¹ Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not.

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God.

Revelation 2

²⁶ He that overcomes, and keeps my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

²⁷ And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of

my Father.

Joshua 10

¹² Then spoke Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand still upon Gibeon; and moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

¹³ And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed.

1 Kings 17

¹ And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

James 5

¹⁷ Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are.

Acts 1

⁸ You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Isaiah 14

¹⁴ Thus says the Lord, The labor of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans men of stature shall come over unto you, and they shall be yours; they shall come after you; in chains shall they come over, and they shall fall down unto you, they shall make supplication unto you, saying, Surely God is in you; and there is none else.

GOD is “the great King.” Man was made in His image, and was His son, so that he was created a prince. He was given dominion over the works of God’s hands, but this dominion was not an arbitrary thing. Man was not merely appointed king, but he was made a king. The authority was in him.

Romans 13

¹ There is no power but of God.

Man in himself has no more power than the dust of which

he is made; but since the everlasting power and Divinity of God are seen in all the things that He has made, it was but natural that in the highest of God's creatures this power should be manifested in the highest degree. The royal authority that was given to man in the beginning was the fullness of God's presence in him.

God set man over the works of His hands. The works of God's hands are described in the first chapter of *Genesis*, and are mentioned in *Hebrews* 1:10. They include all that God made in the beginning. It was no small dominion that was given to man.

- The heavens and the earth that were made "in the beginning" were put in subjection under his feet.
- The fish of the sea, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air were to obey his will, and to come and go at his command; and
- The very earth itself was to be subject to him.

This is plainly set forth in the texts quoted. It seems almost incredible that such power was given to man, yet we are bound to believe it, because God's Word tells us so. Why should we not be glad to believe it? For...

Ecclesiastes 3

¹⁴ Whatsoever God does, it shall be forever.

Nevertheless we do not now see all things put under man. On the contrary, we see man for the most part weighed down under the burdens of this earth. Why is this? It is not of God's appointment. Man sinned, and lost the glory with which he was crowned. His authority consisted solely in the righteousness which God's presence gave him; and when he rejected the Lord and lost the righteousness, he necessarily lost the dominion. The scepter of Christ's kingdom is a scepter of righteousness. *Hebrews* 1:8.

But Jesus tasted death for every man, and because of this He is crowned with glory and honor. This crown He has as man, for it was as the Son of man that He tasted death for every man. Therefore as man He now has the dominion which God in the beginning gave to man. All power in heaven and in earth is in His hands.

Remember that this power is in His hands as man,—the representative man,—for as God He had it all before He ever came to earth. God had never given up His right as Lord over all, and it was not necessary that Christ should come to earth to establish this claim; what He came for was to become man, and as man to win back what man had lost.

1 Corinthians 15

²¹ For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. *Romans* 1:4. He was the Son of God before He was raised from the dead, just as much as afterwards (see *Matthew* 3:17), but it was the resurrection from the dead that demonstrated the fact. It was by the Spirit of holiness that He was raised. He was raised because as the Son of God He was holy.

This same Spirit of holiness—the Spirit of adoption—God has given us, so that we are sons of God, even as Jesus Christ is. It does not yet appear what we shall be; the world does not recognize us as sons of God, just as it did not recognize Christ as the Son of God; but the resurrection will prove the fact. The resurrection will not make us sons, but will make the fact evident to all.

Jesus Christ, having been raised from the dead, was raised above all principality and power, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. *Ephesians* 1:21. The world to come is the new earth, and it was the new earth over which

God in the beginning gave man dominion. Christ, therefore, as the Son of man, having by the Spirit of holiness that dwelt in Him been shown to be also the Son of God, has the very same dominion that man in the beginning had as the son of God. And this He has for every man, since by the grace of God He “tasted death for every man.” *Hebrews 2:9*.

Therefore in Him we are raised to the dominion which man lost through sin. It is true that we do not now see all things in subjection under man, that is under all mankind, yet it is a fact that this dominion is given to those who are in Christ. If they do not exercise it, it is because they do not realize “the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” *Ephesians 1:18*.

1 Samuel 2

⁸ He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s, and He has set the world upon them.

Evidences of the reality of this power as a present possession have when occasion demanded been seen not only in the Man Christ Jesus, but also in those who were His followers. To all it is said:

Acts 1

⁸ You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you.

The Lord wishes us to understand that Jesus of Nazareth was not a unique specimen, but that He was God’s idea of what every man ought to be. It is only as one comes “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” that he is “a perfect man.” *Ephesians 4:13*. Jesus said:

John 14

¹² Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than

these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

There was no power manifested in Jesus that has not also been manifested in some of His faithful followers. God is not partial with His children.

Ephesians 4

⁷ Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

We may none of us ever perform what are termed miracles, but we need the power nevertheless, for nothing less than the fullness of the power which God gave to man in the beginning, and which is now in “the Man Christ Jesus,” can enable us to conquer sin. and Satan. “Power and authority over all devils” (*Luke 9:1*) is needed by every person who overcomes, for we have the entire host to contend with.

Ephesians 6

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Thank God, this power is given to us!

I'm the child of a King,
The child of a King;
With Jesus, my Saviour,
I'm the child of a King.

20. FOOD OUT OF THE EARTH

Genesis 1

²⁹ And the Lord God said, Behold, I have given you every green herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so.

Genesis 2

⁹ And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.

Psalms 104

¹¹ He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that He may bring forth food out of the earth.

Exodus 16

³ And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots and when we did eat bread to the full, for you have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

⁴ Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven unto you; and you shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no.

Deuteronomy 8

² You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments, or no.

³ And He humbled you, and suffered you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you know not, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does

not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord does man live.

John 6

³¹ Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

³² Then said Jesus unto them, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

³³ For the Bread of God is He which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.

⁴⁸ I am that Bread of life.

⁴⁹ Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.

1 Corinthians 10

¹ Our fathers...

³ Did all eat the same spiritual meat;

⁴ And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.

⁵ But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

1 Corinthians 10

⁶ Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

1 Corinthians 10

⁹ Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

Psalms 78

¹⁸ And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

Hebrews 3

¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Romans 14

²³ And he that doubts is damned if he eat, because he eats not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

1 Corinthians 11

²³ I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

²⁴ And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.

²⁵ After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do you, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death, till He come.

²⁷ Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily; shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

²⁹ For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

³⁰ For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

Psalms 103

² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits;

³ Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases;

⁴ Who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies;

⁵ Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Isaiah 55

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

Proverbs 4

²⁰ My son, attend to my words; incline your ear unto my sayings;

²¹ Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the

midst of your heart.

²² For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Matthew 5

⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Romans 1

¹⁷ The just shall live by faith.

IT is out of the ground that God makes the food grow that should be eaten by every living creature. It is true that many animals, since the fall, subsist largely or wholly on the flesh of other animals; and man has also been allowed to do the same thing; “but from the beginning it was not so.” Since the work of Christ is to restore all things, it is evident that the food which God gave man in the beginning is the best for him, and should be adopted by all who wish the perfect image of God to be restored in them, as in the beginning.

Plants, and plants only, can assimilate unorganized matter. They can take the ultimate elements, and transform them into living substance. Then these elements are in a condition to be assimilated by animals. But this food does not undergo any change in the bodies of the lower animals that it does not undergo in the bodies of men. No new food substance is formed in the bodies of animals.

They simply use that which has already been prepared in the plant for both man and the other animals. Therefore when men eat the flesh of animals, they are simply taking their food second and; and food that has once been used loses strength and value just the same as any other article does through use. Thus it is that the flesh of animals is not so nourishing as grains. More than that, the degenerate characteristics of the animal are necessarily imparted to the food that it has formed into its own flesh; and if the animal is diseased, which is very

commonly the case, this evil is intensified.

When God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, to fulfill to them the promise made to Abraham, He gave them the purest food possible—bread direct from heaven. Is it not consistent that when He sets His hand the second time to deliver His people, He will expect them to come as nearly as possible to the same style of living?

In those days the people tempted God, by asking meat for their lust, and as a consequence they were destroyed.

1 Corinthians 10

⁶ Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

The bread which they had was from heaven, given not by Moses, but by God. It was daily bread, for the nourishment of their bodies, and was their living for forty years. Yet it was “spiritual meat.” It was by giving them this bread that God undertook to teach them that man does not live by bread only, but by the Word of God. Therefore we see that in eating of it they were eating the Word of God.

By the giving of the manna, God would have us learn that in the daily bread which He gives us, He is giving us Himself. Christ is the living bread that came down from heaven, and it was upon His body that the children of Israel were fed; in refusing that food, they were rejecting Christ.

But they did not discern the Lord’s body, and so, although the food which they had was the very best that could be given them, they died. They ate and drank condemnation to themselves. Men may do this, we learn from the eleventh chapter of *1 Corinthians*, even while eating the body of Christ. And yet, if we do not eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, we have no life in us. *John* 6:53. Only the perfect body and blood of Christ can give life, but that life must be received in

faith, else even it will be of no avail.

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the very purest materials that can be obtained,—unleavened bread and unfermented juice of the grape, "the fruit of the vine,"—is the best possible exhibition of the body and blood of Christ,—“a Lamb without blemish and without spot.” *1 Peter* 1:19. Christ said of it, “This is my body,” and, “This is my blood.” It is to teach us the same lesson that was given in the manna,—that in the food which He gives us, He gives us Himself; that what nourishes our bodies is at the same time to be to us “spiritual meat.”

It follows therefore that the Lord's Supper is the model meal. Christ is the bread of God which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. *John* 6:33. Whoever does not eat of Him by faith, has no life. So then we should eat of nothing else but Him, if we would have perfect life.

If in our daily meals we ate only of that food in which the perfect life of Christ is clearly exhibited, and ate in recognition of that life, we would be constantly living in Him. Such a life would be a life of faith, and would therefore be a life of righteousness.

It is by taking the words of Christ, which are Spirit and life, that we eat His flesh and drink His blood. But we must remember that Christ gives us His words in a tangible form. Remember that the manna was given to show that man must live by the Word of the Lord. But the words of the Lord...

Proverbs 4

²² ...are life unto those who find them, and health to all their flesh.

So this living by faith,—the conscious taking of the Lord's life, and that only, in the food which He gives us,—will be physical health.

It does not mean self-punishment or the mortification of

the body by denying one's self of any good thing, but on the contrary the eating of that which is good, having the mouth satisfied with good things, and delighting in fatness.

It is as much more enjoyable a way of living as righteousness and health are more enjoyable than sin and disease.

Life is fullest or content
Where delight is innocent.

21. HIS COMMANDMENT IS LIFE EVERLASTING

Genesis 1

³ God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

⁶ God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

⁷ ...and it was so.

⁹ God said, Let the waters under the firmament be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so.

¹¹ God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so.

²⁴ God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so.

Psalms 147

¹⁵ He sends forth His commandment upon earth; His Word runs very swiftly.

¹⁶ He gives snow like wool; He scatters the hoar frost like ashes.

¹⁷ He casts forth His ice like morsels; who can stand before His cold?

¹⁸ He sends out His Word, and melts them; He causes His wind to blow, and the waters flow.

Psalms 148

⁸ Fire and hail; snow, and vapors, stormy wind fulfilling His Word.

Job 37

⁶ For He said to the snow, Be on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength.

Matthew 5

³⁷ Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these comes of evil.

Ephesians 4

²⁸ Let him that stole, steal no more.

²⁹ Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 4

³¹ Let all bitterness, and wrath and anger, and clamor and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice;

³² And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

Philippians 2

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3

¹⁵ Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

¹⁶ Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

1 Peter 3

¹⁰ He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile.

¹¹ Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

Romans 12

⁹ Let love be without dissimulation.

John 12

⁵⁰ I know that His commandment is life everlasting.

Psalms 85

⁸ I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints.

Isaiah 55

³ Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live.

Daniel 10

¹⁶ Then I opened my mouth, and spoke, and said unto him that stood before me, O my Lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.

¹⁷ For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength

in me, neither is there breath left in me.

¹⁸ Then there came again and touched me One like the appearance of a man, and He strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto you, be strong, yea, be strong.

¹⁹ And when He had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak; for You have strengthened me.

NOTE from these texts that whatever God says is so. This does not mean merely that He tells the truth, but that whatever He says ought to be, comes to pass.

Romans 4

¹⁷ [He] calls those things that be not as though they were.

The very calling of their names brings them into existence. His Word creates. When God wanted the earth and the things that are on it to come into being, He simply said, "Let them exist," and immediately they were.

Therefore if anyone wishes to learn the way of life and righteousness,

Job 12

⁷ Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you:

⁸ Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you.

⁹ Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this?

What will these teach us? They will teach us that if we hear what God the Lord speaks, we shall have life and peace. There is life in simply hearing the Word of the Lord.

John 5

²⁴ Verily, verily I say unto you, He that hears my Word, and believes on Him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

²⁵ Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now

is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

²⁸ Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

²⁹ And shall come forth.

Read the story of Lazarus, of the daughter of Jairus, and of the son of the widow of Nain, to see the life-giving power that there is in the Word of the Lord. Now,

John 20

³¹ These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name.

When the prophet Daniel had a vision from God he lost all strength, and even his breath left his body. Then the Lord spoke to him, and said:

Daniel 10

¹⁹ ...be strong, yea, be strong.

And immediately he was strengthened. That same Word says to us:

Ephesians 6

¹⁰ Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

2 Timothy 2

¹ Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Joshua 1 [Compare with Isaiah 41:10-16]

⁹ Have not I commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you whithersoever you go.

It will be well worthwhile to look up many other places in the Bible where direct commands are given, and whenever one is found, instead of thinking, "What a hard thing to do!" remember that the word which commands that these things be done is the same word that says to the snow, "Be on the earth" (*Job* 37:6), and which commands the rain to fall. It is

the same word that in the beginning created all things, and caused the light to shine out of darkness.

Deuteronomy 30 [RV]

¹¹ This commandment which I command you this day, it is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.

If we hear the Word of the Lord, not for one moment merely, but continually, it will be as easy for us to do according to the commandments of God as it was for the earth to bring forth grass at His command. The dead do not do anything to make themselves live; they simply hear the voice of the Lord, and live. So our part, when we are dead in trespasses and sins, is to listen continually to what the Lord says, and we shall live and be strong. Remember that God's Word is always the creative word.

Read the following very carefully:

Psalms 81

⁵ This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not.

⁶ I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.

⁷ You called in trouble, and I delivered you; I answered you in the secret place of thunder: I proved you at the waters of Meribah. Selah.

⁸ Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto you: O Israel, if you will hearken unto me;

⁹ There shall no strange god be in you; neither shall you worship any strange god.

¹⁰ I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt: open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

See what a wonderful promise God makes to His people, that if they will only hearken unto Him there shall be no strange god found among them, and no false god shall be worshiped by them. He will take the idols away. Now read *Exodus* 20:1-3, and see that this is the same thing:

Exodus 20

¹ And God spoke all these words, saying,

² I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ You shall have no other gods before me.

From this learn that all the commandments of God are but “exceeding great and precious promises” (2 *Peter* 1:4) of what He will do for us if we will but heed His words.

22. GOD'S REST

Genesis 1

³¹ And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.

Genesis 2

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

³ And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor, and do all your work;

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work; you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Revelation 14

⁶ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters.

Ezekiel 20

¹⁹ I am the Lord your God: walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them: and hallow my Sabbaths;

²⁰ And they shall be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.

Ezekiel 20

¹² Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them.

Isaiah 40

⁹ Behold your God!

Matthew 11

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

Exodus 33

¹⁴ My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.

Psalms 31

¹⁹ O how great is Your goodness which You have laid up for them that fear You; which You have wrought for them that trust in You before the sons of men.

Ephesians 2

⁸ For by grace have you been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;

⁹ Not of works, that no man should glory.

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [“there is a new creation,” RV]; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

¹⁸ And all things are of God.

Colossians 1

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;

¹³ Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son:

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins;

¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature;

¹⁶ For by Him [in Him] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him.

John 19

²⁸ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst.

³⁰ When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.

John 6

²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

Hebrews 3

⁷ Wherefore, even as the Holy Ghost says, Today if you shall hear His voice,

⁸ Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, like as in the day of temptation in the wilderness,

⁹ Wherewith your fathers tempted me by proving me, and saw my works forty years.

¹⁰ Wherefore I was displeased with this generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; but they did not know my ways;

¹¹ As I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

¹² Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God.

¹⁹ We see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.

Hebrews 4

¹ Let us fear, therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to have come short of it.

² For indeed we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they; but the word of hearing did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with them that heard.

³ For we which have believed do enter into that rest; even as He has said, As I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

⁴ For He has said somewhere of the seventh day on this wise, and God rested on the seventh day from all His works;

⁵ And in this place again, They shall not enter into my rest.

⁹ There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

¹⁰ For he that is entered into His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

REST follows labor; but the labor must be finished, or else there can be no real rest. Moreover, the work must be well done, so that it is perfect and complete, or else the rest will not be perfect.

When God had worked six days in creating the heavens and the earth, and all things in them, He rested on the seventh day, because His work was done, and was well done. Everything was perfect.

The Sabbath is the sign that He is God, for only God could do perfect work; and the fact that God rested, shows that His work was perfect.

Psalms 111

³ His work is honorable and glorious; and His righteousness endures for ever.

⁴ He has made His wonderful works to be remembered.

Literally, "He has made a memorial for His wonderful works." How is the Sabbath a memorial of God's creative power, and thus a sign that He is God?

Thus: Just as one rests only after work is done, and finds the joy and satisfaction of rest in the contemplation of the work well done, the Sabbath is the constant reminder of the fact that God's works are perfect; it continually reminds us that He created all things, and, most of all, that He finished

His work. In the best and fullest sense of the word, His work was finished: it was complete and perfect. Creation was a finished piece of work. Otherwise there could have been no perfect rest following. The Sabbath is therefore the sign or mark of perfection.

When we look abroad upon the earth now, we do not see all things perfect. The curse has marred the works of God's hands. Man, creation's lord, has fallen, and his dominion has suffered with him. The Sabbath, however, remains. There remains a rest for the people of God. That is still left.

But it is a sign of perfection. It is the proof that God's creation was made perfect. It is the proof that He is a great God and does great things. Therefore since God makes nothing in vain, and whatsoever He does shall be forever, the Sabbath is the pledge that everything, man included, shall be made new again. It is therefore the evidence of the sanctifying power of God.

The everlasting Gospel calls upon men to "worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." *Revelation* 14:7. That is what the Sabbath does. Therefore it follows that the Sabbath is the fullness of the everlasting Gospel. It is the seal of perfection. It marks a new creation complete and perfect.

This new creation is effected through the cross.

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation.

The Messiah is the one who restores all things, and it is by the power of His cross that He does it. The power of the cross is the power that created the heavens and earth in the beginning; for the preaching of the cross is the power of God (*1 Corinthians* 1:18), and the power of God is seen in the things that are made. *Romans* 1:20.

So when Jesus was about to yield up His life upon the cross, He cried:

John 19

³⁰ It is finished.

In Him, therefore, that is, through His cross, the works of God, which were finished from the foundation of the world, are ours when we believe. The rest which Christ gives those who come to Him, is the rest that comes from works finished and perfect. The Sabbath teaches us that Christ's power to save is the same as the power that made all things perfect in the beginning.

2 Peter 1

³ His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

The good works in which God wishes us to walk are already prepared for us. God himself has wrought them for us, and laid them up for us. We find them in Christ. In Him the works of God are manifest, and they are ours by faith. By faith we receive Christ, and receiving Him we have the finished works of God.

But when we have the finished works of God, it is evident that we have God's rest. The true keeping of God's Sabbath, therefore, instead of being an attempt to get righteousness by works, is the acceptance of righteousness by faith. It means simply trusting in the Lord for everything; letting Him be the One who both wills and works in us.

This is why those who do not have faith in Christ cannot keep the Sabbath. Only by faith do we enter into God's rest. Without perfect faith there can be no Sabbath keeping, because only by faith do we receive the perfect work of God in Christ.

How plain the Sabbath of the Lord makes the fact that

there can be no such thing as a man making himself righteous by his own works. For instance, a man who does not know this fact, is striving to make himself righteous. Righteousness is right doing, and the righteousness that is required is the righteousness of God. Therefore only God's doing, God's work, can be counted righteous. So the man is trying to do God's work. We say to him,

“My dear friend, you are working for nothing. How foolish are you to be trying to do a work that is already finished. The works were finished from the foundation of the world; and the proof of it is found in the fact that God rested the seventh day from all His works. Moreover, the work is that which only God could do, and that is why He has finished it. Leave off your own work, accept God's finished work, and thus be at rest.”

In the Sabbath of the Lord we find the fullness of the fact that:

Romans 4

⁵ To him that works not, but believes on Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

The word “Sabbath” means “rest.” Indeed it is the Hebrew word for rest. The seventh day is the rest of the Lord. God's presence alone gives rest, and that is why the Lord calls us to come to Him to find rest.

Now as the seventh day is God's rest,—God's Sabbath,—it follows that in it we find the “Real Presence.” Not of course in the formal, outward cessation of labor on that day, but in the perfect trust in the righteousness of God, of which the rest from physical work on the seventh day of the week is a sign.

God's perfect works are found only in Christ, for in Him were all things created, and in Him all things exist. Therefore we must have the real presence of the Lord, in order to have the perfect work of God. But when we have the real presence

of Christ, bringing the perfect work into our lives, then we have God's perfect rest, which comes from perfect works finished. So the true Sabbath of the Lord is His real presence with us.

Isaiah 58

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,...

¹⁴ Then shall you delight yourself in the Lord.

23. THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD

Revelation 14

⁶ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Ecclesiastes 3

¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time.

Psalms 94

⁹ He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?

¹⁰ He that chastises the nations, shall He not correct, even He that teaches man knowledge?

Psalms 96

⁵ All the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens.

⁶ Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Psalms 27

⁴ One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple.

Psalms 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.

Psalms 45

² You are fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into Your lips.

Isaiah 52

¹¹ His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.

Isaiah 53

² He has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.

Hosea 14

⁵ I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

⁶ His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree.

Psalms 90

¹⁶ Let Your work appear unto Your servants, and Your glory unto their children.

¹⁷ And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish the work of our hands upon us.

Matthew 6

²⁸ Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;

²⁹ And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰ Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

Psalms 149

⁴ For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the meek with salvation.

Isaiah 52

¹ Awake, awake; put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean.

Psalms 96

⁹ O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Isaiah 33

¹⁷ Your eyes shall behold the King in His beauty.

Revelation 22

³ And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him;

⁴ And they shall see His face.

Psalms 17

¹⁵ As for me, I will behold Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Your likeness.

THE invisible things of God, even His everlasting power and Divinity, are seen in the things that He has made. *Romans 1:20.*

Psalms 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God.

So in the things that God has made, we see His own presence revealed. God puts Himself into all His works.

The Word which was in the beginning with God, and which was God, and in which was life, is the Word that made all things.

Colossians 1

¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

That is, they hold together. So it is from the life of the Lord that everything comes, and in that life that everything is upheld. "We are His offspring," and the mountains, as well as the whole earth, were "brought forth" from His very being. Thus it is that everything that God has made bears His impress. He has set His glory upon the heavens.

Every faculty that any man has is but the working of God in him. If we do not put anything in the way,—if we do not refuse to be used by the Lord,—God will so work that every one of our faculties shall be perfect.

Psalms 94

⁹ He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed

the eye, shall he not see?

¹⁰ He that chastises the heathen, shall he not correct? he that teaches man knowledge, shall he not know?

From this we learn that whatever faculties man has, God has them infinitely more perfect. Whatever man can do, God can do better. We see because God gives us sight—a portion of His own power of seeing. We hear because God uses our ears as instruments of His power to hear.

So to the questions:

Psalm 94

⁹ He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?

We may add,

“He that made all things beautiful, must He not be beautiful?”

Just as the invisible things of God are seen in that which He has made, and everything bears the stamp of His own life, in spite of the curse, so all the beauty that is seen in the universe is but the shining through of the beauty of the Lord.

Men’s judgment concerning beauty has been very much perverted. They call many things beautiful, which are really ugly; and many things in which men see no beauty at all, are the very soul of beauty.

1 Samuel 16

⁷ The Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

That is why when Christ, who is “fairer than the sons of men” (*Psalm* 45:2), came to this earth, He had no beauty that men should desire Him when they looked upon Him. They looked at what He appeared to be, and not at what He really was.

Have you never had the experience of meeting with a person who at first seemed ugly, but who, after intimate acquaintance, was really beautiful? The first sight was not prepossessing, but when you saw what the person really was, the ugliness of feature was entirely forgotten. This shows that beauty of character is the only real beauty. The saints of God may be very plain outwardly, but when the hidden things are brought to light, then shall they shine forth in the beauty of holiness.

The beauty of Israel is as the beauty of the olive tree. An olive tree is one of the most gnarled, twisted, and ungainly of trees. It grows on hard, stony soil, and more often than not will have the appearance of an old willow tree that has been torn by storms until it is almost dead. Its beauty is the abundant crop of fruit that it bears, in the evidence that it shows of the richness of life in it. So the life of God in the soul is the real beauty of men, and that alone will constitute their beauty in the ages to come.

Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the lilies of the field.

Matthew 6

³⁰ Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field,...shall He not much more clothe you?

“If God so clothe the grass.” How does He clothe the lily? With His life that is in it, making it grow. The beautiful clothing of the lily is but the outward manifestation of the life within. The beauty is not put on from without, but comes from within. It is an essential part of the lily itself. Take the beauty away, and the lily is no more. Its beauty is God’s life in it shining forth. Even so God will clothe all His children.

Strength and beauty are in the sanctuary of the Lord, because He is the perfection of beauty. So the one thing that the Psalmist desired was to dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord. He said:

Psalms 17

¹⁵ ...I shall be satisfied when I awake, with Your likeness.

Not, as some misread it, “When I awake *in* Your likeness.” No; the Psalmist had such a true sense of the beauty of the Lord, that he knew that the sight of the Lord’s face would alone be perfect satisfaction. To be permitted to look at that face throughout eternity, will be the highest blessing that can be bestowed on men. Eternity will not be long enough to cause one to become tired of gazing on the face of the Lord. Each moment will reveal some new and glorious feature.

How may we form some idea of the beauty of the Lord? By looking at the things that He has made, and looking by faith, so that we can see Him in them.

Learn first that there is no real beauty in the universe except the beauty of the Lord. Then think of all the beauty of the grass, trees, and flowers. Add together the beauty of the forests and the meadows, the colors of the rainbow, and the glorious tints caused by the setting sun. In thinking of these, one almost forgets the beautiful plumage of the birds, but that must be added in, too. Who can conceive the marvelous beauty of all these combined?

But as these are only “parts of His ways,” so all the beauty that is revealed in this earth, is but a single feature, as it were, of the beauty of the Lord. All the beauty of the stars, not simply as their many colors are revealed through the telescope, but as a close acquaintance would reveal it, and the beauty of the infinite number of worlds that cluster round these beautiful suns, is but the manifestation of the beauty of the Great King.

Ah, how much more meaning we can now see in that statement concerning the redeemed,

Revelation 22

⁴ They shall see His face.

Not only when they stand in the place where the seraphim veil their eyes from the splendor of the glory, will the ransomed ones see His face, but wherever they wander in the great universe, the face of their Redeemer will shine out to them in all the wondrous beauty that everywhere appears. Who will not be satisfied?

What is the practical benefit of this lesson to us? Is it merely a matter of curiosity? Far from it.

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

It is the beholding of the beauty of the Lord as it is revealed to us in the things that He has made, that prepares us for the sight of His face when He comes.

Psalms 149

⁴ He will beautify the meek with salvation.

The more we see and know of the marvelous beauty of the Lord, the more do we know of the power of His salvation. As we see the beauty that God has put into and upon the lower creation, we may form some idea of the beauty with which man, who was made to be creation's lord, will be clothed when he is restored to his own dominion.

And as we think of that, it is that we may know the perfection of the beauty of holiness which God has for us even now. Let us then pray with new and more enlightened faith:

Psalms 90

¹⁶ Let Your work appear unto Your servants, and Your glory unto their children.

¹⁷ And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish it.

24. THE FULLNESS OF GOD

Genesis 1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

² And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³¹ And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.

Isaiah 6 [RV, margin]

³ Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the fullness of the whole earth is His glory.

Psalms 24

¹ The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein,

² For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Psalms 33

⁴ The word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth.

⁵ He loves righteousness and judgment; the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

Psalms 119

⁶⁴ The earth, O Lord, is full of Your mercy; teach me Your statutes.

Jeremiah 23

²⁴ Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

John 1

¹⁴ The Word was made flesh, and dwelt, among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

Matthew 28

¹⁸ Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given

unto me in heaven and in earth.

Ephesians 4

¹⁰ He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.

John 1

¹⁶ And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Colossians 1

¹⁷ [Christ] is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

¹⁸ And He is the Head of the body, the church; who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.

¹⁹ For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell.

Colossians 2

⁸ Take heed lest there shall be any one that makes spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ;

⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

¹⁰ And in Him you are made full.

Matthew 5

⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Philippians 1

¹¹ Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Ephesians 4

⁷ Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

John 3

³⁴ God gives not the Spirit by measure.

Ephesians 3

¹⁴ I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹⁶ That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the in-

ner man;

¹⁷ That you...

¹⁸ ...may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height,

¹⁹ And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 1

²² [The church] is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

Habakkuk 2

¹⁴ The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

GOD'S name is I AM. Nothing exists except by Him. Everything bears His impress, because He has put Himself into everything that He has made. Apart from Him there is nothing.

At the bidding of the Lord, the matter that forms the earth came into existence. But the earth was formless and empty. Then the Spirit of God moved upon it, brooded over it, and it was filled. Its fullness was the goodness and the glory of God.

That brooding of the Spirit impregnated matter with force. Wherever there is matter there is force; but the force is no part of the matter itself, but is the manifestation of "the fullness of God." The force of the winds and the waves, and the power which the rock has to resist pressure, is but the manifestation of the life of the...

Ephesians 4

⁶ ...Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

The fullness of the earth is the goodness and the glory of God. That is, all the force that is exhibited in nature is but the power of God's goodness. All the fullness of God dwells in Christ, and He ascended upon high...

Ephesians 4

¹⁰ ...that He might fill all things.

As sin brought emptiness, so the cross of Christ brings fullness. Sin tends to bring the earth into its condition of confusion and emptiness (*Isaiah* 34:11), but by the cross, which lifted Christ up to the throne of glory, the earth will again be filled as it was in the beginning.

All things consist in Christ. In giving Him to us, God has given us all things.

Romans 8

³² He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

John 1

¹⁶ Of His fullness have all we received.

All the power that there is in the whole creation is ours. Whether we believe it or not, the fact remains that God has given all things to everybody; the Gospel is the revelation of this truth to us. The message now is:

Revelation 14

⁷ ...Fear God, and give glory to Him.

We give Him glory by worshiping Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And we worship Him as such only when we allow Him to exercise His creative power in us; for if we do not yield ourselves to Him, acknowledging that we are nothing apart from Him, then we deny His supreme power.

It is not enough that the heavens declare the glory of God, and that the invisible things of God, even His everlasting power and Divinity, are seen in everything on the earth, and in the very earth itself. Man also, whom God has created for His glory, must show forth the excellencies of God.

God crowned man in the beginning with glory, and until God's glory is fully revealed before the world in man, the work of the Gospel will not be finished. When those who are willing to follow Christ have so learned His power in the things that He has made that they know nothing else save Christ and Him crucified, then will the church in very truth be "the fullness of Him that fills all in all."

- Then will the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, for the world can see the fullness of His glory in mortal men, so that they will be without the shadow of an excuse for not believing in Him.
- Then will Christ's work of filling all things be perfected, and there will be no place in the universe for those who will not allow Him to fill them.
- Then will the kingdom of God come, and His will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Then will this scripture be fulfilled:

Revelation 5

¹³ And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto Him that sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever.

Related Articles

*These Articles were included
in the same issues
as the Everlasting Gospel series,
and are on the same theme.*

1. BEHOLD YOUR GOD

By comparing *Isaiah* 40:3-5 with *John* 1:23 and *Luke* 3:4-6, we readily see that in the first-mentioned chapter we have the prophecy of the mission of John the Baptist. Concerning this there is no possibility of any misunderstanding.

But where many err is in supposing that the work prophesied of by the prophet Isaiah was finished when the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth died. That this was not the case, is as plain as that John himself came in fulfillment of it. The prophecy itself shows this.

If we read as far as the 9th verse of *Isaiah*, we shall see that the message of John the Baptist included this exhortation and announcement:

Isaiah 40

⁹ ...Behold your God!

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

Thus we see that the special mission which John the Baptist began, reaches to the coming of the Lord to give reward to all His people. The prophecy did not foretell the coming of John, but only of a voice, and that voice must continue to sound until the necessity for it ceases by the coming of the Lord. Men may be put to death, but the voice cannot be stifled.

That voice was to proclaim the nothingness of human flesh, and the greatness of God, thus teaching absolute faith and trust in Him, and preparing people for His coming; for only those who become acquainted with the Lord are prepared for His coming, and all the preparation that is needed for that event is personal acquaintance with Him.

That this message, “Behold your God!” is to be given before the coming of the Lord, and is not a cry announcing His appearance in the sky, is evident enough when we remember that His coming will be like the lightning that shines from one end of heaven to the other (*Matthew 29:27*), so that “every eye shall see Him” (*Revelation 1:7*), and there will then be no need for anybody to say, “Behold Him!”

No; the message is preparatory to that event; it introduces people to the Lord, so that those who heed it may be able to say when the Lord comes:

Isaiah 25

⁹ Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

We know now why the message is given, “Behold your God!” People have not liked to retain God in their knowledge (*Romans 1:28*), and have consequently become corrupt, and are in danger of the eternal destruction which at the Lord’s coming will be the lot of..

2 Thessalonians 1

⁸ ...them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The question now is:

“How shall we make the acquaintance of the Lord? Where are we to behold Him?”

The answer is, in “the things that are made.” *Romans 1:20*. Ever since, the creation of the world, all that may be known of God is clearly to be seen in the things that He has made. People have so long been serving the works of their own hands, that they have become like their idols,

Psalms 115

⁵ ...eyes have they, but they see not.

They need to have their eyes opened, and turned to the works of God's hand, where He stands revealed. God's "everlasting power and Divinity" are revealed through the things that He has made. So every created thing proclaims the Gospel,—the good news of a Saviour from sin,—because the Gospel is:

Romans 1

¹⁶ ...the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

Thus it is that every created thing announces a Saviour, because it reveals God's power, and Christ is "the power of God." So the message proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem, is repeated and re-echoed by every created thing.

The heaven, and earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters, repeat the message of salvation. Day and night the voice keeps saying, "Behold!" And shall men, the crown of creation, be silent? Nay; in addition to the silent voice of the life, the being,—which they possess in common with the rest of creation,—they have articulate speech, so that with "a loud voice" they can cry,

"Behold your God, in heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters; and worship and give glory to Him!"

It is to this end that these lessons have been written. May each one who studies them have his eyes opened to see the Lord in all His power and glory; and as the exceeding loveliness of the sight fills you with "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8), you will need no second bidding.

Isaiah 40

⁹ Lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

2. THE BEGINNING AND THE END

JESUS Christ is the Beginning, the source, of the creation of God. *Revelation* 3:14. Apart from Him not one thing was made. *John* 1:3. In Him were all things created; that is to say, all things spring from His Being, so that He is “the everlasting Father;” for He is the firstborn of all creation. *Colossians* 1:15-17. He is the image, and effulgence, the wisdom, and the power of God. All the works of God are begun and completed in Him.

The eighth chapter of *Proverbs* is the call of wisdom; but Christ is the wisdom of God, so that the words are the words of Christ concerning Himself. In the twenty-second verse we read:

Proverbs 8

²² The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old.

Now there is in the Hebrew of this verse no word indicating “in,” so that, as expressed in some translations, it properly reads, “the beginning of His way.” Christ is the Beginning of God’s way, as stated in *Revelation* 3:14. Also the word rendered “possessed,” in *Proverbs* 8:23, is the same as that used by Eve when Cain was born, “I have gotten a man” from the Lord. So we may read the text thus:

“Jehovah brought me forth, the beginning of His way, before His works of old.”

With this passage compare *1 Corinthians* 1:24; *John* 1:1-3; *Colossians* 1:15-17; and *Revelation* 3:14. Then continue reading in *Proverbs* 8:24-31:

Proverbs 8

²⁴ When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

²⁵ Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I

brought forth;

²⁶ While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields; nor the beginning of the dust of the earth.

²⁷ When He established the heavens, I was there; when He set a circle upon the face of the deep;

²⁸ When He made firm the skies above; when the mountains of the deep became strong;

²⁹ When He gave to the sea its bound, that the waters should not transgress His commandment; when He marked out the foundations of the earth;

³⁰ Then I was by Him as a Master Workman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him;

³¹ Rejoicing in His habitation earth; and my delight was with the sons of men.

“In the beginning—God.” And Christ, the Word of God, is the Beginning of His way.

Colossians 2

⁹ In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Therefore through Him alone we have access to the Father. He died for us...

1 Peter 3

¹⁸ ...that He might bring us to God.

What we must come to, therefore, is the Beginning. Contrary to the usual idea, the Beginning is not what we start with, but what we are to come to. True we ought to start at the Beginning, but we do not, and because we do not, none of us start right. And because we do not come to the Beginning, we keep “out of the way.” *Romans 3:12.*

Luke 19

¹⁷ Whosoever, shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Where does a little child begin to learn? At the beginning. It does not think that it knows anything, and so allows itself to be taught. It accepts truth by faith, and so it learns. So we,

like children, should begin at the beginning, and then we should begin right, for when we come back to the beginning, we come to God.

If men would trust in the Lord with all their heart, and not lean to their own understanding (*Proverbs 3:5*), they would always do and say the things that are right, and would make no mistakes whatever. They could not go wrong, for it would be the Spirit of the Lord thinking and working in them. The reason why we fail is because we assume that we are able to originate plans and to think for ourselves, and do not recognize God as the only Beginning.

We are so anxious to get to the end, that we almost entirely lose sight of the Beginning. Just as though it were possible ever to attain the end while ignoring the Beginning! But we are too impatient to “wait on the Lord.” *Psalms 37:34*. We are like, the man who is not content to sit quietly on board the steamer and be carried to his destination, but must needs leap into the sea, and try to swim there by himself. Of course he will drown if he doesn’t get back into the ship. So with us, unless we abide in Him “who is the Beginning.”

For He is...

Revelation 22

¹³ ...the Beginning and the end, the first and the last.

So when we have got to the Beginning, lo, we are at the end! In Him all fullness dwells,

John 1

¹⁶ ...and of His fullness have all we received.

In Him we find all things, from first to last.

To go back to the Beginning and to be taught like little children, that is, to take simple statements of fact, and to believe them, and not to profess to know anything except what we have been told (allowing God to be the Teacher) seems alto-

gether too simple. We are ambitious for the complex wisdom of the world, which is foolishness. But when we humble ourselves to be children and to walk with God and learn of Him, then we find out that the simple beginning contains the sum, of all wisdom.

Proverbs 1

⁷ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

But that does not mean that something else is the end of it for...

Job 28

²⁸ ...the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.

Men regard the Beginning as something they advance from, and look back to; whereas it is what we are to come to and abide with. When we come to Christ, the Beginning, we have the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. *1 Peter 1:9.*

The last message of the Gospel directs us to the Beginning, as the preparation for the end.

Revelation 14

⁷ ...worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

To fear God and give glory to Him, is the whole duty of man. To live in constant recognition of Him as “the Author and Finisher” (*Hebrews 12:2*), and to allow all our works to be begun and wrought and finished in Him, is righteousness, because He is righteous.

The devil has sought to beguile us from “the simplicity that is in Christ” (*2 Corinthians 11:3*), and has succeeded. Now as the end approaches, the call is sounded “with a loud voice” (*Revelation 14:7*) for us to come to the Beginning, and to remain there, that we may rejoice in the end.

The Gospel of *John* begins where *Genesis* begins, and *Reve-*

lation ends with the beginning. So the Gospel is an infinite circle, ending where it begins, and enclosing the universe. If we are content to abide at the Beginning,—God,—we have everything. If we despise the Beginning, we have nothing.

There are infinite possibilities of knowledge and achievement in the Lord. He is the One...

Revelation 1

¹ ...which is, and which was, and which is to come.

His name is I AM. Wherever and whenever we receive Him, we find the Beginning and the end.

In Him alone we learn the truth of that which has been; His Word therefore is the only authentic history. In Him only do we know the truth and reality of that which is; so His Word is the only true text book of science. And He by His Spirit reveals to us things to come, because He takes the things of Him who is to come, and shows them to us. *John* 16:13-14.

This is not philosophical speculation, but is simple truth. O that we all might be simple enough to see it, and faithful enough to abide in it! Then we should let all our works be wrought in God, and they would be perfect. We should not boast so much about being “independent thinkers,” but should allow God to think for us, and our thoughts would be as much higher than ordinary human thoughts as the heaven is higher than the earth.

This would not be the slavish following of another, for the service of God is freedom. It would be God thinking in us, not instead of us. And why should He not, since He is our life? Who should use our brains and our muscles, except the One in whom we live, and move, and have our being? He is able, for He is the Beginning. Whatever He does not begin in us is nothing. When the light of the Sun of righteousness shines on it, it will be found to be emptiness.

Let us then speedily learn the Beginning of God's Word,
and find in it the sum of all revelation.

3. WHERE WERE YOU?

WHEN God “answered Job out of the whirlwind,” He began at the beginning, saying:

Job 38

¹ Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?
declare, if you have understanding.

The same question could be asked of every man who lives, or who has ever lived, and not one of them could say a word. Everything else in the whole creation was made before man was. Man was the last of all. When he came into being, he found everything complete; and every man that has ever been born has found everything waiting for him when he arrived.

Why this arrangement? Evidently so that no man could have any chance to lay claim to share with God the honor of creation. It is a fact that no man can create. This needs no argument. Men work, and effect changes in form and appearance of many things; but no man ever yet added the slightest particle of matter to the substance of the earth or to anything that exists; and no man ever can do it.

Yet such is the conceit and self-assertion of the human mind that if God had performed any new act of creation after man came into being, man would surely claim that he himself had done it.

Even as it is, men are very prone to exalt themselves above God. The only thing that will keep them—us—from doing this in some form or degree, is to remember “who is the beginning.” We are wont to pride ourselves not a little upon the fact that man was made last—“the crown of creation.” It may serve to abate that pride if we think that God made man last because there was no use for him before; there was nothing that

he could do, he would have been hopelessly in the way of the progress of creation, and what is more, he would not have been able to maintain himself. God had to provide all things first, so that man, the most helpless of created things, might be able to live.

If all men had but kept in mind this simple truth, and had remembered that in Christ, who is the Beginning, “were all things created,” and “He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (*Colossians* 1:17), there would never have been a pope, great or small.

Jeremiah 45

⁵ Do you seek great things for yourself? seek them not.

Let us rather be content to remain children, keeping close to the Beginning.

Proverbs 3

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him [as the beginning] and He shall direct your paths.

What He begins, He will carry to successful completion.

4. POWER TO WITNESS

Acts 1

⁸ You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses...unto the uttermost part of the earth.

In the same connection He also said,

Matthew 28

¹⁸ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore...

TAKE these texts in connection with *Romans* 1:20, which tells us that this power is seen in everything that has been made,—in the blade of grass, and in the hosts of the heavens,—and see what encouragement it is for all men.

We learn of the power by which God works to save us from sin. Every soul who is longing for deliverance may know that “the power that works in us” (*Ephesians* 3:20) to save, wherever we really desire salvation, is the power that supports and holds together the universe. Then let no one say or think that God cannot save a sinner such as he is. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.

There is encouragement also to witness to the power of this salvation; for the power that saves is the power by which witnesses are sent forth. Nothing less than all power in heaven and in earth can save a man from sin; so that whoever is saved has all that power with which to proclaim the Word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation.

Notice that what is needed, and all that is promised, for the proclamation of the Gospel, is power. The Lord does not promise eloquence nor learning, but power. Paul was not destitute of that which in the world passes for wisdom, yet he says:

1 Corinthians 2

⁴ My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;

⁵ That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

It is power that tells; not human power, but Divine power. "There is no power but of God," so that all attempts to make an impression are vain.

John 3

³⁴ He whom God has sent, speaks the words of God,

Hebrews 4

¹² ...the Word of God is quick, and powerful...

All therefore that is needed for the Gospel to go with power is to have a company of people fully yielded to God's power, that is, to His will, and saved by it. There need not necessarily be many. Twelve such men effected a mighty change in the world a few hundred years ago.

All are not apostles; all are not evangelists; all are not called to go as missionaries to other lands, or even to other neighborhoods than their own; but each one who is saved can witness to the power of Christ to save, with all the power by which he has been saved.

5. GOD'S POWER IN MAN

THERE is no power in the universe except the power of God. This is plainly taught in the Scriptures, and is so self-evident as to need no argument. Some will ask:

“How then is man responsible for his actions? Why isn't he as irresponsible as the beasts, or the plants of the field?”

To many who ask this question, it seems unanswerable; but really it is a very shallow question, and shows wonderful lack of thought. It is really a sufficient answer to the question, to say that God did not make man to be a beast nor a vegetable.

To say that God ought to save a man regardless of his actions, since all the power that is in him is the power of God, and therefore man is not responsible for his acts, is inconsistent, in that it demands that God shall treat us as both vegetables and men. God does not save the beasts nor the vegetables of the field. He who wishes to disclaim all responsibility for his own acts, ought not to expect that God do anything else with him than let him go to destruction, just as He does to other things that are irresponsible.

But the plants of the field, and the beasts, although irresponsible, fulfill the object of their existence, in that they do not resist the will of the Lord, while man does not do this; and therefore he cannot possibly be treated as an irresponsible being.

It is God's power in man, and yet every man has perfect freedom. God made man in His own image, to be a companion for Himself; but a cowering slave could not be a companion for God. There must be no fear, no restraint, in perfect companionship.

Now it is utterly impossible for any man to exist apart from

the power of God. No man can keep himself alive. So God mercifully exercises His own power in man's behalf, and whoever loves life will yield to that power. And since God's power is infinite, it follows that whoever yields to that power has unlimited freedom of action. Only the one who tries to resist the power,—he who rejects it,—finds himself fettered and limited.

God does not compel anybody to love Him, since love cannot be forced. So if a person does not wish to love the Lord he need not; but all those who hate Him, love death (*Proverbs* 8:36), for He is the life.

Thus everybody has before him the choice of life or death, and can have whichever he chooses. Surely that is fair. If man hates the life of God, if he refuses to yield to God's power, then he inevitably finds himself hampered and bound, because there is no power but of God, and he is shutting himself off from the source of supply.

But if he yields to the power in its fullness, if he chooses life, then he is as free as God Himself, for the power which works in him unrestrained is the power that fills and upholds the universe. He can do whatever he pleases, and all that he does will prosper. Nowhere in the universe will such a man feel any restraint to his effort, for nowhere will he come to the limit of the power that works in him.

6. JUSTIFIED BY KNOWLEDGE

Isaiah 53

¹¹ By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.

WHAT knowledge of us has the Lord, and how does He have it? Thus:

Hebrews 4 [RV]

¹² The Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

¹³ And there is no creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

There is nothing that the Lord does not know about men; and He knows it not by hearsay, not as the result of inquiry, but from actual experience. The Word that creates and upholds is present in every being, for the Word is the life. In every fiber of the body, there is the Word of God present. He knows the sins, because He bears them. The knowledge by which He justifies, is the knowledge of experience: for He bears the iniquities.

In the Lord, power and wisdom are combined. There is power intelligently directed. His power is His wisdom, and His wisdom is powerful. Thus it is that there is no such thing as chance in the world; force does not act at random, but since it is God's own power, it acts according to the wisdom of God.

By His wisdom God has established the world (*Proverbs* 3:19), and by His discretion He has stretched out the heavens (*Jeremiah* 10:12). By His knowledge He justifies. *Isaiah* 53:11.

Thus we see that the wisdom and power that saves us from

sin is identical with that which created and upholds the universe. What chance then is there for anybody to say,

“I am such a sinner, that it doesn’t seem possible that the Lord can save me”?

Genesis 18

¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the Lord?

No one need philosophize or draw conclusions; all we have to do is to recognize and admit a simple fact, namely, that the Lord is the Creator.

Psalms 29

² Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name.

Revelation 14

⁷ ...worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

And you will never find any place for doubts as to the power of God to do whatever He pleases.

7. THE WITNESS OF THE HEAVENS

Psalm 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God.

IN their ever-changing beauty, the sunny days and starry nights show forth “the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge.” *Job* 37:16. Nor does the firmament reveal Him only as a Being of infinite power, at the thought of whom the inhabitants of the earth should tremble.

Psalm 36

⁵ Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds.

Psalm 89

² Your faithfulness shall You establish in the very heavens.

So morning by morning as we rise from our sleep, and behold the rays of the sun once more, its beams bring the glad message that “the mercy of the Lord endures” still. What a blessed thought with which to begin the day! That which smites upon our eyelids in the summer mornings and gently calls us from slumber is the greeting of the heavens, bidding us be of good cheer, whatever the day may bring, for since God’s mercy is over us still,

Deuteronomy 33

²⁵ ...as your days, so shall your strength be.

Lamentations 3

²² ...His compassions fail not.

²³ They are new every morning: great is Your faithfulness.

If we be conscious of unworthiness, of sinful deeds and stubborn hearts, still the sun shines even to us, and thereby we learn that the mercy and faithfulness which the heavens reveal, are not yet worn out for us.

Luke 6

³⁵ ...He is kind unto the unthankful.

Matthew 5

⁴⁵ He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good.

And therein, Christ taught, He loves them that hate Him.

Now when the sun gets on the horizon, may we think that the powers of darkness prevail, and the evidence of His faithfulness grows dim. But throughout the twenty-four hours He leaves not Himself without witness. To those who fear that their way is hid from the Lord, and that His watchcare is withdrawn, He says:

Isaiah 40

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking.

As far as the lights of heaven shine, so far goes the message of God's mercy. As unsearchable as the expanse of heaven is the length and breadth and height and depth of His infinite love; and as free as is the vision of God's glory to the eyes of men, is the free gift of the righteousness, which is the glory of God, unto all and upon all them that believe.

Jeremiah 31

³⁵ Thus says the Lord, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night...

³⁶ If those ordinances depart from before me, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

³⁷ If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done.

Romans 9

⁸ They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted

for the seed.

Those who have believed God's promise and trust Him for salvation, need never fear that He will suffer His faithfulness to fail, nor alter the thing that is gone out of His lips, so long as they can see the sun and moon in the heavens; for:

Psalm 89

³⁶ His seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before me.

³⁷ It shall be established for ever as the moon.

Then so long as men have reason to think that the morning will bring them the sunlight, and night be made beautiful with stars, they have no less reason to be confident that He whom they have believed, will keep that which they have committed unto Him.

8. WALK IN THE LIGHT

1 John 1

⁵ God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

Romans 3

²³ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

SIN is therefore the absence of glory; it is darkness. Thus we see that the glory of God is His righteousness. He is righteousness; that is His being. But He is light. The glory that shines from Him is the shining out of His character. He is light, and the light that shines from Him is the light of His life.

Colossians 1

¹⁵ [Christ] is the image of the invisible God,

He is the brightness, the effulgence, the shining forth of His glory. *Hebrews 1:3*.

Psalms 84

¹¹ The Lord God is a sun and shield.

Christ is the shining of God's glory, which is His righteousness, so that He is "the Sun of righteousness." *Malachi 4:2*. Jesus said:

John 8

¹³ I am the light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

After stating at one time that He is the light of the world, He showed the reality of it by giving sight to a man born blind. *John 9*. Jesus is the light of the world, by which men see to go about. The Lord is upright:

Psalms 92

¹⁵ He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Thus it is that He is the Sun of righteousness, for He is the

light of the world. The light, therefore, which shines upon this earth is the righteousness of God in Christ.

Psalms 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God.

He has set His glory upon the heavens. *Psalms* 8:1, RV. The sun but transmits to us the light that emanates from “the eternal Father.” But that light is God’s own character, His own personality. Therefore the sun brings to us the righteousness of God.

The true light is that which “lights every man that comes into the world.” *John* 1:9. The sun lights and warms the whole earth.

Psalms 19

⁶ His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

⁸ The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Thus we see that the law of God, the living righteousness of God, has been and is given to every man on earth.

Titus 2

¹¹ The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

What then shall we do? Take the light as God’s own gift, His own life, and rejoice in it.

1 John 1

⁷ If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Proverbs 3

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your

paths.

Acknowledge God in the light, which shines constantly, and God will make you righteous. He will shine righteousness into your hearts. Oh, what a glorious thing light is!

2 Corinthians 9

¹⁵ Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

9. GREAT THINGS

Psalm 111

² The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

³ His work is honorable and glorious.

Psalm 95

³ For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

⁴ In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also.

Psalm 145

³ Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.

Psalm 136

¹⁰ For You are great, and do wondrous things; You are God alone.

Job 37

⁵ Great things does He, which we cannot comprehend.

Psalm 72

¹⁸ Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things.

NOT only is it God alone who does great things, but He does nothing else but great things. He is a great God, and He does great things. The least thing that He does is great.

The smallest flower, the tiniest and most slender blade of grass is the product of power greater than that possessed by all nations and kings on earth. Nothing less than infinite power could make it; but there is no power greater than infinite power; therefore in the smallest thing, that God has made,—a blade of grass, a grain of sand, yea, even a single atom,—the everlasting power and Divinity of God are displayed as really as in the sun, moon and stars.

Psalm 145 [margin]

¹⁷ The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and merciful in all His works.

This is the rendering given in the text of several versions. Now since all the works of the Lord are merciful, and He does only great works, it follows that His mercy is as great as His works. His works are done in mercy; but they are the product of infinite power; so the mercy of the Lord is equal to His power, and identical with it. Therefore,

Psalm 103 [margin]

¹¹ According to the height of the heaven above the earth, so great is His mercy.

Literally, “so mighty is His mercy.” Remember now that it was “not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us.” *Titus* 3:5. The power of this mercy to save us, is the power that is revealed in the whole universe.

What comfort, then, there is for us in reading that:

Philippians 2

¹⁰ We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before prepared, that we should walk in them.

¹³ It is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

We know that His great mercy will do great things, not simply for us, but in us. Yea, He will enlarge us also.

1 Chronicles 29

¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty;

¹² ...in Your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Psalm 18

³² It is God that girds me with strength, and makes my way perfect.

³⁵ You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; and Your right hand has held me up, and Your gentleness has made me great.

All this is the mercy of the Lord.

Ephesians 2

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

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

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

It is by the mercy of God that we are raised up with Christ, and made to sit in the heavenly places with Him, for His mercy is great above the heavens; but in the raising of Christ from the dead, and setting Him “at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion,” God showed “the working of His mighty power.” *Ephesians* 1:19-21. So again we see that the power of God is His mercy. All creation proclaims the power of God, and therefore the mercy by which He saves us from our sins.

It is wonderful indeed; so great is the field into which the Lord brings us, that it seems as though we were in a dream; nevertheless it is true, and our mouth may be filled with laughter and our tongue with singing, and we can say:

Psalms 126

³ The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad.

O come to the Father
Through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory;
Great things He has done.

10. THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 Peter 1

³⁵ And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.

THEREFORE whoever receives the Word of the Gospel receives God. When the Word of God dwells in any man's heart, God Himself abides there.

John 14

³³ If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

This is not a fanciful thing, but a fact. The Word which, when received, brings God into the life, is...

Hebrews 4

¹² „„alive and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

¹³ Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight. But all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Can the Word, that is, God, do no more for us than reveal our defects when we receive it?

John 15

³ Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you.

Ephesians 5

²⁷ Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious

church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Some will perhaps say with Solomon:

1 Kings 8

²⁷ But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain You.

To many it seems incredible that God should in very truth have His abode with those who hear His voice.

Isaiah 66

¹ Thus says the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that you build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

² For all those things has my hand made, and all those things have been, says the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my Word.

God does not count Himself honored when the wealthy and the powerful espouse His cause, trusting in their riches and power, for it is...

Zechariah 4

⁶ ...not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. The humblest, feeblest, basest of mankind, may receive that Word, and manifest in their lives...

1 John 4

² ...that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

“The vilest offender who truly believes” receives power to become the son of God, and...

1 John 2

⁵ ...whoso keeps His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.

1 Corinthians 1

²⁸ [The] base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen...

²⁹ That no flesh should glory in His presence.

1 Peter 1

²⁴ For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of men as the flower of grass.

²⁵ The grass withers, and the flower thereof falls away: but the Word of the Lord endures forever.

Isaiah 57

¹⁵ Thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

Thus it is evident that to receive the Word of God means the accomplishment in us of all that God desires to see. The perfect life of Christ was the Word made flesh; and whoever receives the Word will find that it is a Word of power, able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. *Acts 20:32.*

John 17

¹⁷ Sanctify them through Your truth: Your Word is truth.

John 6

²⁹ This is the work of God that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

Revelation 19

¹³ And His name is called, The Word of God.

The question is often raised:

“If God be so full of love and mercy as you say, why does He permit men to be mowed down like grass by murderous weapons.”

God has no pleasure in the death of men, but He has given man the choice between life and death. The choice is offered to all, and men will often deliberately choose the way of death. Then when they find it a painful and disagreeable por-

tion, they rail at God because He permits evil to come upon them.

The wise thing to do then is to acknowledge that they made a foolish choice and turn from their evil way, and take life instead of death. To those who find that they have been spending their money for that which is not bread, and their labor for that which satisfies not, the Lord calls:

Isaiah 55

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

Satan has largely succeeded in getting men to lay upon God the blame for his own work of destruction. They accuse God of doing nothing to prevent evil, when He might stop it.

2 Corinthians 4

⁴ The god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not.

And instead of recognizing the infinite love of God in all His dealings with men, they impute to Him the attributes of Satan. God's character is on trial before the universe. If it shall appear that anyone has lost eternal life on account of God's negligence, indifference, or lack of provision, it will make Him responsible for the loss of that soul, and He would then be the criminal.

But when the secret things are made manifest, and the hidden things are brought to light, it will be made clear that God did everything that infinite love and wisdom could do, consistently with man's right of free choice, to turn men back from the paths of destruction, and no man's blood can be charged to Him. All will acknowledge that:

Revelation 15

³ Just and true are Your ways, You King of saints.

⁴ Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You only are holy: for all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments are made manifest.

Men will know then that they sold themselves to Satan to work his hellish will, lured by his lying promises of earthly gain and honor. Iniquity will appear in its true light, and Satan will be seen by all as the loathsome, degraded thing he is.

Isaiah 14

¹⁶ They that see you shall narrowly look upon you, and consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

¹⁷ That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?

²⁰ ...You have destroyed your land and slain your people.

⁶ He who smote the people in Israel with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hinders.

⁷ The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet, they break forth into singing.

11. FRUIT BEARING

WHAT gives the strawberries and the cherries their color and flavor? Whence do the flowers derive their beauty?

We see a score of different fruits and flowers growing in the same soil, within a very small space, all receiving the same amount of attention, the same amount of moisture, and the same sunshine; yet all differ in appearance and taste, and each one is perfect after its kind. What is the source of this variety and perfection? The Scriptures give the answer:

Genesis 1

¹¹ God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: And it was so.

¹² And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed, after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind. And God saw that it was good.

Matthew 6

²⁸ Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow...

²⁹ ...Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰ If God so clothe the grass of the field, shall He not much more clothe you?

Thus we see that the fitness and beauty of the plants of the earth are the product of the Word of life. That life is infinite, so that it can present itself in an infinite variety of forms, each one perfect after its kind.

The same Word that made the plants of the field, each after its kind, made man after his kind. Each plant was made to bear its own particular kind of fruit, and the fruit which man was made to bear, is righteousness. Jesus said:

John 15

¹⁶ I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go forth and bear much fruit, and that your fruit should remain.

⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that you should bear much fruit.

Philippians 1

¹¹ Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

How is this fruit—the fruit of righteousness—to be brought forth? This is really the same question as the one at the beginning, and the answer is the same, for we have read:

Isaiah 61

¹¹ As the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth in the sight of all the nations.

Isaiah 27

⁶ Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

There is therefore no more ground for doubting the possibility of God's working righteousness in man, than the possibility of His creating flavor, strength and beauty, in the plants of the field. Of this latter we have positive evidence. We see it. We do not know how it is done; that is God's business; but we know the fact. He who works perfection in the one will do so in the other, if the same submission be present.

The true nature of man is the Divine nature. Christ is the representative Man. It is God who makes man's way perfect, for His way is perfect. Whatsoever He does is good. Let Him have His own way, and we shall be likewise good.

If man would but accept the truth that "all flesh is grass," and would be content to be grass, their ways would be as perfect as was all creation in the beginning.

Psalm 90

¹⁷ Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us.

12. RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST

THE necessity of obeying this injunction is shown by this statement:

Romans 8

⁹ If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

The possession of the Spirit of God is not something that is optional with the Christian. Many seem to think that the receiving of the Spirit merely marks a higher state of Christian experience,—one which is very desirable, but yet not absolutely essential. They talk much about the “higher Christian life,” as though there were two kinds of Christian life, one all ordinary, everyday life, and the other special and extraordinary, marked by being filled with the Spirit.

All this is most erroneous and misleading. The people who talk so much about the “higher Christian life,” are good, and sincere, and well-meaning, but they nevertheless do a great deal of harm, by giving their hearers and readers a false idea of Christianity.

By talking about the “higher Christian life,” they convey the idea that there are two kinds of Christian life,—a high and a low life. It is in reality the Roman Catholic distinction of “saints” and ordinary Christians.

The lower life is supposed to be good enough for all ordinary purposes, and sufficient for salvation, while the other is thought to be for people who are devoted to great deeds, and who live outside of the reach of the petty trials that fall to the lot of common people.

The Spirit for All

Now when we read that if any man have not the Spirit of

Christ he is none of His, we see that any teaching that tends to make anybody satisfied without the full possession of the Spirit of God, and that makes people think that any life is Christian that is not the very highest, is contributing to their destruction.

“But where is the Spirit? and where shall I go, and what shall I do to receive it?”

These are important questions, and most easily answered. Let us take them one at a time. “Where is the Spirit?” Rather ask, Where is He not?

Psalm 139

⁷ Whither shall I go from Your Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Your presence?

⁸ If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

¹⁰ Even there shall Your hand lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

Instead of being difficult to find the Spirit of God, there is on the contrary no place where one can escape His presence.

All Power in Heaven and Earth

The Holy Spirit is Christ's Representative. *John* 14:16-18. It is by the Spirit that Christ dwells in the hearts of His people. Christ is the power of God, and this power is seen in everything that is made; so that every manifestation of what men call “natural force,” is but the working of the Spirit of God.

In the heaven and in the earth, even to its very depths, the Holy Spirit is working to hold all things in the shape which was given them when in the beginning He brooded over them.

There is no power but the power of God, who gives power

to the faint, and increases strength to them that have no might (*Isaiah* 40:29); and it is by the Spirit that God strengthens with might (*Ephesians* 3:16); therefore we see that the Holy Spirit of God is the source of all strength. The moving of the Spirit is what makes it possible for men to move.

The Measure of the Gift

Thus we see that the Spirit of God has been working in the earth, and in men, from the very beginning. There is not a man on the earth, with whom the Spirit has not striven. And as Christ died for all, when He ascended on high He poured out the Spirit on all flesh.

How much, if any, difference there is between this manifestation of the Spirit and that which existed from the beginning, we cannot know; but one thing we may be assured of, and that is that the receiving of the Holy Spirit in fullest measure is the privilege of every person on the earth.

Moreover, if one really “receives” the Spirit, he must receive the fullness of the Spirit, “for God gives not the Spirit by measure.” *John* 3:34.

Not Manifest in All

Someone will perhaps say,

“If this is so, then there is no need of answering the question as to how we are to receive the Spirit, since it seems that everyone is in possession of it already, and therefore everybody must be saved.”

Not quite so fast. It is true that the Spirit has been poured out on all flesh, but it does not follow that everybody has received Him. The fact that the Spirit is obliged to “strive” with men, shows that He is not received. The trouble is that men resist, instead of receiving. Only those who absolutely yield to the power that works in all created things, even in men, “re-

ceive” the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah 40

³¹ They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength.

There is no strength but from the Lord, and they that wait on Him receive fresh supplies of it continually. It is the power of an endless life, that is forever young. Waiting on the Lord, therefore, is the essential for receiving the Spirit, and the consequent power; for power comes with the reception of the Holy Ghost. *Acts 1:8.*

“Waiting”

What is this waiting on the Lord? It is very simple. It is the constant actual acknowledgment that we are dependent on Him for everything, and that He alone is our rightful Ruler. It is to acknowledge in a practical manner that we belong absolutely to the Lord, to be used by Him according to His will. And it is to do this constantly.

It is complete submission to Him. It is the attitude of waiting on Him, waiting for Him to speak to us, or to take us in hand to use us, and yielding absolutely to Him when He does proceed to use us. It is to have no will of our own, but to accept His will.

Do you say that this is too hard a requirement? that it is too difficult a thing to do? Why should it be so difficult? It requires no strength whatever. The Lord knows that we have no strength, and His way provides for such a case, by giving us His strength. All that is required of us is to let go, and rest; it is to be still, and know that the Lord is God.

It is quite true that such self-effacement does not suit proud human nature, but it is evident that there can be nothing easier, if there be the willingness, since all that is involved is the letting go and holding still.

How much power will be imparted to the one who receives the Spirit? All power. This is the privilege of every person, and is at the demand of every believer. Nothing less will do for anybody. The Christian life is a new creation, and nothing but God's everlasting power can create. Infinite power is required for the creation of the smallest particle of matter, and nothing less than just that power is revealed in the smallest thing that God has made, and no greater power is required for the creation of the universe.

So we see that the power which God gives by the Holy Ghost is for all circumstances, great as well as small. There are not two Gods, neither are there two powers. As God is one, so is His power one, and undivided. The same power that performs mighty miracles is the power that is required to enable a man to...

Colossians 1

¹⁰ ...walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being faithful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Not for Self-Exaltation

It is a great mistake to suppose that being filled with the Holy Ghost necessarily makes one a wonder-worker. God is meek and lowly in heart, and therefore the possession of His Spirit makes one the farthest possible from being inclined to "show off."

John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from birth, yet he never did any miracles. Jesus was also filled with the Spirit, yet there was nothing about Him that distinguished Him from other men, except to those who had spiritual discernment. It is true that mighty works did show themselves in Him, yet He was known among men as the carpenter of Nazareth.

Jesus was as full of the Spirit when He worked at the car-

penter's bench, as when He preached the Gospel. He was no less full of the Spirit when He sat weary and hungry and thirsty on Jacob's well, than when He taught the multitudes on the mount.

In the wilderness, tempted of the devil, He possessed the same fullness of the Spirit that He did on the stormy sea of Galilee. The same fullness of the Spirit was required to enable Him to answer questions correctly, or not to answer at all; to take the little children kindly in His arms and bless them; to feed the multitudes; to wash the feet of His disciples; to talk with Nicodemus; or to raise Lazarus from the dead.

1 Corinthians 13

⁴ Love vaunts not itself.

Therefore the possession of the Spirit, whose first-fruit is love, does not lead one to esteem himself different from other men, or apart from them. The one who is filled with the Spirit is the same in all respects as other men, except that he is constantly possessed with a consciousness of utter helplessness.

He knows that he has no strength, and that therefore as the power that is given him is not his own, he has no right to attempt to use it for his own purposes. And since it is not possible for a mere man to do the works of God, he is in a constant state of passive submission to the will of God, that He may work in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure. That which the inanimate creation does unconsciously and involuntarily, he does consciously and voluntarily.

It is God That Works

Then whether God chooses to do what men would call little things through him or great things, it is all the same to him. To be used as the instrument of a small work, overlooked or even despised by men, does not depress him, nor does it elate him to be used as the instrument of what men call something

great, and which they would naturally applaud.

When one is so well acquainted with the Lord that he can recognize the greatness of God's power in the least things, then God can use him in the performance of what men call great things; and yet he may never be used in that kind of service. If he is so used, however, he takes it just as much a matter of course in the line of God's working, as he does in what men call the ordinary things of life.

This is not because he has any lack of appreciation, but just the contrary, He lives in constant recognition of God's infinite power in all the details of life, and gives Him all the glory; and he can do no more. He has constant appreciation of God's power, and since he knows that it takes the same power to do the small things as the great, he praises God just as much for the one as for the other.

The Free Spirit

This is the lesson which all nature teaches us. Much more might be said, and the subject can never be exhausted, but this is certainly sufficient to show that the reception of the Spirit of God is not an indifferent matter. No one can be a true Christian without receiving the Spirit, and no one can really "receive" the Spirit, without being filled with it, since God does not give the Spirit by measure.

The Spirit is as free as the air. Give the air all opportunity, and it will rush in; yield to the Spirit, and He will take possession. And there is no such thing as yielding by degrees, since resistance is resistance, be it ever so feeble; so that receiving means absolute submission. Therefore he who "receives" the Holy Ghost must necessarily be filled with the Spirit. Only so can he live the true Christian life.

Do not make the mistake of saying that you have yielded to the Spirit, and that therefore all that you do must necessarily

be the Spirit's working. In other words, let us beware of mistaking our own spirit for the Spirit of God. The man who is filled with the Spirit will make no parade of his goodness. He will make no claim for himself. Love vaunts not herself. His religion will not be in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

There is no limit to the possibilities before the one who is yielded to and possessed by the Spirit for the Spirit of God is:

Isaiah 11

² ...the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Yet the possessor, conscious that he has this treasure in an earthen vessel, will be humble, giving glory to God. A vessel? Yes, he himself is only a "vessel," a means of conveying the Spirit to others.

John 7

³⁸ He that believes, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Obeying the Truth Through the Spirit

How to receive the Spirit? Study the story of creation, not simply that which is recorded in the first chapter of *Genesis*, but that which is written on the earth, the sea, and the sky, and you will know.

Then when you say to the messenger of God, bringing God's word, no matter what it is, "Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me as You will," the Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you, and all that comes from you will be holy. *Luke 1:38, 35.*

13. THE LIGHT OF LIFE

1 John 1

¹ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

All the light that men have is the life of God.

John 1

⁹ That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

God's life shines.

1 John 1

⁵ God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

1 Corinthians 4

⁶ God has shined in our hearts to give the light.

MEN, unconsciously to themselves, recognize that the light of the world is the life of God, by avoiding the light when they do evil deeds. There is something about the light that makes the daytime out of harmony with the spirit of wrong-doing. Impure thoughts and motives feel, in the light, as in the presence of a strong, repressing influence. Speaking of evil-doers, murderers, thieves, adulterers, despoilers of the poor, Job says:

Job 24

¹³ They are of those that rebel against the light.

John 3

²⁰ Every one that does evil hates the light.

The light is life. The life comes to all men from God as freely as the light does. If a man allows the life of God to control him, his deeds will be good. Only as God's life is allowed to appear are the deeds such as not to be ashamed of.

Wicked men do good deeds sometimes. That is due to the fact that all those particular instances they do not resist the

life of God; whereas, in many other things they do resist it. When a good deed is done, it will bear bringing to the light.

John 3

²¹ He that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

The life was the light. Sometimes men get fresh light, and it calls them to new experiences. They question with themselves whether they can obey the light or not, and often decide that it requires too much of them. This is because they forget that the light is the life.

The light that reveals now truth is the life and power of the thing revealed. Whenever one sees a new duty to be performed, that which reveals it is the strength and life required to discharge it. Some people have questioned for years whether they should keep the Sabbath of the Lord, hoping some day to receive power to do so, but the light that brought the knowledge of the truth to them was the life that would have made them able had they received it. Said Christ:

John 12

⁵⁰ I know that His commandment is life everlasting.

We need not look to the future with forebodings of failure, questioning in our hearts if we will be able to walk in the light unto the perfect day. We shall never receive any light that is not life. God is light, and as we receive more light it will only be receiving...

Ephesians 1

¹⁷ ...the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him:

¹⁸ The eyes of our understanding being enlightened that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we will have fellowship with Him, and our path will shine more and more with the light of life, for it is His will that we should have life,

and have it more abundantly.

Although the light condemns evil, it is never sent for condemnation, but, that men might be saved. God does not use His knowledge to condemn us, but “by His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many.” *Isaiah* 53:11.

Without the light we should see nothing of God’s works, but the more light we get on them, the more we see “His everlasting power and divinity,” and recognize the love that is expressed in the work of creation.

So the more the light of life shines in our own hearts, the further will be removed from any thought of condemnation or fear. Our prayer will be:

Psalm 43

³ O send out Your light and Your truth: let them lead me.

Numbers 6

²⁵ The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you:

²⁶ The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.

14. THE AIR WE BREATHE

YOU know that we keep on breathing every moment of our lives, and if we should stop we should die. But not only is it so important that we should breathe, but also that we should have pure, fresh air to breath.

We have inside us something called lungs, made up of a lot of little cells or bags, which swell out when the air is drawn into them. This is why our bosoms are rising and falling all the time.

When we take the air into our lungs we poison and spoil it. The poison from every part of our bodies is carried by the blood to the lungs, where it passes off into the air that fills the lungs, and the good air passes into our blood and is carried all through our bodies.

So the air that we breathe out is full of poison, and this is why it is so important that we should have our rooms well supplied with the fresh, pure air of heaven, especially when there are many people in them. For if we keep on breathing the same poisoned air over and over, our blood cannot be purified by it, and the poison stays in our bodies and makes us ill.

You will perhaps wonder why it is that if men and animals are poisoning the air in this way all the time, it does not all become spoiled, and the life in it used up. Just see what wonderful provision God has made for this. Did you know that the trees and plants are breathing the air in and out all the time just as we are? The leaves are the lungs of the plants, and they breathe in the poisoned air which comes from men and animals, and breathe out again the fresh, pure air that we need to keep us alive.

Man is not the only “temple of God,” but all created things are His dwelling place. He is “the Life,” not of men only, but of all living things. So it is God who through the plant is taking away the poison from the air, and breathing out His pure, sweet life for us. He has made the plants not only to delight our eyes with His beauty, but that through them He may give life to us continually.

Nature itself is a parable, showing forth the law of love:

The Desire of Ages, p. 20:

There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself. No bird that cleaves the air, no animal that moves upon the ground, but ministers to some other life. There is no leaf of the forest, or lowly blade of grass, but has its ministry. Every tree and shrub and leaf pours forth that element of life without which neither man nor animal could live; and man and animal, in turn, minister to the life of tree and shrub and leaf.

Can we not, then, read in the plants “the Gospel of our salvation”? Does not this teach us how God takes upon Himself the curse and poison of our sin, and destroying it, pours out His life for us instead, that we may be saved by it?

The crowded cities do not have many trees and plants to purify the air for the great number of people who poison it. But God sends the wind to carry the poisoned air to the country, where it is made pure, and carried back by the wind to the cities again.

It was into man’s nostrils that God breathed. We can learn from this the proper way to breathe,—not through the mouth, but through the nose. In this way the air is warmed and freed from bus before it reaches our lungs. If we breathe the air out through the mouth, we are likely did take the poisoned air in again, as it is right before us. But the nostrils, when we breathe in the proper way, send the poisoned air down out of our way, so that we can take fresh air at each breath.

Think of the wonderful love and wisdom shown in all the works of God, and you will love and praise Him who “has done all things well.”

15. THE SECRET OF THE LORD

THE earth was without form, and “void,” when the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, bringing order out of chaos. The Hebrew word from which “void” is rendered, is the same that which in *Job* 26:7 is rendered “the empty place,” where we read:

Job 26

⁷ He stretched out the North over the empty place.

When we know that the North—secret place—is God’s dwelling place, we can understand why there is such an attraction toward the North, and why it is that the earth is kept in position by this mysterious attraction. We say, we can understand why, not how.

God’s own presence, by the Spirit, filled every particle of the matter of the earth, and instantly order came out of chaos. Each atom assumed the correct position in relation to every other atom, just as a company of well drilled soldiers fall into line at the word of command.

God dwells in the secret place, and His name is Secret. But

Psalms 25

¹⁴ The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.

Not that men can comprehend the secret, but it is with them. That is, God’s presence, that power by which He draws all things to Himself, is with them, bringing order into their disordered lives.

John 20

²² Receive the Holy Ghost.

Yield to Him as passively as the drops of water do to the sun, and the same Divine Power that in the beginning hovered over the face of the waters, and which still keeps the

earth steadily turned toward the polar star, will continually overshadow you, and in the midst of a fallen world's perplexity will fill you with the peace of God.

16. THE LAW IS LIGHT

Proverbs 6

²⁰ My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not the law of your mother;

²¹ Bind them continually upon your heart, and tie them about your neck.

²² When you go, it shall lead you; when you sleep, it shall keep you; and when you awake, it shall talk with you.

²³ For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.

THE law of God is nothing other than His life. It is in no sense to be compared with human laws, for it has nothing in common with them.

Men get together, and after a certain amount of deliberation they decide on certain rules which they will impose on other men. The requirements may in the main be just, but they cannot possibly do equal justice to all, since they cannot take into consideration all the various circumstances and conditions; and even where they are applicable, they give the person to whom they speak no power. They do nothing; they are lifeless; the man to whom they are addressed must supply the action.

Moreover human statutes have no special connection with the men who issue them. The laws and the law-makers are no part of each other, and very often the laws are ignored by the very men who make them.

So for a double reason the laws cannot put any life or goodness into the subjects of them:

1. The men who make them are not themselves perfectly in harmony with them, and
2. They cannot, no matter how good they are, put any of

their personality or vitality into the laws which they frame.

Not so with God's law. He Himself is all that He requires. He is not only good, but He is Goodness. His own life is the law.

Each plant has what is termed its "law of growth." There are certain general characteristics common to all plant life, and then each plant has certain individual peculiarities. But these "laws" are not certain enactments to which the plant conforms. The plant grows by the Word of God which says now as in the beginning, "Let the earth bring forth grass," etc.; and that Word of life abiding in each makes it perfect "after its kind." God's "everlasting power and Divinity," that is, His own life and personality, are revealed in all the things that He has made. The plant is involuntarily submissive to the life force of God, and so it conforms to law.

In like manner God's law for mankind is His own character—His life. He wishes men to be good, but He Himself is all goodness. There is no goodness but God's goodness, consequently men conform to His righteous requirements only by voluntarily yielding to His life as implicitly as the plants of the field do involuntarily. He does not require us to be something of ourselves; but He is what He wants us to be, and we become that by accepting His life.

1 John 1

⁵ God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

This is the Gospel message. His life is the law, and His life is light.

John 1

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

So the law is light. This is most literally true. God conveys His life to the earth through agents. He has set His glory in

the heavens, and made the sun, together with the stars, the bearer of light to the earth. Mind this, the sun does not originate the light, but is simply the bearer of God's light—God's life to the earth. Thus the sun is, under God, the supporter of all life upon our planet. Whatever we have, whether it be food or clothing, grows from the earth; but there could be no life nor growth without the light coming from God through the sun. Thus we see that light is most emphatically our life.

But this life that comes to us in the light is God's own life of righteousness. Its shining brings the plant of the field to perfection; and if men were only voluntarily as submissive to the life of God as the plants are involuntarily, it would bring them to equal perfection after their kind.

With this knowledge concerning the light, the life, and the law, we can see the force of the nineteenth *Psalms*:

Psalms 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork.

² Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge.

³ There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard [or "without these their voice is heard"].

⁴ Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

⁵ In them has He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a strong man to run a race.

⁶ His going forth is from the end of the heavens, and His circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

⁸ The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

There is no change of subject in verse 7. The law of the Lord is conveyed to us in the light and heat of the sun, which gives life to the earth. If we but recognize God's life in the light, we shall receive it with constant gratitude, and yield to Him, that He may direct His own life in His own way. Thus shall we glorify God in our lives.

We are precluded from making the objection that we cannot see how God can convey righteousness to us in the light of the sun. We cannot tell how He conveys strength and beauty in perfection to the plant by means of the light, but we know the fact; and that fact is ever before us to teach us the possibility of His imparting to us, by the same means, the righteousness for which He designed us.

17. A LESSON FROM THE LARK

IN the *Natural History of Birds of Germany*, we find the following interesting fact:

Larks, a feeble race of birds, rise higher in the air than any rapacious bird, and this is often a cause of safety. Their greatest enemy is the Hobby. They fear him greatly, so that as soon as one appears singing ceases, and each suddenly closes his wings, falls to the earth, and hides against the soil.

But some have mounted so high to pour out their clear song that they cannot hope to reach the earth before being seized. Then, knowing that the bird of prey is to be feared when he occupies a more elevated position from which he can throw himself on them, they endeavor to remain always above him. They mount higher and higher. The enemy seeks to pass them, but they mount still, until at last the Hobby, heavier, and little accustomed to this rarified air, grows tired, and gives up the pursuit.

This suggests a lesson for us. Our enemy, Satan, seeks to destroy us, but if we can keep above him, it is plain that he can have no power over us. Jesus, our Saviour, has been raised to the right hand of God in the heavenly places,

Ephesians 1

²¹ Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion.

And since we are by faith raised to the heavenly places with Him (*Ephesians* 2:4-6), it follows that this is our rightful place.

If then when our enemy assails us, and that is constantly, we “seek those things which are above” (*Colossians* 3:1), we shall escape him; for that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, has been cast out of heaven, so that he can find no place there any more. *Revelation* 12:7-9. He cannot endure its

atmosphere.

There we can from full hearts sing thanks unto God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

18. THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Psalm 8

¹ Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!
Who has set Your glory above the heavens.

THE first occurrence of the Hebrew word rendered “above” in this text is:

Genesis 1

² Darkness was *upon* the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved *upon* the face of the waters.

In the Revised Version the text reads, “who has set Your glory *upon* the heavens.” Both renderings are correct, for the original word has the idea of nearness, over, upon, against. The glory of God is far above all heavens, but it rests upon them.

One thing is taught by the text, and that is that the glory that shines in the heavens is the glory of God. The latest translation, the “Polychrome,” gives the verse thus:

“How glorious is Your name over all the earth! And in the heavens, how Your glory shines!”

Psalm 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork.

There is no real glory either in heaven or earth, except the glory of God, just as He is the only real King in the universe, and the only One who has power. His is “the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.” *Matthew* 6:13. It is all His, no matter how much anybody else may claim, or how little He is recognized in His works.

The heavens did not create themselves, neither do they manufacture their own light.

Genesis 1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

² And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

Darkness, absolute darkness, without one suggestion of light, was upon all things when they were first created. With the earth in chaos, the heavens were dark.

Jeremiah 4

²³ I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light.

So we know that the light is not originated by any created thing. In the shining of the heavens, they are simply showing forth the excellencies of Him who is light and in whom there is no darkness at all. But the darkness was not darkness to God.

Psalms 139

¹² The darkness hides not from You; but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.

He is light, and the entrance of His Word gives light; so when He sent His Word into the darkness, light immediately shone forth.

Bodies of Light

Although it is a fact that none of the heavenly bodies evolve light from themselves, it is nevertheless true that they are bodies of light. Light existed, as we have seen, before the sun was formed; “and God saw the light, that it was good.”

This was on the first day, and it was not until the fourth day that the sun was made to be a light. In some way, which only the Creator can comprehend, things which before were dark became light. They were not merely shone upon, but they were caused to shine forth. They do not originate light,

but they emit from themselves the light which existed before they were formed. Although nothing but darkness in themselves, they are actually bodies of light.

Last of all God's works, man was created and was crowned with glory and honor, and set over the works of God's hands. *Psalms* 8:4-8. Man was made of the dust of the earth, and had in himself no more glory than the dust that still remained on the face of the earth; yet God made him in His own image, "crowned him with glory and honor," and caused him to have dominion over the works of His hands.

Since God is light, it was but natural that the being who was to be His representative on the earth, should bear His glory, even to a higher degree than the heavens, over which he was given dominion.

"We are His workmanship" (*Ephesians* 2:10), even as the heavens are, and were created for His glory. He who made the heavenly orbs to be bodies of light, could most easily make their lord likewise a light bearer. We do not see it so now, because:

Romans 3

²³ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Through sin man lost the dominion, and likewise the glory; but "the first dominion" (*Micah* 4:8) shall yet be restored, and to this end God has chosen us to be:

1 Peter 2

⁹ ...a royal priesthood, a holy nation,...that you should show forth the praises [virtues, or excellencies] of Him that called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

It is evident, therefore, that "in the ages to come" (*Ephesians* 2:7), even as at the beginning, God's people will be crowned with His own glory.

This is very clear from the fact that:

Hebrews 2

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Jesus is the second Adam; as man, in every respect like other men, He has gained back the dominion which the first Adam lost, and so, as Adam was, He is crowned with glory and honor. That glory is glory that surpasses the brightness of the sun.

God Manifested in the Flesh

John 1

¹⁴ The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

In the very beginning of His ministry, Jesus turned the water into wine in Cana of Galilee, “and manifested forth His glory.” *John* 2:11. Mark this: He manifested forth His glory. The glory was there all the time, only veiled. So on the mount with Peter, James and John,

Matthew 17

² [He] was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light.

The light did not shine upon Him, but shone forth from Him. Jesus was on earth an ordinary man, with nothing in His appearance to distinguish Him from other men.

Isaiah 53

³ He has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.

Yet He was full of the glory of God. That glory was in the

form of grace and truth; it manifested itself in good works and kind deeds. His was the glory of God, which is the glory of a perfect character.

Said Christ of His disciples:

John 17

²² And the glory which You gave me, I have given them.

When Christ dwells in the heart by faith, we are strengthened with might by the Spirit of God,

Ephesians 3

¹⁶ ...according to the riches of His glory.

As the image of God is renewed in the soul by the indwelling of the Spirit, the glory of God is revealed, yet not in a form that appeals to the eyes of the world, who are attracted by that which is gaudy, and which dazzles.

Preparing the Way

Isaiah 40

³ The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain;

⁵ And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is the preparation for the second coming of Christ. The only thing that hinders His coming at once, is the lack of preparation on the part of people. The way of the Lord is thus prepared by His forerunner:

Luke 1

¹⁷ He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

God's way must be prepared in the hearts of His people. This preparation is humility of heart, the acknowledgment that "all flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field." When the heart is thus brought low, the way is prepared for the Lord to manifest Himself.

But God is light, so that whenever He appears in the way, His glory is revealed. That way is in His people; so that the glory of the Lord is to be revealed in the hearts and lives of men, and all are to see it there, even if they do not recognize it as God's glory. Some will see it, and will rejoice in the light.

Psalms 115

¹ Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Your name give glory, for Your mercy, and for Your truth's sake.

The heavens make no claim for themselves, consequently they show forth God's glory, and are themselves glory. So when we are willing that self shall sink out of sight, confess that we are nothing, and make no claim to distinction, we also may be "to the praise of His glory." *Ephesians* 1:12.

The glory will manifest itself as good works wrought by God in us, and will be nothing to attract people to us.

1 John 3

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

Wonderful thought! that these poor, frail, mortal bodies are to shine with the brightness of the heavens. But so it is.

Philippians 3 [RV]

²⁰ Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;

²¹ Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.

When Christ comes,

Matthew 13

⁴³ Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Daniel 12

³ They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Truly,

Romans 8

¹⁸ The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

What is the object of telling us about this wonderful glory? Is it merely that we may congratulate ourselves on the display we are one day to make? Far from it; for when that glory is revealed, we shall individually be as unconscious of it as we now are. Each will see the glory of the others, and delight in the sight, but like Moses, will not know that his own face sends forth rays of light. It is written for our encouragement.

Mark this: The glory is to be revealed in us; the righteous are to shine forth. God tells us of the future glory, in order that we may know what He gives to us in this present time. It is the power by which we are to overcome; for power is glory. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (*Romans* 6:4), yet it was the working of God's "mighty power." *Ephesians* 1:19-20. And this same power works in all who believe.

That glory is power will appear more fully in the article entitled, "The Fruit of the Light⁴," and the power that God gives us in the conflict with sin, is "according to the riches of His glory." *Ephesians* 3:16. The power and the glory that the heavens reveal is only a portion of that which God now gives to us

⁴ See the next article, #19, p. 241.

by His Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as the Lord the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves.

19. THE FRUIT OF THE LIGHT

JESUS is the Light of the world. This is no figurative expression, but the statement of an actual fact. The light by which we see to work or read, is that which shines from the Lord. "God is light" (1 John 1:5), and Christ is the shining of His glory, so that all the light that shines upon this earth comes from His person.

Evidence of this is seen in the fact that, after saying, "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:12), He immediately made a blind man see. Further evidence of the reality of the light that shines from the person of Christ is found in the fact that in the New Jerusalem the city has no need of the sun or moon; for "the Lamb is the light thereof." *Revelation 21:23.*

What a glorious thing to realize, that we are even now walking in the light of the countenance of God! Perhaps it seems unreal to you. Well, if you will but believe the Word, you will soon find it very real; and in familiarity with the thought is there strength and salvation. Recognizing that God's real presence is in the light, we shall "walk in the light as He is in the light" (1 John 1:7), and shall know the blessedness of the truth that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

The sun is the source of all the light and heat that this earth has. But the sun has nothing except what it receives from the Lord.

John 1

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

All the life, therefore, upon the earth is the life of Christ. He is "the Life." There is no other. Since the light that shines from the sun is the life of the Word, we can see how true it is

that “the life was manifested, and we have seen it.” *1 John* 1:2.

But we do not always recognize light when we see it. Jesus was full of glory when He was on earth, yet very few knew it, simply because they were blind. Even today there are very many “foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not” (*Jeremiah* 5:21), so that they do not perceive God in His works.

Light is life. This is true of men and of all the plant creation. No plant can grow without sunlight. See how the tree reaches out its branches in every direction, to take in the sunshine. It grows symmetrically, and thrives, because it never rejects a ray of light. It longs for the light, and rejoices in it. Without the light, it would droop and die.

Year after year the tree stores up the light. Because it never shuts the light out, it is full of light. You don’t see the light in the tree? That is because you have not your eyes open. If you are as yet unable to recognize it in the growing tree, wait until it has been cut down and is used as fuel. What a bright light shines from the grate. Where does it come from? Oh, the tree is now giving out the sunlight that it stored up during all the years of its life.

If you are burning coal, the same thing is seen. The coal that you burn was once growing timber. It became buried in the earth, and lay there for centuries, becoming harder and more compact, and undergoing certain chemical changes, waiting the time when it should be brought forth to serve man with the light that it received from the sun ages ago. If we burn gas or oil, which come from coal, it is nothing but condensed, concentrated sunshine. In an hour we get the benefit of the sunlight of years.

We can see the light when it shines from the grate or the lamp. But it was in the tree before it was given up for our use. Light a torch of wood. Now you see the light coming directly

from the wood itself. That is positive evidence that the light is there, only we are so blind that we do not usually recognize light until it strikes us in the eye almost hard enough to blind us.

Light is power. Put the fuel into the furnace, under a boiler of water, and see what force is let loose. The railway train speeding across the country, and the vast steamship ploughing its way through the waters, carrying the load of a hundred railway trains, are both driven by the light of the sun. Men harness up the sun, and use it to drive all the machinery that is in existence, never once thinking that the force that serves them is the power of God's own light.

Perhaps we can now see the glory in the growing plant. The power by which it grows is the light of the sun, which we must never forget is the light of God's countenance. What marvelous glory the meadow reveals! Is not a forest, or even a single tree, in full leaf, a glorious sight? Ah, we do sometimes use that term, which shows that we recognize the fact that there is glory there; the trouble is, that we do not stop to think whose the glory is, and to give glory to Him who made all these things.

A tree however has something besides leaves; it has fruit. The ripened fruit is but the expression of the life power of the plant. The sun warmed the earth, it caused the water to mount up through the rootlets and the stock to the leaves and blossoms, and when the energy of the plant manifested itself in fruit, it was the sun that brought it to perfection, and gave its cheek its beautiful tint, which is so beautiful simply because it is not painted from the outside, but is the flush of life.

So all the good things that come to our table, which the earth brings forth abundantly, are but the fruit of the light. And that light is the life of the Lord of heaven and earth.

Then we eat the light! Why, yes, the light is our life, just as

it is also the life of all other plants; for “all flesh is grass.” If we eat and drink to the glory of God, recognizing His life in His gifts, we shall eat and drink righteousness; for the promise is:

Proverbs 3

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

Of God’s servant it is said:

Hosea 14

⁵ He shall blossom as the lily.

Isaiah 27

⁶ Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

Isaiah 61

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

That which the plants do involuntarily, we must do voluntarily and consciously. They take in all the light that comes to them, and thus glorify God. If we do the same, then we shall be called:

Isaiah 61

³ ...trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

Ephesians 5

⁹ For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.

The very same light that brings the fruits of earth to perfection, shines upon us, to make us bring forth fruit after our kind, and to cause us to bear much fruit, that God may be glorified. The fact that the light will do this for us, if we accept it, is shown to us every day in the gardens and fields, in the forests and meadows.

Let us therefore walk in the light, that we may be:

Philippians 1

¹¹ Filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

20. THE JOYFUL SOUND

God's Voice in Thunder

Psalm 24

³ The voice of the Lord is upon the earth; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon many waters.

⁴ The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

Jeremiah 10

¹³ When He utters His voice there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain, and brings forth the wind out of His treasures.

Job 37

² Hear attentively the noise of His voice, and the sound that goes out of His mouth.

³ He directs it under the whole heaven, and His lightning unto the ends of the earth.

⁴ After it a voice roars; He thunders with the voice of His excellency; He will not stay them when His voice is heard.

⁵ God thunders marvelously with His voice; great things does He which we cannot comprehend.

⁶ For He says to the snow, Be on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength.

WHAT a grand thing it would be if every child were taught this truth—this fact of science! If they were taught whenever it thunders to recognize it as the voice of the Lord:

Exodus 34

⁶ ...the Lord God merciful all gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

⁷ Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...

...who speaks peace to His people, they would never cower

in terror at the sound of it. There are many men and women who cannot hear the crashing thunder without fear, because they have not learned that it is the voice of God; and there are doubtless many more who would be still more terrified at its sound if they did know that it is God's own voice, because they do not know the Lord, and have not learned that He is love.

One day when Jesus was talking to a crowd of people He broke out into the prayer,

John 12

²⁸ Father, glorify Your name. Then there came a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Jesus understood these words perfectly, because He was thoroughly well acquainted with the voice and words of God; but the people who stood by said that it thundered. There were indeed some who said that an angel spoke to Him, but even they could not distinguish any articulate sounds. To the most it was only ordinary thunder, and that is really what it was; for ordinary thunder is the voice of God speaking words which our dull ears and minds have not learned to comprehend.

Job 26 [RV]

¹⁴ How small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?

God does not wish that we should be afraid of His voice. The "everlasting Gospel" of salvation is to be proclaimed "with a loud voice" (*Revelation* 14:6-7), and that speaks only comfort. Men are simply to take up the call of the Spirit and the bride, and say, "Come;" and the loud cry which they are to utter can be nothing but the resounding of the mighty voice with which God first speaks it, for He says,

Isaiah 51 [see also 2 Corinthians 5:18-20]

¹⁶ I have put my words in your mouth.

The Throne in Heaven

We are exhorted to...

Hebrews 4

¹⁶ ...come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

By the blood of Jesus we have boldness to enter into the holy place where God Himself dwells. *Hebrews* 10:16; *Isaiah* 57:15. We may come there as boldly as a little child to its mother, and we shall hear gracious words of life spoken to us, if we can but learn to recognize the loving voice of God in the thunder.

For “the God of glory thunders” (*Psalms* 29:3), and the throne of grace is the throne of glory (*Jeremiah* 14:21) where God gives grace “according to the riches of His glory.” *Ephesians* 3:16.

John, who was permitted to see into the holy place of God, says:

Revelation 4

⁵ Out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices; and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 5

⁶ In the midst of the throne [whence the thunders proceeded,] stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

So we see that the thunders come from the very place where the crucified and ascended Saviour sends forth the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

On the Cross

When Jesus hung on the cross “the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.” *Matthew* 27:51. There was God’s throne. The body of Jesus was the temple of God, and His heart was God’s throne. When He was slain, there came forth from that throne blood and water,—which is the Holy Spirit,

1 John 5

⁷ For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.

Calvary was the throne of the living God made visible to men; for the throne of God, as the cross of Calvary, contains the slain Lamb; and from that throne, as from Christ on the cross, comes the pure water of life—the Holy Spirit. Yet there are lightnings and thundering and voices from that throne of grace and mercy. What is that but an indication of the fact that God proclaims His grace in tones of thunder, so that none may fail to hear it, and all may know the greatness of His salvation?

Psalms 85

⁸ I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people.

But all have not been as willing to hear as was the psalmist. The Lord says to His people,

Isaiah 48

¹⁶ O that you had hearkened to my commandments! then had your peace been like a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea.

Speaking the Law

So we learn that God speaks peace when He speaks His law, and that those who will hearken will find peace. That peace comes from Christ, by the power of His cross; for in the heart of Christ was the law of God (*Psalms* 40:8), and it flows

out to us in His life.

Even so, the law is in the throne of God in heaven; for,

Psalms 89

¹⁴ Righteousness and judgment are the foundation of Your throne.

The ark of God in the most holy place of the tabernacle built by Moses was a type of the throne of God, because upon it, from between the cherubim, God appeared in glory, and spoke mercy to His people.

But within the ark, underneath the mercy seat, were the tables of the law, showing that righteousness, even the righteousness of the law, is the foundation of the throne. The law was there on dead stone, it is true, because that was only a picture, and not the reality; but it indicated the fact that in the real throne in heaven is the Lamb slain, the Living Stone,—in whose heart is the living law.

Psalms 68 [RV]

¹⁷ The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the sanctuary.

Mount Sinai was the sanctuary, the throne, of God, when “He descended upon it in fire,” and proclaimed His law.

Exodus 19

¹⁹ And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice.

Exodus 20

¹⁶ And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpets, and the mountain smoking.

Now when we remember that from this same mountain there was at that very hour living water flowing forth, flowing directly from Christ, the smitten Rock, we see that we have in Sinai the perfect picture of the throne of God in

heaven. But that throne is “the throne of grace;” yes, and so was Sinai, because:

Romans 5

²⁰ The law entered that sin might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

So Sinai, Calvary, and Mount Zion all agree in one; all are the throne of God’s glorious grace, where God speaks righteousness and peace.

The People Were Afraid

When the people heard the voice of God as thunder, speaking His law, they said to Moses,

Exodus 20

¹⁹ Speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

²⁰ And Moses said unto the people, Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that you sin not.

²¹ And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

What was the matter with the people? Ah,

- They didn’t know the joyful sound.
- They didn’t know that all the commandments of God are promises.
- They did not know that great as are the requirements of God’s law, so great is His grace to put the righteousness of the law into and upon us.
- They did not know that God’s mercy is as great as His judgments, and that though truth—the law of God, *Psalms* 119:142—goes before His face, mercy accompanies it. *Psalms* 89:14.

He had sworn to Abraham, that He would make him and his seed righteous, and this proclamation of the law was but

the exhibition of the greatness of His sure promise.

Psalm 89

¹⁵ Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Your countenance.

¹⁶ In Your name shall they rejoice all the day, and in Your righteousness shall they be exalted.

Let us learn the joyful sound. Let us know that the thunders that come from Sinai, that are heard on Calvary, and that proceed from the throne of God in heaven, are but the assurances of His grace and mercy, and of the righteousness with which He will fill and refresh every soul that believes. Let us then come boldly to the throne of grace, not frightened by the thunders, but rejoicing in them as in the voice of a loving Father.

Shaking the Earth

There will come a time when God's voice will shake not only the earth, but also heaven:

Hebrews 12

²⁶ Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he has promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

That will be...

Isaiah 2

¹⁹ ...when God arises to shake terribly the earth.

At that time many will...

¹⁹ ...go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty...

Yet at the same time others will not fear even though the shaking earth be removed:

Psalm 46

¹ God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed,
and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the
sea.

But they will say:

Isaiah 25

⁹ Lo, this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad
and rejoice in His salvation.

And why?—Because they have learned to know the joyful
sound of the thunder of God's power. That thunder which will
shake the earth, and strike terror to the hearts of the wicked,
will be but the voice of God repeating the covenant of peace
to His people. Blessed sound! How fearful to think that any
should flee from the God who speaks peace!

Would you be able to rejoice at the coming of the Lord
when His thunders shake the earth? Then learn the joyful
sound now. Say from the heart,

Psalms 85

⁸ I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak
peace unto His people.

Yes; hear Him!

Isaiah 55

³ ...hear, and your soul shall live.

Listen to the voice of His law, and learn from it the joy of
the Lord, the joy of His salvation.

21. THE WATER OF LIFE

WITH God is the fountain, the well-spring of life. He Himself is “the Fountain of living waters.” *Jeremiah* 2:13. This is demonstrated to us by the river of water of life, which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. It is a real stream, as plainly to be seen by the inhabitants of the heavenly country as any earthly stream is by those who dwell on its banks. Nevertheless it is spiritual, it is indeed the Spirit, for the Spirit of God is living water. *John* 7:38-39.

But spiritual things are spiritually discerned; and the glorified saints, having spiritual bodies, will be able to see the Spirit of God, even as now with our physical eyes we see each other.

Romans 8

¹⁰ ...the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

And in the world to come we shall be able to see the Spirit of life proceeding from God in a never-failing stream.

In order to be able to see spiritual things, we must become spiritual. When the Lord comes, and the righteous dead are raised, both dead and living are changed to immortality, and given spiritual bodies. See *1 Corinthians* 15:42-53; *1 Thessalonians* 4:15-17. All the change that takes place at that time is in the body, outwardly, and this will take place only with those who have previously been led by the Spirit, and walked in the Spirit, having the mind of the Spirit.

Romans 8

⁹ You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

The change at the coming of the Lord will be simply the

last step in the change from glory to glory. God wishes us now to be filled with the Spirit, and if this be the case, then we shall be able even now to discern spiritual things, even though our eyes cannot see them. The world receives not the Spirit of God, “because it sees Him not.” *John* 14:17. But believers are well acquainted with Him, and can discern His presence, although the eyes that they now have are not fitted to see Him.

We have read that God is the Fountain of living waters. In harmony with this is:

Psalm 46 [Polychrome rendering]

⁴ A brook, whose waters make glad the city of God, is the Most High in His habitation.

God Himself is the stream of life, for God is Spirit. So we read of the new earth:

Isaiah 33

²¹ There the glorious Lord will be to us a place of broad rivers and streams.

The reason for this is that:

²² The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King: He will save us.

He saves us by His life,—the cleansing stream,—which flows from the throne, the foundation of which is righteousness and justice, that is, His everlasting law. The Lamb in the midst of the throne leads the redeemed unto “fountains of waters of life.” *Revelation* 7:17, RV. That fountain, God’s own life, will be our drink, and the life of everything that grows from the earth. Thus will it be as plain to the eyes of the redeemed saints that they live directly from the life of God, as it now is to any man that we live by food and drink.

The good things of God, however, are not reserved for the future. God has given us Himself in Christ, and so with Him

all things. *Romans* 8:32.

Psalm 16

⁵ The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup.

Even now God chooses men, and causes them to approach unto Him, that they may dwell in His courts. *Psalm* 65:4. By the blood of Christ we are “made nigh.” *Ephesians* 2:13. By that blood,—the stream of life from out God’s throne,—we have boldness to enter into the holy place where God dwells.

Psalm 92

¹³ Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

Psalm 36

⁷ How excellent is Your loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

⁸ They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Your house; and you shall make them drink of the river of Your pleasures.

⁹ For with You is the Fountain of life.

So we see that the river of God’s pleasure is the river of life flowing from His throne. The word translated “pleasures” in this text is “Edna,” the feminine form of the Hebrew word “Eden.” The Garden of Eden is the garden of pleasure, and from its waters God gives us to drink even now.

The river that flowed from Eden divided and watered the whole earth. *Genesis* 2:10-14. Eden is no more in this earth, but God still allows men to drink of its waters. Who may drink?

Revelation 22

¹⁷ Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

God took the man whom He had made, and (literally) “caused him to rest in the garden of Eden.” In Eden there is rest.

Hebrews 4

³ We who have believed do enter into rest...

⁹ [for] there remains a rest to the people of God.

A rest that comes to us from Eden. That rest is the Lord's own rest—the Sabbath of the Lord. Rest is delight, and so the Lord says:

Isaiah 58

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable...

¹⁴ Then shall you delight yourself in the Lord.

Those who with all their hearts believe God, worshipping Him as Creator of heaven and earth, rest in His almighty power, and delight their souls in Him. They drink of the water of Eden, and keep the Sabbath that was given to man in Eden.

Just as such ones have passed from death unto life, even while yet in this mortal body, even so they pass from the old earth to the new, even while inhabiting this sin-cursed earth. To them “all things are become new.” *2 Corinthians* 5:17.

In Christ, who is, and is to come, future things are made present. The Spirit is the firstfruits of the inheritance. So everything that they see (that is, everything that God has made) is to them only the image of the invisible. Every gift of God is a medium conveying the Holy Spirit.

So in the rain that comes down from heaven and waters the earth, they receive the water of life, the Holy Spirit poured out upon all flesh. Even now, as in the beginning, the river of Eden waters the earth, and they who know the Lord delight in it. To them heavenly things are not mere speculations nor simply possible future enjoyments, but present living realities. They sit with Christ in the heavenly places. *Ephesians* 2:6.

Psalms 65

⁹ You visit the earth, and water it; You greatly enrich it with

the river of God, which is full of water.

According to the marginal note this text would read:

“You visit the earth when you have caused it to desire (rain); You greatly enrich it with the river of God.”

God creates a desire, a longing, for Himself, and then He supplies that desire. He alone can satisfy the desire of every living thing. The reason why all do not consciously take of Him, and delight in Him, is that they do not believe or realize this truth. So they go on unsatisfied.

Psalm 107

⁸ Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

⁹ For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness.

Matthew 5

⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Yes; every shower that falls from heaven, enriching the earth, and causing it to bring forth fruit, is to those who live in constant recognition of God, a rain of righteousness.

God's witness of Himself is that He does good, and sends rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, so that men can rejoice in abundance of food. *Acts 14:17*. He sends rain on the unjust as well as on the just, in order that they may accept His righteousness, and turn from their evil ways.

Isaiah 61

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

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the

Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

How does the earth bring forth her bud? It is by drinking in the rain that falls upon it. Even so will the Lord cause righteousness to spring forth. How? Just as the earth brings forth her fruit, that is, by the rain. The rain from heaven, recognized as coming direct from God's throne, from God Himself, and acknowledged as bringing to us the Holy Spirit, will cause us to bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

The same thing that makes the earth to bring forth fruit will also make them bear fruit to holiness, if they truly believe; for belief brings them into the same relation to God—the same state of receptivity—that the earth is. Then,

Isaiah 55

⁶ Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.

And He will come and rain righteousness upon you.

22. HARVEST TIME

NOW is the time of harvest. Wherever one goes throughout the land, there is to be seen the standing grain even now over-ripe, here the reaper with his sickle busily laying the corn in bundles, while the gleaner follows on behind, there the more modern reaping machine swiftly laying low a whole field, and now we see shocks of corn waiting the gathering into the barn.

It is a busy season, the season far which the farmer has been laboring and waiting all the year, for it determines the value of what he has done. It is, in fact, the judgment time of the year. The nature of the sowing appears in the reaping; and upon the harvest depends the farmer's future. If it is good, he can rejoice in his prosperity; if it is poor, it may mean bankruptcy.

Who thinks of the real significance of the harvest, as it comes year after year? It has a lesson, and a most important one, which should be impressed upon us more and more deeply by its regular recurrence; but such is the perversity of human nature, that instead of learning the lesson better by its constant repetition, we become entirely unconscious of it, even as we do of the ticking of the clock. Let us see if we cannot stir up our slumbering senses to appreciate the instruction and warning that God never wearies of giving us.

Jesus was one day teaching His disciples, and He said:

Mark 4 [RV]

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth,

²⁷ And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knows not how.

²⁸ The earth bears fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear,

then the full corn in the ear,

²⁹ But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he puts forth the sickle, because the harvest is come.

By the seen, the Lord teaches us of the unseen. That is, from what is apparent, He teaches us of the real:

2 Corinthians 4

¹⁸ For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

And only that which is lasting is real. Each year, therefore, we have a complete picture of the kingdom of God. The whole work of the Gospel, from its beginning till its consummation, is annually set forth in living pictures before the eyes of all men.

For a more detailed account of the matter, read the parable of the wheat and tares, and its interpretation, in *Matthew* 13:24-30, 37-43, together with Scripture already quoted. Seed is sown; it germinates and grows, but no one knows how. This we do know, however, that the seed must die in order to bear fruit. *John* 12:24. It must die in order to live. *1 Corinthians* 15:36. And the work is wholly of God.

1 Corinthians 15

³⁸ God gives it a body as it has pleased Him, and to every seed His own body.

Sad to say, an enemy is also working, among the wheat, and tares spring up among the wheat.

Matthew 13

³⁸ ...the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one.

³⁸ The field is the world...

The good seed, as we also learn from other scriptures, is the Word of God. Those who receive the Word, the incorruptible seed, into their hearts are born of it, thus being transformed into the same substance. This is the new birth, the passing

from death to life. He who is not willing to die, cannot hope to live. The farmer who should refuse to cast seed upon the ground, seemingly throwing it away, would never reap anything. The harvest would surely come, but his hands would be empty.

Matthew 16

²⁵ He that saves his life, shall lose it.

In the growth of the grain we have an illustration of the Christian's growth in grace.

Isaiah 61

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

In the first place, the work is wholly of God. The showers that fall upon the earth show the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; the sunshine which warms the seed into life, shows us how the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in His wings. *Malachi* 4:2. So the grain grows, because under the favorable conditions which God provides, it cannot do otherwise.

We also, if we are consciously as passive in the hands of God as the corn is involuntarily, and as willingly receive the things that pertain to life and godliness, which His Divine power gives in perfection, will as surely bring forth fruit to the glory of God throughout eternity, as the corn ripens to the harvest.

For the harvest will surely come, and...

Matthew 13

³⁹ ...the harvest is the end of the world.

Each recurring harvest is but a sign of the coming end of the world, when...

1 Corinthians 3

¹³ ...every man's work shall be made manifest.

The real harvest is yet to come; these yearly harvests are but the assurances of it. We allow them to come and go without giving them a thought beyond the pounds, shillings, and pence which they bring; their regularity makes us indifferent to the lesson they teach, whereas each returning harvest should but deepen our sense of the coming judgment.

The Jews had each year a round of service in their sanctuary, designed to teach them the truths of the closing act in the yearly service, which was the Day of Atonement. This came in the autumn, when the year ended. It was to them the day of judgment. It was their unbelief that made that typical service necessary.

If we will allow the veil of unbelief to be taken away from our eyes, we shall see the Gospel of the kingdom set forth even more vividly and really than it was in the Levitical yearly service. Their ceremonies were but dead forms; our lesson, which they also had, is the working of the living Word.

Each harvest tells us that God will bring every work into judgment, and...

1 Corinthians 3

¹³ ...the day shall declare it.

Galatians 6

⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

⁸ For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

What shall the harvest be in your case? You may know now as surely as when it comes, for the sowing determines the reaping. The harvest will surely come; it is even now upon us. Then,

Galatians 6

⁹ Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

23. THE REALITY OF THE SPIRITUAL

SEEING THE INVISIBLE

THAT which most stands in the way of people's living the Christian life, next to an unyielding will, is the difficulty they find in conceiving of spiritual things as real. This difficulty is not necessary, but is a result of the false ideas diffused among the people by religious teachers who devoted themselves far more to theology than to the Bible.

That spiritual things are almost universally considered as intangible and unreal, is shown by the fact that even most people who argue strenuously for the personality of the Holy Spirit, will yet make a distinction between the literal and the spiritual. Thus they will speak of the literal and the spiritual meaning of the Bible, and of the difference between the literal and the spiritual seed of Abraham, and will talk about "literal Israel" and "spiritual Israel" as though they were two different peoples.

Now it is evident that just to the extent that spiritual things are considered as unreal, will they fail to have any effect upon one's practical life. When one considers his literal, everyday, practical life as something apart from the spiritual life, then it is plain that his everyday life will not be spiritual, or, in other words, it will not be a Christian life.

But when one realizes that spiritual things are even more real than the things that we see everyday, and he lives as in the invisible world, the spiritual life will be his ordinary, everyday life. The secret of the strength of Moses was that:

Hebrews 11

²⁷ ...he endured as seeing the invisible.

In previous numbers we have spoken of the water of life,

which Jesus said was the Holy Spirit. The Word of the Lord is Spirit (*John* 6:8), and the Spirit and the water and the blood agree in one (1 *John* 5:8), and all are life. The river of living water flowing from the throne of God, from which we are now invited to take freely, is the Spirit of God.

The reality of this river is made known to us in *Psalms* 65:9-10, where we read that the earth is watered and made ready for the harvest by showers from the river of God, which is full of water. Thus every shower makes known to us the fullness and the freedom of the Holy Spirit. With every refreshing draught of the drink which God provides us, we may and should consciously receive the Holy Ghost; and so also with every breath of heaven's air that we breathe.

There is nothing with which we are well acquainted that more nearly represents the Holy Spirit than the air we breathe. Indeed, the Lord used the wind in its unseen motion as an illustration of the spiritual birth. *Psalms* 104:4, "who makes His angels spirits," is rendered in the Revised Version, "who makes winds His messengers." Indeed, the same Hebrew word is rendered in different places "Spirit," "breath," and "wind," as for instance in *Genesis* 1:2; 6:3; 7:15; 8:1. Scores of other instances might be cited.

Air is invisible, yet it is real. For a long time scientists and philosophers thought that the air was immaterial, and had no weight, although thousands of years ago Job wrote of the weight of the wind (*Job* 28:28); and every one who has seen the trees bend and break in a storm, or has seen things floating in the air as in water, might have known that it had weight. But now that scientists have discovered that the air has weight, and are all agreed upon it, we may believe the Word of God and the evidence of our senses without fear of being called old-fogyish.

But now a new thing has been discovered, which makes the

invisible actually visible. This is the fact that the air under certain conditions becomes liquid, like water, and can be seen and handled just the same as the latter substance. We have already noted this interesting fact; but the following further description of liquefied air, by William Henry Hail, Ph.D., comes in very aptly in this connection:

Liquid air is a clear, colorless liquid, when filtered, resembling water. It is intensely cold, the temperature being three hundred and twelve degrees below zero. It is constantly boiling, as it absorbs heat from the surrounding objects, and thus it gradually resumes the gaseous condition. If enclosed in vessels thickly surrounded with a non-conductor, however, it boils very slowly, and may be kept thus in an open vessel for many hours, and may be transported from place to place.

I visited Mr. Tripler's laboratory, March 24, He had just sent off a quantity of liquid air to John Hopkins University, a distance of one hundred and ninety miles, to be used by Prof. George F. Barker in a lecture there.

At the time of my visit to the laboratory, Mr. Tripler was entertaining a party of friends by exhibiting the properties of liquid air. When poured upon any surface, it breaks into drops, which immediately volatilize. So rapidly does it absorb heat from all surrounding substances, that when poured into a glass tube standing in water or whiskey, the liquid surrounding the tube is soon frozen. As the liquid air boils away, the nitrogen first evaporates, because the boiling-point of nitrogen is lower than that of oxygen. After a while nearly pure liquid oxygen remains. A cup of ice was removed from the outside of one of these tubes. Inside it liquid oxygen was poured; then steel was burned in the oxygen.

In another experiment a blowpipe was extemporized by putting liquid air into a vessel to which a tube was attached; and the vaporization of the air forced air through the tube so as to blow to red heat an ignited hard carbon, which was then plunged into liquid oxygen, and burned intensely in the middle of the surrounding cold liquid. The characteristic odor of ozone was noticeable.

The air, as it vaporizes, does so in a white cloud, like the vapor of water. Some liquid air was enclosed in a bottle in which a tube was fitted; and the pressure of the boiling air caused a fountain of vaporized air to issue from the tube.

A bung pounded into a bottle containing liquid air, was blown to the ceiling with a loud pop.

Liquid oxygen is somewhat heavier than water. Liquid air was poured upon water. After the nitrogen had boiled off, the oxygen would sink into the water in little globes, which descended till they reached a depth of water where the ebullition of the descending globe became so violent as to raise it again to the surface.

The cold of the liquid air is so intense that india-rubber, immersed in it, became brittle, and broke like glass, as did also a tin cup containing liquid air.

An exhaust pump was attached to a glass tube containing liquid air, and the vaporized air was drawn off, causing violent ebullition in the tube. So great a degree of cold was thus produced as to cause a liquefaction of the air of the room outside of the tube, and even some crystals of frozen air were formed, the temperature requisite to freeze air being about four hundred degrees below zero.

Such is the avidity of liquid oxygen for some hydrocarbons, that violent explosions are caused by burning such substances as alcohol or cotton waste in the oxygen. An iron pipe, open at both ends, and a copper pipe, open at one end, were shown at the laboratory, both of which had been shattered by explosions thus caused, the energy of chemical combination being so enormous that the resulting gases broke their way through the tube, instead of escaping through the open end, only a few inches distant.

Although men stumble upon these discoveries, it is not an accident that they are allowed to come to light. God will make it plain to the most obtuse that the unseen is real, and that when the proper conditions are obtained, that which is now invisible may be seen. In the world to come, nothing will be invisible to the saints of God.

Hebrews 4

¹³ ...all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

¹³ Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight...

When “that which is perfect” (*1 Corinthians* 13:10) is come, we also shall know even as we are known. *1 Corinthians* 13:12. Then will the Spirit of God be seen proceeding from the Father as a stream of living water.

Happy are those who now learn to know the reality of the spiritual, and to endure as seeing the invisible. In that world they shall dwell in the presence of Him...

1 Timothy 6

¹⁶ ...whom no man has seen, neither can see.

Revelation 22

⁴ And they shall see His face.

24. WASHING IN THE WORD

EVERY reader of the Bible will see at a glance that this picture is intended as a representation of the incident recorded in the ninth chapter of John. The story is quickly told. Jesus passed by, and saw a man who was blind from his birth, and, after saying, "I am the light of the world" (*John* 8:12),

John 9

⁶ He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

⁷ And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

The cut represents the washing in the pool, and also the young man before the neighbors and the Pharisees, to whom he recounted the story of his cure, in these simple words:

¹¹ A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight.

There is scarcely any limit to the number of lessons to be learned from this incident, with all the conversation that grew out of it; but that which specially presents itself to us at this time is the fact that the Word of the Lord is living water, and that it has healing and cleansing power. Would that this lesson might be indelibly impressed on the mind and heart of every reader!

In the first place we must know that water comes from God's Word,—the Word itself is water.

Jeremiah 10

¹⁰ The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King...

¹³ When He utters His voice there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth.

Since He is the living God, from Him comes the living water. He is:

Jeremiah 2

¹³ ...the Fountain of living waters.

His word is a living word, yea, it is life itself, “the Word of life.” 1 *John* 1:1.

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Life is light, so that the Word of life is the Word of light. This was demonstrated in the case of the blind man; for when he obeyed the Word of the Lord, he saw.

Psalms 119

¹³⁰ The entrance of Your words gives light.

By the entrance of the Word of the Lord is meant acceptance of that Word and yielding to it; for since the Word is life, its entrance must impart its own life to the receiver. If the young man had objected that he couldn’t see how going and washing would do him any good, he would never have seen. Of course he couldn’t see, for he was blind; but when he yielded to the Word, he saw light in it.

Even so it is folly for anyone to refuse to obey the Word of the Lord, because he cannot see it. Sight comes with acceptance of it. We do not need to see in order to accept the Word, but we need to accept the Word in order to see.

The visible water in which the young man washed was simply a representation of the invisible water of life—the Word. Another instance of this is found in the case of Naa-

man. When he came to Elisha, the prophet sent word to him, saying:

2 Kings 5

¹⁰ Go wash in Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall come again to you, and you shall be clean.

Naaman was angry at first, but his wrath was appeased by his servants, who said:

¹³ My father, if the prophet had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it? how much rather, then, when he says to you, Wash, and be clean?

This gentle entreaty and sound sense had its effect, and Naaman washed and was cleansed from his leprosy. Was the water of Jordan really better than the water of the rivers of Damascus? Not a particle; but Elisha spoke the word of the Lord, "Wash, and be clean," and the acceptance of that word brought cleansing, even as it brought sight to the blind man.

But the case is not yet complete. We must see that the Word of the Lord is indeed the water of life, with power in itself to cleanse and give sighs, without any visible agent. So we take the case of another leper. One came to Jesus, full of leprosy, and said:

Matthew 8

² Lord, if You will, You can make me clean.

³ And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will, Be clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

The same thing was accomplished in this case as in the case of Naaman, and by the same means, viz., the Word of the Lord. Both are recorded in order that we might know of a surety that the Word of God is water, and has cleansing power.

What is the value of this lesson for us? Is it purely theoretical? Far from it.

Isaiah 64

⁶ We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

We are full of the leprosy of sin.

Isaiah 1

⁵ The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

⁶ From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.

Now to all who are in that deplorable condition, the Lord says:

Isaiah 1

¹⁶ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well.

And then follows the assurance that, as the result of this washing,

¹⁸ Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Take notice that the very same thing is here said to the sinner that was said to Naaman the leper: “Wash, and be clean.” It is the same Word that was spoken to the leper who came to Christ. Jesus said, “Be clean.” Here was a definite command, “Be clean,” to each of these lepers, yet neither one of them understood it to mean that he was to make himself clean.

When the command, “Be clean” was accepted, the cleansing came. The words, “Be clean,” carried cleansing with them. Even so it is when the Lord says to wretched sinners, “Wash you; make you clean.” The acceptance of the commandment brings the cleansing, showing us that:

John 12

⁵⁰ His commandment is life everlasting.

Every one of the ten commandments is a promise of the

righteousness which God will give us if we accept it.

Ephesians 5

²⁵ [Christ] loved the church, and gave Himself for it;

²⁶ That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.

Literally,

“That He might sanctify and cleanse it by a water-bath in the Word.”

To those who receive His Word, He says:

John 15

³ Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you.

Oh, then let us receive the Word with gladness! How much better it is to be clean than to be filthy! How much better clean garments feel than filthy garments. Why should anyone be unclean and blind also, when he can find cleansing and sight in the Word which the Lord has spoken?

Surely every one who loves cleanliness, and finds pleasure in the light of the sun, should make haste to accept the word of the Lord, omitting not one jot.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in You to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

25. BREATHING GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

MAN lives by the breath of God. When we read that “He gives to all life, and breath, and all things” (*Acts 17:25*), we are not to understand that these things are something apart by themselves, but that God gives us Himself in His gifts. It is God’s presence, and that alone, that makes any gift of value. So the breath by which we live is God’s own breath, the breath or life—God’s own life.

Genesis 2

⁷ The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

The physical structure of man has not changed since the creation. Mankind live now by the same means as then. We breathe in the same way that Adam did, and the same air, too. The first breath that a man draws is no different from every subsequent one. The same thing that was done for Adam, is done for every soul that is born into the world: God breathes into its nostrils the breath of life.

But that which we breathe, as well as that which Adam breathed from his first breath till the close of this life, is there. The breath of life is the air that surrounds us. This we know without being told; for if the air be shut away from us, so that we cannot breathe, we quickly die. But it is God who breathes into our nostrils this breath of life. Thus we see very plainly that the air that surrounds us is God’s breath.

We have grown so accustomed to putting the Lord far away from us, that first it seems almost like sacrilege to say that He is so near and so real that the air is His breath. In fact, we have never in our lives, at least a majority of us have not, been accustomed to thinking of God as near at hand, as the

One in whom we actually live.

The statement, “in Him we live, and move, and have are being” (*Acts* 17:28) is very familiar, but to most people it is only a form of words. When we come to consider it as an actual fact, then many begin to shake their heads. They would limit the meeting and force of the Scripture by their own previous conceptions. Let us remember that the Word of God “is true from the beginning” (*Psalms* 119:160), and that it is “the truth.” *John* 17:17. There is no exaggeration in God’s Word. God says just what He means, and means all that He says.

What is air? From childhood we have been taught that it is a gaseous substance composed of a combination (not chemical) of two gases: oxygen and nitrogen. But that didn’t tell us anything as to what it is. Even though it had been correctly analyzed, the mere naming of these two gases does not really add to our knowledge. The name is not inherent in the thing. The names by which the gases are known are simply arbitrary designations given by men.

But new scientists tell us that there are still other elements in the air, which they have never known before. We now have “argon” and “krypton,” and still other things said to be constituents of the air. All this simply shows that human science really knows nothing as to what air is. This is aptly, though not very ingenuously, confessed in the name “krypton,” given to one of the supposed elements of the air. It is not, as some might think, the name of anything whatever, but means hidden, concealed, unknown. It indicates that there is something there which the philosophers know nothing about.

Let us now take a little rest from these various “elements,” which for all that anybody can tell, are different manifestations of one and the same thing, and come to a simple statement of what the air is. What is air? It is life. There is no doubt about it. To know that indeed is of more value than to

know all the fictitious names which scientists have given to the supposed constituents of the air. It is the great agent by which God conveys to us His life. If we remember this, it will lead us to the possession of greater wisdom than can be learned in all the schools on this earth.

We have already seen that the breath that we breathe is God's breath, and thus that the air is the breath of God. Let us note two other texts which state this very explicitly. When Israel came to the Red Sea,

Exodus 14

²¹ The Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

What was this "strong east wind" by which the waters were divided? In the song which Moses sang when filled with the Holy Ghost, we are told. Addressing the Lord, he said:

Exodus 15

⁸ With the blast of Your nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as a heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

The east wind that drove the waters back, was an ordinary wind, the same as we are so well acquainted with; but nevertheless it was the breath of God's nostrils. How much more we can appreciate the air, when we realize that it comes direct from God, and how this truth should teach us not to shut it out, and not to contaminate it with tobacco smoke and other vile odors.

And now to see that God is continually doing for us just what He did for Adam in the beginning—breathing into our nostrils the breath of life. How little we think about breathing when we are in health. If we had to think about our breath in order to keep it going, we should have no time to think of anything else. And we should not dare to go to sleep.

But we do go to sleep, and lose all consciousness, yet we breathe all the time. The breath comes as regularly as when we are awake, although not so often, because it is not needed so much. We do not do it ourselves. Who does? It is God.

Psalm 121

³ ...He that keeps you will not slumber.

⁴ Behold He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵ The Lord is your keeper.

Because the Lord does not sleep, we can lay us down in peace and sleep. And what is more, we can awake, for the Lord sustains us. What a sense of the marvelous greatness God gives, to know that for the life and breath of every individual on earth God is personally responsible. How near we are to Him, when we receive the breath of His nostrils! Truly, He is not far from every one of us.

Our life therefore is not our own. It belongs to God. Not merely in the sense that He has a claim upon it, but it is His own life. Because He lives, we live. In Him we live, because He is our life. This solves the problem of right living. We know that God gives us His own life. This shows that it is possible for Him to dwell in us. How easy then to see that if we but yield to Him, that He may direct His own life in His own way, we shall live righteous lives, because:

Psalm 18

³⁰ As for God, His way is perfect.

Let God use His own breath in His own way, and our breath will be righteousness to us. We shall breathe in righteousness with every breath.

Can God make a man good simply by breathing on him? Certainly; that is what He did in the beginning. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground. He was man, but he was good for nothing as man. He was utterly useless. He knew nothing, and could do nothing. Then God breathed into his

nostrils. That was God's last act in creation; and when God had done that, He saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.

That is to say, that breath of God changed man from a good-for-nothing man into a very good man. As long as Adam received his breath as coming direct from the Lord, and was content to be simply the instrument through which God's breath should play, everything was harmony and peace and goodness. But as soon as Adam thought that he could live on his own account, all was discord. God can and does breathe righteousness into all who acknowledge Him in their every breath.

We live by breathing. But "the just shall live by faith." *Romans* 1:17. That is, the man who lives by faith is a righteous man. Now since we live by breathing, and by faith our life is made righteous, it is evident that we shall be righteous if we breathe by faith. It cannot be otherwise. If with every breath we were acknowledging God as the giver of every good and perfect gift, we could not fail to be righteous; for we breathe several times every minute, and if in all our ways we acknowledge God, He will surely make our ways right.

Then let everything that has breath praise the Lord (*Psalms* 150:6); and as the breath of God comes upon us moment by moment, let us remember that with every inspiration comes the blessed words, "Receive the Holy Ghost!"

26. STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

Psalm 107

²³ They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

²⁴ These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.

WHAT are the works of the Lord, and the wonders in the deep, which are seen in the great waters? The answer is given in the next verses:

Psalm 107

²⁵ For He commands and raises the stormy wind, which lifts up the waves thereof.

The mighty power of God is seen by those who go to sea. God rules in the sea. When Jonah sought to flee from the presence of the Lord, and took a ship bound for Tarshish,

Jonah 1

⁴ The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

But as soon as Jonah was out of the boat...

¹⁵ ...the sea ceased from her raging.

Psalm 89

⁹ He rules the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, He stills them.

An example of this is seen in the stilling of the tempest by Christ on the sea of Galilee.

Mark 4

³⁹ He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a, great calm.

The word here rendered “peace” is the same that a mother

would use in quieting a boisterous child: “Hush; quiet,” she will say; and just as with a restless infant did Jesus deal with the tempestuous sea.

For Jesus was Immanuel, “God with us,” and:

Psalm 93

⁴ The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

There is nothing more awful than the sea when lashed to fury by a violent wind. The destruction that it can work is beyond all description. The strongest works of man are unable to resist its force. No other created thing can equal the sea in power and grandeur; yet it is to God no more than the tiniest infant.

See how strikingly this is set forth by the Lord in His instruction to Job:

Job 38 [RV]

⁸ Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb;

⁹ When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it,

¹⁰ And prescribed for it my decree, and set bars and doors,

¹¹ And said, Thus far shall you come, but no further; and here shall your proud waves be stayed?

The sea with all the might of its proud waves, is to the Lord only as a newly-born infant in swaddling bands. And this God is the God of our salvation.

Nor only do the wonders of God in the deep show the power of God unto salvation of those who believe, but they are cited as encouragement to those who labor for the salvation of others. Read:

Isaiah 51

¹² I, even I, am He that comforts you; who art you, that you are afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man which

shall he made as grass;

¹³ And have forgotten the Lord your Maker, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth; and fear continually all the day because of the fury of the oppressor, when he makes ready to destroy...

¹⁵ I am the Lord your God, which stirred up the sea, that the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name.

¹⁶ And I have put my words in your mouth, and have covered you in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion, You are my people.

The God who can stir up the sea, so that it will roar, and then still it again with a whisper, is the God who put His Word in the mouths of those who will be ambassadors for Christ. Nay, more, the very word that can do this, is the word which He puts into the mouths of those who will yield themselves to Him, to obey and speak only His Word, and no words of their own.

In God's dealing with the sea we have still further encouragement as "laborers together with God." *1 Corinthians 3:9*.

Jeremiah 5

²³ [God has] placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.

Yet this same sand is unstable and shifting. He who builds on it is sure to come to destruction. *Matthew 7:26-27*. "A rope of sand" is an expression for weakness; yet this same sand serves in the hands of God to restrain the raging sea, and keep it in bounds. So although man is weakness itself, and worse than useless to build upon, the word which God puts in his mouth will build a new heavens and a new earth.

1 Corinthians 1

²⁷ God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

Faith in God will manufacture strength out of weakness. *Hebrews* 11:33-34. The sea itself, which rages so furiously, is but water, which is unstable and weak. The strength that it exhibits is the strength of God.

Isaiah 26

⁴ Trust in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

27. THE LIVING BREAD

IN recent studies we have learned that the rain which comes down from heaven and waters the earth is the life of God.

Psalm 65

⁹ You visit the earth, and water it. You greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water.

How greatly, beyond our utmost thought, God enriches the earth in thus visiting it, we do not know, but we are told of some things that He does for it by means of the rain, and these we should believe and receive as from Him.

God's life poured out upon us in the form of rain is not different from His life, as it is revealed in Christ, or as the angels behold it in heaven. It is not strained off before it is poured from heaven, therefore all the righteousness and power that is comprised in the Divine life, indeed "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (*2 Peter* 1:3), are shed freely upon the earth in the rain.

Isaiah 45

⁸ Drop down, you heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

The earth, being without power of choice, has to receive the rain as what it is, and consequently, that which springs from the earth as the result of the rain, is identical with it in quality and virtue.

Isaiah 45

⁸ Let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together: I the Lord have created it.

If a man will recognize the fruit of the earth as the life of

God he will know in eating food that he is a partaker of the Divine life and nature. Such a one will grow strong on the nurture of the Lord. It is a well-known fact that to be strong and well a man must eat strength-giving food, and the measure of his strength will be determined by the quality of his nutriment. Whosoever eats of the Lord will be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Israel had a great work to do when they came out of Egypt. It was no less than is committed to the church of Christ to-day,—to be co-workers with God. But God does not ask men to do anything, in their own strength, and so He fed Israel with food that was able to impart abundant strength, sufficient for the easy and successful accomplishment of every duty that lay in their path. They had...

Psalm 78

²⁴ ...the corn of harvest.

²⁵ Man did eat angels' food.

But Israel did not receive the wonderful strength that there was in the manna. They even despised it, and in so doing,

Psalm 78

²² They believed not in God, and trusted not in His salvation.

They were eating and drinking of Christ, but they did not believe it, and so they only ate and drank condemnation to themselves. Still the earth brings forth salvation and righteousness.

John 6

⁵⁰ [Christ] is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

He says:

⁵⁷ As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eats me, even he shall live by me.

Israel failed to discern the Lord's body in the food that was

given them, and so, not receiving Christ in it, their diet was too poor for the task before them. It overtaxed their strength, and they fell by the way. Christ had an infinitely more trying journey before Him, but He received so much strength in living by the Father that, all the way, He was more than conqueror.

In the same way, if we eat His flesh and drink His blood, where He has put these for our use, we will triumph always. If we do not, we will fail like Israel to enter in, and the simple and only cause of our failure will be unbelief, that is, refusing to admit that God speaks the truth.

It was literally true that Christ lived by the Father. He had meat to eat that His disciples knew not of. Yet He was made in all things like unto His brethren, and had no secret channel of communication with the Father that was denied to them. He said:

John 4

³⁴ My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.

He ate and drank what they did, but not as they did. The will of God was perfectly assimilated into Christ's life, just as every one is made of what he eats and drinks. His testimony was:

Psalms 40

⁸ I delight to do Your will, O my God, yea, Your law is within my heart.

Since He lived by the will of God, as His meat and drink, it must be that this was conveyed to Him in the partaking of material food. There was so high a quality of nourishment in His diet, as He took it, recognizing God's life, or will in it, that it could sustain Him when others, who had last eaten at the same time as Himself, were quite exhausted. At one time, He went in the strength of it, forty days and nights, and it was only afterwards that He was hungry.

It is evident that there is more strength in receiving the will, or word, of God without bread, than there is in eating bread without receiving in it the life of God. The Lord suffered Israel to hunger, and fed them with manna that He might make them know that man does not live by bread alone. *Deuteronomy* 8:3. Christ could say:

John 12

⁵⁰ I know that His commandment is life.

Just as the Divine life does not deteriorate when it comes down from heaven and comes forth in vegetable life with unimpaired vitality, nor when taken into the body of man does it change for the worse. It remains in every stage the life of God, and while the observer of nature sees in its different manifestations what he calls, at one stage, the law of plant life, and at another, the law of human development, it remains, all through, the law of the Divine life.

In thus imparting His life, God communicates in it the law of His own being, His own personal character and attributes. Thus the man who acknowledges that His whole life is derived from God, will also know that in his heart, in his very being, is the law of the Divine life, the instincts of the Divine nature.

This is what God promises in the new covenant:

Hebrews 8

¹⁰ I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts...

¹¹ And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me.

This covenant is fulfilled to every one who recognizes God's life in his food, and receives it with thankfulness. It was to fulfill the everlasting covenant, made with Abraham and his seed, that God gave the Israelites manna in the wilderness.

Psalm 105

⁴⁰ [He] satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

⁴¹ He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out...

⁴² For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant.

Christ, giving His disciples the juice of the grape, said:

1 Corinthians 11

²⁵ This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Through Isaiah, God calls us to:

Isaiah 55

² Eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

³ ...and I will make an everlasting covenant with you.

Thus we see how it is that when we acknowledge God in all our ways, He will direct our paths. He writes His law in our hearts, putting it into us as the law of our being, just as it is the law of His own existence.

Isaiah 58

¹¹ And the Lord shall guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and make fat your bones.

God declared His covenant of life and peace to Israel on Sinai, but the people did not see the grace that was abounding there, flowing from Sinai to them in living streams of water. We are come unto Mount Zion, to the city of the living God.

Psalm 11

⁴ ...the Lord's throne is in heaven.

Psalm 97

² Clouds and darkness are round about Him.

But always from the cloud comes the stream of the water of life, in the form of rain, dropping down righteousness on the earth, that the earth may bring forth salvation for the service of man. God speaks His living law from the midst of the cloud, and those who receive it in the water of life and the

bread from heaven, live by it, and find it life everlasting.

To such the law is not a code of regulations, which one man can teach to another, but the life of Christ, His flesh and blood, which He gives for the life of the world. All who partake of this wonderful nutriment are strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man, and Christ dwells in their hearts by faith, so that they, in Him, are filled with all the fullness of God.

No work is too difficult for them, for they can do all things through Christ who strengthens them (*Philippians* 4:13); and God has no secrets from them, for the Spirit, which is their life, the Divine law of their being, searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. *1 Corinthians* 2:10.

28. CHRIST THE SEED

Galatians 3

¹⁶ To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your Seed, which is Christ.

2 Corinthians 1

²⁰ For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us.

Colossians 1

¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

CHRISt is “the Beginning;” He is the source of all creation, visible and invisible, whether in heaven or on earth. Oh, that men would realize the absolute reality of this fact! Without Him there is not one thing.

Acts 17

²⁸ In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

Most people accept these Scripture statements, but in an accommodated, unreal sense. They do not realize that they are literally true, and that there is no material thing in existence outside of Christ; that outside of Him there is no existence whatever. He is; His name is “I Am;” and He is the only One who is. That which is not in Him, is not at all.

If Scripture statements were taken as literally true, spiritual life would be a practical experience, instead of the abstraction that it so often is. Nothing is more true than that the religious life of many consists largely in the repetition of certain phrases, the meaning of which they do not comprehend, and which very often have no meaning.

All this comes from the habit of making a distinction between the literal and the spiritual,—of separating the ordinary,

practical, everyday life from the spiritual, religious life. As a matter of fact, the spiritual is the only reality there is. That which is seen only with the natural eyes is temporal; only the unseen is eternal.

Christ, the Word, is the Seed to whom the promise of God is made. All who “put on Christ” are the seed in Him. When seed is sown it multiplies. That is why it is sown. So Christ, the Word, being received into human hearts and lives, as He comes in the person of the Holy Spirit, multiplies Himself. Every one in whom He thus dwells is transformed, and lives a new life. He can say:

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

This is the new birth, which is accomplished by the Word of truth. *James* 1:18; *1 Peter* 1:23. Christ becomes the ruling factor in the life. The life is no longer ours, but His: He takes complete possession, so that He thinks and acts through us, using the organs of our body for the accomplishment of His will.

Just here comes in the trouble with many people who would gladly live this perfect Christian life, or rather, allow Christ to live it in them, that the thing seems so intangible; they cannot sufficiently grasp the idea that Christ can dwell personally in them. It seems to them a name, a theory, rather than a fact.

Now the Lord has anticipated this difficulty, and has put the Gospel into visible form, so that we may continually have an object lesson before us. In the seed that the gardener sows, God has provided us a lesson concerning the reality of the Seed by which we are begotten anew, and in the fruits of the

earth He teaches us of the fruits of righteousness.

We cannot see the life that is in the seed which is sown, neither can we see it in the corn that we eat, no matter at what stage we view it. But we can see that the corn grows. We place a single seed in the ground, and we see that it multiplies, and produces thirty, sixty, or even a hundred grains. Each one of these grains has the same life that the original seed had, and just as much of it.

We take the corn, and make it into bread, and eat it, although we can see no life in it; but we know that there is life in it, for we receive life from it. The life of the corn becomes our life. All this is a common, everyday occurrence. We have been familiar with it all our lives. We cannot understand the secret of the life in the seemingly lifeless grains of corn, nor can we understand how the life becomes ours; but we know the fact, and are content with that.

Now it is just as easy for us to comprehend how Christ can dwell in us, so that His life becomes ours, as it is to comprehend the fact that we can get our life from the food which we eat. Indeed, the comprehension of the one is the comprehension of the other.

Remember that Christ is the Seed, the origin of all things. He is the Word of God, by whom all things came into existence. In Him is life. God said:

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth.

He sowed the seed whence all things come. That seed was the Word. It was the life of Christ, the Word, that made the earth fruitful. There is no life but His, for He is the life. *John* 14:6.

So when we eat the grain and fruits which the earth brings forth, and get life from them day by day, we are literally receiving the life of Christ. The life which we assimilate, and which becomes ours, is none other than the life of the Word of God, which was in the beginning, is now, and is to come.

With this simple, easily recognized fact in mind, we can see how literal were Christ's words when He took bread in His hands, and said, "This is my body." In eating bread, we are partaking of the life of the Lord.

The Israelites in the desert of Sinai ate bread, which they called "manna." It was their daily food for nearly forty years. It was "bread from heaven," yet just as literal food as that which we eat every day. But it was "spiritual meat." *1 Corinthians* 10:3. They did not eat by faith, hence they died; but if they had eaten by faith, discerning the body of Christ, they would not have died. *John* 6:50-51.

Romans 1

¹⁷ The just shall live by faith.

By living faith, men become transformed into the perfect image of Christ.

Romans 10

¹⁰ With the heart man believes unto righteousness.

We live by eating. If now men ate by faith, they would live by faith, and so be righteous. And how eat by faith? Simply recognizing the fact that the body of Christ is the substance of all reality; that His Divine life is that which we get in the food that He gives us. Then just as a person assimilates his food, and by that very process, would he assimilate Christ.

Consciously yielding to Christ, that He might live in His own way the life which he gives us, our life would be not simply modeled after, but the actual reproduction of His life. The Seed abiding in us, would keep us from sin. *1 John* 3:9.

How easy and plain is the way of life! It consists simply in the constant recognition of the great fact that Christ is the Seed, and consciously eating of Him.

Psalm 34

⁸ O, taste and see that the Lord is good!

29. THE VINE AND THE LILY

WHEN we read that “all flesh is grass,” we must not fail to couple with that statement the words of Christ, which show that the lilies of the field are included in the classification. *Matthew* 6:28-30. The righteous are also often called trees. These things teach us that from everything that grows out of the ground we are to learn something concerning our life in Christ.

Jesus says:

John 15

¹ I am the true Vine.

This was a part of the last instruction that He gave to His disciples before He was crucified. He had told them that in eating the bread they were eating His body; the supper was over, and the closing hymn had been sung; and now they were on their way to the garden, or possibly were in the garden itself.

A vine growing in the garden by the side of the path as they walked, would easily and naturally serve to give point to the Saviour's words. They had just drank of the fruit of the vine; here was one growing before their eyes, such as they had seen thousands of times. How many times we have seen the vine growing. What is it? It is a vine, nothing more; its object is to bear fruit for the service of man; that is the end of the matter.

Oh, no; that is only the beginning; that is not the real vine; it is only an object lesson. Jesus says, “I am the true Vine.” These vines that we see growing are designed to teach us lessons of Christ and of Christian living. If we have seen them, and eaten of them, and have not learned these lessons,

our seeing and eating have been in vain.

God's purpose for us is that we should bear fruit. Jesus says:

John 15

¹⁶ I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.

⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.

We are to bear much fruit, and the fruit is not to be unsound, and wither, but is to remain. The nature of the fruit to be borne is described in:

Galatians 5

²² Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance.

And these fruits are, like the fruit of all trees, to come from within, and not to be put on from the outside.

Philippians 1

¹¹ Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

The fruit, being in us, is to be brought forth, and thus will God be glorified. We see, therefore, that although the fruit is to come from within, as we are full of it, it is not the product of our own life, but of the Spirit of God, so that the praise and glory are all due to Him.

But how are we to bear these fruits of righteousness, since in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing? Ah, they are the fruits of the Spirit, whom the Lord has given to us, that He may abide with us for ever. *John* 14:16. The Spirit is the bond of union between me and Christ. The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of adoption," showing us to be children of God, "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." *Romans* 8:15-17.

We need not question how the Spirit can dwell in us, for that does not concern us. All we have to do is to yield our as-

sent; He who has the work to do will attend to it Himself. The mystery of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the unsolvable mystery of the self-existence of God, and of the incarnation of Christ. It is enough for us to know the fact.

Read again the words of the Saviour:

John 15 [margin]

⁵ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me.

⁶ I am the Vine, you are the branches. He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for severed from me you can do nothing.

The branch bears fruit because it shares the life of the vine. There is no difference between the vine and its branches. They have one life. As is the vine, so are the branches.

Romans 11

¹⁶ If the root be holy, so are the branches.

The life of the vine is the sap. That is the blood of the vine or the tree. The same sap that nourishes the vine, goes out to the uttermost branch, so long as the branch remains a part of the vine. Jesus says:

John 6

⁵⁷ As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eats me, even he shall live by me.

He whom God has sent receives the Spirit without measure (*John* 3:34), and “the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” *Romans* 8:10. The life of Christ, therefore, is the Holy Spirit of God, and the life of those who live by Him is that same Holy Spirit. What the sap is to the vine and its branches, which we see, that the Holy Spirit is to Christ and those who are in Him.

Now let no one lose sight of the object of this study. It is not vain curiosity, and therefore we have not indulged in any

speculations. We have held strictly to the text of Scripture. The lesson that we are to learn is the possibility and the reality of the Spirit's dwelling in us and producing in us the same fruits that manifested themselves in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are familiar with the fact that sap circulates through the vine and its branches, and produces fruit; what the Lord would teach us is that through faith in His Word we have just as real and intimate a connection with Him as the branch of the grape vine has with the vine itself. The Spirit of God, the life of Christ, can pass from Christ to us as freely and as constantly as the sap does from the root and the stock to the outermost branches, and this is the case so long as we by faith maintain the connection. Is there not life in the very thought?

This is what the Apostle speaks of when he says that by the exceeding great and precious promises of God we are made partakers of the Divine nature. *2 Peter* 1:4. We do not become partakers of the Divine nature by an occasional look at the exceeding great and precious promises, but by a continual feeding on them. The life of faith must be as continuous as the natural life, which comes by eating and breathing. It is not by occasional breathing that we live; even so it is not by occasional thoughts of God and His promises that we live the Divine life.

But when the faith is constant and steadfast, the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, must follow as naturally as do the works of sin when we are out of Christ. The Divine nature is not less active and powerful than the carnal nature. Therefore when we are partakers of the Divine nature, it must be as natural to do right as it is to do wrong when we are controlled by the carnal nature.

Romans 6

¹⁹ As you have yielded your members servants to unclean-

ness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

²⁰ For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness.

²¹ What fruit had you then in those things whereof you are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

²² But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

The one necessary condition is by living faith to abide in the true Vine.

There is infinite power in the Word of God. By it we are made clean. *John* 15:3. Here is infinite comfort and encouragement for the believer. The way of life is not hard, but easy. Jesus says, "My yoke is easy." *Matthew* 11:30.

It is the way of the transgressor that is hard. The Lord in His infinite mercy has made it as easy to do right as to do wrong, provided we trust Him absolutely; yea, far easier, inasmuch as His power is infinitely greater than all the power of sin. Well may this be spoken of as a "great salvation." *Hebrews* 2:3. We do not need to know the how, but the fact is ever before us in the fruit-bearing vine and trees.

Christ is not only the true Vine; He is a tree of life, since He is the wisdom of God. *Proverbs* 3:13-18.

Song of Solomon 2

¹ I [Christ] am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

Matthew 6

²⁸ Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.

Israel "shall grow as the lily." Growth means flower and fruit, so we have it, he "shall blossom as the lily." *Hosea* 14:5.

Isaiah 61

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salva-

tion, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Just as the lily is clothed with beauty, even so will those who trust in the Lord be clothed with righteousness. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like a lily. His magnificent clothing was wrought by man, and put on from the outside. It was no part of himself, and when it was taken off, as it had to be, he had no more glory than the humblest peasant.

But the beautiful clothing of the lily comes from within. It is wrought by God, and not by man. Although the work of God, and the lily's own work, yet it is a part of the lily itself. It belongs to it, and cannot be laid aside without the destruction of the lily. Even so shall it be with those who trust the Lord, He will clothe them with the beautiful garments of righteousness in just the same way that He clothes the lily.

This is the Christian's assurance not only of the life to come, but also of all that he needs for this life. For He who does that which is greatest will also do that which is least.

Romans 8

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

"All things" leaves nothing out. In accepting Christ, the believer receives all things that pertain to life and godliness. He receives everything that he can possibly need in time and in eternity.

1 Timothy 4

⁸ Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

2 Corinthians 9

¹⁵ Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!

30. PRAISE THE LORD

Praise to the holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise.
In all His works most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways.

Psalm 150

⁶ Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord.

THAT is what breath is for,—to praise the Lord with. It is the breath that God gives that makes man a living soul; and man was formed only for the glory of God.

But we see that the call to praise God is not limited to man. It includes everything that has breath, and the lower animals have breath as well as man. They, too, are to praise the Lord.

Can dumb brutes praise the Lord? Most assuredly, else they would not be called on to do so. There is no exception; everything that has breath ought to praise the Lord. If there is anything that does not praise Him, there is no use for its existence.

The lower animals cannot speak; how then can they praise God?—In the same way that the heavens do, which also have no voice, namely, by fulfilling the object of their creation. Breath gives life, and since it comes from God, it is to be used only in His Service. So it is not merely with our tongues that we are to praise the Lord, but with every organ of the body that is quickened by the breath of life.

There is stronger evidence of the worthiness of God to be praised, than the charges that men bring against Him, and the blasphemies that are uttered. Remember that no man provides his own breath. The breath that we breathe is a gift from God, which He bestows upon us fresh every moment. What man is

there who would patiently and uncomplainingly continue to heap benefits upon those who persistently and unceasingly slandered and reviled him?

Such goodness is not found among men; but it is the goodness and forbearance of God. No stronger proof of His worthiness to be praised is needed than kindness in giving breath to those who hate and revile Him, and who use the breath that He gives them in denying His goodness.

Praise is an evidence of life. Hezekiah said:

Isaiah 38

¹⁸ The grave cannot praise You, death cannot celebrate You; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Your truth.

¹⁹ The living, the living, he shall praise You as I do this day.

If a man does not praise the Lord, that is a sign that he is practically dead. It is just the same as though he had no breath at all, for he does not use it to any real purpose. What wonder if God at length leaves off giving breath to one who shows no appreciation of its value? Are you alive?

31. KNOWING GOD

THE greatest good that any man can get in this world is the knowledge of God. This contains in itself all that can be desired, and much more. The message of glad tidings that Christ brought for all people was simply the revelation of the Father. The world sat in darkness and in the shadow of death because it had forgotten what God was. Christ came to light up the darkness, and that which He brought to do it with was the life of God.

John 1

⁴ In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 17

³ This is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God.

Men shun this knowledge, fearing that it only gives them a sense of condemnation. Said Christ:

John 17

²⁵ The world has not known You.

If men would only look upon God as He has revealed Himself in His Word and works, they would find it a revelation so wonderful in its nature and effect that in the very beholding they would become changed.

Isaiah 45

³² Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth.

There is comfort in the knowledge of God. When He commits to His servants a word of comfort for the sinful and troubled, to tell them that their warfare is accomplished, and their iniquity is pardoned, the glad tidings is given in the message:

Isaiah 40

⁹ ...Behold your God.

The everlasting Gospel which prepares believers to meet the Lord in peace at His appearing bids men to “Fear God and give glory to Him.” *Revelation* 14:7. God does not seek fictitious honor, and when He invites men to give glory to Him, it is that they may know the wonderful fullness of the reasons there are for doing so.

This call is glad tidings, because the glory of the Lord is that He saves, even to the uttermost, that He endures the contradiction of sinners against Himself, that He meets all hatred and defiance with an unalterable love, and bears for man the curse that man has earned. He does all this and desires man to give Him credit for it, by joyfully accepting the situation which infinite love has created.

“Give glory to Him,” as One who gives His own glory to the unworthy.

32. STRENGTH FOR SERVICE

THE power of God, manifested in all creation, is the power in which the Gospel is to go as a witness to all people. This was the encouragement with which Christ sent forth His disciples.

Matthew 28

¹⁸ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

¹⁹ Go therefore, and teach all nations.

It was in this confidence that the early church bore its testimony. When opposed by earthly rulers their only appeal was to God,...

Acts 4

²⁴ ...which has made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.

Paul so taught and labored that the faith of his converts...

1 Corinthians 2

⁵ ...should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

As the churches have failed to rely to the full on the strong arm of God for efficiency, weakness has come in, but instead of returning to the Lord, recourse has too often been had to the world. Protection and favor are sought from earthly governments, but these, while ministering to carnal pride and the desire for worldly standing, are found poor substitutes for "the exceeding greatness of God's power." *Ephesians* 1:19.

Dr. Fairbairn is about to visit India for the purpose of delivering a series of lectures on the Christian religion, for the Haskell Trust. The duty of the trust is to provide...

...distinguished men to discuss with representatives of the leading religions their different forms of faith, to show the

points in which they agreed and differed, and to enable those who followed each, better to understand the feelings of the other.

Dr. Fairbairn is considered to be pre-eminently fitted for such work, and his approaching visit to India was made the occasion of a complimentary dinner at the Holborn Restaurant.

After the company had drunk to the success of his mission, Dr. Fairbairn, in replying, expressed himself as feeling the responsibility rather than the pleasure associated with his undertaking. It would have been easy to go to learn, but the puzzle was how to go to teach. Religion in a sense was but an incident in the life of our people. We were an imperious race, if not imperial. It was very difficult for a religion of peace to be carried out by a people of dominion; it was very difficult for the people who were ruled to receive the religion of the rulers as a religion that was a religion of peace and humility. Christianity would have a far better chance in India if it came in its own right, to speak in its own name in absolute dissociation from the imperial power.

These words are true. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. Its sole concern with the world is to save out of it all that will be saved, and "imperial power," connected with its work, is only a source of weakness. Those who plead that the church is helped by the money and influence of the world should remember what God said to Amaziah, when he hired a hundred thousand mighty men of valor out of Israel for a hundred talents of silver.

2 Chronicles 25

⁷ There came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with you; for the Lord is not with Israel...

⁹ And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? and the man of God answered, The Lord is able to give you much more than this.

33. HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER

Psalm 89

¹ I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.

BUT nobody can live upon a past experience. The Christian's rejoicing does not consist merely in telling what God did at some time in the past even for him. Life—real life—is not in the future nor in the past; it is now. Therefore the only reason why we can sing of the mercies of God forever, is that “His mercy endures forever.” *Psalm 136:1.*

Psalm 89

² For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness shall You establish in the very heavens.

Psalm 36

⁵ Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds.

Psalm 103

¹¹ For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.

¹⁷ The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children.

Someone will say,

“Yea; the mercy of the Lord is forever, but only to a certain class; there comes a time when His mercy ceases for sinners; and may it not be that it has now ceased?”

To this it is necessary only to say that it will be time enough for people to talk about God's mercy ceasing, when they read something in the Bible to that effect; but in the face of the statement, repeated many times, that “His mercy en-

dures for ever,” and that:

Psalm 114

⁹ The Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works.

It is exceedingly presumptuous for anybody to say that there ever will come a time when God’s mercy for anybody will cease, or be in the least diminished.

God’s mercy is Himself, for He is love, and it must be as enduring as He is. We read that He is “from everlasting to everlasting” (*Psalm* 90:2), and even so have we just read of His mercy. To say that there will come a time when God’s mercy will cease, is the same as saying that there will come a time when His righteousness will cease. There is no more reason to limit God’s mercy than there is to limit His righteousness.

True, it is said that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, but the same thing is also said of His righteousness. But neither the one nor the other statement gives us any reason to conclude that either God’s mercy or His righteousness will ever cease, or ever be restricted in any degree.

The righteousness of God endures for ever, yet it will not be found on everybody. Why not?—Because so many will not submit unto the righteousness of God. The free gift comes upon all men unto justification of life (*Romans* 5:18), but many reject the gift. It is evident, then, that God cannot be charged with unrighteousness. If men will not take what He freely gives, He is clear.

So His tender mercy is over all, and it endures for ever; and the fact that many utterly refuse His loving mercy, does not in the least diminish it. In an otherwise most excellent hymn, occur these words:

But if you still His call refuse,

And all His wondrous love abuse,
Soon will He sadly from you turn,
Your bitter prayer for pardon spurn.

No, never! That is not the Lord. Says Jesus:

John 6

³⁷ Him that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out.

He is “able to save to the uttermost,” not simply the worst sinner; but to the longest time that any sinner may need and desire pardon, because:

Hebrews 7

²⁵ He ever lives to make intercession for us.

There will indeed be a time when men who have abused his love, and definitely refused His call of mercy, will call, and will not be heard (*Proverbs* 1:24, 33), but the reason why is that:

- They do not desire pardon—cleansing from sin.
- They would gladly escape the consequences of sin, but they do not desire holiness.
- Their sorrow is not godly sorrow that works repentance. *2 Corinthians* 7:10.

He does not heed their cry, because they do not ask for anything that He has to give. Even though they might seem to ask for life, they do not really ask for it, because they do not ask for holiness.

There will never be a time when a truly repentant sinner will be rejected by the Lord. The only reason why probation will cease, will be that there will no longer be any need of it. The decree will be made:

Revelation 22

¹¹ He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

This will not be an arbitrary fixing of destiny. It will not be that God's patience is exhausted, so that He will say:

"I will not stand this any longer; I will not give them any more opportunity."

No; it will simply be the announcement of the fact that everybody has made a final decision, so that no change would be made even were probation to be continued for a thousand years. And the mercy of God will be as great when the wicked are destroyed, as it was when Jesus hung on the cross.

Psalms 136

¹⁰ To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endures for ever:

¹⁵ But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy endures for ever.

¹⁶ To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endures for ever.

¹⁷ To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endures for ever:

¹⁸ And slew famous kings: for his mercy endures for ever:

¹⁹ Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endures for ever:

²⁰ And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endures for ever:

The greater the thing refused, the greater the loss. Let no one think that because the mercy of God is so infinite and so eternal, therefore he is safe without it. What a foolishly fatal conclusion!

The fact that the mercy of God is so great, filling heaven and earth, is the great reason why we should accept it; for if we reject it, there will be nothing left for us but eternal destruction. If His mercy were feeble, it might be rejected with comparative impunity; but since it fills eternity, the rejection of it is an eternal loss.

Let us rather at once accept His mercy, and accept it as freely as He gives it; and then, since "His mercy endures for

ever,” we, being filled and surrounded and transformed and preserved by His mercy, must also endure for ever. Then indeed we can sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever.

34. GOD'S THOUGHT IN PLANTS

THE Scriptures tell us that "all flesh is grass." *Isaiah* 40:6. This we are bound to accept as absolutely true. It may at first seem too humiliating a thought; but if we look at the truth as it is, we shall see that it is a most glorious thing to know that we stand in the same relation to the Lord that the grass of the field does.

Not that we are of no more value in His eyes than is the grass of the field; far from it. But we are as absolutely dependent on Him as the grass of the field is; and when we recognize and confess this dependence, He works in us in the same way that He does in the grass of the field, only to as much greater a degree as we are of more value than that grass, and are created for a higher destiny.

Let us now for a few moments forget entirely about ourselves, and give undivided and impartial attention to some of the things that are growing. Let us consider them, "how they grow."

A Life History

We will begin at the very beginning, the very lowest and simplest form of plant life. We will take the life history of a water plant, the scientific name of which is of no special consequence.

To the naked eye it appears like a dense plexus of dark—green irregularly branched and matted filaments. These filaments, when magnified, are seen to be tubular cells which wither and die away at the base while growing at the apex, and developing sac-like branches laterally....

Now there comes a time in the life of every one of these filaments when its extremity swells and becomes more or less club-shaped. The moment this occurs, the dark-green con-

tents withdraw somewhat from the extremity, leaving it hyaline (glassy) and transparent. Almost simultaneously the contents of the swollen part of the tube nearest the apex become transparent, while further do the color becomes very dark.

Twelve hours after the commencement of this change, that portion of the tube's contents which occupies the club-shaped end separates itself entirely from the rest. A little later the cell-wall at the apex of the tube suddenly splits, the edges of the slit fold back, and the enclosed mass travels through the aperture.

This, jelly-like ball, having a greater diameter than the hole, is at first strangulated as it struggles forward, so that it assumes the shape of an hour-glass, and looks for an instant as if it would remain stuck fast. There now arises, however, in the entire mass of green jelly an abrupt movement of rotation combined with forward straining and in another instant it has escaped through the narrow aperture and is swimming freely about in the surrounding water.

The entire phenomenon of the escape of these bodies takes place between 8 and 9 A.M., and in any one case, in less than two minutes.

Let us stop here just long enough to let our minds grasp the fact that we have been witnessing the birth of a new plant. Another living thing, humble as it is, has begun a separate existence. Shall we follow it in its short career?

Guided in the Right Way

At first the ball rises to the surface of the water towards the light, but soon after it sinks deep down, often turning suddenly half way round and pursues for a time a horizontal course. In all these movements it avoids coming into collision with the stationary objects which lie in its path, and also carefully eludes all the creatures swimming about in the same water with it....

At length the swimmer attains permanent rest. He lands on some place or other, preferably on the shady side of any object that may be floating or stationary in the water....So long

as it is in motion, the gelatinous body has no definite wall. Its outermost layer is, no doubt, denser than the rest; but no distinct boundary is to be recognized, and we cannot properly speak of a special enveloping coat.

No sooner, however, is the ball stranded, no sooner has its movement ceased and its shape become spherical, than a substance is secreted at its periphery; and this substance, even at the moment of secretion, takes the form of a firm, colorless, and transparent membrane. Twenty-six hours afterwards, very short-branched tubes begin to push out from the interior, and these become organs of attachment. In the opposite direction the cell stretches into a long tube which divides into branches and floats on the water.

After fourteen days the free ends of this tube and of its branches swell once more and become club-shaped; a portion of their slimy contents is, as before, separated from the rest and liberated as a motile body, and the whole performance described above is repeated.”⁵

This little jelly-like cell, whose entire life history we have followed, is the very simplest form of matter. It has no organs whatever, least of all has it a brain, yet no one can deny that there is intelligence manifested in its action, all the intelligence that is needed for its well-being. Whence comes that intelligence?

Let each one answer the question for himself, while we pass to notice the action, not of a single cell, but of a multitude of primitive forms of life working together to build up a plant. We consider simple facts, apart from any speculation, and the extracts are from the above-named work.

Methodical Action

When one considers the unanimous co-operation of protoplasts living together as a colony, and observes how neighboring individuals, though produced from one end the same mother-cell, yet exercise different functions according to

⁵ Kerner's *Natural History of Plants*.

their position; and, further, how universally there is the division of labor most conducive to the well-being of the whole community, it is not easy to deny to a society, which works so harmoniously, the possession of unity of organization. The individual members of a colony have community of feeling and a mutual understanding, and stimuli must be propagated from one part to another.

But the great puzzle lies, as before remarked, in the circumstance that the atomic and molecular disturbances occasioned by such stimuli and transmitted through the connecting filaments are not only different in the protoplasma of different kinds of plants, but even in the same plant they are of such a nature, according to the temporary requirement, that each one of the aggregated protoplasts in a community of cells undertakes the particular avocation which is most useful to the whole, the effect of this joint labor conveying the impression of the presence of a single governing power of definite design and of methodical action.

And that is exactly what there is, but “the governing power of definite design” does not originate in the cells themselves.

Jeremiah 10

²³ The way of man is not in himself.

Neither is the way of a plant of the field in itself. It is God that works in the grass of the field both to will and to do of His good pleasure, thereby showing us how perfectly He will do the same in us when we will consent to occupy the same humble position before Him that the grass of the field does. But let us a little further “consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.”

Intelligence

Were we to designate as instinctive those actions of the vital force which are manifested by movements purposely adapted in some manner advantageous to the whole organism, nothing could be urged against it. For what is instinct but an unconscious and purposeful action on the part of a

living organism? Plants, then, possess instinct. We have instances of its operation in every swarm-spore in search of the best place to settle in, and in every pollen-tube as it grows down through the entrance to an ovary and applies itself to one definite spot of an ovule, never failing of its object....

Linaria Cymbalaria (toadwort) raises its flower-stalk from the stone wall over which it creeps toward the light, but as soon as fertilization has taken place, these same stalks, in that very place and amidst unchanged external conditions, curve in the opposite direction, so as to deposit their seeds in a dark crevice.

Selection of Food

The very salts that are needed by most plants are among the most widely distributed on the earth's surface....At the same time it is very striking that these mineral food-salts are not introduced into plants by any means in proportion to the quantity in which they are contained in the soil, but that, on the contrary, plants possess the power of selecting from the abundance of provisions at their disposal only those that are good for them, and in such quantity as is serviceable.

Having now seen that land plants take in food-salts by means of special absorptive cells, it is natural to find that each of these plants develops its absorption-cells, projects them, and sets them to work in a place where there is a source of nutritive matter. The parts that bear absorptive cells will accordingly grow where there are food salts and water, which is so necessary for their absorption.

The *Marchantias* and fern prothalli spread themselves flat upon the ground, molding themselves to its contour. From their under surface they read rhizoids (root-like projections) with absorptive cells into the interstices of the soil. Roots provided with root-hairs behave similarly. If a foliage leaf of the Pepperplant or of a *Begonia* be cut up, and the pieces laid flat on damp earth, roots are formed from them in a very short time. The roots on each piece of leaf proceed from veins near the edge, which is turned away from the incident light, and grow vertically downwards into the ground.

It is a matter of common knowledge that roots which arise upon subterranean parts of stems, like those formed on parts growing above ground, grow downward with a force not to be accounted for by their weight alone.

It is sometimes claimed that the growth of roots downward is but “an effect of gravitation.” It is strange that those who give this “explanation” do not tell us why the branches of the same plant, which are much heavier, do not also grow downward by the same force. That it is not a matter of weight is shown by the facts which follow.

Adaptation to Circumstances

It is noteworthy that if bits of willow twigs are inserted upside down in the earth, or in damp moss, the roots formed from them, chiefly on the shady side, after bursting through the bark, grow downwards in the moist ground, pushing aside with considerable force the grains of earth which they encounter.

The appearance of a willow branch thus reversed in the ground is all the more curious inasmuch as the shoots, which are developed simultaneously with roots from the leaf-buds, do not grow in the general direction of the buds and branches, but turn away immediately and bend upwards. Thus the direction of growth of roots and shoots produced on willow-cuttings always remains the same, whether the base or the top of the twig used as a cutting is inserted in the earth.

If seeds of the garden cress are placed on the face of a wall of clay which is kept moist, the rootlets, after bursting out of the seeds, grow at first downwards, but later they enter the wall in a lateral direction.

The direction taken by roots in their search for food is dependent upon the presence of that food, and the fact that the roots grow towards places that afford supplies of nutritious material, are strikingly exhibited, also, by epiphytes growing on the bark of trees, such as tropical orchids....

The growing rootlets which spring from the seed, and the

absorptive cells produced from minute tubercles, grow upwards if placed on the under surface of a branch, horizontally if placed on the side, and downwards if on the upper surface. Thus, whatever the direction, they grow towards the moist bark which affords them nourishment.

Finding the Best Place for a Living

The movements of roots, as they grow in earth, suggest that they are seeking for nutriment. The root-tip traces, as it progresses, a spiral course, and this revolving motion has been compared to a constant palpitation or feeling. Spots in the earth which are found to be unfavorable to progression are avoided with care.

If the root sustains injury, a stimulus is immediately transmitted to the growing part, and the root bends away from the quarter where the wound was inflicted. When the exploring root-tip comes near a spot where water occurs with food-salts in solution, it at once turns in that direction, and, when it reaches the place, develops such absorptive cells as are adapted to the circumstances.

Identity of Plant and Animal Life

Let one read carefully all the foregoing statements of fact, and add to them instances from his own observation, and he cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that in plants all the phenomena of animal life are manifested, although of course within a narrower range. Intelligent action is manifested at every step of growth. No false motions are made. Nothing is done in a haphazard manner.

These things can be accounted for only by “the presence of a single governing power of definite design.” The Bible tells us what this is. The everlasting power and Divinity of God are clearly seen in the things that are made. *Romans 1:20.*

When a man perceives a good opening, and occupies it, he is said to exercise good judgment. When a man avoids a place

where he has met with danger, it is called the exercise of memory and reason. What shall the same things be called in plants? It is evident that they must be called by the same name as in man; but it is also equally evident that the plant itself has no power to remember or to reason; therefore we are shut up to the conclusion that God Himself exercises these functions in the plant; and this being so, since all flesh is grass, it is evident that these faculties in man are simply manifestations of the Lord's presence and working.

Erratic movements in man, poor memory and poor judgment, are simply the result of lack of submission or positive opposition to God's Spirit. The blessed assurance is:

Isaiah 52

¹³ Behold, Your servant shall deal prudently.

Sure and Well-Directed Effort

Note with what precision and certainty the plant proceeds to procure its necessary sustenance. Out of a vast mass of matter at hand, it selects only that which is good for it, and only in such quantity as it needs.

No one needs to be told that human plants do not by any means exhibit the same wisdom and prudence. How few there are who know what are the very best things for them to eat,—what is best adapted to their constitution,—and who do not make frequent mistakes in the quantity taken. And yet man boasts of his superior wisdom! Does he do well to boast when he does not exhibit in the most vitally essential things the intelligence that is manifested in the despised plant of the ground?

Take note also of how surely the plant sends out its rootlets to places where there is moisture and nourishment. It makes no mistakes. It does not make any experiments. If water is to the east of it, we do not find it sending out its water carriers

to the west. It goes at once and in the most direct manner to the very place where it can make its living.

Ah, how often we find men making bad investments! How often a man settles down in a place where there is no possibility of his earning a living, and then is obliged to go elsewhere. Indeed the whole life of very many men is little else than speculation, and too often only failure.

Why is it that the man who has a brain, and who claims as his essential characteristic that he is a “reasoning being,” so often acts with less evidence of calculation than the grass of the field?

God's Word Given Free Course

The answer is not far to seek. It is because in the plants of the ground the Word of God is allowed free course, while the human plant imagines that wisdom originated in himself, and that he is in himself capable of directing his own affairs. If the man would unreservedly acknowledge God in all his ways, and not lean to his own understanding, which is nothing at all, he would make no more mistakes than the plant does.

We have the word of the Lord for this. The man who makes the law of God his meditation day and night shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water; he will bring forth fruit in its season, and whatsoever he does shall prosper. *Psalms* 1:1-3.

Would it not be far better to be humble enough to acknowledge that we have of ourselves no more wisdom than the grass of the field, and always do the right thing at the right time, than to trust in our own supposed wisdom and He continually making failures?

We have our choice,—either to boast of our own ability, and make failures, or to confess our ignorance and have true prosperity. But when we come to think of it, there is nothing in failure to boast of, so that boasting is really excluded in every

case. We have our boasting for nothing; we might better refrain from boasting, even in our innermost thought, and have something substantial.

The Lesson for Us

The great lesson to be learned is this, that God can and will manifest His own wisdom and strength in those who absolutely depend on Him. We may say if we wish to, that He gives wisdom and strength; the Bible uses those terms; but we must bear in mind that He Himself must direct them.

Philippians 2

¹³ It is God that works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

We are not to work the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit of God is to work us. In the plant of the earth we have an object lesson of how completely the Spirit of God can and will use our organs, if we will but receive Him indeed. With no will but God's will, no Spirit but God's Spirit, no life but the life of God, even mortal flesh could exhibit power and wisdom that are beyond human comprehension. Only under such conditions can *John* 14:12 be fulfilled. That means the humility of Jesus, and perfect and unquestioning acceptance of every word of God. Is not the result worth the cost?

Colossians 3

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

35. IMAGINATION AGAINST KNOWLEDGE

Jeremiah 9

²³ Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.

Why not? Because...

1 Corinthians 3

²⁰ The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

THE result of men's boasting of their own wisdom, and trusting to it, is set forth in:

Romans 1

²¹ When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³ And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and to creeping things.

The verb from which the noun rendered "imaginations" is derived, is the one that is translated "to reason," so that the word, as suggested in the margin of *2 Corinthians* 10:5, might well be rendered "reasonings," instead of "imaginations." That is to say, the so-called reasonings of men who leave God out of the account, are only vain imaginations.

How true this is may be clearly seen from a few short extracts from one of the latest and really most scientific works on the subject of botany. It is a work which confines itself largely to statements of actually observed facts, without venturing much in the way of theory, and therein it is truly scientific. What we quote is from the introduction.

Ever Seeking, Never Finding

Even though the ultimate sources of vital phenomena remain unrevealed, the desire to represent all processes as effects, and to demonstrate the causes of such effects—a desire which is at the very root of modern research—finds at least partial gratification in tracing a phenomenon back to its approximate cause.

In the mere act of linking ascertained facts together, and in the creation of ideas involving interdependence among the phenomena observed, there lies an irresistible charm which is a continual stimulus to fresh investigation. Even though we be sure that we shall never be able to fathom the truth completely, we shall still go on seeking to approach it.

The more imaginative an investigator, the more keenly is he goaded to discovery by this craving for an explanation of things, and for a solution of the mute riddle which is presented to us by the forms of plants. It is impossible to overrate the value and efficiency of the transcendent gift of imagination when applied to questions of Natural History.

The Bible student will, on reading this, at once involuntarily think of men who are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 *Timothy* 3:7), which was the case with those described in *Romans* 1:21-23; but we will pass on to note the author’s own statement as to the real value of this “transcendent gift of imagination.”

Conjecture Upon Conjecture

After mentioning certain objects of research, he says:

In all these and similar investigations imagination plays a predominant part. Experiment itself is really a result of the exercise of that faculty. Every experiment is a question addressed to nature. But each interrogation must be preceded by a conjecture as to the probable state of the case; and the object of the experiment is to decide which of the preliminary hypotheses is the right one, or at least which of them approaches nearest to the true solution.

The History of Theories

Every one of our theories has its history. In the first place a few puzzling facts are observed, and gradually others come to be associated with them. A general survey of the phenomena in question suggests the existence of a definite uniformity underlying them; and attempts are made to grasp the nature of such uniformity and to define it in words.

Whilst the question thus raised is in suspense, botanists strive with more or less success to answer it, until a master mind appears. He collates the observed facts, gathers from them the law of their harmony, generalizes it, and announces the solution of the enigma.

But observations continue to multiply; scientific instruments become more delicate, and some of the newly-observed facts will not adapt themselves to the scheme of the earlier generalization. At first they are held to be exceptions to the rule. By degrees, however, these exceptions accumulate; the law has lost its universality and must undergo expansion, or else it has become quite obsolete, and must be replaced by another.

So it has been in all past times, and so it will be in the future. Only a narrow mind is capable of claiming infallibility and permanence for the ideas which the present age lays down as laws of nature.

Master or Tinker

To be always traveling towards a place and never getting there is highly unsatisfactory; but to have no hope of ever getting there is most discouraging. From the foregoing it would seem that many great thinkers are at the best only tinkers. An architect who built houses that would fall down almost as soon as he had finished them, would hardly be called a master builder; so a mind that frames a law that is not even expected to be permanent cannot be called a master mind.

There is only one master mind in the universe, and that is the mind of God. Imagining is not thinking. So-called ideas

which are the product of imagination, are not ideas at all; they are only shadows. Only God can create ideas. When men are willing to acknowledge this, then they will think to some purpose, for their thoughts will be God's thoughts.

Psalm 33

¹¹ The counsel of the Lord stands for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations.

Truth Not Uncertainty

Jesus said:

John 8

³¹ If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed;

³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

He Himself is the truth, because He is the fullness of the God of truth. It is possible for men to know the truth. The Holy Spirit is given in order that we may know the things that are freely given us of God.

Is it not a most humiliating confession, to be obliged to say that the work of even a "master mind" in science must necessarily in a few years, or even months, be thrown aside, that no one can be sure that any theory he advances is the truth? Can there be any more humiliating confession than the acknowledgment that one has no hope of reaching the object which he is seeking? and to be obliged to say that the foundation which he has laid for his followers to build upon is not a foundation, but only a weak, floating raft that will soon go to pieces? Is not that in reality a confession that one knows nothing?

How much better, then, to make that confession to God, and at the same time to confess Him, and to accept His thought, that we may be sure of our ground. He has laid in Zion a tried stone, a sure foundation, and whoever believes shall not be confounded.

When each experiment is preceded by conjecture, then it is evident that one has only conjecture by which to test his work. True it is stated that:

The object of the experiment is to decide which of the preliminary hypotheses is the right one, or at least which of them approaches nearest to the true solution.

But when one starts out without knowing where he is going, how can he possibly tell when he gets there? To make a lot of preliminary guesses (for an hypothesis is only a guess), and then to guess which of the guesses is the correct one, is labor spent to no profit. One can never arrive at any definite conclusion that way, and that is what is admitted.

Truth a Matter of Primary Revelation

But the truth may be known, and the lesson to be learned from this study is that we must know the truth to begin with. Truth is revealed by God in His Word. No man can by searching can find out God, and He alone is the truth. God must reveal Himself to us, and then we know the truth; and this He has done even to babes.

The truth is most wonderfully simple. A little child can grasp it, because it has only to be believed to be known. When one knows the truth, then study may be carried on to eternity, and with positive certainty at every step. For we are to grow in the knowledge of the truth.

We are not to be studying all our lives to find out what the truth is, but we are to begin with the truth, and to spend all time and eternity as well in exploring it. The knowledge of the truth must precede all observation of phenomena or gathering of facts, if our work is to be to any real profit. Then every fact that is observed can at once be referred to its proper place in the building of God's truth.

Imagination is Idolatry

Imagination is not a gift of God. It is the perversion of God's gift. It is the result of refusing to let God Himself direct the faculties which He has given us, and trying to direct them ourselves. One has no right to imagine anything. Imagination is but an *ignis fatuus*⁶ that leads men into a fog.

The first chapter of *Romans* tells what it does for men. They had the knowledge of God, that is, of the truth, for God had showed it unto them. But they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. They did not like to admit that they were not wise in themselves. So they proceeded to find out the truth by their own "reason."

But God is the only source of reason, and "reasoning" without Him is only vain imagination. They saw wisdom and power displayed in the things that are made, and which are growing. But they would not acknowledge that it was God's power and wisdom that were manifested there, for in that case they would have been obliged to acknowledge that it was only by His power and wisdom that they themselves lived and acted and thought.

This they would not do, for they professed themselves to be wise; they put themselves in the place of God. Then there was nothing left for them but to say that the things that were made were God, thus changing the truth of God into a lie. Instead of seeing God in everything, they imagined that everything was God, because they rejected the truth to begin with.

The truth is that God's power and Divinity are to be seen working in everything that is made; the lie is to say that the power and wisdom originate in the things that are made whether it be men or the grass of the field. When men substituted their own imaginations for pure reason, it naturally fol-

⁶ Ignis fatuus: "something deceptive or deluding".

lowed that they gave those imaginations visible form, and so image worship was the result.

Imagination is simply the forming of an image in one's own mind. The image that is formed is only the imagination of the heart made visible. To make images is idolatry, whether they be formed by the hands, or only retained in the heart.

The work of the Gospel is to cast down imaginations:

2 Corinthians 10

⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Imagination has no place in God's work. He deals in facts, not in fancies. The Gospel is a fact. There is no speculation about it. We have only to believe what is real, that which has been done and finished.

Think what heights of knowledge we all might have attained to, even in our short lives, and with our meager advantages, if we had never learned anything but the truth. We might not have been able to make much of a display, but we would have had something of solid value. One bag full of wheat is worth more than a thousand bags full of air.

That which made Jesus of Nazareth superior to all the men of His day was the fact that He held Himself rigidly to the truth. Thank God that even though we have turned every one to his own way, and have filled ourselves with winds of teaching, it is never too late to learn the truth. If we come to Jesus in humility, He will transform us by the renewing of our minds, even giving us His own perfect mind.

Jesus Christ the Source of Wisdom

Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God, and He is of God made unto us wisdom as well as righteousness. God's Word is the only source of wisdom:

Proverbs 2

⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom; out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

Now since imagination is the deadly foe of the truth and of wisdom, it is evident that in dealing with the Scriptures, above all things, every trace of imagination should be rigidly excluded. Nothing of self must be allowed any place. We must hold ourselves as nothing, not bringing to the study of the Word any preconceived ideas, or rather, what men are pleased to call ideas. We must be silent before the Lord, believing that every word of God is absolute truth, and allowing Him to fill us. Then there will be no mistakes. Then there will be no danger that we shall fall into error.

All who do this will see the truth, and will be...

1 Corinthians 1

¹⁰ ...perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Only in this course is there safety.

In thus humbly submitting to be taught of God, not presuming to originate a single thought for ourselves, there are possibilities of almost infinite wisdom for the poorest and humblest souls. They who acknowledge God as the One who is all in all, have access to...

Colossians 2

³ ...all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

1 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ Let no man deceive himself: if any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

36. GOD'S BEAUTIFUL PREACHERS

Isaiah 52

⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace; that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation; that says unto Zion, Your God reigns.

THERE is more than one preacher of this class, for when the Apostle Paul quotes this scripture, he, uses the plural, saying:

Romans 10

¹⁵ It is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good, things!

It is true that the text speaks only of the feet of these preachers, calling them beautiful, while we are talking about God's beautiful preachers; but since the feet are the most humble members of the body, it necessarily follows that if the feet are beautiful, the whole body must be beautiful also.

May we know who these beautiful preachers are? Certainly, or else we cannot know the message that they bear. Let us see what the Scriptures have to say about them, and we shall learn something valuable about preaching the Gospel, as well as something of the glory of the Gospel.

In *Romans*, we have the statement that:

Romans 10

¹³ Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Then follow some questions, designed to emphasize the fact that all have had an opportunity to know the Lord, and to call upon Him. Thus:

Romans 10

¹⁴ How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

¹⁵ And how shall they preach, except they be sent?

All these questions suggest their own answer. But some have been sent, as is shown by what follows:

¹⁵ ...as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

So since some have been sent, it is evident that there are preachers; and since there are preachers, it follows that people have heard; and since they have heard, they have had a chance to believe, and to call upon the name of the Lord.

Passing by the statement that “they have not all obeyed the Gospel” (verse 16), and that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (verse 17), we come to the question:

¹⁸ But I say, Have they not all heard?

Heard what? The Word of the Gospel, of course, for that is the only thing under consideration.

¹⁸ ...Yes, verily...

They have all heard the Gospel, but they have not all believed it. Now for the proof that all have heard it:

¹⁸ ...Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Whose words went unto the ends of the world? The words of the beautiful preachers of whom the Apostle has just spoken as preaching the Gospel of peace, and bringing glad tidings of good things.

So far it is all very clear. Now who are these beautiful

preachers of the Gospel, whose words have gone unto the ends of the world? The answer is found in the scripture from which the Apostle has quoted. It is *Psalms* 19:4. It is the bodies which God created to be in the firmament of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, whose...

Psalms 19

⁴ ...line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

The sun, moon, and stars, and the firmament itself, are the preachers whose feet are so beautiful upon the mountains, as they come preaching the Gospel of peace. And truly their feet are beautiful. Who has not been filled with ecstasy as he has seen the sun lighting up the hilltops, or the soft light of the moon upon the mountains? Beautiful preachers they are indeed.

Glory is power:

Romans 6

⁴ Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.

We also read in *Ephesians* 1:19-20 that the resurrection of Christ was a manifestation of the working of the mighty power of God. Therefore the heavens, in declaring the glory of God, are proclaiming His power.

And the power of God is salvation, for the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and:

2 Peter 1

³ His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

So the heavens proclaim the salvation of the Lord. Thus, as rendered in the best translations:

Isaiah 52

¹⁰ Jehovah has made bare His holy arm in the sight of all the

nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Take notice that this statement directly follows the verse first quoted, about the beautiful messengers of good tidings, publishing salvation.

So the heavenly bodies are God's model preachers. They preach by simply shining. That is the way that Jesus Himself preached. He was the light of the world. It was the shining of His life that taught men.

John 1

⁹ [He is the] Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

John 8

¹² [Whosoever] follows Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life...

...even of His life. Would you be one of God's beautiful preachers? You do not need to be eloquent. It is not actually necessary that you be able to speak at all. You have only to let Christ shine upon you, and to allow God to make your heart His sanctuary, and then He that sits between the cherubim will "shine forth." *Matthew 13:43*.

Philippians 2

¹³ It is God which works in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

The one thing that the world needs is to see God in His works, that they may learn His ways. Then,

Matthew 5

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

37. REVEALING THE GLORY

2 Corinthians 4

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

Other versions give the verse something like this:

“For God, who said that light should shine out of darkness, has let it shine into our hearts.”

THIS is not perhaps so exactly literal a rendering, but it makes emphatic the fact that is contained in the text, that the light which in the beginning God caused to shine out of darkness, is the same light that He lets shine in our hearts. And why does He let it shine into our hearts?

“To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

One may read this text very many times without getting the full benefit of it. It is only when we consider it in relation to what goes before, and remember what the general subject of these chapters is that we can get the force of these words.

One ordinarily thinks that God has shined this light into our hearts, in order to give us the light of the knowledge of His glory. It is true that this result will follow as a matter of course; but what the text teaches is that the light shines into our hearts for the sake of others, to give to others the light of God's glory. God makes His people the light of the world, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of others.

If anyone will read carefully from the latter part of the second chapter of *2 Corinthians* to the first part of the sixth chapter, paying no attention to the chapter divisions, but reading

all as one connected letter, he will see what is meant.

In the latter part of the second chapter we read, that God...

2 Corinthians 2

¹⁴ ...makes manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place.

Compare this with the text first quoted.

Then in the third chapter we read that God has made us able to be ministers of the new covenant, that is, ministers of the Spirit; and so follows a statement of the glory of this ministration. It is the glory which transfigured the face of Moses, as he talked face to face with the Lord. The children of Israel would not look upon this glory, and so they remained in darkness; but we, beholding this glory with unveiled face, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory. Here we learn what effect the glory has upon us personally when it shines upon us.

2 Corinthians 4

¹ Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.

Here we learn that this shining of the glory upon us is not simply for our sakes, but it is that we may minister it to others.

2 Corinthians 4

³ But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost;

⁴ In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

⁵ For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

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

Then passing on into the fifth chapter we read that we are

ambassadors for Christ, since God has put the word and ministry of reconciliation into us, and beseeches sinners by us even as He did by Him.

2 Corinthians 6

¹ We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain.

Surely no one can fail to see that God designs that every one of His people should shine the light of His glory forth to the world, even as the heavens do and as Christ did.

Acts 13

⁴⁷ For so has He commanded us, saying, I have set you to be a light of the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

The glory which God has given to Christ, He has given to us, and for the same purpose that He has it, namely, that we may shine as lights in the world, and thus glorify God.

John 17

¹ Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You.

John 15

⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.

Romans 8

¹⁸ I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

²⁹ For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

³⁰ Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.

God has glorified His Son Jesus, and has given us the same

glory that He has given Him. By beholding Him we are conformed to His image, so that we are His brethren, He being the firstborn.

1 John 3

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

The glory that God has given us does not appear to the eyes of the world, even as the glory of Christ did not. Yet those who were enlightened by the Spirit, saw the glory of Christ,

John 1

¹⁴ ...the glory as of the only begotten full of grace and truth.

So the glory which God gives us is now in the form of grace and truth; but when the Lord will come it will shine forth so that all may recognize it as glory.

What is the measure of that glory?

Ephesians 4

⁷ Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

When Christ was on the mount of transfiguration, the glory that was in Him as grace and truth shone forth, so that:

Matthew 17

² His face did shine as the sun.

Therefore when He comes, and we appear like Him,

Matthew 13

⁴³ Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

That is, the glory which God even now gives us, is the glory of the sun. But glory is power, the power of grace, so that the power which God gives us now, not simply to enable us to be saved, but to bring others to salvation, is the power

that is manifested in the whole heavens.

Daniel 12

³ They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Therefore,

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine!

38. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Psalm 89

¹ I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.

² For I have said, mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness shall You establish in the very heavens.

³ I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant,

⁴ Your Seed will I establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.

CHRIST is God's Chosen, in whom His soul delights (*Isaiah* 42:1), and He is the Seed of David. *Romans* 1:3. He is "the Root and the Offspring of David." *Revelation* 22:16.

The tabernacle of David, that is fallen down, is to be built up by the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (*Acts* 2:14-17), and the throne of David is to be perpetuated to all generations through the resurrection of Christ. *Acts* 2:29-31.

But by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead all who believe are begotten unto a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away. *1 Peter* 1:3-5.

Therefore the covenant with David, unto which God swore, is the covenant that assures us an inheritance among the saints in light; and so we see that it is identical with the covenant with Abraham, to which God swore by Himself, and which gives us strong consolation and hope of salvation through Jesus Christ. *Hebrews* 6:13, 20.

The Seed of David is the Seed of Abraham, and if we are Christ's we are a part of this Seed, and heirs according to the promise. *Galatians* 3:29. So we find in the following scripture

the direct promise of eternal life to us:

Psalm 89

³⁵ Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.

³⁶ His Seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before me.

³⁷ It shall be established for ever as the moon and as a faithful witness in heaven.

As surely as the sun and moon endure, so surely will God give eternal life to every one who trusts Him. His faithfulness is written in the heavens. The sun and moon are witnesses to it.

Hebrews 6

¹³ When God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself.

This was not for Abraham's sake, but for our sake. Abraham did not need the oath for confirmation, because his faith was perfect before the oath was made; but it was given that

¹⁸ We might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.

¹⁷ God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed Himself by an oath.

Do you realize what is involved in the oath of God? how strong the consolation is? Think of it a moment, and when you have grasped its meaning, you may continue to think of it forever.

He promised salvation to every one who would accept it in faith; to all who would simply trust Him to save them. Then He pledged Himself its surety for the fulfillment of the promise. He interposed Himself between us and the possibility of failure, staking His own existence upon the result.

When one pledges anything, it is well known that the thing

pledged is lost if the price is not paid, or the vow performed. So in swearing by Himself God put Himself in the position where He would forfeit His own existence if His promise should fail.

Let us in passing remember that this promise is to all.

Revelation 22

¹⁷ Whosoever will, let him come.

God has chosen the poor of this world. *James 2:5.*

1 Corinthians 1

²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen.

If God's promise should fail in the case of the poorest or the most insignificant and despised of human beings, that would be a failure just the same as if He should reject the whole world. If one poor soul should come to Him and fail to find forgiveness for a sin confessed, or help in time of need, that would be a failure of God's promise, to which He swore by Himself, and therefore that very moment God would cease to exist.

Does someone say that it is irreverent to talk about God's ceasing to exist? It is no more irreverent than it is to talk about His not being able or willing to forgive any sin that is acknowledged, or to provide all the help that any soul needs. Would that all men might see that to doubt God's willingness to forgive is to deny His existence, so that it is the rankest infidelity not to accept pardon, or to doubt that God helps in every time of need.

And now what constant assurance have we before our eyes that God lives, and that therefore His promise is sure? His faithfulness is written in the very heavens.

Isaiah 40

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these,

that brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking.

The whole universe depends on God. If He should cease to exist, everything would that instant cease to exist. God made the sun, moon, and stars “for signs, and for seasons, and days, and years.” *Genesis* 1:14. That thing of which they exist as a sign is the faithfulness of God.

The sun, moon, and stars are evidences that God still lives, and as surely as He lives, may we come with boldness to the throne of grace, with perfect confidence that we shall obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Psalm 119

⁸⁹ Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.

⁹⁰ Your faithfulness is unto all generations.

39. GREAT LESSONS BY HUMBLE MASTERS

Job 12

⁷ Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you;

⁸ Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you.

WHAT is it that these creatures can teach us? They can teach us the one thing that it is necessary for you to know, namely, that the power of God is manifested in everything that exists.

Jeremiah 9

²³ Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches;

²⁴ But let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.

Most valuable lessons are given to everybody every day, and are ignored. Men are constantly mourning their lack of advantages for education, when if they would improve the opportunities freely provided, they might obtain knowledge that cannot be found in any school on earth that is conducted by man. The most valuable things are to be had for free. It is only for second-rate things that we have to pay money.

Job 28

¹² Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

¹³ Man knows not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

¹⁵ It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

¹⁶ It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

¹⁷ The gold and the crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.

¹⁸ No mention shall be made of corals or pearls; for the price of wisdom is above rubies.

¹⁹ The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

Since wisdom cannot be obtained for gold, and no jewels of earth are equal to it in value, it follows that whoever gets it must get it freely. It comes from God without money and without price.

James 1

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and upbraids not; and it shall be given him.

The wisdom which He gives to man is greater than that which He gives to the beasts of the field and He “makes us wiser than the fowls of the heaven” (*Job* 35:11), provided we but accept His Word, and do not imagine ourselves to be any wiser, in ourselves, than the beasts and the birds are.

Out of the almost infinite number of facts that might be cited, we will instance only a few, from authentic books of natural history, as well as from personal observation, which show what marvelous wisdom God has given to creatures with the tiniest bodies and brains. Let us first take a look at...

The Californian Wood-Pecker

This bird nourishes himself upon ants and other insects, but at the same time that he is hunting these, he is engaged in storing up acorns for future use. Whether he eats these acorns, or only the worms that may breed in them, is a question among naturalists, but that is immaterial to our present study. What concerns us at present is the manner in which he stores them up.

He chooses a tree, and hollows out in its trunk a cavity just large enough to receive a single acorn. Then he brings an

acorn, and inserts it into the hole, so that it cannot fall out, nor can any other bird or animal get it out. In this way he stores up a vast number. I have seen a fir tree so filled from the bottom to the top of its trunk with the acorns which this industrious little worker had gathered, that from a little distance it looked as though it had been shot full of rifle bullets. It is said that a wood-pecker will carry an acorn thirty miles to store it in its larder.

The acorns which are thus gathered are long and slender, very much like a modern rifle bullet. Of course they vary in size, just as any other nuts; but the remarkable thing is that in no case is the hole made a particle too large for the acorn which is designed for it. Each acorn fits its cavity as perfectly as if it were a piece of iron that had been driven in with a hammer.

So, as already stated, no animal can get one of them out. Only the wood-pecker with its strong beak, can pierce the hard, polished extremity of the acorn. Man can dig them out with a knife, but in no other way. It is worthy of note that the holes are never made too shallow, so that the ends of the acorns project beyond the bark of the tree. In every case they are exactly even with the surface. How long would a man have to practice before he would be able to do such perfect mortising?

The Tailor Bird

This bird is not only a tailor, but a spinner and weaver, as well.

They place their nests in a large leaf, which they prepare to this end. With their beaks they pierce two rows of holes along the two edges of the leaf; they then pass a stout thread from one side to the other alternately. With this leaf, at first flat, they form a horn in which they weave their nest with cotton or hair. These labors of weaving and sewing are pre-

ceded by the spinning of the thread. The bird makes it itself by twisting in its beak spiders' webs, bits of cotton, and little ends of wool. Sykes found that the threads used for sewing were knotted at the ends. It is impossible not to admire animals who have skillfully triumphed over all the obstacles met within the course of these complicated operations.⁷

Yes; and one may well say, It is impossible not to admire the God who teaches these creatures to do such perfect work.

Not Blind Instinct

But someone will say,

“Yes, it is very interesting and amusing; but the bird is born with that instinct, and cannot really do any other way.”

Even if this were true, it would not in the least diminish the honor due to God for thus providing it with that sense; but it is not true.

Certain birds change the form of their dwelling according to the climate, or according to the season in which they inhabit it. For example, the Crossbill does not build its nest according to the same rules in Sweden as in France. It builds in every season. The winter shelter is spherical, constructed with dry lichens, and is very large. A very narrow opening, just sufficient for the passage of the owner, prevents the external cold from penetrating within. The summer nests are much smaller, in consequence of a reduction of the thickness in the walls. There is no longer need to fear that the cold will come, and the animal gives itself no superfluous trouble.

Again, the Baltimore Oriole, which inhabits both the Northern and the Southern States of North America, knows very well how to adapt his manner of work to the external circumstances in which he lives. Thus, in the Southern States the nest is woven of delicate materials united in a rather loose fashion, so that the air can circulate freely and keep the interior fresh; it is lined with no warm substance, and the en-

⁷ Frederic Houssay, *The Industries of Animals*, Chapter VI “Dwellings”.

trance is turned to the west, so that the sun only sends into it the oblique evening rays. In the North, on the contrary, the nest is oriented to the south, to profit by all the warm sunshine; the walls are thick, without interstices, and the dwelling is carpeted in the warmest and softest manner. Even in the same region there is the greatest diversity in the style, neatness, and finish of the nests, as well as in the materials used.⁸

It is a common idea that birds and animals never improve their methods of labor, but that the young one knows of itself how to go to work, and that it does as well the first time as ever afterwards. This is a mistake, as is already shown. Other instances which may be cited, will show that the brains of these laborers are actively engaged in planning and inventing.

The *Popular Science Monthly* gives the missionary Moffat as authority for the statement that when lions were yet numerous in South Africa, they were often seen instructing one another in leaping to catch prey, using a bush in their practice, instead of an animal. In one case a lion, which had missed a zebra, through miscalculating the distance, repeated the jump several times, for his own instruction. While he was engaged in this exercise, two other lions came along, and he led them round the rock, to explain the case to them, and then, turning to the starting point, completed the lesson by making a final leap. The animals kept roaring during the whole of the curious scene, "talking together," as a native who watched them said.

By the aid of individual training of this kind, birds become clever with age, old birds building more artistic nests than young ones.

In Constantinople, where the life of the street dogs depends upon their ability to protect the morsel that they have secured, against all intruders, the writer has been amused by

⁸ *Ibid.*

watching an old dog teaching her pups to fight, and training them to secure their food.

Bees in Their Dwellings

In a hive full of active bees the temperature rises considerably and the air becomes vitiated. Accordingly, means are adopted to secure ventilation.

Bees ranged in files one above the other in the interior agitate their wings with a feverish movement; this movement causes a current of air which can be felt by holding the hand before the opening of the hive. When the workers of the corps are fatigued, comrades who have been resting come to take their place. These acts are not the result of a stupid instinct which the hymenoptera obey without understanding. If we place a swarm, as Huber did, in a roomy position where there is plenty of air, they do not devote themselves to an aimless exercise.⁹

The stores of bees often suffer from the raids of a large moth called the “Death’s Head Moth.”

Protected by the long and fluffy hairs which cover him, he has little to fear from stings, and gorges himself with the greatest freedom on the stores of the swarm. Huber, in his admirable investigations, narrates that one year in Switzerland numbers of hives were emptied, and contained no more honey in summer than in the spring. During that year Death’s Head Moths were very numerous. The illustrious naturalist soon became certain that this moth was guilty of the thefts in question. While he was reflecting as to what should be done, the bees, who were more directly interested, had invented several modes of procedure. Some closed the entrance with wax, leaving only a narrow opening through which the great robber could not penetrate.¹⁰

⁹ Frederic Houssay, *Industries of Animals*, Chapter VII “The Defense and Sanitation of Dwellings”.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Others built up before the opening a series of parallel walls, leaving between them a zigzag corridor through which the bees themselves were able to enter; but which would not admit the long body of the moth. In the same way man constructs a turnstile, which will allow him to pass, but which excludes the long body of a cow. The bees set up the barricades only in the years when the Death's Head Moth is numerous. In years when it is rare, they leave their doors wide open, for their own greater convenience.

Gardening Ants

Whole numbers of this paper could be filled with authentic stories of the wisdom of this little insect, but we must be content with one or two facts. The Leaf-cutting ants of tropical America are often referred to by travelers on account of their ravages on vegetation.

They climb a tree, station themselves on the edge of a leaf, and make a circular incision with their scissor-like jaws; the piece of leaf, about the size of a sixpence, held vertically between the jaws, is then borne off to their house.¹¹

It is said that they are capable of destroying whole plantations of orange, mango, and lemon trees. But the ants do not eat these leaves. If they did, their performance would not be so wonderful. These ants are in reality mushroom growers and eaters, for...

...the real use of the leaves is as manure on which to grow a minute species of fungus.¹²

Great care is taken that the nest should be neither too dry nor; too damp. If a sudden shower comes on, the leaves are left near the entrance, and carried down only when nearly dry. During very hot weather, on the other hand, when the

¹¹ *Idem.*, Chapter IV "Provisions and Domestic Animals".

¹² *Ibid.*

leaves would be parched in a very short time the ants work only in the cool of the day, and during the night.

Occasionally, inexperienced ants carry in grass and unsuitable leaves; these are invariably brought out again, and thrown away.¹³

Harvesting Ants

In spite of Solomon (*Proverbs* 6:6-8), naturalists for a long time asserted that ants do not store up food in barns for the winter; but it is now admitted that they spoke from too meager data.

Nearly all ants may therefore be called harvesters, but there is one species which specially deserves this name. They procure various kinds of grain towards the end of autumn, collecting them from the ground, or even climbing the stalks and gathering them.

But they have not completed their task when they have the grain safely in their storehouses. The conditions of heat and moisture in the interior of the ant-hill are such that the grain, if left to itself, would soon begin to grow. But this the ants do not desire, at least not until it suits their convenience.

How they prevent the grain from germinating is a secret not known to man; but it is certain that they do it, for as long as the ants have access to the grain it does not germinate, but if from any cause they are denied access to one of the chambers where the grain is stored, it immediately begins to grow.

But although they thus hinder germination in the grain, they do not render it impossible, and when the time has come for utilizing the accumulated stores, they allow the grain to follow the natural course. The radicle and stalk of the plant soon come to light.

¹³ *Ibid.*

But the ants do not allow the development of the plant to go too far. As soon as the starch in the grain has been, in the process of growth, converted into sugar for the use of the growing plant, the young stalk is cut off before it has an opportunity to consume the food thus prepared for it. Then the ants bring out their stores to the sun, dry them, take them back to their barns, and thus through the winter have a supply of sweet flour.

Here we have the manifestation of wisdom that is not merely wonderful as exhibited in ants, but which is beyond the understanding of man.

Topographical Knowledge

Jeremiah 8

⁷ Yea, the stork in the heaven knows her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming.

When the season comes for these birds to migrate, they go; but they do not go at the same time every season. If warm summer weather continues till late in autumn, the birds remain; and what is more remarkable, they do not, except in single instances, anticipate the return of warm weather in the spring, even though its coming be delayed beyond the usual time. How do they know the right time?

But there is something even yet more remarkable connected with the migration of birds. It is the fact that they will cross the ocean and come back to the very spot from which they started, building their nests year after year in the very same tree or house.

When we stand on the deck of a steamship in mid-ocean, with a trackless waste of waters on every side, we wonder at the human skill which guides the great vessel across the waters, and brings it straight to its destination, even though the

place be one to which the master has never before sailed. But he could not do it at first. It took years of study to enable him to accomplish the feat, and when he undertakes the task he has charts and maps of the entire route, and the most delicate instruments, besides his Compass, to enable him to mark his course.

But the bird will make the same trip without compass or chart. If this be attributed to “instinct,” then the question arises:

“Isn’t instinct better than reason? Wouldn’t it be a good thing for man if he had instinct?”

The Source of Wisdom

Where do the birds get this knowledge? The answer is indicated by the Lord in His question to Job:

Job 39

²⁶ Does the hawk fly by your wisdom?

And by His statement concerning the ostrich:

¹⁷ God has deprived her of wisdom, neither has He imparted to her understanding.

Now God “teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the fowls of heaven.” *Job* 35:11. Why then do not men invariably know more than these creatures do? Here is the answer:

Jeremiah 8

⁹ The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?

Someone will ask:

“Do you mean to say that if men were wholly controlled by the Word of the Lord, they would be able to cross the ocean without chart or compass?”

To that we have no answer to make; but we are to learn from the birds and beasts not merely to do the same things that they do, but that dependence on God which will make us proportionately wiser than they are, in the things which are necessary for us to do.

One thing is certain, and that is, if men were wholly yielded to the Word and Spirit of God, they would make no mistakes in whatever they undertook. See *Psalm* 1:1-3. The degree of knowledge that a man would possess if he were wholly guided by the Lord, is incalculable.

That in the world to come man will be able to go to all parts of the Lord's dominions; and not get lost, there is not the slightest doubt. Every Sabbath day, and every new moon, all flesh will appear in the temple of God to worship. From every quarter of the globe they will make the journey, and each one will by the most direct route come to the Holy City.

Who dare say that even in this present world a man wholly led by the Spirit of God could not do the same thing, if it were necessary in the service of God? When God's ways are in a man's heart, God will direct his paths.

When we study the life of Christ we can see what wonderful wisdom can be attained by one who takes counsel of God alone. Remember that Christ was here on earth in man's place, so that:

Hebrews 2

¹⁷ In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren.

He had access to no wisdom that is not open to mankind. He never went to the schools, which taught the wisdom of the day, but He had wisdom even as a child, that caused the wisest doctors of the law to marvel. Here is the secret of His wisdom:

Isaiah 50

⁴ The Lord God has given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should know how to sustain with words him that is weary; He wakens morning by morning, He wakens my ear to hear as they that are taught.

⁵ The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward.

Strength in Helplessness: Wisdom in Simplicity

In this connection let us learn another lesson from the ant. In “Glimpses of Nature,” in the *Strand Magazine*, Grant Allen has the following in a little treatise on ants:

It takes the insects three or four weeks, in the pupa form, to develop into full-grown ants and even when they have finished, they are as helpless as babies, and could not escape from the cocoon but for the kind offices of the worker attendants. It is pretty to see the older ants helping them to extricate themselves, carefully unfolding the legs and smoothing out the wings of the males and females, with truly feminine tenderness and delicacy.

This utter helplessness of the young ant is very interesting for comparison with the case of man; for it is now known that nothing conduces to the final intellectual and moral supremacy of a race so much as the need for tending and carefully guarding the young; *the more complete the dependence of the offspring upon their elders, the finer and higher the ultimate development.*

Make special note of the words we have placed in italics. They let us into the secret of wisdom and strength, although the naturalists who note the fact, do not carry it out to the proper conclusion.

We are the offspring of God. *Acts 17:28.* God deals with us as with children, if we do not get so wise in our conceits that we imagine we can get along without instruction from Him. No other animal that is born into the world is so ignorant and helpless as the human infant. And no matter how long we

live, we are always little children—babes—in the eyes of God. He says:

Isaiah 46

³ Hearken unto to me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb.

⁴ And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.

Isaiah 66

¹³ As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you.

Jesus Christ was born a helpless infant, and was wrapped in swaddling clothes, in which even a man would be helpless, and laid in a manger. He was a perfect picture of human helplessness and foolishness. But He was cast upon God from the womb (*Psalms* 22:9-10), and so in Him we have the full demonstration of the fact that:

1 Corinthians 1

²⁵ The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Colossians 2

³ [In Him] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

1 Corinthians 1

³⁰ [He] is made unto us wisdom...

2 Corinthians 12

⁹ ...[His] strength is made perfect in weakness.

1 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

Psalms 146

⁵ Happy is he that has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God:

⁶ Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is.

40. A NEW MAN

AS the last and crowning act of creation, “God created man in His own image.” The process is thus briefly described:

Genesis 2

⁷ And the Lord God made man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.

Man is therefore animated dust; but the life which animates him is the life of God. If men would but keep those two facts in mind, and not be ashamed to acknowledge them, they would be just what God wishes them to be; for when man had been made,

Genesis 1

³¹ God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.

The expression is the strongest that could be used. God Himself could find no fault in man, and that means perfection.

When man forgot that he was but dust, and began to act as though he were God, he fell, and the image of God was shattered. It is in this condition that we all find ourselves in this world, as sons of the fallen Adam. God’s purpose in Christ is “to restore all things” (*Matthew 17:11*), and therefore “if any man be in Christ he is a new creature,” or, “there is a new creation.” *2 Corinthians 5:17*.

The work of Christ, in whom all things were created in the beginning, is to make man over again, in the image of God, so that, as in the beginning, God can look at him and say, “very good.”

Only one thing stands in the way of this new creation, and that is man’s unwillingness to believe that he is nothing but dust. The thought is too humiliating. Dust has no power in it-

self, and if man were to confess himself to be but dust, that would be an admission that of himself he can do nothing; and that he does not like.

The natural man is continually boasting of his own powers, —“power of intellect,” “power of body,” etc., forgetting that the higher degree he makes out for himself, the more of a lie he is (*Psalm* 62:61), since...

Psalm 39

⁵ Every man at his best state is altogether vanity.

That this refusal to acknowledge himself to be but dust stands in the way of the new creation, appears from this, that since man deliberately chose his present condition, God leaves it to him to choose if he will accept the original condition again. And since man in the first instance was made in the image of God out of the dust, it follows that it is only as dust that he can become a new man again. Man has nothing more to do with his new creation than Adam had in the beginning; but every man can choose to be made now. God alone can do the work.

Although man is for the most part quite indifferent as to his condition, except as expressed by the commonly-declared desire to “better his own condition,” God is not indifferent. His great desire is to see man as good as man was when the breath of the Almighty first gave him life and understanding, and no one knows so well as God that this change is impossible as long as man entertains the high notions of himself that he does. Therefore God’s attention is directed towards causing man to see and realize that he is but dust, and that “life, and breath, and all things” come from Him alone. This is shown in the prayer of Moses, which is in part as follows:

Psalm 90

¹ Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

² Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had

formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting You are God.

³ You turn man to destruction, and say, Return, you children of men.

⁴ For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

Looking at the margin of the Revised Version, we find a better reading of the word rendered “destruction.” It is “dust,” or “crushing.” The Jewish version, by Rabbi Leeser, gives the proper word, “contrition.” “Contrite” means “ground together,” as the chemist reduces a substance to powder in the mortar.

Another form of the same word that occurs in the ninetyeth *Psalm* is found in:

Psalm 51

¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

That is, a heart, broken to pieces, and ground up to dust. It is true that man is only dust, no matter how high he exalts himself in his pride, so that the work of God in turning him to dust, or contrition, is to make him see his condition.

When we are by the Spirit of God made conscious of our sinfulness, pride at once departs. God has many ways of bringing men to this condition, none of them pleasing to the natural man; but we are at present concerned only with the fact that God brings us low for our good.

In ancient times, when men were more picturesque and vivid in their representation of things, they put dust on their heads, or sat in the dust, as an indication of their low state. That was a sign of repentance, for it showed that they recognized that they were nothing but dust. That is all that God wants. He does not desire to humiliate man, but only to get him to recognize the facts as they exist, in order that He may lift him up.

Nothing is too hard for the Lord. He does not despise a broken and a contrite heart, because out of it He can create a new heart. It suits His purpose much better than anything else could. What He did in the beginning He can do again. All that anyone needs in order to be saved, is to recognize that he is but dust, and then implicitly to believe the story of creation. Wonderful things God can do with dust, as the Bible narratives plainly show.

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

To be in Christ plainly means to be of the same nature, and the first thing necessary to this is the acknowledgment,

John 5

³⁰ I can of my own self do nothing.

Christ, in whom we have redemption, “is the image of the invisible God.” *Colossians* 1:15. Such a one is “created in righteousness and true holiness,” and day by day “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.” *Ephesians* 4:24; *Colossians* 3:10.

The first man was made faultless. God looked him over, and could not detect a single flaw. He was pronounced “very good.” Of Jesus Christ, in whom the new creation is effected, it is said,

1 John 3

⁵ ...in Him is no sin.

John 7

¹⁸ ...there is no unrighteousness in Him.

This is why the first man was made perfect, because “in Him were all things created.” *Colossians* 1:16. Therefore He is able to take us when we are but dust, and present us...

Jude

²⁴ ...faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding

joy.

Who will humble himself, that he may be thus exalted?

41. THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

THE prophet Isaiah sang thus to God's people concerning the resurrection:

Isaiah 26

¹⁹ Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

The power by which this will be accomplished, is the power by which men are now made alive, who are...

Ephesians 2

¹ ...dead in trespasses and sins.

Jesus set it forth in these words:

John 5 [Compare with Isaiah 55:3]

²⁵ Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

²⁶ For as the Father has life in Himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself;

²⁷ And has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.

²⁸ Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.

No one who believes in the resurrection of the dead, can have any doubt as to Christ's power to raise any man from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; and no one can doubt His power to raise the dead, if he but reads the story of His life in the four Gospels.

Man is but dust, and unto dust he returns again. His breath is only in his nostrils, and therefore he is nothing to be ac-

counted of (*Isaiah 2:33*), for...

Psalm 146

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

But the same God who in the beginning made man of the dust of the ground, can of the dust bring him forth to life and glory; and that which makes us know this is the new creation which takes place with every one who is in Christ. Out of the dust of repentance God takes man, and makes him over entirely new, so that although he is still in mortal, sinful flesh, the perfect life of Jesus is manifested in him.

God turns man to dust, and says:

Psalm 90

³ ...Return, you children of men.

All have gone astray like lost sheep, but God calls them back, and is very patient and long-suffering with them, waiting long for them to hear His voice, "Return!" But when they hear, their return is as certain as is the resurrection of the dead. God will say to His people who are in the graves, "Come!" and they will...

Jeremiah 31

¹⁶ ...come again from the land of the enemy.

So it really makes no difference whether we consider *Psalm 90:3* as referring to conversion or the resurrection, for both are identical. Conversion is resurrection from the dead, and has in it the assurance of the final resurrection at the coming of Christ.

Christ says:

Revelation 3

²¹ To him that overcomes will I give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.

So John, speaking of the resurrection, says:

Revelation 20

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.

These are they who have been raised from the dust of the grave. That will be a glorious time; but God has nothing for us in the future of which He does not now give us a taste; so He...

Ephesians 2

⁵ ...has quickened us together with Christ (by grace you are saved;)

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

Ephesians 1

¹⁹ ...the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places.

This power is that by which we are thus quickened now from our death in trespasses and sins.

1 Samuel 2

⁸ He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

What a blessed thing it is, then, to remember that we are dust, for God remembers it too, and He has not forgotten how to make a man of the dust and crown him with glory and honor.

42. EVERLASTING POWER

ACCORDING to the Shastras, or religious code, of the Hindus, the sanctity of the Ganges is shortly to cease. They are not clear as to the precise date, but it will be somewhere about six months from the present time.

It is to be hoped that many who now worship the river, will be led to consider what kind of a god it can be whose power and sacredness depart with the lapse of time, and that the Gospel of a Saviour who, because He continues ever, is able to save unto the uttermost (*Hebrews 7:24-25*), will gain new value in their eyes by contrast with their own decaying deities.

Why is it that men all over the world have come to worship the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever? The answer is given:

Romans 1

³¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful.

If thankfulness is involved in glorifying the Creator, it is evident that to know Him as God is to know Him as giving occasion for thankfulness. Nor is the thankfulness to be on a small scale, but on a divinely infinite one. Therefore to know Him as God is to know Him as blessing men to an infinite extent.

This must be true still of God, or men would now be justified in not glorifying Him as God; but all who do not “are without excuse.” Therefore God is still giving infinitely to every man. If He were not, ingratitude would cease to be a sin.

Romans 1

¹⁹ That which may be known of God is manifest in them.

The creation reveals eternal power and divinity. These may

be clearly seen. Take the Ganges for instance. Why does it flow on and on for centuries, carrying down to the ocean a vast volume of water without cessation? Why does the sun pour out unreservedly every moment the fullness of its light and heat, yet have as much today as it had ages ago? These things reveal the everlasting power of God. Men who think more of the creature than the Creator predict a distant time when the sun will have parted with all its light, because they do not recognize in the working of all nature the everlasting power of God.

It is this power which keeps the heathen alive, and which keeps up the uninterrupted flow of the Ganges. But does not God know that His precious gifts will be perverted, that the Ganges will get the honor due to Himself, and that the men whom He has made will pervert His life, and change the truth of God into a lie? Yes, He knows it perfectly, and it grieves Him at His heart, as did the wickedness of the world before the flood. Yet the current of blessing given in His life flows with unabated volume, because not only is His power everlasting, but His mercy also endures forever.

In God's hand is the soul of every living thing. *Job* 12:10. No one can go anywhere in the universe out of the presence of God. No matter where he may be...

Psalms 139

¹⁰ ...even there shall Your hand lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

So God is trying to lead the heathen. They will not be guided by Him, but He does not therefore give them up.

Hebrews 12

³ Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself.

Because He loves them with an everlasting love, He draws them everlastingly to Himself with loving-kindness. *Jeremiah*

31:3. The more determinedly a man resists this love, the more wonderful it is seen to be. Truly it is love that hopes all things, endures all things; and thus, even where God is rejected by men, they cannot hinder that which may be known of God being manifested in them. The more they do despite to the Spirit of grace, the more they bring out its wonderful long-suffering, its patient, Godlike endurance.

Romans 5

²⁰ Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Every man who does not recognize that he receives his life and breath and all things direct from God, and that God's hand is leading and upholding him every moment, is in the same condition as the Hindu worshipers of the Ganges. Indeed he is worse, for to the extent that he has more light than they, his ingratitude is the baser. He is serving the creature rather than the Creator.

What is the way out of this deplorable condition? Be thankful. Glorify Him as God. We may not see very much to be thankful for at first, but if we give thanks for that, the righteousness of God will be revealed from faith to faith, and the occasion for gratitude will be seen to greatly increase. We will not then glorify ourselves as God, but Him, and know that He has all things, while we in ourselves have nothing.

In this humility lies the only hope of our exaltation. While we glorify ourselves we will trust in self for everything, and having no power in ourselves will never make any advancement. When we know ourselves helpless, and know that God has all power, we will look to Him for help, and He will not leave us helpless.

1 Samuel 2

⁸ He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.

God's princes dwell in His palaces, and in those palaces God is known. He is known as what He is, a refuge. So knowing Him as God, and glorifying Him as God, His people find infinite occasion for thankfulness.

Psalm 48

¹ Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God.

43. EATING LIFE OR DEATH

Matthew 5

⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

THESE words teach us that righteousness may be obtained by eating and drinking; that we are to eat it and drink it. For when one is hungry and thirsty, and then is filled, it is only because he has eaten and drank that for which he hungered and thirsted.

Plain Language

There is not nearly so much figurative language in the Bible as most people suppose. Someone reads a text that is beyond his experience, and because it seems impossible to him he says,

“O that is figurative language.”

Of what it may be figurative he cannot tell, but it eases his mind to think that it does not mean exactly what it says; for if it does not mean what it says, and he does not know what else it means, it is evident that he is freed from any obligation in the matter. This is the way the Word of God is made of none effect.

We shall get along much better if we settle it in our minds that God knows His own mind; that He knows exactly what He wishes to say, and just how to say what He means; and that when He says a thing He means it. Surely we cannot go wrong when we take the Lord at His word.

Suppose it should happen on some occasion that He did not mean just what He said, and we should take His words as though He did mean them as He said them, do you not see

that He could not condemn us for believing what He Himself said?

John 3

¹⁸ ...he that believes is not condemned.

If a father jokingly tells his child something, and the child confidently takes the father at his word, and mischief follows, it is clear that it is the father that is to blame, and not the child. It is an honor to the father, that the child didn't think he could mean anything different from what he said; and a disgrace to him, that he abused the child's confidence.

But God does not joke with His children. He says to us:

James 5

¹² Let your Yea be yea, and your Nay, nay.

And He does not ask anything of us that He is not Himself. Therefore we may believe that...

Proverbs 30

⁵ Every word of God is pure; He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him.

So when we read:

Psalms 34

⁸ O taste, and see that the Lord is good.

We may believe that His flesh is true meat, and His blood is true drink. *John 6:55*. When we read that the children of Israel in the desert ate spiritual meat, even Christ Himself, we are to believe the fact. In believing the statement we shall find knowledge of the utmost value. We do not believe the words of the Lord *because* we understand them, but we believe them *in order to get* understanding.

Proverbs 2

⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom; out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

Eating the Body of Christ

The Lord said to the children of Israel:

Exodus 16

⁴ I will rain bread from heaven for you.

And Jesus said:

John 6

⁴¹ I am the bread which came down from heaven.

What else can we believe, therefore, but that it was the body of Christ that they ate? We may doubt, and say, "How can this be?" just as the unbelieving Pharisees did; but we shall find that doubt means death.

Someone may exclaim:

"But Jesus Himself shows us that He does not mean that we are actually to eat His flesh and drink His blood, because He says, "The flesh profits nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life."

You should read more carefully than that. It is true that Jesus used the words just quoted, and meant just what He said; but it is not true that He said that we were not really to eat His body and drink His blood. He said that if we do not eat His flesh and drink His blood we have no life in us; and He would not immediately deny what He had said.

We should see in these words of Christ, not a denial of His former words, but an evidence that in His words we find His body and His blood. The words of the Lord are not merely empty sound, but they are real things. They are good food, and may be eaten.

Jeremiah 15

¹⁶ Your words were found, and I did eat them; and Your word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.

Read with great care the following verses:

Deuteronomy 8

² And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments, or no.

³ And he humbled you, and suffered you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you knew not, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord does man live.

Too often the words, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,” are taken as though they meant that bread is in opposition to the Word of God. But the texts tell us that God gave the children of Israel bread in order that they might know that man lives only by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. That is to say, God would teach us that in the bread which He gives us, He gives us His Word.

Bread from Heaven

If we but think of the origin of bread, we shall see that this is so. Bread comes from corn, and corn is grass.

Genesis 1

¹¹ God said, Let the earth bring forth grass,...and it was so.

There was nothing in the earth until God spoke, so that the grass came forth from His word. His word was the seed that was sown. Nothing grows but from the word of the Lord. The grain that the farmer sows contains the word of life, else it would never spring up. So when we eat the bread that is made from the grain, we are really and truly eating the word of the Lord.

But the word is life, and Christ is the life; so in the bread which God gives us, He gives us the life of Christ. It was therefore no figure of speech, but an actual truth that Christ

uttered, when He said to His disciples as He handed them the bread, "This is my body."

Think what would happen if men recognized every mouthful of food that they ate as being the very body of Christ. Would they not eat with reverence? They would constantly remember and acknowledge that their life comes from God, and that it is His life that they are using, and not their own. This would teach them that they are not their own. Consequently they would be continually passive in His hands, for Him to live His own life in His own way.

But this would be righteousness, for His life is only righteousness. So by eating and drinking they would be filled with righteousness. We can have only one life at a time, and the life which God expects us to live is the Christian life. But we get our daily life only by eating the daily bread that God gives us. So we see that God expects that by the food which He gives us we are to receive strength to live the Christian life.

Of course it is understood that when we say that we are to live the Christian life, we mean that we are to let Him live it in us; for He alone is our life.

Satisfied with Good

But we are to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Our desires are to be only for that which is good. The Lord gives that which is good. He does not withhold any good thing from His children:

Psalms 84

¹¹ For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

From above He sends down every good gift and every perfect gift:

James 1

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

He says:

Isaiah 55

² Eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Our natures are corrupt, and our appetites perverted, so that we desire things that are not good. This has been so ever since the fall. The woman “saw” that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and that it was to be desired to make one wise. But it was not so. The tree was not good for food. It brought death.

We are therefore to learn that not what we may naturally desire, but what God gives us, is good. This does not mean that our whole life is to be one continual longing after things that we like, but dare not take. No; the lesson that we should learn from our first parents as well as from the children of Israel is that...

1 Corinthians 10

⁶ ...we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Thank the Lord, He satisfies our mouth with good things. He teaches us to desire the good, and to find delight in it. The way of life is not one of unsatisfied longing. The good Father opens His hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing. *Psalms* 145:16.

Receiving it Fresh from God

The sum of all this is that we are to hunger only for those things that convey to us the life of God in its freshness and fullness. We are to train our appetites to desire only the things that God says are best for us.

There are plants in which the life of God has been so perverted through the curse that they are only death to those who eat. These we should not touch. There are plants, such as tea and coffee, which, while they do not, as ordinarily taken, cause immediate death, yet have no life-giving power. They excite, but do not strengthen. The only power they have is in the line of death.

It is evident that such things cannot be taken to the glory of God, for it is not to the glory of God that His children should be slaves to that which destroys. In taking these things, not to mention tobacco, which is wholly poisonous, and altogether filthy, one is not taking the pure life of the Lord. Consequently they are against the Christian life, for everything that is not of the Lord is against Him.

There are other things that are food, but not the best food. The flesh of animals is food, that is, it will give strength to the body, but it is not perfect food. At the best, it is one degree removed from the food as God prepares it for us. In eating the flesh of animals, we get our food secondhand, to say nothing of the defilement from the evil dispositions and the diseases of the animals themselves.

But out of the ground the Lord God makes to grow food that has no taint of evil about it, and when He gives us the best things, it is, to say the least, very ungrateful to pass them by, and take that which is inferior. Not only is it ungrateful, but it shows disregard for His life. It shows that we would rather gratify our desires than receive the fullness of His life.

Life Only by Faith

Therefore since God gives us food in order that we may have life, and the life which He wishes us to live is His own perfect life of righteousness, it is evident that if we eat only the food which He tells us is the best, and eat it in faith, as

coming from Him, and bringing Him to us, we shall have that perfect life from day to day.

But we must remember that the best things taken without recognition of Him are not life, but death. The children of Israel ate food direct from heaven, and yet they died, because they did not eat in faith. So whoever does not discern the Lord's body in his eating and drinking eats and drinks damnation to himself, and not righteousness.

It is evident that no one can discern the Lord's body where it is not, so that it is impossible to eat and drink righteousness in that which is not food nor to get it perfectly in that which is not perfect food; but the mere eating of the best things is not sufficient; we must take them in humble and thankful recognition of God. When this is done, life and righteousness must follow as surely as the word of God is life.

1 Corinthians 11

²⁹ He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

This is true without any qualification. The Lord's Supper is the model meal, to show us that in eating and drinking pure food we are eating the Lord's body and drinking His blood. It is thus that we get His life. But if we do not take those things in which His life is clearly to be discerned, or do not recognize Him in the good things that we do eat, we eat and drink to no purpose. Our eating and drinking in such case is only to death.

A little thought must make this apparent to everybody. What will be the end of those who know not God? It will be destruction. See *2 Thessalonians* 1:8-9, and *Psalms* 9:17. What does it profit a man to have lived threescore years, if at last he sinks into perdition? Would it not have been better for that

man if he had not been born? To what end was all his eating and drinking? To nothing but destruction. If he had recognized the Lord in all his ways, he would have been eating and drinking to life, but since he does not recognize the Lord, he is taking only death, instead of life.

Romans 14

²³ ...whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Because of sin, disease and death are in the world. So sickness and death come from rejecting or ignoring the Lord, who is life.

Not a Trivial Matter

Is it not evident that the matter of proper eating and drinking is not a mere fad? It is not a matter of no consequence, for God has not spoken about things that are useless.

And let no one imagine that this means that we are to go into "Jewish bondage." Far from it. The bondage of the Jews did not consist in their obedience to the word of the Lord, but in their disobedience. The Lord would have us free from bondage; but when we do not have the life of His word, we have nothing but bondage.

He would have us eat that which is good, and delight in fatness. *Isaiah* 55:2. He would have us delivered from every evil thing that tends to enslave and destroy life. He would have us enjoy the absolutely perfect freedom of His own life.

Psalms 34

⁸ O taste, and see that the Lord is good.

44. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FOOD AND STIMULANTS

IN the previous article on eating righteousness, it is stated that tea and coffee are not foods, but stimulants, and are poisonous instead of helpful to the body. This will without doubt meet with a strong protest from many, who will say:

“I positively know that tea is nourishing and strengthening. Why, I couldn’t get through my morning’s work without my tea. I must have a cup of tea before I can do anything in the morning, and then in the middle of the forenoon my strength is gone, and I am so faint that I should give out entirely if it were not for the tea; but directly I have had my tea I am fresh and strong for work again.”

Exactly, and that statement is in itself the best of evidence that tea does not give strength, but rather deprives one of it. It simply satisfies a craving which it has created for itself, and not any natural desire of the body. In reality it does not satisfy anything, since the more one uses it, the more the desire for it increases.

The difference between food and stimulants may be briefly stated thus: Food supplies a real want of the system. The body is continually using up substances which must be replaced by food, or else the strength will be utterly lost. When this substance is replaced with food, the longing of the system is satisfied.

But the point to be specially noted is that any kind of good food will satisfy this desire. It is true that a hungry person may at a particular time have a preference for a certain kind of food, yet if that is not at hand, any other wholesome food will do as well. When the waste has been repaired, the system does not bother itself about what particular food it was that

did the work.

But it is not so with the unnatural appetite that exists for a stimulant. Nothing but the stimulant will answer the demand. If it were a real desire for food, a piece of bread would fully satisfy the desire, but nothing but tea will do. That shows that the tea does not satisfy a legitimate desire of the body, but a fictitious desire which it has created for itself. It is the supply that has created the demand.

Suppose that there were a big strong ruffian who should make a regular practice of picking up a small boy and throwing him into the water, and then plunging in and pulling the lad out just as he was drowning; would you praise that fellow's bravery and humanity? Would you recommend him for a medal on account of his activity in saving life? Of course you would not. You would on the contrary report him to the police, that he might be punished for his brutality.

Now tea is just such a conscienceless ruffian as that. It throws its victim into the ditch, and then pulls him out, and the poor, deluded victim embraces it, and says, "Noble fellow! you have saved my life." And the more the thing is done, the more the victim falls in love with his tormentor. The trouble is, he does not know that the one who lifts him up temporarily is the one who has pushed him down. Do you not think that we can get along better without such a "benefactor"?

A food is a servant, while stimulants are tyrants. Let the woman who now thinks herself wholly dependent on tea for strength, make a desperate struggle and free herself from its clutches, and it will not be long before she will find that when she depends solely on food she can dispatch her morning's work without that terrible feeling of faintness that she before experienced. Then she will see for herself that her tea was not a food, serving the needs of the body, but a tyrant stimulant, producing a feeling of weakness in order that it might get

credit for seeming to undo its own mischief.

Tea and coffee are thieves and robbers, and lying ones at that.

45. TRUST IN MAN OR GOD?

Isaiah 2

³³ Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Jeremiah 17

⁵ Thus says the Lord: Cursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the Lord.

WHY this curse? Is it an arbitrary punishment from the Lord, pronounced upon the one who trusts in man? Not at all; it is simply a statement of fact. The man who trusts in man, whether it be himself or some other man, is under a curse, because he is putting his trust in that which cannot deliver.

How little is man “to be accounted of” (*Isaiah 2:22*)? The Lord tells us:

Isaiah 40

¹² [He has] weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.

But all the nations of men who dwell on the earth...

¹⁵ ...are counted as the small dust of the balance.

That is, the dust that goes to make all nations of men is so small an amount in comparison with all the dust even of this earth alone, that it makes no appreciable difference in the balance. If all the men were off, the weight of the earth would not be sensibly lightened, so that in weighing the mountains and hills the men upon them are not taken into account.

So much for man in comparison with the earth alone. But look up now to the heavens, and see the shining suns that light up an infinite number of worlds, the number of which is

known only to the infinite God. When we consider these wondrous works of God's fingers, then we must exclaim with the Psalmist:

Psalm 8

⁴ What is man, that You are mindful of him? and the son of man that you visit him?

Plainly, then, to trust in man for help, is to trust in nothing. Help would utterly fail, if it were not for the fact that the God who made the heavens and the earth, upholds all things by the Word of His power. Think how easily He can do it.

Isaiah 40

¹⁵ He takes up the isles as a very little thing.

Then the burden of all mankind is as nothing to Him. To carry all men in His arms makes no additional tax upon His strength.

Yet, insignificant a part of creation as man is, he is not despised, nor forgotten, nor neglected of the Lord. "All nations are before Him as nothing" (*Isaiah* 40:17) in comparison with the great universe, yet He knows the number of hairs upon the head of every single individual. So we have at once evidence of God's thoughtfulness for us, and of His ability to carry into effect the thoughts of peace which He thinks toward us.

The only thing that burdens the Lord is sin. The weight of all nations is nothing to Him, but sin makes Him weary. This, however, is no reason why any sinner should hesitate to come to Him. Quite the contrary; for whether we trust Him or not, He has us all, and the burden of all our sins, upon Him. The Lord bears the sin of the world.

Then since sin is a burden to Him, and He has all our sins upon Him, the thing that we should haste to do is to let Him take the sins away from us, so that He may be relieved of that

burden. He can easily bury the sins in the depths of the sea; but He does not wish to cast men there also; therefore He asks us to let Him separate the sin from us, in order that, in casting off that burden, He may not be obliged to fling us off with it.

What marvelous long-suffering and compassion God exhibits for man! For our sake He endures the heavy load of sin which we compel Him to carry. He is compelled to carry it, simply because His love for us will not allow Him to throw us aside. If we would but yield to Him, He would remove the sin from us, and from Himself also, and then it would be unalloyed joy for Him to continue to carry us.

And this removal of the sin would be our salvation, for sin is death. With what confidence can we trust the Lord to save us from sin, when we know that He wishes to do it in order to relieve Himself of the one thing that burdens Him.

Jeremiah 17

⁷ Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

46. THE LIVING WORD

Hebrews 4

¹³ The Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The Word of God is not simply living, but it gives life.

Psalms 119

²⁵ My soul cleaves unto the dust; quicken me [make me alive] according to Your Word.

⁵⁰ ...Your Word has quickened me.

Isaiah 55

³ ...hear, and your soul shall live.

Jesus says:

John 5

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes on Him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

²⁵ Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

GOD gives to us His Word, in order that we may live; if we but keep the Word, we shall keep the life, for it is “the Word of life.” *1 John 1:1*. When man issues a commandment, the one to whom it is addressed is obliged to supply the force necessary to carry it into execution; but when God gives a commandment, the commandment is itself the living force that will work effectually in those who receive it.

John 12

⁵⁰ His commandment is life everlasting.

This is why it is that if we would enter into life, we must keep the commandments. Only in keeping the commandments of God have we life, for they are life. We keep them by faith, and they supply the life and righteousness.

The story of creation is given to show us the reality of these things. There we see the word in action.

Psalm 33

⁶ By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.

⁹ For he spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

When He spoke, it was. The earth did not have to go about to make itself, when God spoke; but when He spoke, it existed. The darkness did not have to exert itself to produce light; but God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and it was so. The earth was without form, and void. God desired order, but He did not expect the earth to put itself in order.

Genesis 1

² ...the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

That same Word speaks to us. The Gospel is the power that creates, for:

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation.

2 Corinthians 4

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

The Word says to us:

Ephesians 5

¹⁸ Be filled with the Spirit.

If we receive that Word, the Spirit will fill us, and will bring

order out of the chaos of our minds and hearts.

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

⁴ In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

⁹ That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world.

Therefore the same Word which in the beginning caused the light to shine out of darkness, says to us:

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine; for your Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

If we will hear that Word, we shall as surely be “light in the Lord” (*Ephesians* 5:8), as the light in the beginning shone when God said, “Let there be light.”

Genesis 1

¹¹ God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit;...and it was so.

There was no struggle on the part of the earth to perform the commandment of the Lord; only the reception of the Word of life, which works effectually wherever it finds an opening for it. Now,

Isaiah 61

¹¹ As the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Exodus 20

¹ And God spoke all these words, saying,

² I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ You shall have no other gods before me.

Now how did God suppose that we were to keep that commandment? Israel of old made the mistake of supposing that

they themselves must furnish the power to do it, and they did not attain to the righteousness of the law. But God did not expect anything of the kind. Hear what He says, repeating almost the words that are in *Exodus* 20:1-3:

Psalm 81

⁸ Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto you; O Israel, if you will hearken unto me,

⁹ There shall no strange god be in you; neither shall you worship any strange god.

¹⁰ I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

There was to be no straining to manufacture power which they did not have, but a simple yielding to the self-acting Word. Let the people but hear, and continue to hear, the Word of the Lord, and He will take the responsibility upon Himself of seeing that strange gods are kept from among them.

The first commandment includes all the ten. The tenth commandment, "You shall not covet," is only another precept against idolatry, for covetousness is idolatry. *Colossians* 3:5. The law ends just where it begins, and is as a whole but an exhortation to love God.

But love is of God, and He sheds His love abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit. So instead of expecting us to do what the flesh cannot possibly do, God simply asks us to submit to His love, to submit to His righteousness. "His commandments are not grievous" (*1 John* 5:3), but they are love.

Thus we see that the commandments of God are in reality promises of what He will do for us, or rather, statements of what He has already laid up for us ready to our hand. His grace supplies all that His justice demands. He never asks anything of us that He has not first given to us.

Psalm 139

¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts unto me, O God! how

great is the sum of them.

How precious is the thought that no matter what God requires us to be, no matter what He tells us to be or do, the very same Word that makes known to us the requirement, supplies the thing required.

Let us read all the commandments of God in the light of the first chapter of *Genesis*, and life will assume a new phase. Then the greater the commandment, the greater will be our thanksgiving for what the Lord has done for us; and even in the midst of the thunders of Sinai we can say:

Psalm 66

¹⁶ Come and hear, all you that fear God, and I will declare what He has done for my soul.

47. HIDDEN WONDERS

WHEN Professor Huxley was visiting the Highlands of Scotland, one day as he wandered over the moors, he picked up a moss-cup, and began to examine it with his magnifying glass.

A Highland shepherd came near and watched him with interest and curiosity. Mr. Huxley asked the man if he would like to see the moss-cup through the glass.

As he looked, his eyes opened wide with wonder; presently he said,

“Can this be a moss-cup?”

When he was assured that it was, he asked that he might see it again, and then, handing back the glass and the moss-cup, he said,

“O sir, I wish you had never shown it me.”

“Why?” asked Mr. Huxley in surprise.

“Because I do tread upon thousands of them every day of my life.”

Now that his eyes were opened to see what had before been hidden from him in this common, familiar object, it had become such a mystery of wonder that the thought of trampling on it seemed almost like sacrilege.

And so it is with every one of the works of God’s hands. The more we think upon them, and seek them out, and examine them, the more we shall realize that He does indeed...

Jeremiah 23

²⁴ ...fill heaven and earth,

and...

Isaiah 6

³ ...the whole earth is full of His glory.

Appendix

1. PANTHEISM

THERE have, from time to time, been accusations in more recent times, that E. J. Waggoner taught “Pantheism”, a particular spiritualistic doctrine that J. H. Kellogg espoused in the book *The Living Temple*, published in the year 1903.

Wikipedia states:

“Pantheism is the belief that all of reality is identical with divinity, or that everything composes an all-encompassing, immanent god.”

The danger of the theory is that if God is already in all things, then there is no need for atonement, redemption, or salvation. Even the value of the Bible comes into question, for if God is already within you, why do you need an outward guide? Why not just follow your own inbuilt “holy” impressions?

Lucifer, during the rebellion in heaven, taught a similar error, proclaiming that the angels were “holy” and did not need an “external law”:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 37:

Leaving his place in the immediate presence of the Father, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. He worked with mysterious secrecy, and for a time concealed his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God. He began to insinuate doubts concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that though laws might be necessary for the inhabitants of the worlds, angels, being more exalted, needed no such restraint, for *their own wisdom was a sufficient guide*. They were not beings that could bring dishonor to God; *all their thoughts were holy*; it was no more possible for them than for God Himself to err.

A similar error was met by Ellen White in the early days of

the Advent movement. She writes:

The Review and Herald, Jan. 21, 1904:

In New Hampshire [in the year 1850] there were those who were active in disseminating false ideas in regard to God. Light was given me that these men were making the truth of no effect by their ideas, some of which led to free-lovism. I was shown that these men were seducing souls by presenting speculative theories regarding God....

Among other views, they held that those once sanctified could not sin, and this they were presenting as gospel food. Their false theories, with their burden of deceptive influence, were working great harm to themselves and to others. They were gaining a spiritualistic power over those who could not see the evil of these beautifully clothed theories.

Great evils had already resulted. The doctrine that all were holy had led to the belief that the affections of the sanctified were never in danger of leading astray. The result of this belief was the fulfillment of the evil desires of hearts which, though professedly sanctified, were far from purity of thought and practice.

This is only one of the instances in which I was called upon to rebuke those who were presenting *the doctrine of an impersonal god diffused through nature*, and the doctrine of holy flesh.

Especially in countries such as India and China, where Pantheistic teaching is more widespread, branches of healing philosophy have emerged wherein it is taught that the power to heal is within man, and that disease is simply a blockage or disruption of the flow of the life energy. Therefore, healing is accomplished by attempting to “unblock” the human agency, so that the “power of god within” can work properly again. This is contrary to the Christian idea, where true healing power flows from an external God, through Christ, and into the needy human agent.

Ellen White warned about “Pantheistic Theories” in 1905:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 428-429:

Today there are coming into educational institutions and into the churches everywhere spiritualistic teachings that undermine faith in God and in His word. The theory that *God is an essence pervading all nature* is received by many who profess to believe the Scriptures; but, however beautifully clothed, this theory is a most dangerous deception. It misrepresents God and is a dishonor to His greatness and majesty. And it surely tends not only to mislead, but to debase men. Darkness is its element, sensuality its sphere. The result of accepting it is separation from God. And to fallen human nature this means ruin.

Our condition through sin is unnatural, and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ. Only through the blood of the Crucified One is there cleansing from sin. His grace alone can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature. The spiritualistic theories concerning God make His grace of no effect. If God is an essence pervading all nature, then He dwells in all men; and in order to attain holiness, *man has only to develop the power within him*.

These theories, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They do away with the necessity for the atonement and make man his own savior. These theories regarding God make His word of no effect, and those who accept them are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction.

They may regard virtue as better than vice; but, having shut out God from His rightful position of sovereignty, they place their dependence upon human power, which, without God, is worthless. The unaided human will has no real power to resist and overcome evil. The defenses of the soul are broken down. Man has no barrier against sin. When once the restraints of God's word and His Spirit are rejected, we know not to what depths one may sink.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 413:

God's handiwork in nature is not God Himself in nature.

The things of nature are an expression of God's character and power; but we are not to regard nature as God. The artistic skill of human beings produces very beautiful workmanship, things that delight the eye, and these things reveal to us something of the thought of the designer; but the thing made is not the maker. It is not the work, but the workman, that is counted worthy of honor. So while nature is an expression of God's thought, it is not nature, but the God of nature, that is to be exalted.

Apart from these Pantheistic ideas, there is a cardinal Christian doctrine about God's nature, that teaches of His "omnipresence". This is, obviously, not Pantheism, but just a recognition of the nature of the Holy Spirit to be in all places and situations. It is comforting to the Christian to know that, wherever he may find himself, in whatever solitary place or remote dungeon, the Holy Spirit cannot be shut out or excluded.

In this work on the "Everlasting Gospel", Waggoner does indeed make some statements that sound like Pantheism, especially when he refers to the "personal presence" of God in nature. For example (Chapter 3, "Power and Wisdom"):

Thus all the power in heaven and in earth is His. There is no manifestation of power, force, or energy, as men call it, in the universe, except the *personal presence* of the living Christ, by the Spirit of power. His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in all things.

Waggoner explains later that he is referring to the Holy Spirit's omnipresence (Chapter 5, "The Spirit's Work"):

Read the texts that tell plainly that the Holy Spirit is the direct Representative, the personal Presence of God, both Father and Son. So God is present in every place by His Spirit.

Jeremiah 23

²¹ Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

At the same time, he is careful to uphold the Bible and faith in Christ, as the only source of holiness and purity. As far as I know, Waggoner was never rebuked by the servant of the Lord (Ellen White) for teaching the error of Pantheism, and he himself denied believing it on a number of occasions, including twice in the “Everlasting Gospel” series (Chapter 2, “The Beginning”):

There is a worldwide difference between this truth and pantheism. The truth is that every created thing reveals God’s power; the men of old “changed the truth of God into a lie” by saying that every created thing is God. So they worshiped and served the creature instead of the Creator.

And from Chapter 20, “The Animal Creation”:

Remember that the worker is not the thing worked. There is an infinite difference between the Creator and the thing created. The power that is seen in anything must not be confounded with the thing itself. Neither men nor any of the lower orders of creation are God, but His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in everything from highest to lowest. Nothing but sin cherished hinders its perfect manifestation.

Therefore, I am happy to release these articles, since I think there is much light and valuable truth in them. On going through some of the rich truths contained in Waggoner’s articles, I am deeply impressed by the closeness and clarity with which he saw the spiritual things in the natural world. If, therefore, he made some statements that could be misunderstood, “...what is the chaff to the wheat?” *Jeremiah 23:28*.

We should remember that Waggoner is not here to explain exactly what he meant, and therefore should not jump on phrases that may not have been intended to mean what they might seem to say to us. Take up these studies in the spirit of love, which “thinks no evil”, and assume that if Waggoner made some seemingly difficult statements, they were intended

to be understood within the framework of standard Christian truth.

He had a special message from God (as testified by Ellen White), a message which, had we already understood it, the Lord would not have sent it. We should rather fear that it is we who are liable to misunderstand that message, and therefore walk carefully.

- Frank Zimmerman, September 2016

2. LETTER FROM E. J. WAGGONER, 1905

Editor's note: This letter from E. J. Waggoner to his daughter Pearl, is of interest as it shows that Waggoner did believe in a literal Sanctuary in heaven, which some have accused him of denying.

Battle Creek, Oct. 8, 1905

My Dear Little Pearl,

I was very glad to get your little note, and thought to reply at once; but I keep very busy, and when I have finished my study for the next day I feel much like going to bed. They have been having operations all day Sunday; but today there are none; so I am taking the opportunity to write some letters.

I have not been lecturing since the school opened, but I have had some speaking to do. You see Dr. E. was away and I was asked to talk to the patients twice a week till she came back. Now she takes the time. I have to speak in the tabernacle to night and next Sunday night.

I am working now in the Pathological Laboratory. It takes quite a bit of time, but I have learned a great deal from it. At 7 in the morning there is Chapel and Bible Study. Then we have two classes from 7:30 to 9:30. From then till 12 I study and do Laboratory work—mostly the latter—and from 12 to 1 we have another class. Then we have two classes, covering from 2 to 6 p.m. so you see there is not much time left vacant.

It is such beautiful weather now, that I wish I could be where you are, among the trees.

I don't think that Edith understands the matter that she writes about very well herself. I know that she does not understand about the subject under consideration at Minneapolis, and the result. It would take a long while to write all about it, but I think that I can give you a few ideas in a few minutes,

that may help you. I haven't see any complete, connected statements of Bro. Ballenger's ideas, so I cannot judge how far he is right or whether he has anything that is really new.

I might say, first, that I don't think that the denomination has ever "acknowledged that alongside with the heavenly sanctuary there was a new covenant." That, of course, they always believed, but what they did not and do not now believe, as far as I know, is that there was any heavenly sanctuary or priesthood dating from creation. Indeed, I think that very few have even thought about it at all; and I think that it is now very much as it was fifteen years ago and more, when scarcely any two, even among the ministers had the same views, or any definitely connected views at all, about the covenants.

I have never troubled myself to inquire what anybody else believed, but have simply taken what I found in the Bible; and here is a brief summary of the truth as it appears in the Bible: Sanctuary means holy place, and that is wherever God is—His dwelling place. No place built by hands, either in heaven or on earth, can contain God, and be His dwelling place. Yet God has a localized place (not necessarily the same spot all the time where He specially manifests Himself. This place is composed of living creatures, not made with hands, just the same as His throne. (See *Ezekiel* 1). This dwelling place and throne are from before the creation of the world—as early as there were any living creatures in the universe.

As long as, or, ever since there have been created beings, there has been worship of God, and a priesthood, and this will be so as long as there are created beings in existence—throughout eternity Christ is the Mediator, that is, the means of communication and connection between men (and all other living creatures, for that matter) and God. While there was no sacrifice for sin before sin existed, and will not be after sin is blotted out, there was and will be just as much need of the

Mediator as there is now; for no created being can live without God.

As suggested by the living throne of God and the living temple, not made with hands, God's creatures are His real temple. Christ was the perfect representation of this and He so declared. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, it was for the purpose of bringing them at once to His Sanctuary (*Exodus* 15), and dwelling in them. They were not submissive, and that plan could not be carried out then; and since they would not allow God to dwell in them (His proper dwelling place)

He had them build Him a sanctuary that He might dwell among them. But all the prophets knew that this was not the real temple, even for this earth, and that the sacrifices offered in connection with it amounted to nothing. The building of that sanctuary, and the making of that old covenant at that time did not in the least affect the reality—the real priesthood of God's everlasting covenant. That covenant was made known to Adam, and was specially confirmed to Abraham, who is the father of all who believe. Consequently we came in under the covenant to Abraham.

Everything that could ever be promised to anybody was promised to Abraham, and he had all the blessings of the Gospel that anybody has ever had. The new covenant, which will be made when the Lord comes, is new only in the sense that it is new to the whole house of Israel—i.e. the second covenant made with the people as a whole; but in detail it differs in no respect from that made with Abraham. It simply confirms to "the whole house of Israel" the blessings promised to Abraham and to his descendants as individuals, and it is made at the resurrection, the only time—the first time it could possibly be made with the whole house of Israel. (*Ezekiel* 37).

Of course this is but a brief outline, but it covers everything and every question that can possibly arise can be answered by

what is here suggested. Perhaps it may help you somewhat. I have not a single copy of *Everlasting Covenant* now, but I am sending to London for some and when they come I will send you one. I could make things a good deal plainer now than when I wrote that book; but there is nothing that needs to be changed otherwise.

I was out to Ruby's two or three weeks ago, and grandma was there. She gave me a cushion cover that she wanted you to have particularly, and as I do not see any other way of getting it to you, I will send it by post.

Take good care of yourself and keep well. With much love,
Your own loving Papa
E. J. Waggoner

3. A LETTER OF CLARIFICATION

Editor's note: This letter from E. J. Waggoner's son-in-law gives some interesting details and testimony. He denies that Waggoner was involved in Pantheism.

1971

By: Ellis P. Howard, son-in-law of Dr. E. J. Waggoner

I am Ellis P. Howard, 86, son-in-law of Dr. E. J. Waggoner. I am writing this and I speak with considerable authority. So listen, please, for there have been so many false accusations.

He was called doctor because he was a medical doctor. He graduated as a surgeon from *New York City Medical School*. He practiced some, but his heart was in the ministry. One day at one of our California Camp meetings (Healdsburg), God revealed his Son, Jesus, to him as it were a television scene. He saw Jesus dying on the cross, an atonement, complete, for the human race. That picture never faded. It is the golden thread seen through all his writing.

Pearl, my wife, Dr. Waggoner's younger daughter, attended *Washington Missionary College* the winter of 1915-1916. We were under appointment to the mission field, by the General Conference. We were married at the close of the school term.

Pearl wanted to visit her father before going to Peru. So by train we went to Battle Creek, Michigan. Dr. Waggoner was serving as registrar in the large *Battle Creek Sanitarium*. He also served as Chaplain a great deal of the time. Pearl and I were most welcome in the Waggoner home. The doctor was married again, but Pearl knew his wife as she had worked in the publishing house when they lived in London and the Doctor was editor.

Our visit with Pearl's father was shortened by his sudden death, heart failure. He had had warning so submitted to a

physical examination that very day by one of the best heart specialists in the world. He [Waggoner] was preparing a funeral sermon for a young person, for the next day. Then we ate a light supper and went to bed a little later. Just as he lay down his heart fluttered until it stopped. Edith called me to come quickly, but he was already gone. He was a great student. In London he had bought cheaply a great number of second hand books. I believe he had all of the "Fathers of the Catholic Church," and hundreds of histories. It took a joining house, with shelves to the ceiling to hold all his books. The above is just a little side light.

Now let us go to the large parlor of the *Battle Creek Sanitarium*. For several weeks, in May of 1916, Dr. Waggoner had been holding studies on "Righteousness by Faith". One morning I stepped in to listen. What wonderful truth from the lips of a wonderful preacher. Right up to the day of his funeral his favorite Bible theme was "Christ and His Righteousness."

All through his several books it is the theme of "Christ and His Righteousness." Pearl and I have loaned to Elder L. E. Froom, permanently several of Dr. Waggoner's books. They were to be passed on by him finally to the James White Library. Elder Froom has some important secret letters in his files. Dr. J. H. Kellogg was a close family friend. He became mixed up in Pantheism. He tried to persuade Dr. Waggoner. The Lord warned the Doctor through Sister White. He heeded the warning. I will tell you about it and about a personal letter in the files of L. E. Froom.

Now Dr. Waggoner wrote a letter to Dr. Kellogg, trying to persuade him against Pantheism, but Dr. Kellogg would not listen. It is this letter that Elder Froom has.

Now a small writing of several pages, savoring of a tinge of Pantheism, was on the writing desk at Dr. Waggoner's when Pearl and I arrived from Washington D. C. for our visit. On

the back of this pad was written, “not for print.” Yet months later it was printed locally. Dr. E. J. Waggoner’s name was typewritten to end it. Now listen. I have good reason to believe that Edith wrote it and not the doctor.

Why, partly? Dr. Waggoner was a very strong believer in the atonement through Christ on the cross. It permeates all his books except “Fathers of the Catholic Church” which consists mainly of quotations from “Church Fathers.” A person who accepts the atonement through Christ cannot be a Pantheist. See *Ministry of Healing*, Chapter “A True Knowledge of God.”

Dr. E. J. Waggoner could not have been dropped from the church for apostasy because he never left the truth. He taught the truth to the day of his death.

Let us look briefly at his marriage. It was his wife, Jessie, who obtained the divorce right here in the states while he was on a trip to London. Now I am going to reveal a family secret—I am the only person still living at 86 who can reveal this secret. I do it only to clear Dr. E. J. Waggoner’s name, as I hope.

One day many years back Pearl, my wonderful wife, received a letter from her mother which made her very sad. Her mother had become engaged to a young Englishman from London. At this same time she applied for a divorce in California. Now this divorce was granted. And thus Jessie F. Moser Waggoner became a divorcee with the full intention of marrying this young Englishman. But something happened and she never did marry this young man. I had met him but Pearl and I opposed the move, very strongly.

At this very time Dr. E. J. Waggoner was in London. Of course he knew about it and had it been left to him there would never have been a divorce. Yet Doctor Waggoner was blamed for the divorce, and also because he remarried. It was only well after the divorce that he remarried. And before he

remarried he consulted with several of his very best friends, ministers, editors etc., both in England and the U.S.A.

And his two very best friends here in the U.S.A. were Elders W. A. Spicer and M. C. Wilcox, editor of the *Review and Herald*. Elder Spicer told me he had learned more Dr. E. J. Waggoner than from anyone living on this earth. I knew and loved the Spicer's, all the family except I only knew of a son. The same with M. C. Wilcox and brother. Wonderful men and wonderful S.D.A.'s and they were loyal, completely, to Dr. Waggoner. During the years of great trial for Dr. Waggoner these men stood by him.

Doctor Waggoner never criticized or showed any anger. He never opposed the truth, but always taught it. Pearl, my wife, says he was the finest Christian who lived. He never criticized the General Conference. He was happy that Pearl and I had been called to the mission field by the General Conference. He prayed for our success and for the Lord's work. I fully expect to see Dr. E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones in the kingdom. God will take care of the past, the present and the future.

Now a word about Jessie F. Moser Waggoner. She was sorry for some things she did, but she could not undo what she had done. She dropped Waggoner from her name. Dr. E. J. Waggoner was dropped from the church but Jessie F. Moser was not dropped. Now all this took place during a time of physical weakness in her life. Now there is never an excuse for sin, but God knows all the circumstances and He loves to receive the one who has made a mistake.

From *Selected Messages*, No.1, page 368, we read, "Christ looks at the spirit, and when He sees us carrying our burden with faith, His perfect holiness atones for our shortcomings. When we do our best, He becomes our righteousness." This is only one of dozens of similar quotations.

Jessie F. Moser, Pennsylvania Dutch, was very, very bright,

and a thorough going Christian S.D.A. She settled down in Glendale, California. Her elder daughter, Bessie I. Harrower, who was considered wealthy, provided her with a nice home on East Broadway across from the Harrower Laboratory. She became a member of the large Glendale Church. They constantly called upon her brilliant mind and talent to help out in the *Sabbath School Department*. She died in Glendale at the age of 84, heart failure, while sitting in an old fashioned rocker. She was not sick, same as Dr. E. J. Waggoner. I expect to meet her in the kingdom and also Dr. E. J. Waggoner.

While Pearl and I were in Battle Creek for a short time in 1916, part of May, June and July, A. T. Jones was in Kalamazoo, Michigan, holding an old fashioned S.D.A. public effort, and what did he preach? It was plain Seventh-day Adventist teaching. Jones was famous for his maps, and knowledge of history. He had been dropped from the church. I ask why? Please don't even try to answer. Leave it in the hands of God. A. T. was an old family friend. Pearl, when little, used to sit on his lap and listen to Bible stories. She loved Elder Jones and so did I. I expect to meet A. T. Jones in the Kingdom so soon to come.

I feel like writing much more. However, I have given enough for you to understand the reasons for some things. And how wonderful is our Heavenly Father and the wonderful message He has committed to us, the Remnant Church.

Ellis P. Howard

May 1, 1972

P.S. I have still some for the future if acceptable.

How I spend my sustentation years. Because of bad amoebic dysentery and ten years of malaria I was limited in my capacity to do things. Yet I won many to the truth,—one university graduate couple and five children, very bitter against the truth. And several more. An angel presence, beautiful light

floods my spirit of prophecy books by my side one night.

It must have been an angel which one day, I was about to have a real terrible collision. I must have been as close as an inch from the next auto ahead of me, and going at 20 miles per hour, and it must have been an angel who literally picked up my car and set it down in the next lane. Wonderful. But there is another similar.

My deepest and most interesting and absorbing spiritual thought for study has been "God's Love for a Lost Race." I divide this in about five thoughts not studies. They would consist of Bible texts, and spirit of prophecy quotations

I have felt so sorry through the years that Dr. Kellogg accepted Pantheism. I am sure the brethren tried to show him how wrong is Pantheism. It is a very subtle form of Pantheism. It is all through India. The giant banyan tree, hundreds, of years old, having withstood winds of one hundred miles an hour. It is beautiful and its shade is very welcome to scores of animals or man. The very long limbs have roots that drop down to the ground and support the limbs. Anyone can admire it. Certainly the unseen power of God manifest in this beautiful tree. But hidden in the admiration of God's beautiful creation there is danger lest we worship the tree and not the Creator.

Here are the beautiful flowers and God's power is manifest, but we must not worship the flower. To make out that nature is God is Pantheism. It can be a very subtle and deceptive form of spiritualism.

Dr. Kellogg removed a large internal tumor from my grandmother, free, in 1894.

