

Fruits of Obedience

“Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8).

Young’s Concordance gives the meaning of “obedient” in our text as “harkening submissively.”

God has created and formed all things, and for His pleasure they are and were created, and in His great wisdom and love He has subjected all creation to certain fixed principles and laws. All the heavenly bodies obey His voice; yes, in Isaiah 40:26 we read “Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, not one of them is missing.” Indeed, if it were not so, we realise that only confusion and chaos would eventuate, but the Psalmist exultingly exclaims — “For the choir director. A Psalm of David. The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands” (Psalms 19:1 NASB).

On the earth also, we see all around us this principle of obedience to our wonderful Creator. In insect life it is evident in the ants and bees; This instinct which God has implanted in their tiny brains gives them an uncanny ability to organise and work for their sustenance and preservation in such a way that also helps us as we consider them. They understand that to obey this instinct means to them life and happiness: to disobey, death. In all other kinds and varieties of animals, we see this law of obedience carried out — in plant life, bird life, animal life, and so on.

With man, the highest order of God’s creatures on this earth, it is different; in His great wisdom God has allowed man the choice to be able to obey or to disobey. God created Adam perfect, with full ability to love and obey Him as he should have done. In his trial and judgment, as we know, Adam disobeyed and brought upon himself and his children the condemnation and sentence of death, fulfilling the Lord’s warning that, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into

the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12 NASB).

Ancient Worthies

In the ancient worthies we have set before us an example of faithful obedience to the Lord’s commands; they believed in the Lord’s promises and carried out His instructions to the very best of their ability, and under such trying circumstances. Of these Paul says, “who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others experienced mocking and scourging, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and

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holes in the ground. And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11:33-40 NASB).

The Psalmist tells us also, that these shall be made “princes in all the earth” (Psalms 45:16).

Israel

To the children of Israel God said, ‘Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel” (Exodus 19:5-6 NASB). However, they proved themselves to be a disobedient and stiff-necked people, rebelling against the Lord; they walked not in His statutes, neither kept His judgments.

So the Lord repeatedly chastised them, in raising up the various nations against them, who led them away as captives into bondage. When they cried to Him for deliverance, He harkened to them and released them, but because of their idolatrous ways, they were finally left in bondage. At the time of our Lord’s first advent only a remnant was able to see in Jesus their long looked for Messiah; but to those who received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to those who harkened submissively to him — Israelites indeed (John 1:11, 12).

Jesus

In our wonderful Saviour, we see perfect obedience; it was His greatest joy to carry out His Father’s will; He found all His happiness in completing and carrying to fruition God’s plans. Of him it is written — “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. From everlasting I was established, From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills I was brought forth; While He had not yet made the earth and the fields, Nor the first dust of the world.

“When He established the heavens, I was there, When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep, When He made firm the skies above, When the springs of the deep became fixed, When He set for the sea its boundary So that the water would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth; Then I was beside Him, as a master workman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, Rejoicing in the world, His earth, And having my delight in the sons of men” (Proverbs 8:22-31 NASB).

In God’s due time, the Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). And although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became



Jesus was made flesh, and dwelt among mankind.

to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 5: 8-10 NASB). Thus the Apostle Paul explains that our Lord, already undefiled, perfect, already a Son, already fully obedient to the Father under favourable conditions, learned what it means to be obedient under the most adverse conditions; yes, He was despised and rejected of men, made Himself of no reputation, had nowhere to lay His head, bore the oppositions of sinners against Himself with such humbleness and patience, and is such an inspiration to Christians everywhere.

Thus, our Lord Jesus demonstrated before the Father, before angels, and before His brethren, His obedience and fidelity to the Father, and to the ‘principles of the Father’s government. He magnified the Father’s law and made it honourable, demonstrating that it was not too exacting; that it was not beyond the ability of a perfect being, even under adverse conditions. Wherefore, because of His great obedience, God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth (Philippians 2:8-10).

His Followers

We, His followers, may well rejoice, saying — “Worthy the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing” (Revelation 5:12 NASB) Yes, well may we rejoice in the wonderful privileges that the Father has extended to the Bride class in this age; those whom He has called and drawn to Jesus, begotten by the Word of truth, shown the way to present their bodies living sacrifices, and helped and encouraged in every conceivable way to press forward towards the mark for this wonderful prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ. Our finite minds are indeed staggered at the greatness of the prize, to partake of His nature,

the highest form of spirit beings, next to the Creator Himself, to have immortality, deathlessness, to see Jesus and to be enabled to engage and co-operate in the wonderful work of the kingdom. This latter thing in itself would be a wonderful privilege — to be able to help the poor groaning creation of mankind up out of the degradation of sin and death, along the highway of holiness, back to the lost dominion in paradise; to help in the restitution of all things spoken by all God’s holy prophets since the world began; to assist mankind to harken submissively to the voice of that great Prophet, that they too may become sons of God.

Love and Obedience

These are some of the fruits of obedience, and as Paul expresses it, “To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile, but glory, honour and peace to every man that worketh good” (Romans 2:7-10). Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

Yes, love is the spring of obedience, and our love is manifested to everyone by the way we try to walk humbly in His steps; we are living epistles, known and read of all men; may we so walk that our every thought, word and action will bring honour to Jesus, and glorify our loving Father in the heavens. We will also experience great joy in doing these things in obedience to His commands.

So, the Psalmist bids all the anointed body rejoice, saying, “Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, for praise is comely for the upright” (Psalms 33:1). And Isaiah, speaking for the same class, says, “I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As

a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels” (Isaiah 61:10 NASB).

Even though, for the time, we must suffer certain trials and tests, which are necessary for the testing of our faith, we can, like our Master, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross and despised the shame, saying through the Psalmist — “You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever” (Psalms 16:11 NASB).

Abide in Jesus

Those, then, who abide in Jesus and obey His voice have that legacy of peace, for He said “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful” (John 14:27 NASB). This is not a worldly peace, not the peace of indifference nor of self-indulgence, but is the peace of Christ, His peace. It is a peace that implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice, and power — which remembers all these precious promises made to the Lord’s faithful, that nothing shall by any means hurt His jewels, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God.

This peace can accept by faith whatever divine love permits and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the fulfilment of all that the Master has promised, and of which the present joy and peace are merely foretastes. As Brother Paul says, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18 NASB). And as Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Revelation 3:20-21 NASB).

The Light of the Word

“The light of the Word shines brighter and brighter,
As wider and wider God opens my eyes;
My trials and burdens seem lighter and lighter,
And fairer and fairer the heavenly prize.

“The wealth of this world seems poorer and poorer,
And farther and farther it fades from my sight;
The prize of my calling seems surer and surer,
As straighter and straighter I walk in the light.

“My praise and thanksgiving are swelling and swelling,
As broader and broader the promises prove;
The wonderful story I’m telling and telling,
And more and more sweetly I rest in his love.”

“My waiting on Jesus is dearer and dearer,
As longer and longer I lie on his breast;
Without him I’m nothing seems clearer and clearer,
And more and more sweetly in Jesus I rest.

“My joy in my Savior is growing and growing,
As stronger and stronger I trust in his Word;
My peace like a river is flowing and flowing,
As harder and harder I lean on the Lord.

The Lamb of God

*“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened.
For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7).*

Jehovah God swore a covenant of blessing. He used the Passover Lamb to deliver His people from bondage; we too memorialize annually our Passover Lamb, Jesus, even today (the eve of Nisan 14). It is a Memorial of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The Lamb and the Promise Covenant

The first suggestion in the Bible of offering a lamb is when God told Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a burnt-offering. Isaac inquired where the lamb¹ for a burnt-offering is? Only to be told it is he. Then God substituted a ram,² a matured lamb, at the last minute (Genesis 22). Evidently, God intended this to be a type of Jesus Christ. Thus, John the Baptist said of Jesus, “Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

God had made a promise to Abraham that if he would go to a land He would show him, he would receive a blessing. With Abraham’s heart-wrenching obedience, God expanded on that promise by changing four parts of that promise:

Genesis 12:3 (RVIC)

“in **thee** shall all the **families**
of the **land** be **blessed**.”

Genesis 12:18 (RVIC)

“in **thy seed** shall all the **nations**
of the **earth** **bless themselves**.”

“In thee” (where Isaac and his other progeny yet were) becomes “in thy seed” (now that Isaac had been born). “Families” becomes “nations.” Not only of the local “land,” but now to be of the whole “earth.” Not only will heaven bless those on earth, but people on the earth will bless one another. These latter were in the promise God confirmed with an oath that He would do. And from Isaac was Jesus ultimately born.

Lamb of God in the World’s Exodus

The Passover “lamb” was the centerpiece of the Exodus, God bringing Israel out of the land of Egyptian bondage. That was to typify Jesus Christ’s sacrifice to bring the whole world out of bondage to sin, sickness, sorrow and death.

The overall typical picture begins with Moses coming to Egypt (Exodus 4:27-6:13), which typifies Jesus in His First Advent. The ten plagues span the Gospel Age, with the last plague completing the

church of the firstborn, while the firstborn of Egypt are being destroyed (heirs of the kingdom of this world in Armageddon). Institution of the Passover, centered around the Passover Lamb, leads to the deliverance of Jehovah’s people (Israel, spiritual or fleshly).³ Then follows the seven-day Feast of Passover, divided into three parts: The first three days picture the thousand-year Kingdom of Christ, the fourth day Satan’s “short time” or “little season,” and days five to seven the perfect ages of eternity (Exodus 12:37, 13:20, 14:2; 14:3-30, 15:22).

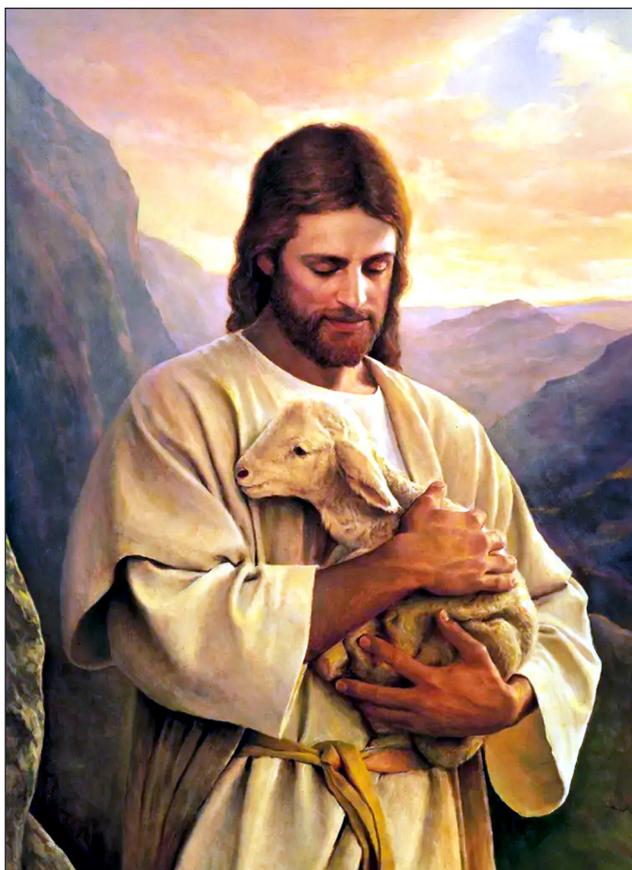
One may observe in Exodus 12 that the Passover Lamb was to be “without blemish,” neither raw nor boiled, eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. “Our Passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ” (1 Corinthians 5:7-8 ASV). His sacrifice withstood the entire heat of sacrifice, not raw nor sodden with water. And it is for the Christian to partake of His ransom price with “unleavened bread” (uncorrupted truth in the word of God); we are to purge out the old Adamic leaven, and not replace it with malice and wickedness. Also, with “bitter herbs,” meaning “ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:6-7). It is for us not only to be grateful to Him for His great sacrifice of Himself — for salvation of us and all — but to follow in His footsteps as best each of us is able.

(Some may wonder how the Passover Lamb may be shown not at the beginning of the plagues but at the end. Christ’s sacrifice was at the beginning of the Gospel Age, not at the end. The Passover was established as a Memorial (Exodus 12:14). Apparently, it is to show that the work of Christ’s First Advent — giving himself a ransom for all — was essential to the deliverance of the people. A similar question might arise in Revelation 16:15-16, where “Behold, I come as a thief” is associated with Armageddon. But again, the work of Christ’s Second Advent⁴ is shown to be necessary for the deliverance of the people — the whole remaining world of mankind.)

Four Necessary Steps

There were four necessary steps to Jesus’ sacrifice; only the last one is also sufficient.

(1) It was at the River Jordan, when Jesus was baptised by John, that His ransom sacrifice was promised, committed (John 1:29). (2) Jesus’ crucifixion at Calvary completed the ransom (Hebrews 2:9, 7:26-27. The “money” was available, but there was as yet no owner to pay it.) (3) Two days later God resurrected Jesus, so both the ransom price and its



Jesus, our Passover Lamb

owner are there (1 Corinthians 15:13-14), but the price has not yet been offered, either for the church or for the world. (4) Forty days later, Jesus ascended “into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us” (Hebrews 9:24 ASV). Then was Jesus’ ransom price offered — an offering for sin — on behalf of the church (though the world must still wait for it to be offered on their behalf).

“Ye Were Bought with a Price” (1 Corinthians 6:20)

The church could not be with Jesus when He offered the ransom price on behalf of the church, but they will be with Jesus when it is offered on behalf of the world. The church does not add anything to Christ’s ransom sacrifice; it cannot, for two reasons. (1) We cannot, because “all our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment” (Isaiah 64:6 ASV). (2) Because Jesus died “once for all,” what can anyone add once the price is already paid in full?

Although the faithful church cannot add anything to the price, they will be with Jesus when His ransom is applied on behalf of the ancient worthies and the rest of the world: “God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11:39-40 ASV).

Jesus the Prophesied Messiah

The Gospel according to Matthew cites Jesus fulfilling Old Testament Prophecies more than any of the three other Gospels.

Matthew, written originally in Hebrew,⁵ notes 14 generations each: Abraham to David, to the Babylonian captivity of Jehoiachin, to Jesus Christ. In Hebrew or Aramaic (not in Greek, etc.) the alphabetic numerics of the name David (Dvd, 6 + 4 + 6) is 14, showing Jesus to be the prophesied son of David (2 Samuel 7:12-17).

Isaiah 7:14 had prophesied, “The Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,” which was fulfilled in Jesus’ birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:22-23). Though people calling Jesus “Immanuel” (God is with us) might await his Kingdom.

Micah 5:2 had prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David (1 Samuel 16:1, 13, Matthew 2:4-6). Again, God alone could have him born there.

When Jesus was but a few months old, the wise men from the East brought to the family gold, frankincense and myrrh. The gold and frankincense may have been prophesied in Isaiah 60:6. But the fragrant myrrh was also used in burying the dead (John 19:39 ASV).⁶ Together they would have financed the family’s journey to Egypt; so that “Out of Egypt did I call my son” (Matthew 2:11-15, Hosea 11:1). Here, as often, there was a literal event which was a type of a grander fulfillment centuries later.

“There shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse [father of king David and ancestor of Jesus Christ], and a branch [Hebrew, *netzer*] out of his roots shall bear fruit” (Isaiah 11:1). So when Herod was dead, and his son, Herod Archelaus, had taken over Judea, Joseph took the family to Galilee, beyond Archelaus’ control. They settled at Nazareth (City of branches) (Matthew 2:23).

Isaiah 9:1 had prophesied, “In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.” Was Jesus consciously fulfilling the prophecy when “he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth (in the land of Zebulun), he came and dwelt in Capernaum (in the land of Naphtali), which is by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali”? (Matthew 4:12-16).

Beginning at Jesus’ Baptism

Jesus was likely born on Wednesday, BC 2, October 1 (Rosh HaShannah, the Jewish New Year that year), though possibly a few days later. If he was baptized on the first Sabbath after the Feast of Tabernacles, AD 29 October 12-18 (Wednesday-Tuesday), it would have been Saturday, October 22. Counting that as Day 1, and his crucifixion was AD 33 April 3, his ministry was 1260 days long (“From Jordan to Golgotha,” *Beauties of the Truth*, February 2011).

Jesus’ consecrated life began with His baptism in the River Jordan. Forthwith, in the wilderness Jesus fasted forty days (without food, but likely not without

water. Matthew 3:16-4:11). Then the tempter said, “If thou art the Son of God, command that thee stones become bread,” telling Him to use His God-given power to satisfy Himself. Again, appealing this time to lust for power, the devil offered Him all the kingdoms of the world if He would fall down and worship him. (Had Jesus succumbed, would we think that the devil would have kept that promise?) Appealing to the desire to be honored, the devil quoted scripture (Psalm 91:11-12). Yet all three times, Jesus quoted scripture in refusing temptation.

As Jesus was tested before embarking on His ministry; so also must the faithful members of the church be tested before becoming the priesthood under Jesus Christ for the Millennial Age.

Jesus’ Priorities

The focus of Jesus ministry was to provide atonement for all mankind. “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). Not for a few, but for many. For how many? “There is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself having been a man, Christ Jesus, the one having given himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be born in its own seasons” (1 Timothy 2:5-6 RVIC). There are two seasons of redemption: the Gospel Age for the church, and the Millennial Age for the world.

Had the Lamb of God not given himself as the ransom-price for all of Adam’s race, nothing else He could do for mankind could last.

“As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). Some say, Yes, all who believe in Christ shall be made alive. But do only believers die in Adam? If Jesus Christ died “once for all,” should not all benefit?

Developing the Church to be a Priesthood

Before Jesus’ First Advent, John saw “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” Afterwards, he saw “a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven heads and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth” (Revelation 4:5, 5:6). The holy Spirit was sent only after Christ sacrificed Himself. These seven Spirits were the seven times the holy Spirit speaks to the seven periods developing the faithful church in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. This has been Jesus’ highest priority during the Gospel Age. The prime duties of a priesthood are sacrifice and blessing (in that order; e.g., Leviticus 9:1-21, 22-23). The sacrifice comes first (also for us, Romans 12:1).

1 Peter 3:10 tells us of another work Christ has for “the last day” of the Gospel Age. “The day of the Lord will have come as a thief, in the

which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be exposed” (2 Peter 3:10 RVIC). The world will have to see the full consequences of sin and death to be fully ready for the Kingdom in righteousness.

The Priority in the Coming Age

Ultimately, Christ’s third priority is to raise and restore to perfection all the peoples of the earth. “The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law” (Hebrews 7:12). The law of the covenant is described by the prophet, “This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days [of the Gospel Age], saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for I will forgive their iniquity [during the Millennial Age], and their sin [of all preceding ages] will I remember no more” (Jeremiah 31:33-34).

The Millennial Age will be a mixture of right and mistakes, but the right will progressively prevail (Zechariah 14:6-7, 15-19). That it is foreshadowed by the Feast of Tabernacles [Sukkoth] shows that it is a temporary, remedial period. There will remain a final exam, Satan’s “little season” (“short time;” Revelation 20:7-10 RVIC). After that, the whole of mankind will be in complete harmony with God, and they will so live forever.

Our Memorial of Jesus Christ

We were instructed to remember Jesus Christ’s sacrifice “once for all,” just as Israel was instructed to annually remember their Exodus from Egypt, and the Passover Lamb associated with it. “This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19, 1 Corinthians 5:7, 11:24).



Jesus at the Last Supper

Luke presents the elements of the Memorial sequentially, whereas Matthew 26:26-29 and Mark 14:22-25 present them topically. It appears:

(1) As they sat down for a last meal, Jesus said that he would not eat of the Passover meal⁷ until it would be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God (Luke 22:15-16).

(2) Next, Jesus said that he would not again drink “of the fruit of the vine (unfermented grape juice?), until the kingdom of God shall come” (Luke 22:17-18).

(3) As they were eating, “he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19).

(4) “And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you” (Luke 22:20 ASV).

The first two references to the meal and the fruit of the vine express Jesus’ feelings about this last meal with his disciples. #3 and 4 give us instructions for our Memorial observances. Our attention is to be focused on Jesus. “This do in remembrance of me.”

The Apostle Paul addresses divisions among the Corinthians (and us?) and then relates it to the Memorial observances. “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? seeing that there is one bread, we, who are many are one body” (1 Corinthians 1:10-16, 4:6, 10:16-17 RVIC^{mg}). It is as if to say to each student, Once you have chosen your professor [Saviour], you

cannot also choose your fellow students. If we partake of Christ, we are one class, one “body” — no room to squabble.

Again, Jesus said, “This do in remembrance of me.”

(1) Lamb (*seh*, S7716), a lamb (of sheep or goats). (*New Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies*).

(2) Ram (*ayil*, S352), the principal of the flock. (*New Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies*).

(3) The firstborn are first to be delivered from death, by resurrection in “the last day.” The rest of the people (world) are delivered from bondage in the Millennial Morning.

(4) Christ’s Second Advent is shown in Exodus 8:20-23, where Jehovah separates the LORD’s people, and Moses takes the dominant role in administering the remaining seven last plagues. In Revelation it is shown in Revelation 15:5-8, where the Temple is opened (dedicated) long before it is completed (Revelation 16:17, “It is done,” like our Lord’s words on the cross, “It is finished.” Similarly, Solomon’s Temple was dedicated in the 7th month but not completed until the 8th month (1 Kings 8:2, 6:38). In each case it suggests Christ at His return raises the saints that have already successfully completed their courses in death long before the church is complete.

(5) In the early second century, Papias wrote, “Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them [into Greek?] as best he could.” (*The Apostolic Fathers*, editors J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, 1891)

(6) Myrrh is viscous and acts like a glue that hardens in 24 hours. Thus, Jesus’ grave clothes might have remained a hollow shell even after Jesus’ body was gone. If so, it was undeniable evidence of his God-given resurrection.

(7) The institution of the Memorial Supper was at the beginning of Passover season and may be referred to as a Passover meal, even though it be prior to the meal prescribed with Passover lamb.

Need for Self Control

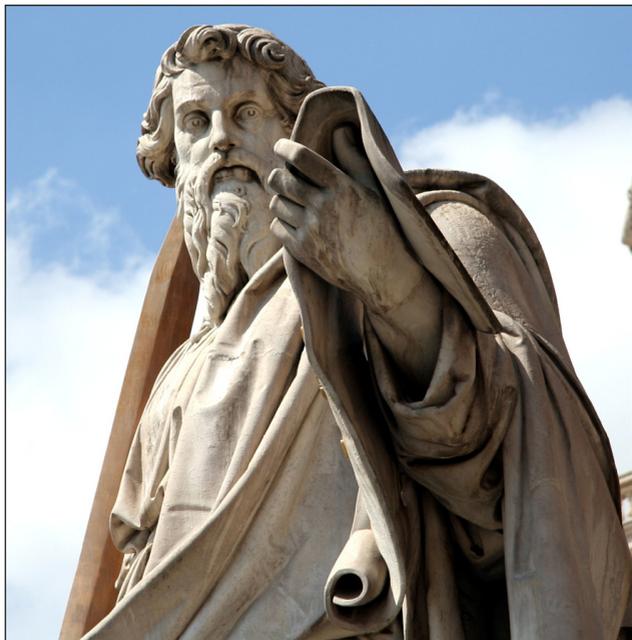
“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; And he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city” (Proverbs 16:32 ASV)

This subject of controlling self is a principle essential to all true Christians seeking to walk as nearly as possible in the Master’s footsteps. Our firm aim must be to learn to know what is to be controlled, and then to endeavour to do our best, looking to our Lord to help us. As all mature Christians well know, faith may be said to have in it two elements, intellectual perception and heart reliance. Both the intellect and the affections are necessary, and both must be rightly directed and controlled if we are to gain that kind of character without which it is impossible to please God.

The trial to which our Lord and the Apostles refer is a trial not only of the intellectual knowledge of Divine truth, but also of the heart’s trust and reliance upon God. In both respects the true child of God will find himself severely tested.

It is apparent in our times that a large number of the brethren have attached undue importance to the mental or intellectual phase of their faith, a head knowledge, to the neglect of the heart appreciation of the truth. They have failed to devote proper attention to the qualities of holiness, righteousness, Christian forbearance, and love, such qualities as enter so largely into the composition of the character-likeness of Christ that alone will win a place in the kingdom of God.

It is evident that one may receive a large intellectual knowledge of the Truth, he may be able to discern many of the fine lines and points with regard to some of the doctrines, so far as the letter or theory of the Truth is concerned, and at the same time may have little or none of the real power of the Truth in his heart or life, and be greatly lacking in those essential



Apostle Paul, author of 1 Corinthians 13

elements that go to make up a truly religious life such as is analysed by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13th chapter. May we not in this way account for the lack of true piety, or love and brotherly kindness amongst the brethren today? Is it not because of too much theory, and too small a measure of religion in the heart that there is so much of the spirit of self-seeking and contention abroad amongst professing brethren, resulting in many bitter controversies and divisions? It would seem so!

It Has a Place

In learning to control self we certainly need to be engaged in the intellectual study and searching of the Word. But let us remember that the primary object is to reach the heart and effect the change there if we would be acceptable to God and make any progress in the development of character. Does not St. Paul tell us that “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal,” and does he not add, “Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all (that is, intellectual) faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing?” (1 Corinthians 13:1-2). The object, then, of all the revelation, of all the knowledge received through the intellect is to acquaint the child of God with the divine will, that he may become informed as to what are his duties, and the part he must perform if he would permanently secure the favour of God and the crown of life which He has promised to them that love Him.

In controlling ourselves we would need to be careful of one important trait of character of which those who may have an inclination to be heady and esteem themselves should beware; that is conceit, or pride. This arises from too low an estimate of other men. Estimates of ourselves as well as of other

men are relative. All self-measurements involve measurements of others. The only way by which the conceit can be taken out of a man effectually is by bringing him into a clear comparison and sharp competition with others. The more widely and truly we know men, the more we shall see we are frequently equalled and surpassed. Candid estimates of ourselves by comparison with others will make us think soberly and judge ourselves modestly. Conceit has no more fruitful root than a narrow knowledge and prejudiced estimate of the labours and worth of others. Conceit involves a faulty self-knowledge.

It is noticeable that a person who thinks most highly of himself or herself is one of whom others of a right mind think little. The conceited man has only one ardent admirer, and that is himself. A true self-knowledge reveals our faults to us and gives us a true view of ourselves. It lets the light in upon our narrow prejudices and makes us ashamed of them. It discloses the insufficient grounds of many of our judgments and unearths the subtle process of our self-deception. It lays bare the operation of motive and shows how often conscience itself is made a mere convenience.

Humility

Self-knowledge humbles a man. The Word of the Lord speaks truly when it says, “The heart (the natural fallen heart of man) is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). Those who think themselves complete beyond other men commonly stand alone in that opinion. They are apt to think themselves complete only because, while they keenly perceive other’s faults, they are blind to their own. In this view lies almost the only excuse which can be given for the man of inordinate self-conceit. It implies intellectual weakness, and incapacity for keen discernment. God dulls the discernment of such, as it reads in Matthew 11:25 where Jesus answered, “I thank thee, Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them unto babes.”

The Apostle gives us a reason in 1 Corinthians 1: 27-29, “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. And base things of the world _and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence.” Does it not also say in Isaiah 5:21, “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes.”

The wise man informs us of the greatness of ruling our own spirit, and how can we do better than by giving strict attention to the influence of thought in the development of character? If we can control that part, how great an achievement would be accomplished; for our thoughts are the invisible influences which give completion to our lives. If, then, we would control ourselves and live good and worthy lives we must not

suffer our thoughts to become guilty thoughts, nor even allow them to be vacant thoughts. We must fill them with things of the spirit. How can we best do this? Best by forgetting ourselves, best by obliterating our own selfish will, best by thinking wholly of others and of God; for in the true life there are three factors — God, the soul, and our fellow men. Our duty to our own soul is best summed up in our duty to God and our duty to our fellow men.

The Heart

When the wise man admonishes, “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23), he is telling us to guard carefully our hearts; to watch our meditations, to carefully consider what motives and purposes control and guide us in the course we are pursuing in life. Thoughts about God and contemplations of His character, and the great qualities thereof cannot but have an elevating effect upon every soul that is really consecrated to Him. One writer says, “Very few of us, I fear, very few even of the best of us, think enough of God. How many a life has been kept humble, and pure, and sweet, by the living realisation of that one truth — Thou, God, seest me.”

We realise how all of us are affected and made better in our hearts by the mere presence of someone to whom we can look up as good and true. All mankind are born with more or less of determination. Some have this in a very marked degree, others in a lesser degree, but we find that whether our wills are strong or weak, they need direction.

We need to be careful not to pervert sound judgment. It would be disastrous to us to yield ourselves to passion, to allow it to sweep over us and master us, whether we are weak-minded or strong-minded.

We are to rule our own mind, our natural impulses. This means that if a thought presents itself to the mind, or if we feel a certain impulse, we should be quick to perceive the nature of the thought or impulse, and if it is not in harmony with the principles of righteousness or with our covenant as children of God we should at once resist it. (See Galatians 5:16.) If we are unable

to do this successfully of ourselves, as is often the case, the heart should be promptly lifted to the Lord for His promised grace to help in time of need. If we feel an impulse toward a certain action or course, we should carefully weigh the matter and decide as to its righteousness or propriety in the circumstances, looking to our unfailing source of help for guidance. The world would think that this is too exacting, they would have more pleasure in doing their own will. But we know that in doing their own will they frequently get into trouble.

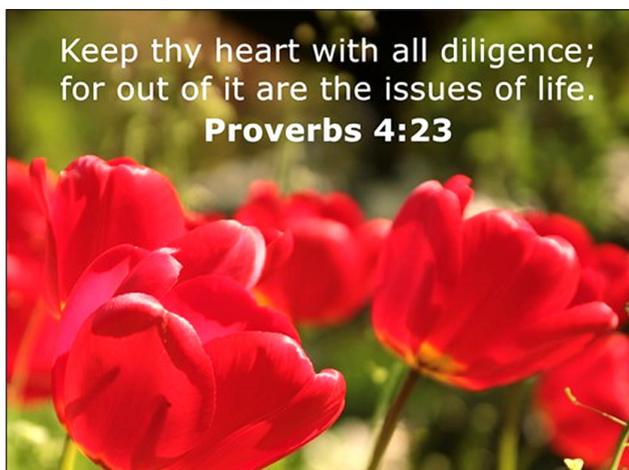
Not Our Own Will

A Christian has covenanted not to follow his own will. The more advanced the Christian, the more should we expect that he would be able to rule his spirit, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the will of God in Christ. If we rule our mind, our thoughts, we shall rule our tongue. If the thoughts were not in the mind the tongue would not utter them. There is great danger of saying or doing things under a momentary impulse which our heart — our consecrated judgment — would not approve; hence the necessity of bringing our thoughts and impulses into subjection. We should consider what would be the effect of our words or our actions upon another. Would they cause any harm or ill-feeling? The Apostle urges us to “Consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.”

By thus scrutinising ourselves, by thus controlling ourselves, we are showing our earnest desire of heart to be pleasing to the Lord and true to our covenant. And those who learn to rule their own spirit according to the will of the Father are the ones whom He will be pleased to make joint heirs with His Son in His Kingdom.

In what way can a Christian cultivate the disposition to control himself? At first the individual has not the power to rule himself in everything, but as he learns to exercise control in the little things, more and more in thought and word and deed, doing what he can in this direction, he will gain in strength of character. If we daily practise controlling ourselves, we shall gradually attain a strong character along this line, which will be of inestimable advantage to us in our Christian warfare. There is no place in our daily walk where the proof of our ability to rule our spirit can be shown to greater advantage than in our own home.

With husband and wife, with parent and child, with brother and sister, this is an important matter. The battle with ourselves is the greatest battle we have to fight. Moral strength is infinitely nobler than the greatest degree of physical strength or the most scientific strategy. It is only after we have become masters of our own flesh, after we have conquered ourselves, and after we have cast the beam from our own eyes, when we have subdued anger, malice, hatred and strife in our own hearts, that we are enabled by means



A good reminder

of these severe battles with our own weaknesses to assist the brethren, to assist our neighbours, to aid them by our example, in overcoming their besetment's and infirmities.

To control ourselves implies a great conflict; for no matter where we begin, we find entrenched within us many armed and opposing powers. They have possession, they are there as the result of heredity. If we have passed the days of youth, they are the more strongly entrenched, and it requires the greater skill and generalship to rout them out. But whether early or late, such as would succeed in life's battle of self-control must fight the good fight of faith. They must fight a good warfare to the very end. If the children of God would be victors in this battle, they must storm the fortresses of the inherited evils which seem to be part of their natures.

Assistance

We all realise that to control oneself is by no means an easy task; it cannot be done single-handed. Therefore, those who are wise will seek what assistance they have at their command; for as the Apostle says, "We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). As we well know, the world, the flesh, and the devil are powers that are closely allied, and all individuals who have taken it upon themselves to go into combat with these allied forces must seek an alliance with another and stronger power, or else they will soon be overcome in the battle.

This power is tendered to all who earnestly undertake this great work. It is none other than the almighty arm of our God: "Greater is he that is with you than all they that be against you." There is an old saying, "Where there's a will there's a way," for good or for evil. God will assist through various agencies for good, Satan through various agencies toward evil. If the will says it must be done, it calls in the needed help that is available; and forthwith it will set the other faculties of the mind at work, first to subjugate, and then to regulate the entire being.

Conscience must be alert and keep a vigilant watch over all the mental operations. Then, under the influence of conscience, judgment must decide as to the righteousness of any matter. If the will be weak it will be irregular in its rulings; and the governing of such is apt to be unstable and perhaps ultimately wholly at the mercy of the fallen appetites, passions and ambitions. It is all important, therefore, that they will be entirely consecrated to God and righteousness, and that it strengthen itself in the Lord; and in His Name and strength strive to rule with a firm hand, always humbly looking for His guidance in all of life's affairs.

One member of our body we must particularly strive to control is the tongue; for how much evil has been engineered by an uncontrollable tongue. It is written



Jesus, giving good advice

in Matthew 12:36, "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." From our Lord's comments at various times on the subject of the tongue, we realise that in His day there must have been some seriously wrong condition prevailing amongst those with whom He came in contact. The scribes and Pharisees attributed evil power to Him, and declared that He was the tool of Satan, that Satan was speaking through Him. In the beginning our Lord told them in a general way that they deceived themselves. Later He reproved them severely and showed the fallacy of their arguments. (See Matthew 23rd chapter.)

The Tongue

More and more we realise the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that, although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. "If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man" (James 3:2). We cannot possibly estimate the results of our words. This influence may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore, we have here a disposition of character which needs controlling; and are to consider carefully what we may say in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether they will dishonour Him, whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others, or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

God in His wisdom has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus, we are making or marring character continually. It is well that we should all realise this fact. All Christians should understand this principle; for they are now on trial for glory, honour and immortality. Therefore, by neglecting to weigh carefully their words, they may lose the great prize for which they are striving. There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words, and from the standpoint of our Lord this is murder. Thus, at the end of the Jewish Age the scribes and Pharisees criticised and slandered our

Lord. Although from their knowledge of the Law they knew that they would be accountable for their actions, yet they did not appreciate the fact that they would be judged by their words.

Under stress of sudden temptation, the Lord's people who are now on judgment may impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must learn not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right, we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God. So long as Satan and his emissaries are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. The Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me." (See Psalms 39:1, Ephesians 4:19-32).

Just

Amongst the Lord's people it is very important that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet justice is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord. In dealing with others, a Christian will think, what are the rights of others, and what would the heavenly Father have me to do? It is very natural for one to recognise his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore, one of the most important lessons to be learned is to do unto others as we would have others do to us — simple justice.

One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavours to the contrary. Many of the Lord's people find that while their hearts are well intentioned there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. There is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to what kind of treasure will be stored up. In laying up good treasures in our hearts and minds we are building character.

Preferences Demonstrate Character

Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences demonstrate his character. Thus, it is with all of us; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character. When we come to render up our account as new creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be associated with our Lord as members of His Bride. Only those who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of our Lord Jesus Christ will be fit for an inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way we now use our minds, and the thoughts which we now accumulate.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart, that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of grace divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly kindness, love, supreme reverence for God, and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness may be firmly fixed as the governing principle of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue and ourselves generally; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

The Potter's Hand

To the Potter's house I went down one day,
And watched him while moulding the vessels of clay,
And many a wonderful lesson I drew,
As I noted the process the clay went through.

Trampled and broken, downtrodden and rolled,
To render more plastic and fit for the mould.
How like to clay that is human, I thought,
When in Heavenly hands to perfection brought.

For Self must be cast as the dust at His feet,
Before it is ready for service made meet.
And Pride must be broken, and self-will lost —
All laid on the altar, whatever the cost;

But lo! by and by, a delicate vase
Of wonderful beauty and exquisite grace.
Was it once the vile clay? Ah, yes; yet how strange,
The Potter has wrought so marvelous a change!

Not a trace of the earth, nor mark of the clay,
The fires of the furnace have burned them away.
Wondrous skill of the Potter — the praise is his due,
In whose hands to perfection and beauty it grew.

Thus with souls lying still, content in God's hand,
That do not His power of working withstand.
They are moulded and fitted, a treasure to hold,
Vile clay now transformed into purest of gold.

— *M. F. Clarkson, R0464-3*

Bullock and Goat

The Bible Teachings (Part Twenty-Two) – Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin Offering, Atonement

Bullock and Goat Represented High priest

Both of these animals represented the High Priest: the bullock, our Lord and Head, and the goat, His body, the Church. When the high priest sprinkled the blood of the bullock, it represented “His own blood,” the merit of His own sacrifice. He applied it for us, not for the world; hence only believers and not the world in general have had the blessing secured by our lord’s sacrifice, thus far. Meantime, according to divine intention, the Church has been gradually in process of selection — according to willingness in sacrificing earthly interests — walking in the footsteps of our lord: filling up the sufferings of Christ; laying down their lives for the brethren. Our presentation of ourselves to the lord was at the door of the tabernacle, as represented by the tethering of the goat there.

Thus, we offered ourselves and, when we were accepted, our sacrifice as the lord’s goat class began. This acceptance was indicated by the killing processes. Henceforth we ceased to be men and were recognised on a new plane as “members of the Body of Christ,” without any headship of our own. Consequently, when at the end of the Day of Atonement sacrificing the anti-typical High Priest shall make a further presentation of the blood of the goat upon the mercy-seat, it will be “His own blood” in two senses of the word:

His Blood in Two Senses

It will be His own in the sense that all the merit was originally His and appropriated to us in order that we might have the opportunity to share with Him in sacrifice. The sacrificial merit merely passed through us, “the lord’s goat” class. We were favoured by the privilege accorded of “suffering with Him that (in due time) we might be also glorified together with Him.” It is not necessary to question whether our sacrifice could add anything to the merit of the transaction, because no more merit was necessary than that which our lord had and which He applied on our behalf.

Merit in Church’s Work

Undoubtedly there is a merit in the Church’s work, else the Scriptures would not so indicate. But if we were actually perfect instead of reckoned perfect, it would still be true that only one man was directly condemned by Justice and hence the death of only one man was needed to constitute the ransom-price of the whole world. Justice does not object to the extra sacrifice, however. Yet, Justice has promised a great reward to the 144,000 joint-sacrificers — that they may become joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, their Lord and Head. Justification is a free gift from God through

Jesus our lord; but “the high calling” is everywhere classed as a reward of merit intended only for “him that overcometh”; “They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy,” although when drawn by the Father to the Son we were “sinners,” “defiled,” “children of wrath”; “but ye are washed, ye are sanctified — but ye are justified in the name of our lord Jesus and by the spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Mean Things Made Clean

“That which God has cleansed call not thou unclean.” While God called “the mean things,” He does not leave them thus, but justifies by faith in Christ, and sanctifies by the Truth, by giving them opportunity to share in Christ’s sacrifice; to share in Christ’s “cup” of the blood of the New Covenant shed for them and for many; to share Christ’s baptism into death; thus to learn obedience even unto death in the school of Christ; and finally to share in His glory, honour and immortality — the divine nature. The cleansing of Justification by faith is for the very purpose of cleansing us that we might be acceptable sacrifices on His altar. See Malachi 3:3, Romans 12:1.

All the Church has Belongs to the Great Bridegroom

The blood (merit) which our lord will apply as soon as the Church shall have finished her share in His sacrifice will be “His own blood,” in the sense that He accepted or adopted us as His members, we lose our personality in the transaction in the same manner that a bride loses her name and her individuality at marriage. All that we have and are, belong to the great Bridegroom, and we are delighted that He is pleased to count us in with Himself in any sense of the word in connection with His sufferings of this present time, and glories which will follow.



A goat was used for a sin offering.

Lamb of God re Sin of the World

John the Baptist declared of Jesus, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!” The type of the Passover shows the death of the lamb only in connection with the firstborn of Israel. Its blood on the doorposts was for the protection of the firstborn, and not for the remainder of Israel. Since the firstborn represented “the Church of the firstborn” now in process of selection, and since the others of Israel represent those of the world who will ultimately be saved from the bondage of Pharaoh and Egypt (typifying Satan, sin and present worldly conditions), how can we apply John’s words, namely, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world”?

Only Church of First-born Passed Over

If there were no other Scriptures on the subject, we would be at a loss to know how to understand the discrepancy. However, other Scriptures show us that the Church of the Firstborn, passed over in this night of this Gospel Age, will be the Church of Glory soon. Then, under the headship of Christ, it will constitute a Royal Priesthood, which, during the Millennial Age, will bless mankind with assistance, instruction and uplifting influences of every kind. The lamb of God has not yet taken away the sin of the world. He began to lay down the ransom-price at His baptism at Jordan. He finished this at Calvary. He ascended on high with that price in His hand, so to speak, and presented it not for the world, but for the Church. As the Apostle declares, “He ascended up on high there to appear in the presence of God for us” — for the household of faith — for the antitypical priests and Levites. Other Scriptures show us that the merit of Christ when passed through the Church will be made available in the end of this age for the sin of the world. Thus and then the lamb of God will take away the sin of the world — in God’s due time and order.

Moses Not a First-born

The separateness of the types is here again duly noted: Moses was not one of the firstborns, but Aaron, his brother, was. In this type, therefore, Moses does not appear. Subsequently while all the passed-over ones were, by Divine direction, exchanged for the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe represented those firstborns, and Aaron, the high priest, became the representative of our lord, the High Priest of our profession or order.

The Ransom-Price and the Sin-Offering

The ransom price relates to the valuable thing itself, namely, the blood or death of Christ — a ransom price sufficient for the payment of the penalty of one member of the human family or of all, as it may be applied. The sin-offering shows the manner in which the ransom-price is applicable or effective to the cancellation of the sins of the whole world. As already



Jesus was the lamb of God.

shown, under Divine arrangement, the ransom price was first made effective toward the Church and justified freely every believer in an acceptable attitude of mind — an attitude of consecration to be a loyal follower of the lord Jesus. Secondly, at the end of this age, the ransom-price having been applied to the Church and used by her and laid down in death again, will be available in the hands of the great High Priest as the sin-offering, the Atonement price for the sins of the whole world — aside from the household of faith already justified through its merit.

Illustration of Difference Between Ransom and Sin-offering

Let us give an illustration: Suppose a man possessed a valuable property. Suppose a number of friends of his had been kidnapped and were held as hostages by bandits, a ransom-price being demanded for their release. Suppose that our friend sold his property and got the cash with a view to paying their ransom-price. That cash would be the ransom price for the liberation of his imprisoned friends. No less sum would do. No greater sum was necessary, for one or for all. The selling of the property and the getting of the ransom-price into his possession would not constitute a satisfaction for his friends. That must come later. At his convenience he could take this ransom-price and apply it for one of the captives or two or more, or even for all. The application of the money, whether in one portion or in different portions at different times, corresponds to the presentation of the sin-offering on behalf of sinners.

Providing vs. Paying Ransom Price

When the property was sold its money value was the ransom-price of those friends, even though not applied. So Jesus gave Himself, surrendered His life as a ransom-price sufficient for the sins of the whole world, and in the interest of the world of mankind. This work He began at Jordan and finished three and a half years later at Calvary. The moment He died the ransom-price was complete, was laid down. But this value was not turned over to Justice and made applicable to mankind when Jesus died, nor three

days later when He arose from the dead, nor forty days later when He ascended on high. A little later, after He had ascended on high, He appeared in the presence of God for us (for the household of faith) as our Redeemer, our Advocate, our great High Priest. He had in His possession the merit of His own sacrifice, the ransom-price and there and then He offered it on our behalf. This is shown in the type by

the high priest taking into the Most Holy the blood of the bullock, which represented His human sacrifice, the ransom-price which He possessed. He took that blood or ransom-price into the “Most Holy” and there sprinkled it upon the Mercy Seat and before the Mercy Seat, thus applying it for us (for His Body, the “little flock”) and for His house — the household of faith.

Diversity Amongst God’s People

“For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? (1 Corinthians 4:7 ASV).

While it is true that all men are born with inalienable rights and privileges, yet no man is born without sin. The Scriptures very properly declare that the race in Adam was sold under sin six thousand years ago. In this sense, then, we are not born free, but slaves of sin. Neither are we born equal. No two persons are exactly alike in opportunity, talent and ability. We differ from one another. God did not create some better and some worse — some more richly endowed and some less richly endowed.

We take the Bible statement of the origin of humanity and understand that God made Adam perfect. All the imperfections which encumber the human race are the results of the dying process. Sin has made us all to differ, then, from the original image and likeness of God. Satan brought that difference through Mother Eve. Apostle Paul states “for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23 ASV).

In our text the Apostle Paul has in mind a New Creation in Jesus Christ — a new order — amongst whose members there is a difference. Some in the Church have many talents, others have few; some have special talents, others ordinary talents. The Apostle says “Now hath God set the members each one of them in the body ... as it pleased him” (1 Corinthians 12:18 ASV). Thus, bringing forth different degrees of fruitage are manifestations of God’s grace in our hearts. Thus, we are made to differ from each other.

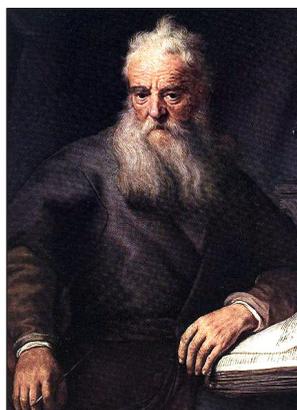
Growth in the holy spirit depends in large measure upon each one’s zeal to know, to do the will of God. We are put into the school of Christ to learn of Him. Some learn more rapidly, others less rapidly. In proportion as they learn they have greater opportunities and blessings. All are granted a measure of the holy spirit — all granted some blessing. Those who are anxious to know the will of the Lord and to study it grow the more rapidly, and thus have more of the holy spirit. These are zealous to do the Lord’s will; their progress is not attributable wholly to

themselves, but especially to the favour of God.

The Apostle goes on to say, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10 ASV). We could not do this work ourselves. The power that is working in us is of God. He is preparing a glorious Temple. He has provided who shall be the chief cornerstone of this Temple, and who shall be the members of this Temple class. We could not choose the place for ourselves, but in God’s providence we each responded to the call to be a living stone. The stones were first cut out of the dark quarry and now are being shaped and prepared for places in the glorious building.

The great Master-Workman is doing a work upon us; He is chiselling and fashioning us; He is making us what we are. Consequently, there is to be no boasting. There is a certain amount of personality connected with each one, however, and if there is too much cross-grain in the stone it will be abandoned. As the Apostle Peter exhorts, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time. The same Apostle also reminds us that we should look up to God and give Him praise for all that we have and are. “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time” (1 Peter 5:6 ASV).

We are co-labourers with God. We give God the praise that He has made us to differ from our former selves; that is making us thus to differ more every day, and that He will continue the good work as days go by and as we seek to do His will. What have we of ourselves? Nothing! We were wholly dead through Adam’s disobedience; we were born in this condition, having no right to everlasting life. But God has a plan which is world-wide in its scheme of blessing. He has offered the blessings of the highest feature of this Plan to us and invited us to come to Him in advance of the world; and this we receive through His grace.



The Apostle Paul

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The Bible Teachings

On the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom,
Sin Offering, and Atonement.

This book was published by the Berean Bible Institute in the 1970's and sets out the teachings from the Bible on topics which so eluded many in the Christian world. This edition of the Peoples Paper covers the next part of this 274-page book. For Brethren who would like to read more of the content, it is available at:

www.australianbiblestudents.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-Bible-Teachings-on-the-Covenants2.pdf

I Believe That ...

Our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become. Life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I respond to it. I remain in charge of my attitude. No matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you occasionally, and you must forgive them for that.

Just because someone does not love you the way you want them to, does not mean they don't love you with all they have. True friendship continues to grow, even over the longest distance. The same goes for true love. Its taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.

You should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them. You can keep going, long after you think you can't. We are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel. Either you control your attitude, or it controls you. Heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.

Money is a lousy way of keeping score. My best friend and I can do anything or nothing and have the best time. Sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down will be the ones to help you get back up.

Sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry, but that does not give me the right to be cruel. It isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself. No matter how badly your heart is broken, the world does not stop for your grief. Just because two people argue, it does not mean they do not love each other. And just because they do not argue, it does not mean they do.

Two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different. Your life can be changed in a matter of hours by people who do not even know you. Credentials on the wall do not make you a decent human being.

Even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, you will find the strength to help. Maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you have had and what you have learned from them, and less to do with how many birthdays you have celebrated.

— A. C. Frey Collection

Remember Me

According to Thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember Thee.

Thy body, given for my sake,
My bread from heaven shall be;
Thy testamental cup I take,
And thus remember Thee.

Gethsemane can I forget?
Or there Thy conflict see,
Thine agony and deep distress,
And not remember Thee?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my Sacrifice,
I must remember Thee.

Remember Thee and all Thy pains
And all Thy love to me;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains,
I will remember Thee.

Then of Thy grace I'll know the sum,
And in Thy likeness be,
When Thou hast in Thy kingdom come
And dost remember me.

Author: James Montgomery (1825)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-uga5cJSUg

