

Spiritual Call

A Continuance of "Macedonian Call"

To be carnally minded is death, but to be SPIRITUALLY minded is life and peace.

—Romans 8:6

Walk worthy of the vocation (calling) wherewith ye are CALLED.

—Ephesians 4:1

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"Unto Them that Love his Appearing"

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.—Paul in 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

These verses have been quoted very much in the Christian world, but we have emphasized the glorious conclusion of Paul's life nearly altogether, and have not noticed the promise that this crown of righteousness shall be given to "ALL them also that LOVE his APPEARING."

Most professed Christians today think little about the second coming of the Savior, and don't want to think about it. Many are afraid of it. I once talked on this subject, and after the meeting, a sister said that when she thought about the second coming of Christ, she shrank back. If such is our attitude, are we prepared to die?

The Lord has left the time of his coming indefinite so that his people would always be prepared, yet he has continually warned them that he may come at any time. True, many people speculate and even set the time when he will come, or other such event which belongs to God, and they fail; this failure has caused many to turn away altogether from the fact that he will come and that we know not the time.

It will be one of the most important events in the history of man. Paul thought so much about it, that he mentions it at the conclusion of every chapter of the 1 Thessalonian letter, and very much at length especially in the 4th and 5th chapters; and also in the 2nd Letter. Let us have the passages fresh in our minds.

"And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."—1 Thess. 1:10.

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"—2:19.

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward one another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you; to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."—3:12, 13.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—4:15-18.

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved

blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—5:23.

Read especially the 4th and 5th chapters.

Paul probably says as much in these two letters on the 2nd Coming, as in all his other writings. I have wondered. Here are a few facts you might curiously consider. Alexander the Great was a Macedonian. The city of Philippi was named after his father, and Thessalonica where Paul preached and established the church under great persecution, was named after Alexander's sister, Thessalonica. Alexander conquered the world, and was perhaps the most famous general that ever lived. No doubt the inhabitants were still thinking about and talking of the wonderful deeds of their great countryman, who lived no longer before them than the pilgrims lived before us, about whom we talk so much. But Alexander went away and conquered, and never returned to bless them. King Jesus went out and conquered the world through his soldiers of the Cross, but HE will return again, and will subdue all things unto Himself, and then will deliver the Kingdom to the Father.

Was Paul intimating such an idea as this?

But anyway, he is coming again, and we know not the hour. Many are not working for Him, and hence are not anxious to have him come and find them asleep. Many have never sacrificed anything for Him who gave his life for them; and they are not anxious for His coming. Others never have suffered persecution, though it is said that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." Many, most of us, have received talents to use for Him, but have laid them away in a napkin. And so we are not anxious for Him to come now. But he may come NOW. We do not "love his appearing."

But remember, that the "crown of righteousness" will only be given to "them that LOVE His appearing."

Is not this a good standard by which to measure our spirituality and our sincerity, if we are even fairly well informed?—are we anxious for Him to come now?

Brilliant, Wealthy, and Yet Unhappy

Two hundred years ago, 1749, Goethe was born in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Germany, and the world of letters is honoring his great genius this year. A secular paper says in an editorial: "Goethe was Germany's greatest poet, a major force in world literature. He also was a great novelist and dramatist, an able lawyer, statesman and scientist, even an inventor in his spare time; in short, a near-universal genius."

Many years ago, the writer of this appraisal took the trip up the Rhine, and stopped at Frankfurt, and visited the house where the great writer was born, and lingered in the museum on the premises which contained many reminiscences of his boyhood days. Also, I was interested in Frankfurt because it is close to the state of Hesse, whence my grand-

father came more than a hundred years ago, to escape the German militarism. A thousand years ago Charlemagne held a convocation of bishops and other dignitaries in Frankfurt. But—Goethe was a skeptic, and he has not been a moral force that we recommend, and he was unhappy.

Some of his writings are so nasty that translators refuse to bring them over into the English. He ruined the life of a German minister's daughter, and had "affairs" with married women. Though he no doubt wrote many good things, he lacked morality as a whole. What a pity that such talents could not have been used for righteousness! But he was idolized by people of the world in general, and his life in their eyes was a grand success. Yet in his old age "he said to Eckerman"—

"I have been esteemed one of Fortune's chiefest favorites; nor can I complain of the course my life has taken. Yet, truly, there has been nothing but toil and care and, in my seventy-fifth year, I may say that *I have never had four weeks of genuine pleasure.*"

Think of that, ye who pine for wealth and beauty and brilliancy and honor! He had them all, yet had not the one thing every one is seeking—genuine happiness.

You seek for wealth, yet there is probably more unhappiness of mind in the mansions of the rich than in the cabins of the poor. You seek for personal beauty, but it is empty and soon passes away. You crave brilliancy of mind that you may shine; possibly no man that ever lived possessed more of that than Goethe, and it failed to bring the genuine pleasure he longed for. You sacrifice everything for the applause of the world; he gained it in abundance, yet was not happy. Can we learn nothing from history?—from the miseries of those who have tried these things and failed? Solomon told us this three thousand years ago when he said, "Then I looked on all the works my hands had wrought and on the labor I had labored to do, and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit [striving after wind], and there was no profit under the sun."

Untold millions of people who have not been rich, nor brilliant, nor honored, nor beautiful, have been happy, not for a pitiable four weeks (like Goethe), but four years, you forty years. Why? Because they had contentment of mind. They gave themselves to Jesus Christ, and trusted in Him. Even when Jesus' disciples suffer for his sake, they are commanded to rejoice and be exceedingly glad. The Christian has something the man of the world can not have and which is the most important thing in life—he has "the peace of God which passes all understanding." Goethe did not have it, though it is purchased without money and without price.

Oh, reader, can you not see that the greatest thing in all the world is to be a whole hearted Christian?

*"In the world you fail to find,
Ought of peace for troubled mind,
Come to Christ, on Him believe,
Peace and joy you shall receive."*

Protestant Building is Set for \$700,000,000

COLUMBUS, O.—One of the biggest booms in Protestant church building is now in progress in the United States. Dr. Elbert M. Conover, director of the Interdenominational Bureau of Church Architecture, told the annual meeting here of the International Council of Religious Education. A total of \$65,000,000 in church building is under way, and construction amounting to \$700,000,000 is scheduled to start in the near future, he reported.

(I wonder how much they plan to give to the poor? That is churchanity with little christianity.)

Words Whisper, Actions Yell

I'd rather see a sermon than to hear one any day,
I'd rather one would walk with me than merely tell the way;
The eye is a better pupil and more willing than the ear;
Fine counsel is confusing, but examples are always clear,
And the best of all the preachers are the ones that live their creeds,

For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.
I can learn to do it, if you will let me see it done;
I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too swift may run;

And the lectures you deliver may be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lessons by observing what you do;
For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you give,
But there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

When I see an act of kindness, I am eager to be kind;
When a weaker brother stumbles and a stronger stays behind
Just to see if he can help him, then the wish grows strong in me

To become as big and thoughtful as I know that friend to be.
And all travelers can witness that the best of guides today
Is not the one that tells them, but the one that shows the way.
One good man teaches many, men believe what they behold;
One deed of kindness noticed is worth forty that are told;
Who stands with men of honor learns to hold his honor dear,
For right living speaks a language that to everyone is clear;
Though an able speaker charms me with his eloquence, I say,
I'd rather see a sermon than to hear one any day.

—Edgar A. Guest

Scattered Thoughts

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him,

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (Heb. 12:5-6)

The trials and afflictions that come upon us are for our good, if we are careful to obey the commandments of Christ. Also, they help to build up our strength and our evidence of God's concern for us. "Let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

The reward is to the faithful, those that endure to the end. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

The trials of this life cannot be compared to the glory that shall be revealed at Christ's coming. "Let us work while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work." "Let us put off the old man with his deeds and put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

These are perilous times and we should be up and doing, fight the good fight of faith. We must uphold the word of truth at all times. There can be no compromise with the forces of evil. Too many are drifting with the tide: They seem to have no convictions of their own, but accept almost anything that their leaders suggest.

Let us not be of that class, let us search the scriptures to find out the truth, and then follow it without regard to how it may affect our lives here, knowing that only those who obey the truth have any promise of reward in the future life.

Finally, be ye steadfast, unmoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord.

May the Lord be with all those who serve him in sincerity and truth.

—C. D. McKay

The Apostolic Church at Work

The working, or functioning, of a New Testament congregation, and the appointed order of things, as ordained by the Holy Spirit, is very clearly specified. Under its overseers, or elders, every member of the congregation was set to work and was encouraged and exhorted to activity and zeal. Instead of the public meetings of the congregation being under a one-man monopoly, "for the sake of filthy lucre," as is so rapidly becoming true of our congregations today, under the direction of its wise and prudent overseers (?), they were an open forum in which every brother, or, as Paul said to the congregation at Corinth, "every one of you," was permitted to have something to say, "one by one," to the exhortation, instruction or edification of the congregation. When a visiting teacher or preacher came, as in the case of Paul at Troas, recorded in Acts 20:7, he occupied most, if not all of the time devoted to teaching in the meeting. But the Scriptures very clearly show that such was the procedure, or order of things, only in the case of a visiting teacher.

1 Corinthians, 14th chapter, shows the order of things in the teaching part of the service in a New Testament congregation. Along with it, the apostle is discussing the miraculous "spiritual gifts" for teaching that were bestowed upon members of New Testament congregations, that enabled them to teach while not having a completed Bible. Some of the brethren in the congregation were miraculously inspired to instruct or edify it by "prophesying," while other brethren were so inspired to "speak with tongues." Paul cautions them that no brother should speak to the congregation in a tongue, or a foreign language, unless he was empowered with "the gift to interpret," or to translate, or unless another brother was present who was so empowered, that "all things be done unto edifying."

In the previous chapter, the apostle pointed out that these temporary "spiritual gifts," with which different members of the congregation were miraculously empowered to instruct it, would soon pass away and that "when that which is perfect shall come, that which is in part shall be done away." "That which is in part" was the miraculous "spiritual gifts" that were bestowed until the revelation of the Christian religion was fully and completely made by inspired men. "That which is perfect" is the full, complete revelation, or, in other words, the completion of the Bible canon. From the close of the canon, when inspired men completed the revelation, until the end of the world, all divine revelation is in the Bible. Any man today with a Bible in his hands has access to all divine revelation. He has everything, in the way of revelation, that came through a "spiritual gift" in the miraculous age. Any brother in the congregation, who has a Bible, and who obeys the Spirit's command to, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), has all that God, in His wisdom, provides to enable him to "be complete, furnished completely" to take his turn, or, as Paul says, to speak to the congregation "one by one, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted."

Thus, in these instructions to the church at Corinth, as to the use of the "spiritual gifts" that were conferred upon them during the time of the incomplete Bible, Paul sets out the order of teaching in the congregation, as it was instituted by the apostles. When the congregation was assembled, all the brethren were encouraged to, and were given the opportunity to actively participate in the teaching part of the service. "What it is then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." (1 Cor. 14:26.) It is very clear that the order of

things established by the apostles in the New Testament churches embraced an open forum in which every member of the congregation (the women were commanded to "keep silence in the churches," or to refrain from making speeches) was expected, encouraged to, and given an opportunity to say something towards the instruction, edification or exhortation of the congregation. It was not until the Great Apostasy set in that the one-man "regular preacher" was able to take over on a "filthy lucre" basis. That "regular preacher," who soon was called "the bishop," became the Pope of Rome and for many centuries has so poisoned the religious atmosphere of the world, "for filthy lucre's sake," that the original, primitive, apostolic order of things in the churches has almost been lost sight of.—J. A. A. in *Apostolic Times*.

The Second Greatest Document in the World?

The Bible is the greatest written production which the World has ever seen. Greatest, because it has done more for justice and peace and happiness in the world, than perhaps all the other documents combined. Perhaps the next greatest document for the justice and opportunity for man in a temporal way, is the Constitution of the United States of America, signed September 17, 1787, which date is celebrated as "Constitution Day." It not only helped make America great but was a pattern for many other nations.

The writer of these lines has a distinct memory of that Constitution, because in high school he had to memorize the whole production, with its 15 pages of small type, which was no easy task for a boy with a memory like a sieve!

JUSTICE and FAIRNESS of man toward man, is the foundation of this Constitution. All of you remember the opening statement—"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish JUSTICE, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

In "Amendment Article VI," we have this concerning Fairness—"In ALL criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and PUBLIC trial, by an IMPARTIAL jury," etc.

Notice, that by this Constitution, every one had the civil right to a "PUBLIC" trial, not a secret one; and that it was to be by an "IMPARTIAL" jury. How different some trials in some professed Churches of Christ. The elders claim ABSOLUTE authority, and demand "secret" investigations much like the "Inquisitions" of the Roman Church a few centuries ago.

Under the Constitution always every man is entitled to an "IMPARTIAL" jury. In other words, he should have as much say about selecting it as those who accuse him. But think of a so-called "church of Christ," in which the elders make the accusations, hear the charges (become the jury or judge), and decide the case, and execute the judgment which they have UNJUSTLY rendered!! *The Constitution would not stand for that for a moment.* Why, right here in Indianapolis, a negro was accused of murdering two women, had a change of venue to another county, had confessed himself to the crimes (some said under duress), and condemned to die, but the Supreme Court of the United States said he had not received a fair trial, and that he would have to be given a new trial. Both the state and accused had agreed to the jury, but that was rejected by the highest court in the land. See how careful our Constitution is, according to that court, that a man shall receive full justice. But see how lightly some

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elders treat JUSTICE; which is so dear to the American people in general.

The Bible is the Constitution to the Church of God, and all the way through that, JUSTICE is probably emphasized more than any other one thing—that men shall be treated fairly—as each one would wish to be treated if he were in the same plight as the accused.

If there is any one virtue which this writer has tried to exercise toward his fellowmen is that of FAIRNESS. One that is not fair, and does not treat all matters with fairness is either governed by prejudice, passion or is downright dishonest, and is not on the road to heaven. That is one reason that in our book, Church of Christ, written 35 years ago, in referring to the trial of elders, we said *seven times within three or four pages*, that they are entitled to a "fair, impartial" hearing. *And the same fairness applies to every other member of the Church.* It may interest some to quote the passages we mention—

"In the governments of men, EVERY accused man is allowed an IMPARTIAL jury."—Page 169.

"Having against it the common doctrine in law *that a man has a right to be tried by an IMPARTIAL jury.*"—Page 169.

"The natural thing, then, to do would be to look on the outside of the congregation for some Christians *who would not likely be prejudiced.* Perhaps those bringing the charges and the one against whom the charge is brought would agree concerning some brother whom they both considered *would be IMPARTIAL in such matters.*"—Page 170.

"The accused elder could not say he was not getting an IMPARTIAL HEARING, when he himself would have as much say as any one else in saying who should be the judges."—Page 170.

"No one can think of a method of trying elders which *would be more FAIR,* simple and scriptural than this."—Page 171.

"The second position we have considered is that the natural way to try them [elders] is to call for some one outside that particular church, inasmuch as those in it *would likely be prejudiced,* or at least, would be considered so by the accused."—Page 172.

These are some of the points we brought out on Church Government 35 years ago: and taking the book as a whole, on that subject we endorse it today as written, except that today we would give more details on some teaching that they might not be twisted. As Brother Daniel Sommer often said, regarding those who twist the Scriptures, we would say regarding wresting our own writings, "The Lord made no provision against the dishonest mind."

Preachers, elders, deacons, or any other members who will not act JUSTLY toward their fellowmen, and especially toward their brethren in the church, are hypocrites and not Christians. What a reproach before the world when professed leaders in the Church divide churches in their Injustice, such

as will not be tolerated in temporal matters by the Constitution of the United States.

If such people die without correcting their Injustice; they will be that way through eternity, for almost the last words in the Bible are these—"He that is UNJUST, let him be unjust STILL." (Rev. 11:11.) How saddening that will be for them. How unchangeable!

The Church Established

The Prophet Isaiah, about the year 760 B.C. in Isa. 2:2, 3, stated, and it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it, and many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. See Micah. 4:1, 2. The prophetic eyes of these men was on the establishment of the Lord's house (Church) in the last days. I Tim. 3:14, 15, at the time of these prophetic statements the Hebrews (Jews) were the chosen people of God. Daniel, about the year 603 B.C. in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream tells of the four great powers of which three were yet to come. In Daniel 2:44, the prophecy is made, and in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever.

Now a definite time has been set for the establishment of the kingdom. The Babylonian Empire was a world power from 606-536, B.C. The Persian Empire was a world power from 536-330, B.C. The Greek Empire was a world power from 330-146, B.C., and the Roman Empire was a world power from 146, B.C. to 476, A.D. Christ was born during the period of the Roman Empire: so according to Daniel this Kingdom had to be set up sometime between 606 B.C. and 476 A.D. About the year 26 A.D. John the Baptist, as foretold in Malachi 3:1, began to preach, Matt. 3:1, 2. In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent ye for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Jesus was preaching, after John had been put in prison, Mark 1:15, and saying, "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand: Repent ye and believe the Gospel." Jesus sent out his disciples with this instruction, Matt. 10:7, and as ye go preach, saying, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. When Jesus later sent out the Seventy disciples he instructed them, Luke 10:9, and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. Jesus made a statement to Peter, Matt. 16:18, and I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The church had not yet been established, but Christ called it his Church, so then it must be Christ's Church or the Church of Christ (I shall take Christ's word for it), I Cor. 3:23; Heb. 3:6; Rom. 16:16. How long will it be until it will be established? In Matt. 16:28, verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste death, till they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom. Also, Mark 9:1. It was to be in the lifetime of some of those who were there present, when Jesus was upon the cross of Kingdom had not been established, because of the words of the thief, Luke 23:42, and he said unto Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom. Thus Jesus lived and died upon the cross before the Kingdom had come. See Luke 23:51. The

Kingdom had not come when Jesus ascended to glory. See Acts 1:6-9. A few days after Jesus had ascended to heaven, his apostles were in the city of Jerusalem, and in Acts 2nd Chapter. We have the record of the Holy Ghost descending from heaven in mighty power, demonstrating to his apostles the fulfillment of his promise. John 14:26, Mk. 9:1 and of Peter's sermon. Then in Acts 2:17, Peter speaks of the last days referred to in Isa. 2:2, Mic. 4:1, 2 and Joel 2:28, and so this would be the proper time and place for the establishment of the Lord's house, according to Isa. 2:2, 3 and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, Isa. 2:3, and Micah 4:2, and Luke 24:46, 47. All agree that Jerusalem was the beginning place, and then was Peter preaching in Jerusalem. The people were pricked in their hearts, wanted to know what to do. Peter answered (Acts 2:38). Then Peter said unto them. Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of Sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. We learn there were about three thousand Souls added unto them that day. Acts 2:41, and the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved, Acts 2:47. We cannot find where any one was ever added to the Church before the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. And Micah 4:8 says the first dominion of the Kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem. Paul says, Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. *All Christians* Gal. 4:26. Nothing can be traced beyond its mother or beginning. The Church (Kingdom) began at and in Jerusalem. The apostle John speaks of being in the Kingdom, Rev. 1:9; which was about A.D. 96. Paul said, he and the Colossians brethren, had been translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son. Col. 1:13. So the Kingdom or Church was established on the day of Pentecost about A.D. 33.

One can get into that Kingdom today by doing exactly what they did then. Believe, Heb. 11:6, Repent, Lk. 13:3, 5, Acts 17:30, 31, 2 Pet. 3:9, Confess, Rom. 10:9, 10, Matt. 10:32. Be baptised, Acts 2:38, Mk. 16:15, 16, Acts 11:26 they were called Christians, and Acts 2:47, the Lord added to the Church daily. In Romans 16:16, we find the name churches of Christ, or Church of Christ for a single congregation.

Yes, the Church of Christ established on the day of Pentecost is still here, and will stand forever. Its foundation is sure, Isa. 28:16, it is stronger than death. Yes, death is conquered, the grave robbed of its prey, its victim arose from the dark domain of the silent tomb. Ascended to the glory world, to the heights sublime. Beckoning us to come unto Him, and share his peace and rest and heavenly joy, at the Father's right hand. This Church invites and welcomes you into its fold. *A.M.E.N.*—Send to Mrs. A. R. Dix, Rockville, Mo., for copies of this tract.

Seek First the Kingdom

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Rom. 12:1.

The first reference to sacrifice that we have in the Bible is the sacrifices which were offered by Cain and Abel. They both made offering unto God, and God accepted Abel's offering, but rejected Cain's.

Why? Because Abel offered of his flock, and shed the blood of his offering, while Cain offered of the fruit of the ground. We are told in Hebrews that Abel did it by faith, so it is obvious that God had told them what to offer, and the record informs us that at that time God talked personally with man, for he told Cain that if he did well that he would be accepted.

We see by this that in order to be pleasing to God we must do as he says. God required the shedding of the blood of an

animal to cleanse from sin. Abel took from the best of his flock, and was accepted. Cain tilled the ground and did not have an animal that he could offer, so he thought, as many do today, that he could substitute something that he had, the fruit of the ground, for that which God had commanded. But his offering was rejected.

Should not we take a lesson from that and do what God commands us in the gospel, through Christ and the apostles and not attempt to substitute our own ideas for what He has commanded?

Throughout the Old Testament, God made it clear that he meant what he said, and in making a sacrifice to him they were told to take of the best of the flock, that which was perfect in every way. He was to come first. The Jews were required to offer to Him the *first fruits* of the season. All of which required a personal sacrifice on the part of the individual, to give to the Lord the first and best that they had.

To test Abraham's faith, God commanded him to offer Isaac, his only son, the one concerning whom God had made great promises to him; by thus trusting and obeying God, Abraham received a blessing.

In considering instances of self-sacrifice for God, the case of Elijah and the widow of Zarahath comes to mind, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of 1 Kings.

There we are told that because of the sins of Ahab, God brought a severe famine upon the land. God sent Elijah to this widow to live with her while the famine lasted. Elijah found the widow gathering sticks with which to bake a cake, for herself and her son, of the last handful of meal and with the little oil that was left. Elijah told her, to first bake a cake for him, and then one for herself. Here this woman and her son was facing starvation, and was ready to die, but she was willing to first feed Elijah the prophet of God. Elijah promised her, that as God liveth, the meal and oil would not fail until it rained. How many of us, under such circumstances, would be willing to feed a stranger first?

Yet Jesus, the Son of God, has promised us that if we will seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, that we will have all of the necessities of our temporal life *added* to us. Do we believe that? Many act as though they did not, for they devote all of their energies to providing for the needs and pleasures of this life, and leave but little time or strength to devote to the Lord's work.

Many of those who call themselves Christians will so manage their affairs that when the day comes to meet with the Lord around his table, that they say that they are too tired, that they need to rest. Or, they will leave some work around the place to be done on Sunday for they say that is the only time they have at home; or, they will go out on Saturday night and spend the night in pleasure, and in the morning will not put forth enough energy to get up and go to the Lord's house for worship.

Will God be pleased with such a life?

God wants to always come first in all of our thoughts and doings.

Paul beseeches us to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, and says that it is a reasonable service.

Jesus, speaking of the widow who put two mites into the treasury, said that she had put in more than any of the others, for she had put in *all* that she had.

The question for us is, how can we present our bodies a living sacrifice to God?

It seems to me that one way to do it is, to always keep as a motto what Jesus said, "Seek *first* the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness," hence when a question arises whereby we must choose as to whether we shall give God service, or, whether we shall gratify our own desires, it may be either our

temporal duties, or our desire for pleasure, then we can sacrifice those desires, and give our time and efforts to the Lord first.

Paul describes a certain class as being lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, we should be just the opposite of that and be lovers of God more than lovers of pleasure.

Since God so loved us that he gave his only begotten Son to die for us, should not we be willing to make a sacrifice of our desires in order to serve him who has done so much for us.

—Fred D. Weed

SOME NEWS FROM SOME BRETHREN

NEWTONGRANGE, SCOTLAND, 14th Sept. 1949—Dear Brother Sommer: I thank you for the copy of the Spiritual Call which reached me yesterday. It contains reliable teaching, and can be highly recommended to all earnest seekers after "the truth" as revealed in God's Word. The S. C. is the most helpful magazine in bringing "the Fundamental Truth" contained in the Bible before the people—(1) Sin, (2) Sacrifice, (3) Salvation, the theme I would venture to call the three SSS, which I have declared very often during my 61 years' service for the Master. I have never shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. I have always upheld truth and exposed false doctrine, and with God's help will seek strength to remain faithful to the end. . . .—George Allan.

(This aged brother is past 80 years, and has preached 61 years, and from what I have printed from him, and read from other of his writings, I think he knows what he is talking about.—Editor S. C.)

CLINTWOOD, VA.—Preached over 2 Lord's days on Dotson Fork of Bold Camp with the best attention; many seemed very much interested and desired meeting to continue on, but stormy and rainy weather made it almost impossible. No church of Christ in this community. Numbers were heard to say they never heard the Bible explained so plain before. I set forth the New Testament Church, showed the errors of denominationalism doctrines and commandments of men. Many acknowledged the plain facts, and if the truth could be preached repeatedly much good could be accomplished in these parts.—J. D. Powers.

EAST ALTON, ILL.—Aug. 29—Bro. Gilford Wisdom of Jerseyville, Ill., Bro. Eddie Grapes of Wood River congregation and myself went to Worthington, Mo., Aug. 27, 28, to attend a meeting just starting under the services of Bro. H. L. Carlton of Vienna, Ill. The meeting got off to a good start as several congregations were present for a basket dinner and all day services Sunday. We enjoyed the fellowship of the faithful brethren in that part of Missouri, and were strengthened much by their stand and courage for the Lord. We enjoyed ourselves in the homes of Bro. Collins, Bro. Hodges and Bro. Fowler. May God strengthen the cause in that place and everywhere, where Brethren are standing for the Truth of the Gospel.—H. L. Othwell.

DES MOINES, IOWA—I was down to Worthington, Mo. Lord's Day, Sept. 4. Went down Saturday afternoon and heard Bro. Carlton in the evening. They had a basket dinner and service in the afternoon. Had a good talk with Bro. J. A. Collins; stayed all night there, and was at Bro. Hodges in Unionville, Lord's Day night. Was at Bro. Ora Robinson's afternoon till evening service. I talked at Unionville Lord's Day evening. But told them that the next time I expected to hear some of them talk. . . .—C. D. McCay.

JERSEYVILLE, ILL.—We have had four additions recently, and welcome them into our midst. The two men are both taking active part in our worship. The church here is getting along fine, every one wanting to do and help all they can and no one wanting to exalt himself. There is a spirit of Christian love as there should be. Our attendance Lord's Day morning is about 50; Sunday and Wednesday nights average about 22.—Robert Shultz.

W. J. STONE is an old brother, now of 3898 Ellis St., Corona, Calif. He was an elder many years, and has been the means of helping start three congregations in his life, they meeting some in his house. Bro. Stone has had definite convictions and stood to them. I did not always agree with him in some things, but they were unessential. He and his wife have been the kind of matrifal pillars of the Church are made of. So many today have little conviction, and are following the crowd, and are listening to men rather than God. He is very sick now, in both body and mind. The publisher of the S. C. may never get to see him again here, but expects to meet him above when all the battles for truth and righteousness are ended. Many know this old couple, and you would encourage their hearts if you would write them a letter in their declining years, for the battles they have fought for the truth of God. Character is what counts with God. Here is a poem which

was written by Sister Stone's father over a hundred years ago, which I happened to run across in looking over some old Macedonian Calls where it was published, and it will be a comfort to them in the evening of life:

The Bower of Prayer

(Written in 1840 by James Daniel Benson, father of Mrs. W. J. Stone.)

To leave my dear friends, and with neighbors to part,
And go from my home, it affects not my heart
Like the thoughts of absenting myself for a day
From that humble retreat, where I've chosen to pray.

Sweet bower where the pine and the poplar do spread,
And wove in their branches, a wreath o'er my head,
How oft have I knelt on the evergreen there
And poured out my soul to my Saviour in prayer.

The lofty, shrill notes of the loved nightingale
That dwelt in the bower, I observed as my bell
To call me to duty while birds in the air
Sang anthems of praises, whilst I went to prayer.

How sweet were the zephyrs perfumed by the pine
The Ivy, the balsam, the wild eggplantine.
But sweeter, oh sweeter superlative there
The joys that I've tasted in answer to prayer.

Oh, Jesus my Saviour, oft deigned to meet,
And blessed with his presence in my humble retreat.
Oft filled me with rapture and blessedness there
Endiefling in heaven's own language my prayer.

Sweet bower, I must leave you and bid you adieu
And pray my devotions to parts that are new.
Well knowing my Saviour resides everywhere
And can in all places, give answer to prayer.

THE YEARNING OF MANY OLD PEOPLE

"Put your arm around me; there, like that.
Just a little petting at life's setting,
For 'tis harder to be brave,
When old age comes creeping,
And finds us weeping.
Loved ones gone.
Just a little petting at life's setting,
For I'm old, alone, and tired,
And my long life's work is done."

A SISTER whom we have admired because she has given her life to take care of her mother till she died, writes the following in response to our request to write something, and we hope our readers will look up the scriptures she cites:

"Find these in your Bible when trying to uphold the truth you feel that the odds are against you: Psalms 56:11 . . . Isaiah 11:6 . . . Eccl. 3:14 . . . Eccl. 11:6 . . . Psalm 37:35, 36 . . . Ezekiel 3:17-21. —A Sister in Indiana."

We hope our sisters, as well as others, will ponder these scriptures; and we hope other sisters, as well as brothers, will send scriptures which strike them as very helpful in the battle against sin, and tell why you like that scripture. Or, write a little article. You might quote the words of the references, so that every one will get the benefit. Let us "edify one another", as Paul commands. (Please write plainly and on one side only of the paper.) . . . A DYING WORLD and a dying church need a strong call to repentance. The Spiritual Call is trying to furnish that. Won't you help save the church and world by procuring ten new subscribers? Only 50c each.

STOCKTON, CALIF. (4418 E. Washington, 47A)—My Dear Bro. Sommer: It is sad to state that I was called by telegram to hasten home—that wife had a stroke, and is seriously ill! Some signs of change for the better. And indeed again, for I had just started a meeting in a new place in Virginia; spoke three nights with fine interest. I was so sorry to have to leave this meeting. There were a few brethren there but were not organized, but they wanted to stand foursquare for the gospel of Christ. I left them with a sad heart. I trust the Lord will bless me to return to this great mission field. Let us pray to that end, and that wife may recover.—J. D. Powers.

We have been watching with interest this humble work of Bro. Powers, this old soldier of the cross. Going from house to house, speaking privately to those whom he met, as well as publicly—this is the way much good was done in the apostolic days. Let us pray

that his wife may soon recover, and that he can return to Virginia, his old home. . . Why not all who know Bro. Powers write him a letter of comfort in the light of faith he is making, for he is enduring for the gospel more than you know. Why not our readers send him a contribution for the work he has done for several months, to help pay carfare, etc.?

UNIONVILLE, MO.—Our meeting closed at Worthington Sept. 11; one was baptized. Had a good meeting in the face of opposition. Began here Monday night, 12th, with good attendance considering: interest and attention excellent.—H. L. Carlton.

CHRIST IS UNCHANGED

Jesus Christ the same yesterday today and forever (Heb. 13:8.) A careful study of the scriptures will show any candid mind that he is the same unchangeable Being. To change his methods today with the flimsy excuse that times have changed, betrays a lamentable state of rebellion in the human heart. Nothing but a return to God as the "Allwise," in teaching and practice, will heal the backslidden church, or unite the professed people of the living God.

We have got to be a humble people with a reliance only on Jesus Christ and faithful obedience to his laws and ordinances, if the church is to be the Lamb's wife and wear alone his name and recognize him as "Lord and Master." We must once and for all seek to disband all ecclesiasticisms and reject all the traditions and doctrines of man.

Nothing will stand the test but the Bible. To believe the gospel and obey it as Christ demanded will win the favor of God and give strength and power to the faithful in Zion that none of their enemies can successfully resist the wisdom and power by which they build for eternity. May God help the faithful to endure to the end.—Nora L. Blankinship.

VAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Jesus, in his sermon on the mount, said "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven."

Here is a warning that none can afford to overlook. While these are plain and simple words it is altogether too easy to fall into this condemnation. Yes we know what Christ is talking about alright, but the test comes when its our turn to choose between self-glorification, which is according to the flesh, or the glory of God in Heaven.

Alms (righteousness) include such things as prayer, fasting, honesty, justice, moral integrity etc., and without this righteousness it would indeed be impossible to serve God. On the other hand it is said to know that many may do this righteousness and yet lose their reward, all because they love the praise and applaud of men. It is only human nature that we are thus minded. Did you ever notice a small child, how they are delighted when they receive praise for the little things that they do? This makes us realize, all the more, that we all must be born again, of the Spirit as well as the water. Therefore let us not be as the hypocrites are, seeking the glory of men; but let us serve God and seek his glory, although we may not receive thanks, we may not be noticed, we may be hated, we may be persecuted. Yet we cannot forget the repeated warnings of Jesus. When we stand at the judgment, facing eternity, let us so work that our righteousness will have not been in vain.—Lyle Carlton.

THE GOSPEL TIDINGS is a very respectable religious paper published in Texas by members of this great Movement to try to restore the Apostolic Church. It may interest our readers to know that the past year or two, they have published several of our front page articles, two of them on their front page. The articles are "15,000,000 Americans Anxious to learn the Truth and we won't Teach them," referring to the young people between 5 or 6 years and 10. Another article, "35 Rules on How to Be Happy"; and another, "Jesus Died of a Broken Heart". If these so struck that editor that he wished to pass their truth on, it might help our readers to go back and re-read them. . . The front page with the autumn picture, September, may be considered melancholy by some, but A. T. Kerr, an elder, writes, that "it was excellent and should be read by all carefully." Solomon says that "by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." There is too much of the comic strip and funny stuff on the radio, to permit the "Christian" to think seriously of life. Paul speaks about living "soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." If we all realize that Jesus may come tonight, which is true, there will be more soberness in us.

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

This article was written by Bro. A. R. Moore, and is characteristic of his style; and many readers will recall him when he was still living. It is copied by Sister A. R. Dix.—Editor S. C.

The first man lived 930 years—the seventh from Adam lived 365 years, but did not see death, while Moses died at 120 minus the mark of old age. (Deut. 34:7).

Christ could have lived here forever—He laid down His life (John 10:18).

Most people frown at old age. Some refuse to tell how old they are, while many of the gentler sex stand still at forty—Sarah is the only Bible woman whose age is given at death—She was 127. Age should not be reckoned by days passed but by years to come. Condition of mind and body is a better index to age than passing of time. A half century gone is no token of death because one-fourth the race die before five years old; certainly they do not decrease from old age. Thus the ratio of death from birth to twenty is greater than the two decades from 50 to 70. Don't be alarmed about years—like clouds they come and go but the sun shines on. If man had nothing but time to fight he would be good for a 1000 years. We are able to increase the period of life or we can shorten the springtime of youth. A man may say "Well, I am fifty; I may expect to be broken down" or he may be optimistic and forget the years behind—the body may get much nourishment from the mind. Solomon said, "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

Food, climate, sleep, rest and recreation add to longevity; while exposure, lust, excessive living and unwarranted mental agitation will cheat the body, palsy the hand and dim the eye. The past life of an automobile may be five years, yet good as new—usage stands for age.

"Work to eat" (2 Thes. 3:10). A. R. Moore.

A Peculiar Treasure

When studying the word of God we find that he speaks of his people as a peculiar treasure. When we think of a treasure we think of something of great value—perhaps of the greatest treasure on earth in value—the diamond. The diamond is the most brilliant of all gems, and we remember when we go back to the words of the Saviour in Matt. 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven."

A Christian in the sight of God is precious to him as a diamond is precious in the sight of men. When we read in the word of God about 1500 years before the Saviour came to this earth, here he says, "Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people for all the earth is mine." Exod. 19:5.

We find in the old testament that God's people were getting along pretty well until they wanted to be like the nations around them, they wanted a king over them. As we go back to the words of the Saviour as he was speaking for the apostles and others, John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." By these words we find that a Christian is to be set apart from the world; by this we do not mean that we are to dress different with clothing that makes us stand out from the other people of the world, or separate ourselves from the people of the world, but we are not to walk in their worldly ways, such as dancing, theatre going, card playing, etc. When we do not these things we are peculiar to the world and set apart from the world. We are not to be discouraged when we are small in number, for God's words tell us we are not great in number, Deut. 7:7, "The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people." And the son of God says the way is not crowded on the road to eternal life, John 1:11, "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it."

The cost was very high to God to give mankind a chance for eternity, Titus 2:14, "Who gave himself for us that he

might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." So we also read in John 3:16. So we find that Christians cost God a great price, so they are as a great treasure to him.

When we are baptized into Christ, God made us citizens of his kingdom. We read in Eph. 2:19, 20. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone." So again we find that we are peculiar in the eyes of the world, but a citizen with the saints of God.

Then we find also in the Roman letter what we are to do in, or labor in, the work of God. We are not to be like the people of the world, but to change ourselves and shape our mind in the ways of God. Then we can prove to the world that we are God's people, as we read in Romans 12:2,—“And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

And again we say as we walked this earth of sin and sorrow—we are here on trial and God will try us here to see if we are worthy to enter into the heavenly home for eternal life. We read in I Cor. 3:16, 17. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy which temple ye are.”

As Adam ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and brought death upon all of us, Christ has given us a chance for eternal life by keeping his commandments, he gives us the right to the tree of life, Rev. 22:14.—“Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

—Elmer R. Smith

HIS WAY OF GROWING SPIRITUALLY AND SPREADING THE TRUTH

Dear Bro. Sommer—I do not visit you this way as often as I should, but I love and enjoy the *Spiritual Call*, and sometimes I think that a certain issue is the best ever, but when the next one arrives, it seems it is better yet. I READ IT ALOUD TO THE REST OF THE FAMILY. [How many of our readers do that?—D.A.S.] Keep up the good work. I am enclosing an order for two *Simplified New Testaments* to be mailed to our son and wife in—who were recently baptized in that *One Body*; and I think the testaments will be a great help to them in studying the Bible. Would also that you send them the *Spiritual Call* for a year, and the remainder of the \$10 use to spread the gospel, and help carry to a lost and ruined world the story of the Cross and God's power to save. **THE PRINTED PAGE IS A WONDERFUL MEDIUM TO SPREAD THE GOOD THINGS,** for thereby you reach many who never come to church services; and who knows, **SOME MAY BE INFLUENCED AS I WAS A FEW YEARS AGO,** as those whom Paul preached to down there at Berea. May God bless you and keep you to carry on the good work. Yours in Christ,—Paul H. Harmon, Urbana, Ill. . . . (We are trying hard to make the *Spiritual Call* a real “spiritual” uplift to Christians and a warning to non-Christians. Are YOU interested in trying to save them? You can now send the paper a year to **THE NEW** names for only five dollars.

And remember, that the new edition of the *Simplified New Testament* contains references to about 2500 devotional verses of scripture. To read these devotional scriptures in your homes, and then mark them in your Bibles, may be a great spiritual help to your soul in the midst of all the enticing things of the devil around us.—Publisher)

Partners

Said a whiskey flask to a cigarette,
“I'd like to make a good sized bet
That I can get more scalps than you,
Although your victims aren't so few.”
Said the cigarette to the whiskey flask,
“Well, that's easy as I could ask,
For I give kids their downward start,
Then you pitch in and do your part.
They come to you with burning thirst,
But I'm the fellow that sees 'em first;
So most of them should count for me.
I'll take the bet, it's a cinch de'vee see?”
Then the whiskey flask had this to say,
“I never looked at the thing that way,
But I confess you spoke the truth;
'Tis you who tackles the foolish youth.
You fill his system with dopy smoke,
I mould him into a first class soak;
We work together far too well
To quarrel for even a little spell.”
So the whiskey flask and the cigarette
Shook hands together and offed the bet,
And away they sauntered side by side
Hunting for victims far and wide:
In every corner of the nation.

—Anonymous

Who Will Be Next?

Nearly 200 died in the steamship disaster recently in Toronto, Canada. One of our readers might have been one of them, on vacation trip. Several hundred were killed, and thousands were injured in the Labor Day holiday; one of you might have been among them. Airplanes are wrecked almost every day with a number killed; one of us might have been on one of those planes. Between forty and fifty thousand are killed every year in automobile accidents; some who were our readers have been among them. More people are killed in home accidents than on the highways; all of us live in homes. Diseases take multiplied thousands of our citizens every year, some old, some young; we may be the next. But even if we escape all these evils, old age creeps upon us. The beauty shop often only makes fools out of some; the grey hair will come; the wrinkles can not be held back, but make little valleys in our faces symbolical of the Great Valley of Death toward which we are headed. And yet—we are careless concerning the greatest question in the world. Where shall we spend eternity?

Later—Since writing the above, I have read in the daily paper that a subscriber of this paper, and a contributor to it now and then, a Christian, has been killed instantly in an automobile wreck. It might have been you or I!

God's Unchanging Word

For feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God,
Naught else is worth believing.
Though all my heart should feel condemned
For want of some sweet token,
There is One greater than my heart
Whose word cannot be broken.
I'll trust in God's unchanging Word
Till soul and body sever;
For, though all things shall pass away,
His Word shall stand forever. —Martin Luther