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Volume
xv.

January
A.D. 1934

NEW SERIES.

FIDEI COTICULA CRUX
(The Cross is the Touchstone of Faith)

The Overcomer

*A Quarterly Magazine for Christian Workers
on the deep things of God.*

*"Be thou Strong
and very Courageous"*

—Josh. i. 7.

**"And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and
BOLDLY DISPLAYED THEM AS HIS CONQUESTS**

when by the Cross He triumphed over them." Col. ii, 15 (Weymouth).

THE "OVERCOMER" BOOK ROOM,
"CARTREF," WESTBOURNE PARK ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH

Published (D.V.) Quarterly on the first Thursday in January, April, July October.

For terms of issue, see inside cover.

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**The Manager, Overcomer Book Room,
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N.B.—Letters to the Editor should also be addressed as above, with a stamped envelope enclosed if reply is needed. (*Foreign correspondents excepted.*)

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Money Orders payable at WESTBOURNE POST OFFICE, BOURNEMOUTH. It will GREATLY HELP the Book Room if friends abroad will carefully note the Post Office at which Money Orders should be made payable. Letters should not be addressed there.

Will our correspondents also kindly note that the Book Room is closed on Bank Holidays, and that the Postal Regulations during the holiday season make delay at such times unavoidable.

**ECCLESTON CONFERENCE HALL,
Eccleston Street, Victoria, London, S.W.**

The Conference for Christian Workers is held on the first Thursday in every month, October to July (inclusive). Meetings 11.30, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

A Prayer Meeting is also held on the Friday following the Monthly Conference, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on the Third Wednesday of the month, from 2.30 to 5 p.m. These are held in The Prayer Room, 4 Eccleston Place, S.W.1.

DATES OF MEETINGS.

- Jan. 4—Monthly Conference (Rev. John Thomas, M.A.).
- " 5—Prayer Meeting, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- " 17—Prayer Meeting, 2.30 to 5 p.m.
- Feb. 1—Monthly Conference (Rev. W. E. Dalling).
- " 2—Prayer Meeting, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- " 21—Mid-monthly Prayer Meeting, 2.30 to 5 p.m.
- Mar. 1—Monthly Conference.
- " 2—Prayer Meeting, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- " 21—Mid-monthly Prayer Meeting, 2.30 to 5 p.m.

"Le Vainqueur." (The "Overcomer.")

A 16-page paper issued occasionally, as funds permit consisting of articles from "The Overcomer," translated into French. Edited and issued free by Madame Brunel, Laverne, Viane, Pierre-Segade, Tern, France.
Miss Cope, 19 Dalmeny Crescent, Heath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, acts as Treasurer for Mme Brunel. She will gladly send a copy of "Le Vainqueur" upon application.

The SWANWICK CONFERENCE

In connection with "The Overcomer," will (D.V.) be convened at

**THE HAYES, SWANWICK,
MAY 14th to 19th, 1934.**

Theme :

The Holy Spirit's Unveiling of the Cross.

The Morning Bible Readings will be given by
Rev. JOHN THOMAS, M.A.

GUEST FUND.

As the Conference is of vital importance to Ministers of the Gospel and Missionaries, who may not be able to afford the cost of coming, it is hoped those who are able will contribute to the Guest Fund for enabling these servants of the Lord to attend. Gifts should be sent to Miss Garrard, c/o The Overcomer Bookroom, marked "Guest Fund."

INFORMATION.

The cost for the whole period will be £2.10.6, not inclusive of Railway Fares. Circulars giving full particulars may be had (stamped envelope) from the Conference Secretary, to whom all applications for accommodation and all payments should be made, before April 18.

N.B.—No Meals can be served to day visitors without ordering before hand from the Conference Secretary.

Address : Conference Secretary, Mr. H. E. Hoyton, "Hafod," Merstham, Surrey. Tel. : Merstham 285.

Conferences

Arranged by the Council of the Overcomer Testimony.

BIRMINGHAM.

Mar. 30. Good Friday, at Bordesley Green Baptist Church, 3-30, 5 and 7 p.m. Speaker: Rev. B. C. Lovelace, Chairman: Rev. A. R. Boughen.

CARDIFF.

Enquiries : Rev. A. I. Edwards, 21 Plasturton Gardens, Cathedral Rd.

LIVERPOOL.

Jan. 16-17. Gordon Hall (large hall), at 3.30 and 7.30 p.m. each day. Tea and Question Hour. Speakers : Revs. George Harper and H. Lockyer. Enquiries : Miss Crewe, 34 Greenbank Road, Liverpool.

MANCHESTER.

Mar. 12. In Albert Hall, Peter Street. Afternoon 3 p.m., Tea 4-30 and Question Hour. Evening 7 p.m. Speaker : Rev. Herbert Lockyer. Enquiries : Mr. N. Repton, Overstrand, Sagers Road, Handforth.

SOUTHAMPTON.

Feb. 7 (Wednesday). In the School Hall, Polygon Baptist Church. Afternoon, 4 p.m. Tea 5.30, followed by Question Hour. Evening, 7.15. Speaker : Rev. George Harper (London). Enquiries : Mr. Podesta, 108 Malmesbury Road, Shirley, Southampton.

Note.—We are glad also to call attention to the following meetings for prayer and fellowship arranged by some of our readers.

Birmingham : Bible Witness Fellowship, "Kelvedon," Frederick Road, Wyde Green. Every Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle : Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Meeting. Second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff : Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m., No. 2 Room, Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station). In charge of Miss Millett, Supt. C.A.W.G., Newlands Street, Barry.

Isleworth : St. Mary's Hall, Thornbury Road. Informal Monthly Conferences, 2nd Monday at 8 p.m. Also Tuesdays, Jan. 16, Feb. 20 and March 20, at 3.30 p.m. Quarterly Missionary Prayer Conference, Jan. 29th at 7.45 p.m. at St. Luke's Mission, Kingsley Road, Hounslow. Speaker : Miss R. Harris (Sudan Interior Mission).

Enquiries : Miss Gravatt, London House, St. John's Road, Isleworth.
Liverpool : Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday at 3 p.m. at 55 Granby Street, Princes Park.

Isle of Wight : Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m., at 42 Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Leicester : Weekly Prayer Meeting, Tuesday at 3.30, 12 Greenhill Road, Clarendon Park.

Manchester : Monthly prayer meeting on 2nd Monday at 7 p.m. Enquiries : Mr. Norton Repton, Overstrand, Sager's Road, Handforth, Manchester.

Muswell Hill : Prayer Meeting every Tuesday, at 35 Muswell Avenue, 3.30 p.m.

Stamford Hill : Prayer meeting every Tuesday, 72 Darenth Road, 3 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Suckling.

THE OVERCOMER.

Josh. 1:7
Courage

"Be thou Strong and Very Courageous"—Josh. i. 7.

1934.

JOSHUA is really the Old Testament word for Jesus, Joshua-Jesus, chosen to lead Israel into Canaan. He is commanded to "be strong," with his only equipment the Word of God and implicit obedience to it! *Such was Christ's equipment.* The Lord said that He *lived* by the Word of God, and that His meat was to do the will of His Father. All that Joshua had to do was to take the directions given to him by God, and to lead under His command. Then, said God, Thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land . . .

But as we read on, we see how, on Joshua's part, it was necessary that he should be strong and courageous, so as to co-operate with God for the fulfilment of these promises. How the words ring out with power: "*Only be thou strong, and very courageous, and then thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land.*" These words make it appear that Joshua was responsible for the courage—"ONLY be thou strong . . ." said Jehovah. This is what every child of God must take heed to in the battle to-day. We are responsible not to get depressed, or discouraged, for a moment, by yielding to the temptation of the enemy to look away from God. You must settle it that all discouragement is from the enemy, and not in any circumstances yield to, or accept it.

Then again, Joshua is not left in any doubt as to how he is to become full of courage. He is bidden to turn to the commandments of God as written in the law, and to *observe to do according to all the law*, turn not to the right hand nor to the left, that thou mayest have good success. Implicit, undeviating obedience to the Word of God. "This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth. *Thou shalt meditate therein day and night.*" If Joshua had lived to-day, we may well ask if he would have led Israel to victory so valiantly, had he fed upon the literature of the present time.

It is useless expecting success or victory in this spiritual battlefield unless we are prepared to take the Word of God as our one authority. We must be prepared for implicit, undeviating obedience to the Word of God. There must not be a turning from that Word in the slightest measure, to the right or to the left. We must make sure of what God's Book says, and then stand to it without questioning, and God will be with us. It is the one great condition of success—this implicit recognition of the authority of God's Word and obedience to it, honestly seeking to know the will of God. Not merely obedience to *one text*, but seeking to know and to do His will, as revealed in the general principles laid down in His Word for life and conduct.

The only way to be "strong, and very courageous" is to be filled with the Word of God, and to have the mind full of it by meditating upon it. Not simply reading a little, and putting the Book down, but really meditating on the Word of God until you know the heart-truth of all that is written in the Sacred Book.

"Meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest . . . do . . . for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then shalt thou have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage, be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee" (Josh. i. 8).

In this passage we see from the Lord's words, the linking together of *His Presence*, and the fearless courage needed for victory. To be freed from all fear and dismay before the forces of the enemy, our great remedy is to have God's Word strengthening us day and night, so that we lose sight of man, and all fear of man. This Word is *strength*. You would be strong souls if you were so filled with the Word of God that everything you heard around you instantly caused the Scripture to spring into your mind which would meet or explain the need; so that whatever question was asked, or whatever doubt came to you, in one moment the right answer would come to your mind from the Scriptures.

Are you being kept by God at this point? You know so much about victory, about identification with Christ in His Cross; but Oh! child of God—are you *strong and very courageous*? Or are you dismayed and fearful? Will you allow all fear to be swept from you, and go forward meditating on this Book day and night? It means that when you awake in the morning the Word will be in your mind. It means that when you go to sleep there will be no troublesome thoughts in your mind to prevent your sleeping. The one great, strong, mighty equipment for unbroken victory, is to be filled with divine strength by this Word dwelling in you richly. This was the equipment for Joshua as he started out, and if you are to be a "leader"—to lead souls around you into Canaan, or into the heavenly places—you can only have the true vision to lead them as the Word dwells in you, and you meditate upon it, as Joshua was bidden to do . . .

Servants of God, go back to your place of battle, and clothed in the whole armour of God, strengthened with might by the Spirit of God, *use the truth*. Lay hold of the weapons of war prepared for use, and stored in the armoury of the Written Word; that "by them thou mayest have a good warfare" (1 Tim. i. 18); and through the Scriptures inspired of God, be "furnished completely unto every good work."

J. Penn-Lewis,

Prayer warrior—Trust! It is the last half-hour!
Rely upon thy God.

Seems it defeat? Nay, His almighty power
Upholds thy faith's prayer rod.

Dying meant victory to Christ thy Lord,
Who vanquished death by His last dying word:
Prayer warrior—Trust!

Pressed beyond measure; pressed into the place
Where foothold, e'en, is not!

'Tis there that God doth magnify His grace,
He ne'er failed, or forgot!

Look off to JESUS; steadfast run thy race;
Thou shalt have light when thou dost see His face!

Prayer warrior—Trust!

J. H. S.

A Word to our Readers.

DEAR FRIENDS IN GOD,

May I call your attention to the announcement of the Swanwick Conference in this issue? I trust the kind friends of the Guest Fund will forgive my reminding them once more of the great value of their help.

Several missionary friends on furlough have expressed their wish to be with us and if any such friends will write to Miss Garrard, we shall be glad to offer them hospitality if possible.

We hope to have the ministry of Rev. John Thomas for the morning Bible Readings. Those who enjoyed that high privilege at Swanwick on a former occasion will look forward to this with great expectations. Mr. Thomas also hopes to be with us for the afternoon and evening meetings at Eccleston Hall in January.

I frequently ask myself "how prospers the work of the Overcomer Testimony to which God has called us?" Its very name implies a solemn witness to a fact, and that fact, victory. Its value will still be beyond reckoning if its message reaches despondent and bewildered believers, so many of whom are well-nigh beaten to their knees in the pressure of these critical days.

If our Testimony is to continue in the will of God, it must continue to demonstrate our blessed Lord's power to overcome in the person of its members. We function, not by a phraseology nor by devotion to the memory of those who have inspired us and passed to their rest, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power as exemplified in the life of each individual who stands with us to-day.

I ask you therefore, as I ask my own heart, are our inner lives demonstrating the truths of this Testimony? Where we have known victory we will joyfully "ascribe our conquests to the Lamb": where we have tasted the bitterness of defeat, we know the cause full well; thank God we know also the remedy.

It has been my joy recently to meet many who are one with us in very distant parts of the world. We welcome their fellowship. It is a great source of courage to know that they are stressing in their individual circles the truths we stand for.

In a work so widely scattered, it is wise to remind ourselves from time to time of its objects and scope. May I therefore repeat what has often been stated. We claim no monopoly of the overcomer's secret, nor are we accustomed to describe ourselves as "Overcomers." We are far from being a new sect, and have no thought of drawing believers from the church of their choice. The only organization of the Overcomer Testimony centres around the little journal of that name.

Seeing that various views are held by Christians regarding matters of great importance which do not touch the fundamental truths of the Gospel, we judge it best for our Testimony that each should feel free to exercise his judgment in these things, according to the light given. We therefore refrain from ventilating many questions of controversial interest the details of which may well be discussed in other spheres.

Our commission is to witness, by pen, by speech, but above all by the lives of those in fellowship with us, to the overcoming power of the victory of Calvary when claimed and appropriated by the believer in

Christ. We stand for the truths taught by the Spirit of God in Romans vi., and many other Scriptures, as to the believer's union with Christ in his death and risen life. We desire to enter into this identification more fully as the way of victory over self and sin.

We wish to testify also to the facts of spiritual warfare in which all believers are called to engage as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. We seek wisdom in withstanding the power of the enemy, so that we may not only escape ourselves, but succour our brethren ignorant of his devices.

"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Such light as we believe God has given us on these and kindred aspects of His truth we desire to share with our brethren in Christ, not claiming any singularity in such knowledge but rejoicing in their recognition wherever found.

When we consider the riches of our resources in Christ and the poverty of our use of them in daily practice, we abhor ourselves, and wonder at the Grace which bears with us.

To many students of prophecy the coming year is fraught with great significance. May the Lord keep us watching and testifying. As we see the day approaching, each year is charged with an increasing responsibility for those who are called by His Name. Truly the darkness deepens—"but ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." Let us praise God for the multitude of His children shining as lights in the world. May we be found with them standing in our "lot at the end of the days."

As we look forward to weeks and months which, whatever they bring, will mean for us a new testing of faith, shall we unite in praise to Him who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood and hath made us Kings and Priests into God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever Amen.

Yours in the joy of His victory,
Parkstone,
December, 1933.

BERNARD W. MATTHEWS.

O GOD of the IMPOSSIBLE,
Since all things are to Thee
But so in which OMNIPOTENCE
Can work almighty!

Each trial may to us become,
The means that will display
How o'er what seems IMPOSSIBLE
Our God hath perfect sway.

The very storms that beat upon
Our little barque so frail,
But manifest Thy power to quell
All forces that assail.

The things that are to us too hard,
The foes that are too strong,
Are just the very ones that may
Awake a triumph song.

O God of the IMPOSSIBLE,
When we no hope can see,
Grant us the faith that still believes
ALL possible to Thee.

That stands upon Thy Word, Thy Name,
And will not let Thee go,
Till Thou Thy mighty power hast shown,
Love's blessing to bestow! J.H.S.

The Cry of the Church in the Last Days.

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis.*

"He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint."

Luke xviii. 1.

Luke 18:1
Church
Prayer 3

OUR Lord's parable of the unjust judge and the widow is generally used as an illustration of persistency in prayer, but it has a deeper meaning which escapes the observation of many. Let us look at the story again:

"There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man: and there was a widow in that city, and she came oft unto him saying, Do me justice (m.) of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming. And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, who cry to Him day and night, and He is longsuffering over them? I say unto you that He will avenge them speedily. Howbeit, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find the faith on the earth?" (R.V.)

We have here a judge, unmoved by fear or love, by consideration of God or man. To him comes a widow, defenceless and alone. She has no claim upon him, no influence, no support—she has nothing but a cry, short but persistent, "*Avenge me of mine adversary.*" Only one sentence, but it expressed the whole of her need and she kept on with it: *Avenge me, avenge me!* Then the effect upon the judge is recorded: "*Lest she wear me out by her continual coming, I will avenge her.*" That is the story: what are the main points of its spiritual application?

First, God is described as a Judge, with power to avenge wrong. The widow is a picture of the Church of Jesus Christ—it is referred to thus in Fausset's Commentary. He says that "the primary and historical reference of this parable is to the Church in its oppressed, defenceless condition" at the close of this dispensation. The time of the cry is indicated by the words, "when the Son of Man cometh." In regard to this time, our Lord Jesus spake a parable "to the end that men ought always to pray and not to faint," and the prayer He immediately suggests as a fitting one is this—"Avenge me of mine adversary." The parable, therefore, is a brief fore-view given by Christ Himself of the last hour of the Church's history on earth, and shows what the Church will be doing when the "upward call" comes. She will be praying with a ceaseless cry to God for deliverance from her adversary.

Now if a wicked man on earth can be moved by such a cry, says our Lord, how much more shall God be moved by the cry of "His own elect," those who have a "claim" upon Him, for they are His very own; He has purchased and redeemed them. Not nominal Christians, these, not merely church members. Many are ready to speak well of Christ, of His works, His teaching; a beautiful life to be imitated and admired. But it is often "another Jesus," without the atoning death, the shed Blood; without any relation to Sin and the sinner. But in every corner of the world there are those who have been "born from above," who are members of the mystical Body of Christ, and these the Holy Spirit will bring to the place where they will unite in this one cry. When a man is in a crisis it is a "cry" that is uttered, not a beautiful little prayer for

* From shorthand notes of an address.

help. David said "I cried unto the Lord in my distress;" "this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him." It is when prayer becomes a cry of need that the Lord intervenes and delivers.

But before she will cry such a cry as this, it is clear that the Church will have come to an end of all her own resources, and have recognised her own utter weakness and helpless condition; She will have had her eyes opened to the fact that she is oppressed by an adversary, and that only the coming of Christ will truly and finally deliver her from this enemy and from all the wrongs she has suffered at his hands. "Yet," writes Fausset again, "ere the Son of Man comes to redress the wrongs of His people, so low will the hope of relief sink . . . that one will be fain to ask, will He find any faith of a coming Avenger left on the earth?"

The fulness of iniquity.

"He is longsuffering over them." God is "slow to anger" and has long patience for the sake of human instruments of Satan's oppression, even though it be with cost to His own (see Jas. v. 7 and 2 Peter iii. 9). Again, there is a *fulness of iniquity*, as well as a fulness of blessing. "The iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full," God told Abraham, as the reason why there would be four hundred years delay before his captive descendants should be delivered from their captors—a picture of the "cruel bondage" in which Satan seeks to hold the inheritance of Christ. There is little doubt that the world is rapidly coming to the point of "fulness of iniquity," in its cry for a "super-man," in its exaltation of man, its "gospel of humanity"—man his own saviour, man with his pride of intellect, throwing off all dependence upon his Creator.

God is waiting for iniquity to come to its fulness, and He is longsuffering over His Church as He sees her living in the midst of such conditions in the world. God is not blind to the sufferings of His own, He sees them, He watches over them, and the moment comes when He will act: "I say unto you He will avenge them speedily." The answer to this day and night cry is absolutely certain, and the answer will be exactly according to the asking. The Lord's people cry "avenge," and God answers with vengeance. Moreover, when the moment comes the vengeance will be speedy and certain.

But remember, it is not vengeance upon flesh and blood. God's warfare is with the "principalities and powers," and "wicked spirits in heavenly places." We read in Daniel x. that Satan has "princes," whom he sets over countries. Daniel had prayed for three weeks, and no answer came. But he did not give up, he prayed on, and when the Messenger of God got through to him with the answer, he told of a terrible battle in the unseen realm, when the Satanic prince of Persia had sought to intercept the message—until another heavenly Messenger, "Michael, one of the chief princes" in the ranks of God's servants, came to his help.

Every unveiling of the spiritual realm given in the

Word of God is as true now as it was when first revealed. There is no change, except that which the great crisis of Calvary made. God still has a warfare against supernatural forces of Satan, who still oppose His sovereign will to the utmost of their power. At Calvary those wicked hosts were conquered, but they were not annihilated; and as the day draws near for their final downfall they rage more fiercely, knowing that their time is short.

"Avenge me of mine adversary."

The cry "Avenge me of mine adversary" will mean that the Church has lost sight of "flesh and blood" enemies, and sees the true cause of evil on earth. In this "widow's cry" we have a picture given by our Lord Himself of what it means to "pray against" the powers of darkness, for the deliverance of souls from their power, and for the emancipation of the whole Body of Christ from their oppression. Let us look beyond our personal needs, and condition, and interests. Let us rise to the place of vision with the Lord Jesus Christ, and take from Him this picture of the last days. Has this cry come into your heart yet? Do you see that there is a real adversary, and that there is no other resource against his power but that of prayer? When you see children of God in bondage, tied and bound by the power of the enemy; when you hear of the work of proclaiming Christ in heathen lands being hindered and held up for lack of funds, what is your attitude toward these things? I invite you to join in this importunate cry, the cry of "His own elect." In Rev. xxii. the cry is for the Lord Jesus to come quickly, but here it is for the destruction of God's enemy and man's when the Lord comes.

When you see a certain truth in God's Word, it is important that you immediately take a right attitude toward it. Here we have the vision of the Church being brought to one mighty cry. There is no need of long, or round-about prayers. The necessary things are the simple ones. Simple purpose and wise direction in prayer according to the will of God, is the pathway to power in prayer.

For our own needs, as well as for the Church as a whole, the cry is the same. Is the Adversary oppressing you? Are you crying to God to take vengeance upon him—literally to "do justice" upon him? We have the promise of God that this shall be done. "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed shalt thou be . . ." (Gen. iii. 14). God will fulfil that curse when Christ comes back to reign over the earth, and the great adversary, the dragon, the divider, who has poisoned, persecuted, injured and killed God's children will be driven down to the pit and ultimately to the lake of fire prepared for him and his angels.

How much do we enter into this plan and purpose of God? Is there deep down in our hearts a real and growing hatred of Satan as we see his work and his influence spreading through the world? When God puts this into your heart, you will cease to blame "flesh and blood" for the suffering and wrong you see, you will cease to "wrestle" against "flesh and blood" in a vain endeavour to have things put right. You will know that there is only one thing to do, to "pray without ceasing" against the "world-rulers of this darkness" who are soon to be cast down from

their place "in the heavenlies," when the triumphant Victor of Calvary comes down to "execute the judgment written," and to reign in righteousness over the world they have so long spoiled.

Do you ask how I dare to say such things? Where in God's Word, there is warrant for our taking part in this warfare? You will find it at the very beginning of God's dealings with man, when He said to the Serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." (Gen. iii. 15). "I will put a breach between you." God Himself puts the enmity between believers and Satan, for Eve was the first believer. She believed the promise of a coming Saviour, and she is called "the mother of all living."

A divinely created enmity.

Years ago, as a young believer, when I saw the Satan was at the back of anything, I always felt a spring of protest in my spirit, saying, *It is victory, Satan shall not triumph!* Since then I have come to see that the divine life of Christ must always antagonise the enemy. Where the life of Christ is, there must always be a spring of hatred, of antagonism against the powers of darkness, and when there is such a spring, it simply means that the divine life is not strong enough within us. There is too much of the soulish, natural life in activity for there to be any great power of resistance to the foe. Christ and Satan have been at enmity from eternity, there is an undying enmity between them still, and there will be an intense hatred of the powers of darkness in you just in proportion as He is dwelling in you, and has "free course" to live and move out through you. The indwelling Spirit of Christ is not limited, but the capacity of the indwelt one often limits Him. I am convinced that one of the greatest marks of the true divine life in the believer is this: *response to God as resistance to the devil*; it has "no fellowship with the works of darkness" because it is light—"the Life is the light."

"I will put enmity between me and the serpent. Is he the enemy to you? Does he let you alone because you let him work alone? Or does he hate you because by your prayers and life you are damaging his schemes, and helping his captives to freedom? Is this Divine created enmity a real thing between you and Satan? If that enmity was a real thing in the whole Church of Christ, she would be a very different Church, as the day would soon be here when her cry "Avenge me, do me justice of mine enemy" would be answered. But, "when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find tithing on the earth?"

Will you let the Lord lift you to this wider outlook? Will you cease to pray for yourself so much, so that you may pray for the whole Church of Christ on earth? Will you think less of the things that concern your own limited circle of vision, and enter into the great purpose of God, and within your own spirit continue with this cry, while you remain on the earth? The greatest things in the world are done through prayer—it is a mightier weapon than any other. Is it not absolute folly to have such resources and not to use them?

If you get this vision you will talk less and pray more. It means a deeper, a more silent life, for

unwise or flippant sentence may nullify your prayers. A grieved spirit also leads to powerlessness in prayer, and your spirit will soon be crushed if you try to deal with "flesh and blood" instead of going direct to God, and claiming His promised victory over the unseen enemy at the back of things.

It also needs an unflinching recognition of the fact that your "old creation" life has been dealt with at the Cross, crucified with Christ, and a steadfast unflinching making to die the "doings of the body," the ways and inclinations of the old natural life. You cannot expect to see the enemy bound in answer to your prayers if in any degree you are tolerating what you know to be the self-life, or giving any occasion to the enemy through the flesh. There will be no "enmity" between you and the enemy if you are nursing and holding on to any of "his goods" in your own life. But as we obey the Word of God and definitely "reckon" ourselves dead indeed to sin and to the workings of our sinful nature, having died with Christ (Rom. vi. 1-11), the

law of the Spirit of "life in Christ Jesus" makes us free. The Holy Spirit comes in on the basis of our union with Christ in His death, and teaches us how to "mind the things of the Spirit" instead of the "things of the flesh," and so nullifies the power of sin and the self-life.

When this is your constant, steady attitude before God, then He can put into you the foretold "enmity" and give you power to "resist the devil" from the inmost depths of your spiritual life, and you will prove the promise true—"he will flee from you." As you see the powers of darkness at work, here and there and everywhere, the sight will draw from you the cry, "Lord, avenge us of our Adversary." It is the last prayer that will be unitedly offered by the whole Church, and will hasten the day when the Lord Jesus Christ shall deliver His Church, and lift it up and transfer it to the Throne, and manifest His Calvary victory to the whole world.

Conversion

Gleanings from Question Hours.

From shorthand notes, hitherto unpublished, of "Clinic Hours" conducted by Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

Hindrances to Conversion.

A WORKER: A number of men come to our Institute for whom we have prayed very definitely for years. The way of salvation has been put before them, but they never come to the point of accepting it. It is evident they cannot be "talked in." They are good people too, more than ordinarily generous, kind, unselfish toward others and toward the Lord's work. How can such people be brought to decision for Christ?

A. There is a word of Scripture that seems to fit the case: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the Gospel of Christ should shine unto them." You prayed much that God will save them—but God is ready and waiting to save them! What you need to do is to *pray away the obstacles* that hinder these souls from accepting what God has done for them; and the chief obstacle is this "veil" on the mind, put there by the "god of this world." It seems to me that, alongside of the preaching of the Cross, of the love of God and salvation through Christ, we often fail to pray concerning the opposing forces; "the god of this world" who makes men blind and deaf to the claims of God. Like a firehose directed on a fire, prayer should be focussed upon that "veil" over the mind, until it is broken, and upon every other obstacle to the work of God which we see, as we "*watch and pray*." As you see the mind held, you might pray in this way: "Lord, Thou hast said in Thy Word that the god of this world blinds the minds of those who believe not. But Satan was conquered at Calvary, and in the Name of Jesus I ask that Satan's power over that man's mind shall be broken." Then by faith steadfastly affirm the "It is finished" of Christ over the blinding power of the enemy, until the veil is gone.

A Minister: I am quite sure that in such cases, praying in general terms that this or that man may be saved often proves ineffective. We need to be more definite. When a man came to Jesus saying "Lord, have mercy," the Lord said, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" And he said, "That I might receive my sight." I am sure that we must focus prayer on the very thing that hinders. How awful is

the blinding power of Satan, putting out the spiritual sight of the people lest they should see the salvation of God. If we focus prayer upon that awful, malignant power of the god of this world, and persist in it, depend upon it we shall come through into victory, where before we have been disappointed and discouraged.

WORKER: I am sure some of the people I referred to *do* see the way, and consent to it mentally—but they do not follow it. May the trouble not be in the *will* in such cases?

A. If these souls have the light but do not yield, it may be that the will is held, so that they cannot act upon what they know. Many men have power to choose and decide in earthly matters, but in spiritual things seem quite unable to do so. If the enemy is interfering with the will, ask the Lord to release the will from the grip of the enemy, so that they may have the power to choose the right.

The Holy Spirit and the "channel."

But there is another aspect of the question. Has the Holy Spirit full right of way in and through those who are seeking the salvation of these men? The proclamation of the Gospel needs the power of the Holy Spirit behind it, and the Holy Spirit needs a channel to work through—and the channel may be the hindrance. You do not know of anything manifestly wrong in your life, but have you discovered that the Holy Spirit can be checked by other things beside sin? The preacher needs, not only victory over sin, but that his spirit, in which the Holy Spirit dwells, be liberated, so that God can *reach the people through him*, convicting them of sin and revealing to them the love of God. As a "channel" the worker may be "closed," not by sin necessarily, but perhaps by the natural reserve of his own character and make-up. Many of God's children do not recognise this. They are so reserved, the circumference is so hard, that the Holy Spirit is unable to flow out through them, and manifest the love of God, and other fruits of the Spirit. Their lives are right, their choice is for God's best, but there is not the liberty and openness of their spirit *man-ward*, as well as God-ward, that makes possible

the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit in the outward life. The Holy Spirit dwells in your spirit, but suppose the "outside" of you is stiff and reserved, how can there be "rivers of living water" flowing out through you?

The human spirit is the "sanctuary" in which the Holy Spirit dwells. How may that sanctuary be kept open, not only toward God, but toward those around us whom we would help and win? It is only as we are living in constant recognition of our union with Christ in His death, yielding our members unto God as those that are "alive from the dead" (Rom. vi. 13) and, in harmony with that faith position, we deliberately "put off the old man," to make room for the risen life of our Lord to manifest itself in and through our "mortal body." Then it will be HE who is seen and heard, and not we ourselves, and there is nothing in Him that will check or hinder the power of the Holy Spirit.

Another point is this, if your spirit is weighed down with burdens, or crushed, the Holy Spirit may be hindered in working through you. When you feel a heavy weight on your spirit, do you just "put up with it" until it passes away? Have you recognised that the enemy can put "weights" on your spirit, and that if he can keep you with a sad spirit, or a grumbling spirit, or a depressed spirit, he can hinder the victory and testimony of your life? Have you ever "resisted" the weight on your spirit as put there by the enemy? Why not pray, when the cloud comes down upon you, and ask the Lord to keep you with a free, buoyant, victorious spirit, for His glory?

The atmosphere.

There are, of course, other reasons why certain souls do not yield to the Gospel message. What about the Christians around them? Are those who minister the Word in that place surrounded by a band of praying Christians, with such victory in their own spirits that their presence in a meeting helps to make an atmosphere in which the Holy Spirit can freely work? The whole weight of a meeting should not be upon one man. One man cannot "lift" the meeting, if the atmosphere is heavy, yet that is often what happens. Fifty or sixty Christians will come to a meeting, and expect the one who leads it to have enough spiritual power to lift all their burdens! They deliberately come to get rid of their day's burdens, whereas, *those who know the Lord* should go to the meeting to stand by the leader, and pray him through, so that the work of God may be accomplished in that meeting.

Children of God, pray your own burdens off before you go to the meeting. Perhaps your spirit has been "going down" all day long, until you feel you have scarcely any "spirit" left, and you say: "I will go to the meeting, then I shall feel better!" But you cannot afford to carry those burdens from morning until evening! And it is not fair to the leader of the meeting to have to bear the weight of all those people who have come in with their spirits crushed and "down." Ask the Lord to teach you how to keep your spirit in poise and victory, and then you can say: "I have had victory all day—now I will go and stand by our Minister, and help to make an atmosphere in which God can work, and in which the enemy cannot hinder." Dr. Meyer once said that many Christians were like his water tap. It ran cold, and cold, and

after waiting about ten minutes it began to run warm, and after fifteen minutes it would run hot. Christians so often get hot at the end of a meeting, instead of coming hot at the beginning, and so being instruments in God's hand for blessing in the gathering.

On the God-ward side, remember that you cannot dictate to God *the time* when a soul shall be saved. If you have the evidence of others being saved in the meetings, you know that the Holy Spirit is free to work there, and you must not let the powers of darkness turn you back to self-condemnation because certain ones do not "come through." The "accuser of the brethren" would like to crush you under the responsibility of these souls. You must refuse that and pray on in faith, believing that "in due season" you will "reap," and these you pray for will be brought in. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord"—throw these souls upon God, and trust Him with them. Beware of "weights" upon your spirit, because directly you are weighed down, your spirit loses power in the fight, and you will not bring souls to Christ any quicker by being crushed under the burden of them—but you *will* hasten the day by casting the burden upon the Lord, and living before them with a glad, victorious spirit. "This is the victory that overcometh . . . even our faith"—not our burdens!

Prayer

How shall we Pray?

SCARCELY a week passes without some great world-stirring event happening. The words of prophecy describe the conditions exactly, see, for example, Haggai ii. 6-7; "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations . . ." See also Ezekiel xxi. 26-27; Hebrews xii. 25-29.

Earnest souls, who are truly the Lord's remembrancers (Is. lxii. 6) are asking, "How shall we pray in times like these, and what ought we to expect?" If these are the "appointed times" of Dan. viii. 19, and the "determined" things which shall be done (Dan. xi. 36), will our prayers change, or affect the declared purposes of God? If not, have we to accept what comes without prayer?

Daniel, the recorder of many of the prophecies which are now in course of fulfilment, faced similar issues in his day, as ch. ix. 2 shows. The guidance he received should help us to answer our questions. There was no silent, passive acceptance of declared events, but, in prayer he sought a *definite personal adjustment to the Will and Purpose of God*. He sought a place in that Will, v. 3; he prayed with Confession of sin, v. 4-11; he admitted the Justice of God, who had given due and ample warnings, v. 12-15; and then prayed that God would perform His own Will, for His own sake, v. 17-19.

Daniel thus teaches us that the Prayers of God's people become the vehicle for the out-working of God's purposes on earth, and for the adjustment of the Saints to the Will of God, so that their expectations, and desires, and prayers are according to His Will.

It was while thus in prayer, the answer was granted, of peace and assurance that God's perfect plan was being wrought out, v. 20-27. W.G.S.

Our Union with Christ in His Death.*

The Need of a Personal Assent.

"For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him." Romans vi. 5-6.

THOSE who are "in Christ Jesus" were first of all united to Him in His death . . . In Christ, my Representative, I died. All the fruit of that death becomes mine the moment I believe the fact, but it is only as I believe that any power of that death and life becomes mine.

Our great need to-day is to be conformed unto His death: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering, becoming conformed unto His death" (Phil. iii. 10). We died with Him, but most of us are not being wrought into the likeness of His death, and hence, we are not like Him in life. The reason for this is, that we have never assented to what He has done for us, and never have believed that what He did as our representative is *actually ours*.

To begin with, let us give a hearty assent to what God says about the fact that we have been crucified with Christ; see Gal. ii. 20, Romans vi. 5-6, 2 Tim. ii. 11 ("If" here is not the "if" of doubt or uncertainty, but the "since" of a known fact or condition. "Since" indicates that we died with Him, hence we are among those who live with Him and have life) In Rom. vi. 11 we are commanded to reckon on this fact. God states the fact that we were united with Christ Jesus in His death on the cross, regardless of our consciousness of the matter. There is but one way to translate these truths of God into life, and that is, by believing them regardless of feeling: as we begin to thank God that they are true, the Holy Spirit works the experience of these truths into life.

When were we crucified?

The question arises, when were we united? When were we crucified? We were not present when He died, we had not yet been born. Remember first, He was crucified and died as *our Representative*, and it was not necessary for us to be present.

Second, as far as God the Father was concerned, we were crucified with "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8, A.V.). "Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love" (Eph. i. 4). "For we who have believed do enter into that rest; even as He hath said, As I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Heb. iv. 3). In the Father's mind and purpose, the work was all finished, we were crucified and died with Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

As far as Christ Jesus was concerned, it was the day He died on the Cross and became a curse for us; when He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Then it was He died as our representative; we were then united to Him in His death.

As far as the Holy Spirit is concerned, it was the

*L. L. Legters, in the "The Christ Life" Magazine, U.S.A. (Condensed).

day we actively believed on the Lord Jesus as our personal Saviour, when each one of us said to the Father, "I do believe that Jesus bore my sins in His body on the tree. I do believe He died in my place." Then it was that the Holy Spirit united us to the death of Christ Jesus, which He had accomplished as our representative. "Or are ye ignorant that all who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Rom. vi. 3). We were baptized into and were united in the death of the Lord Jesus by the Holy Spirit. What God the Father did in the councils of eternity, as far as He was concerned, was an *accomplished fact*, for "He calleth the things that are not as though they were" (Rom. iv. 17). Hence He could deal with men and make promises as though all had been accomplished, though Christ had not yet died and we had not yet been born. But what was done by God the Father and accomplished by the Son becomes a reality and a personal experience only as we assent and consciously, believingly, look to the Holy Spirit, Who lives in us, to make it a vital experience in our lives. It can never be experienced in any life when there is an unwillingness to have this personal experience. Are we actually willing to be *conformed to His death*? Nor can it ever be experienced in any life in which there is not faith to believe the plain statements of God; but when we believe, then the Holy Spirit works the reality in our lives.

What does it mean to be crucified? It really means to become a horrible, repulsive, despised, hateful thing. It means to become an accursed thing, "for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 13). It also means to become a dead thing . . . A Jew returned to his home, his heart thrilling with the joy of his new-found Saviour. When he told his mother and sisters that he had found that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, they cursed him and called him a vile, repulsive, horrible creature; they sent him from the house, forbidding him ever to return. Three days later they brought a coffin into the home, a funeral service was held, and the son and brother was buried from their sight. He was *dead to them*. That is what it means to be crucified—it means to be as one dead to everything of the past.

What was crucified?

What was crucified? Not my body surely, for my body was not there. It was not a physical matter, though the work He did as my representative was for my body as well as my spirit, that I should never pay the penalty of my sin in my body. But our union with Him in His death went infinitely deeper and meant more than that. "Knowing this, that our OLD MAN was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away, that we should no longer be in bondage to sin" (Rom. vi. 6). It was my old self, the "I," the ego, my self-will, my ambitious self, my self-pride—in fact, all that I received from Adam by my birth, all that I am apart from Christ. Some call it the "old man," others the old nature; call it what you will, it is all that I am by nature which is crucified with Christ.

When we give assent to this truth though we cannot

see the reality of it in our lives, the Holy Spirit is able to and does make this an actual experience for us. The Holy Spirit can do nothing until by faith we lay hold of it and then, as we stand on this truth, He is able to lead us into a personal, practical experience of crucifixion with Christ. In the verse just quoted the word translated "done away" really means "to make of none effect," to "render inactive." One day we were in a home where we were to have whipped cream with our dessert, but something had happened to that cream, and for some reason all the whipping was of no effect, and the cream would not respond! Our having been crucified with Christ was to make the body of sin of none effect while we live by faith, but it can instantly become active and dominate the life of a believer when faith becomes dormant and inactive.

Our crucifixion was for freedom, for he that died is free from sin, "that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin." The purpose was that the domination of sin should be broken. It is not God's will that *sin* have dominion over any child of His; all died with Christ Jesus, all were united with Him in crucifixion, but few enter into the joy of the freedom of the sons of God because they will not believe God's Word. When any child of God will *believe* and *begin to express that faith* in thanksgiving, day by day thanking Him for the fact (which one may not yet have experienced) the Holy Spirit will lead that one into a glorious personal experience. Then from the heart he can say: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2).

There are four steps in crucifixion. First the trial. Second, the passing of sentence, then the giving over of the prisoner to the executioners, and finally the actual crucifixion. In the same way, in the life of the child of God, there has been the trial, when God saw, sentenced, handed over to execution, and then united us with His Son in death. Now will you bring your self-life, your natural man with all its doings, before God's judgment bar, and there, in the light of His Word and in view of what He has done, agree with God in what He did and said? You are not to crucify it or put it to death, but you are to agree with what God has said and done.

Self—the usurper.

In the lives of most Christians, *self* has usurped the place belonging to Christ. It is a criminal worthy of death, but the trouble is, they do not recognise that this self-life has been crucified. They do not believe God's Word, and sin reigns in their lives; they live in bondage to sin, praying for deliverance, praying that they may die to sin, but refusing to believe what God says He has already done. They believe that Jesus died *for sins* as their Substitute, and that they are justified by God. If in the same way they would believe that Jesus died *unto sin* as their Representative they would experience liberty from its domination; for His death was *for sins* unto justification, and *to sin* unto sanctification. The first does not avail until we believe it, and the second is powerless in our lives until appropriated in the same way, by faith.

Our old self-life which has been crucified with Christ and which we have agreed is worthy only of death must be kept in the place of death by the Holy Spirit. When a man was hanging on a cross in physical pain and anguish, fever soon set in and thirst became

intense, and he cried out, "I thirst, I thirst." A bystander would hasten to him with a sponge filled with vinegar, kept ready to slake the thirst of the dying man, and hold it to his mouth. So, also, the self-life which has been crucified may cry out, "I thirst, I thirst." Do not nourish it, do not give it a stimulant. Turn your back upon it and look to the Holy Spirit to keep it in its place of death. Let your ear be deaf, let your heart be adamant. Remember it is your mortal enemy, the one who has betrayed you, the one who brings you into bondage to sin. Count on the fact that it was crucified with Christ. The following incident may serve as an illustration:

How it works.

Some time ago at the close of a meeting a man was brought to me; he wanted to become a Christian, so it was not hard to lead him to the Lord. He soon saw the way of salvation, and as he saw each step, he acted upon his knowledge. At last I said, "Now what are you?" He replied, "A son of God." Then I asked, "What have you?" He said, "Eternal life." Later I asked him whether he had either a Bible or New Testament; when he told me he had neither I went to the lobby of the church where a number of people were standing, and asked them for a Testament to give to him. As I was waiting for the janitor to get one, I asked one of the most spiritual ministers of the town to go to the man, introduce himself, and invite him to his church. He did this, and afterwards continued talking with him. The following day another person came to me and said, "Do you see what a wonderful soul winner Mr. Blank is, how quickly he led that man to the Lord?" The life that I had judged worthy of death and that I had agreed with God had been crucified began to cry out, "I thirst, I thirst for rightful recognition of what I have done." There was just one thing to do and say, "You died, you were crucified with Christ, I will not give to you the stimulant you so much desire, legitimate explanation."

Can we leave the case in the hands of the Holy Spirit, not explaining, not defending, but looking to Him to bring to an end all desire for even legitimate explanation of our side of the case? Let people think what they will, let them say what they will, let it pass into oblivion. Thanks to God, we have been crucified with Christ.

God's great purpose in uniting us with Christ in His death was that there might be an end of the old self and the beginning of a new life . . . God says that we are no longer under bondage to sin, that we are freed from sin's dominion, but there is a glorious positive side as well. "That like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. vi. 4). "That we, having died unto sins, might *live unto righteousness*" (I Pet. ii. 24). "In that he liveth he liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin, *but alive unto God*, in Christ Jesus. And being made free from sin, ye became bondservants of righteousness" (Rom. vi. 10-11, 18).

"There is in the wide universe no possibility of liberation from the power of sin, but through personal separation from it in entire death to it."

Andrew Murray.

"Lift up Your Heads!"

"When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads . . ." Luke xxi. 28.

IN these words the Lord Jesus shews what the Church should be in this hour when "these things" have indeed begun to come to pass. Standing erect, her gaze should be directed upward into the heavens as those who "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right-hand of God," who "set" their "mind on things above" (Col. iii. 1, 2).

This is more than an expression of opinion as to what our attitude should be in the hour of His return: it is an imperative command! It is essential that the Lord's own should now LOOK UP!

The word here used is translated elsewhere "lift up," and is used only of Our Lord in John viii. : 7, 10. "He lifted up Himself"; and in Luke xiii. 11 where we have the record of the woman who "could in no wise lift up." Here is a woman who cannot look up, whose outlook is not heavenly but earthly, and she is so because there are hellish powers at work making it impossible for her to be otherwise, though none but Jesus could discern that. She is typical of many to-day who, though having an upward and heavenly calling (Phil. iii. 14; Heb. iii. 1) are bound earthward and selfward. Like Bunyan's man with the muckrake they are looking downward so intent on things of the earth, that they never behold the heavenly crown above their heads. Not that they are sinners engrossed in things forbidden; they are saints largely in ignorance of "the hope" whereunto they have been saved. They do not look up with any degree of holy expectancy, nor with that faith which, laying hold of heavenly possessions, makes them their own. And here too it has to be recognized that there are tremendous Satanic activities at work to keep such earthbound in thought, in aspiration and in experience.

"Look up"—not "Look Around."

At the same time at which the call is being given to the Church, His Body, to "Look up," men's hearts are found looking around. "Looking after those things which are coming on the earth." "Things," note you, not the Lord; "the earth," and not heaven! The outcome of such looking is "bewilderment and hearts fainting for fear." It is not to be expected that the natural man should have the vision of the heavens, but it is to be expected that the Church should. Surely, there can be no devout servant of the Lord but what recognizes the seriousness of the hour, the "distress of nations . . . the sea and the waves roaring" (Luke xxi. 25). But too many, even of the Lord's people, are looking around instead of looking "up" and they tell us that "contributions" are to be made by the Church of the Firstborn to the present system of things by which means a better day shall be ushered in. Thus the earthly mass is to be leavened until one far-off day the Kingdom of God shall at length come.

Is not this to ignore the actual seat of the disturbance which the Word of God here and elsewhere shows to be in the heavens, though it be so closely related to this earth? In this very passage for instance we have that which is so suggestively rendered by Dr. Weymouth "The forces which control the heavens will be disordered and disturbed" (v. 26). "He that sitteth

in the Heavens shall laugh" but "the despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world—the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare" are becoming greatly agitated, for their hour is short. They have assailed the Throne of the Highest. Their leader hath said: "I will ascend into the heavens; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God" (Isa. xiv. 13). Therefore "It is very tempestuous round about Him." Yet shall "the heavens declare His righteousness" (Ps. 1. 3-5). These are days in which the prophecy of Haggai is being enacted. "I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land: and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come" (Hag. ii. 6, 7). But the writer of the Hebrew letter is careful to emphasize that the shaking is not "of the earth only, but also heaven" (Heb. xii. 26, 27). The movement, the reverberations of which are already being felt upon earth, is that of "The Lord Jesus out from heaven" as He cometh forth to make war in righteousness, and to triumph (2 Thess. i. 7; Rev. xix. 11).

A heavenly people, born from above, should be aware of these things and should be looking through the heavens to Jesus their returning Lord and their Head.

"Look up"—not "Look Back."

There are burdened hearts to-day, and one thanks God that they are so burdened, oppressed with the condition of things not only in the world around but in the Church itself. Appalled by the spiritual lifelessness and barrenness everywhere apparent they are seeking a remedy. Often it is thought to be found in a going "back." Back to the experiences of the past; back to men of the past; back to revivals of the past! If only these could be reproduced all would be well. Often the desire of those seeking a display of the power of God has been voiced in the cry "Back to Pentecost." Even here our eyes must look "up" not "back."

But let me be clearly understood. We are in these days entitled and expected to live in the full manifestation of the risen, ascended, and enthroned Christ, as were the Apostles Peter, John, Paul, or any of the early Church. But that end is not going to be gained by seeking to reproduce the conditions and the phenomena which accompanied the initial outpouring of the Holy Ghost. It is, however, going to be realized by fulfilling the conditions of faith together with the becoming "conformed to His death" (Phil. iii. 10) the non-observance of which gives the only explanation of the present-day absence of "the power of His resurrection" in the members of His Body. The Church has in the immediate future to pass through that, the intensity of which she has never experienced in her whole history. She will go through in triumph, drawing upon the endless resources of her Head who is seated in the Heavens. If there be a storm-centre in the heavens as regards the powers of darkness, there is a life-centre in the heavens as regards the Body. "He is Sovereign Head of the Church which is His Body; the fullness of Him who fills all things

everywhere with Himself." We share His life! and in Him we are "raised up with Him from the dead, and seated with Him in the Heavens" (Eph. ii. 5, 6, C. & H.). That was the essence of Pentecost! It was that that the early Church knew: It is that which we may know, not as we look *back*, but as we look *up* in faith to Him Who is far above all, in Whom we are made full (Col. ii. 10 R.V.). "Forgetting everything which is past, and stretching forward to what lies in front of me, with my eyes fixed on the goal, I push on to secure the prize of God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let all of us who are mature cherish these thoughts" (Phil. iii. 13-15, Weymouth).

"Look Up"—not "Look In!"

One is deeply impressed with the fact that throughout the world there is a large company of the Lord's choice servants who are His lovers, seeking His very best; desirous of knowing fullness of life in the Spirit, and believers in the doctrine of the return of the Lord, who yet do not count for much in this conflict in the Heavens, the reason being that they are so largely turned in upon themselves. They should be together with their Lord taken out into true spiritual warfare, and in Him made mighty factors in that very storm-centre, to which reference has been made, which centres around the Person of the Lord. They might be in the front line of the battle of the Lord, led by the great Captain of the Hosts of the Lord, wielding weapons which are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," even that last great stronghold of the enemy which ere long will collapse when Satan and his angels will be "hurled down" from the heavens (Rev. xii. 9, Weymouth).

The position may be likened to an enveloping military movement as the Lord with His hosts is moving out from the Heavens, and at the same time is working from the earth side through the members of His Body. Between them lies the fiercely malignant "dragon and his angels." The heavenly forces are approaching nearer and nearer to those here below who are "alive and remain." In but a little while there will be the break through, and then the "place" of the great dragon and his angels will not be "found any more in heaven" (Rev. xii. 8).

But are there not many who have been "chosen to be soldiers, who know nothing of that warfare? There are those, even, who talk much of the Baptism in the Spirit who are gourmands rather than warriors, spiritual epicureans rather than fighters. Instead of beholding the battle-lines in the heavens and being carried out and beyond into this unseen but mighty theatre of war, and in this fight of faith being made to know to the utmost "the transcendent greatness of His power in us believers as seen in the working of His infinite might when He displayed it in Christ by raising Him from the dead and seating him at His own right-hand in the heavenly realms" (Eph. i. 19, 20, Weymouth), they are revolving around their own personal experience, their spiritual enjoyment, their sense of power, their ecstasies, and manifestations, and gifts. They are self-centred in spiritual experience. Satan is well content to have it so, but the Lord Jesus is not. To these specially He would say "LOOK UP!"

Yet here it may be questioned, "Can creatures so puny as we make any difference in affairs so vast? Can we hope to accomplish anything by setting our-

selves against such supernatural intelligence and power?" Well may it be asked! for indeed "we have no might against this great company which cometh against us." And

*"The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own."*

It is true that no zeal of ours, and nothing that we can do will effect issues so tremendous. JESUS is Victor, and only Jesus! But we bear His Name, before which hosts of darkness flee: we are filled with the Spirit of Him who "led captivity captive"; we are energized by "the faith of the Son of God" which subdues kingdoms; we are sprinkled in His Blood by which Satan will be cast out of the heavens; we proclaim His triumph on the Cross whereby these self-same powers have been "boldly displayed as His conquests" (Col. ii. 15, Weymouth); and thus we "set ourselves, stand still, and see the SALVATION OF THE LORD." We can only evade this conflict by nullifying the working of the Holy Ghost within us.

Let us then Look up, and in entire self-forgetfulness, as having nothing we can call our own, "Baptized in the baptism" He is baptized with, in the power of the Eternal Spirit, in utter reliance upon Himself alone, our unseen but heavenly Head, confident in His abiding victory, be led out to the field of battle, there to "stand . . . and having fought to the end (the glorious end) to remain victors on the field" (Eph. vi. 13, Weymouth). "To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: *this honour have all His saints*, Praise ye the Lord" (Ps. cxlix. 8, 9).

Exquisitely tender is the Lord's own description in verse 15 of His dealing with the woman who "could in no wise lift up." *He looses from all Satanic bondage whatever be its nature. He leads away to watering.* How significant this is, for it is the same word which we get in 1 Cor. xii. 13 "*made to drink into one Spirit*"—the Spirit which is in Him and in us. And here we get the true conception of "Baptism in the Spirit," and we see it to be a baptism "into one body." It is manifest that the more fully we enter into the meaning of the baptism, the more shall we experience that which is included in the reality of membership in the Body. Above all shall we realize that we are united to our Heavenly and glorious Head, that we may be "As He is in this world." Then in the measure in which we drink, and drink, and drink yet again "of the same Spirit," which is His Spirit, will the wonder and the glory of that union be manifest, and assuredly we shall be made to LOOK UP. A. S. CROWE (*India*).

THERE is a destiny for the Church, the Body of Christ, and He will show the trustful, studious soul, what that destiny is. He will guide you into all truth concerning those perils and dangers which are specially to abound at the close of the dispensation, just prior to the return of Christ; and happy is he who is well armed at this point. There is such a time of sifting coming that only the taught of God shall stand. Oh, beware, for if this Word teaches anything plainly it teaches this—that there is going yet to be an awful manifestation of demon power. How happy is he who, taught of the Spirit concerning things to come, is not surprised when these things happen. He sees that which may astonish some and alarm others, but taught of the Spirit, he says, "Ah, yes, my Book told me that all these things were going to happen. Here are heaven's warning signals now flashing in the sky." "When ye see these things lift up your head, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh."—*Rev. Archibald G. Brown.*

"When Ye Pray"

By Rev. W. S. Jones.*

Prayer

11

I HAVE been in London most of the week, and I came with a burden—a burden that has come upon me by noticing the powerlessness of our Christian life. It came very specially, in the first instance, on noticing the defection of a Christian preacher, a minister with whom one had had much to do previous to the Welsh Revival. I had been talking to him about prayer, and he said, "How far away from me those things are now!" My heart sank! The burden was increased as I noticed that after all we have learned about taking our place continually with Christ on Calvary, and reckoning ourselves raised with Him and "seated with Him"—Christian brethren who are called of God to teach, still harp mainly on the very first principles concerning the matter of prayer, which one would have thought were our very life.

That brought serious thought, and the question: are we always to be learning the same things? Are we still to be children in prayer? Is there no way of growing to manhood? Is there such a thing as proficiency in prayer? Is there anyone at any time, of whom we can say that he is master of prayer? These God-given teachers generally call us right back to the very first things we learned about prayer, and this seems to suggest the negative answer, and one is driven again to ask, Is prayer an art at all? Is it anything that we can be expected to master? In the matter of art, if I do this and that, there comes naturally, by law induced, the result. Does that apply to prayer? Can I say if I do this and that, say this and that, the result will come necessarily, as by law induced? I am afraid I cannot. And I was led to look within myself. I must not think of prayer as an art, it is a communion. It is a spirit dealing with God; a spirit having a will, dealing with another Spirit Who has a will; and if I ask of Him, still He is at liberty (whatever I may think), He being All-wise, to do what He likes.

I got as far as that. Then I went to the Book again, because I felt that there is no one, and no book but this Book, that can teach me to pray. The broad principles of prayer you will find in the New Testament. They are known to everyone, but the deepest principles are always new, however well you know them. You never get beyond the A B C—you have to deal with the alphabet every day, neither can you ever do away with your multiplication table.

First, the whole of the New Testament breathes this principle, that there is a need and a duty and a privilege of prayer. There is a call within me, and in my situation, and there is some great demand in my existence, and in God's existence, which both of us feel; a demand and a duty that says, "Men *ought* always to pray." If you read it in Welsh it is stronger still, there is no English word that would represent it, unless you say, "men *must*." There is some tremendous call that we should pray, which we dare not set aside.

* From shorthand notes of a message given at our London Conference. We have not attempted to alter the familiar colloquial form of this "quiet talk," and pray that it may arouse in many hearts a deep desire to "know God" in spirit and in truth.—Ed.

Secondly, there is a tremendous inability, a tremendous failure, regarding prayer. I think if the Christian Church searched back into its deepest consciousness, it would have to say "I cannot pray." In view of this tremendous failure, God has made a tremendously valuable provision to meet my "I cannot," so that I really *may*, and you will find that in Romans viii.

"The Spirit . . . helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26).

Though we know not how, and cannot pray, the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings that find no language; and God knows the mind of the Spirit, and it is just there that God has made provision for our "cannot," it is there that we find the reconciliation of our tremendous failure and the power to pray—the reconciliation of the two things that are in my heart: that I *ought*, and yet I know that I *cannot*.

Someone said to the Lord Jesus, "teach us to pray." That man felt he could not get along without prayer. The greatest thing he had then come across was the praying of the Lord Jesus. Although this poor man had been brought up among people who did pray, and had heard many prayers, yet when he heard Jesus pray he felt, "If this is praying, why I have never commenced to pray." Do you not feel to-day, in view of our work for God, that we need to get down to the old lesson? for there is no other way of doing our work or of really conquering our situations, but by praying.

But, you say, what about preaching? Nay, nay! we have experiences of preaching and experiences of tremendous failure there. Yet the preaching is good, they say. We preach the truth; we tell the story of Calvary, and yet the people hear not! Now little comes of it! One sermon was preached at Pentecost and 3,000 souls believed. Three thousand sermons are preached to-day and none believe! But I do remember this, that there was a "coming upon" of the Spirit of God, and a mass of praying behind that preaching of Peter; so I am driven back to the same thing, PRAYER—if I could only do it!

And I open the New Testament again, and I find right through the Epistles I am taught that this is the fact, that if somehow I cannot learn to really *pray*—not to make prayers, but to really pray—nothing else that I do is of any value. I remember a great London preacher saying once, "Oh that fatal gift of prayer!" I understood what he meant. How fatal it is if you are able to be glib in prayer! How fatal it is that "praying" is so easy! How fatal it is when your prayer becomes a speech! If I could only *pray*, I do not need to bother so much about my preaching.

Running right through the Epistles the Holy Spirit is urging prayer. If I want an epistle on prayer, where shall I go? Anywhere! But what do you think of James? James talked about works, but it is a splendid epistle on prayer. What about John? Again, splendid on prayer. Just before I rose to speak, my mind went to John, and I read this verse:

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1 John v. 13-15).

Did John not say that they were a people who believed on the Son of God—and yet he says, "*That ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God*"! You do believe on THE NAME—that is your profession, it is that on which you stand. I have written to you these things because you have faith in the Name of the Son of God, "that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and *that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God*." It means to believe with some special power and effect as occasion may arise. It must mean something like that.

Then he says, following that, "and this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will"—and we may do that, because we have the Word, and we know HIM. Many years ago we had trouble with some people because we had a Sunday School. They said it was not in the Bible. But I do not need to ask anyone whether it is right to teach about God, because I know Him, and I know His will in the matter. It is not difficult, if you live in God's fellowship, to know His will. To know God is to know His will, almost instinctively, in a thousand ways.

The gift of Life.

This, then, is our confidence, our faith, that "if we ask anything according to His will," He hears us, and if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions, the special petitions, the very thing "that we desired of Him." That is, if we know the principle, if we are saturated with our own doctrine, if it has gone down into our very spirit and soul, then we know that we have whatsoever we ask of Him.

Have we really that confidence? Do you not feel, as I read these words, that you fail here? That prayer is not to you that tremendously strong thing that John describes? Are we not all driven to say, "Lord, teach us to pray; do anything that we may pray, discipline us that we may pray."

I have said that John is writing to Christians who know the Christian doctrine, and telling them something that they already know. *Why* does he rub in these old, old principles? He had a purpose, for immediately after talking about prayer in that way he says: "If any man see his brother sin . . ." he shall preach to him? Oh no! Advise him? No! that is not the way. The first essential in the matter of saving your sinning brother is this: "If any man see his brother sin . . . *he shall ask*." That is your method for tackling the sinner. "Ask"—not rebuke. Begin at the beginning, "*he shall ask*"—master that first. And what then? "And He—God—shall give him *life* for them that sin." Do you see your method? You shall ask, and God shall *give you* life for them that sin. Your son whom you have rebuked so many times, talked to so many times—perhaps you had better stop talking, and get back to the matter of praying and asking. "Ask" and God shall give you life for your son. It will be God's gift to you the advantage will be your son's. You remember the Lord Jesus coming to the grave

of Lazarus. He must first have prayed there, for He turned to His Father and said, "I know that Thou hearest Me always, but for the sake of those that stand round have I said it." He had prayed there, and then He cried "Lazarus, come forth," and Lazarus came forth alive. What was that? It was God's gift to Jesus, Who had prayed! Who got the advantage? Well, Lazarus and his family of course. The life came to Lazarus, and the gift to Jesus. Do you not think that is God's plan very often? Your boy is falling and running riot, or some neighbour of yours, and you talk to them, but nothing comes of it. You have been trying to study how to rebuke and how to advise. Suppose we come back to see what we know about praying, about asking. John tells you that the matter of saving is begun by asking, and if you learn how to ask, as Jesus taught His disciples, the result will be that the Author and Giver of life will give you, as His gift, LIFE for those who sin. Hear the Word of the Spirit of God—"ASK"! Would you save men? ASK! Would you change your neighbour? ASK! "And He will give you life for those who sin not unto death."

So that brings me to my main lesson. The other day I went down to Porth, and there was a man there giving Bible Readings. I did not hear one, although one night I sat by him while another spoke. And suddenly, as if his mind had been switched away from the subject, he said, "Brother, it takes a long time to learn *how to say what we know*!" It struck me. I am trying to say to you what I really *know*, and I feel I am not able to. But that throws us back on the Spirit of God—I know it is He alone who can say what I am speaking about. I am speaking, but He can say it down deep in your heart, so that you are never the same man or woman again.

When we pray, say FATHER!

My mind goes back to the man who asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Our Lord took the matter in hand so very readily and simply: "When ye pray say, Father . . ." If there is one passage of Scripture more classic than that in John's Letter on the subject of prayer, it is Luke xi., where our Lord is teaching His disciples how to do the work of prayer.

There are those who know what it is to be praying in public, making prayers at demand, and doing it eloquently, with an easy flow of language and thought. Do not think you are a master of prayer, for you are not. We are all learners, practising as we learn. Get back to Luke xi., read it to-day, read it to-morrow, read it alone—lock the door, it will help you, and read Luke xi. 1-13, and suppose yourself to be the man who asked, "Teach me to pray"; and I am greatly mistaken if it does not do something in you.

If I could only *pray* the Lord's Prayer! You say it, but do you pray it? Years ago, reading one of the old mystics, it came to me that he touched upon the point of how to pray the Lord's prayer: Do not glide over it, do not merely repeat it. You can pray only one petition at a time; *pray* that petition before you take another. If you fail to get through the whole, *pray* the petition you do pray. Let the petition find you out, and reproduce itself in your soul. Learn to *pray* the Lord's Prayer, and then remember the story He gave to illustrate it. What is the essence of the story? Persistence? Exactly. Keep at it. Have you

a desire? Keep at it. Is there a man who needs bread, and you have nothing to give him? Get to the Throne and "knock." Keep at it. Pray, pray, pray! But, you say, I cannot! I know the difficulty, my brother, of keeping at it; but did not the Lord press that upon those people? He wanted to make them sure of God. This is what He said, after telling the beautiful little story: "And I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given to you," as really as it was given to that man. "Seek, and ye shall find," as truly as he found. "Be ye knocking, and it shall be opened unto you"—to him that knocketh, whosoever he may be, it shall be opened. Not to George Muller, but to you. "Though he rise not because he is his friend" (friendship fails) "because of his persistence, because he does not give up, because he knows what he wants and *will have it*, He will rise and give him as many as he needeth." Why does he persist? Because he knows that his friend *has* bread, and knows his friend's heart and character, and knows that if he asks he will get it. "Be ye asking, and ye shall receive." It is no good talking about things you have asked for, which God has not given you. If you are sure of God, you will get it. "But He does not give it!" The Lord knew about that trouble, that need, before you uttered it, and He does not conclude His teaching without telling them this, that they will receive from God exactly what they ask for—or *something better*! Never anything worse. Never anything poorer. I never yet met

a beggar who asked me for a penny and was offended because I gave him a shilling! If you ask your Father for an egg, will he give you a scorpion? No! "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" The best gift God has to give.

"When ye pray, say 'Father'." In the R.V. the word "our" is not there, and "which art in heaven" is not there, only, "When ye pray say—FATHER!" That is it! Can you say it? In the deep silence of your own heart, can you say "Father"? That is the key to answered prayer—how do you say "Father"? Can you say it as the Lord Jesus said it, trying to make them realise their relationship, realise *who* they are, and Who He is to Whom they say "Father"? You say you have no faith—no faith in Whom? No faith in your Father? Why, you have not said "Father" yet! Say "Father" until you do not think at all about faith. Do not tantalise your soul with saying you have no faith: *have you a Father?* Then get alone with Him, and bring your petition, and your Father will hear you, and if you find it difficult, let your first petition be that you may be able to pray. "Grant me the ministration of the Holy Ghost in prayer." How much more will your Heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that *ask*. May God grant us all to really know, to really learn, to pray.

Amen.

Life, Heavenly

The Heavenly Life in its "Hidden" Character.

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them, else ye have no reward with your Father." Matt. vi. 1. R. V.

SURELY the words practically mean this: "Take care that you do not live your life before men instead of before God, for if you do, God cannot bear witness to it and give you His reward."

God cannot respond to "veneer," or to anything that is done with the least motive of being "seen." These words pierce to the joints and marrow. They lay bare the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In the light of them do they not reveal how much of our Christian life is lived before men and tell the story *why* there is so little reward in "God bearing witness with distributions of the Holy Ghost." (Heb. ii. 4. m.).

How much of our Christian work is done "to be seen." Not intentionally perhaps, but almost unconsciously, "How does it look?" "What will they say?" lies in the background of much that is said and done.

The "Heavenly Life" is a hidden life, "hid with Christ in God," and in this passage (Matt. vi. 1-18), the Lord points out to the children of the Father the hidden life and its reward. He speaks to them of hidden service, (verses 2-4), hidden prayer, (verses 5-15); hidden suffering, (verses 16-18).

Hidden Service.

Let us look first at the hidden life of service. "When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet . . . [for] glory of men . . . but . . . let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

Briefly, let all your service and all your giving of money, time, strength, etc., etc., be hidden between

God and yourself. Yea, more than that, let it even be secret to *yourself*, never sit down to think or dwell upon it—never tell yourself or count up to yourself what you have done—what you do, forget, and leave it before God.

A life poured out to God in secret *must* be owned by God and bring "open reward." It will be seen of men then, but seen so that they glorify the Father. They will see how God serves us, not how we serve God. How true the Divine law is, that we get what we give up and lose what we seek to gain. If we think of the praise of men, we lose the reward of God. If we think of the praise of God, we gain His seal and His open reward, which men do see after all.

Hidden Prayer.

From the doing of righteousness, the Lord passes on to speak of the hidden prayer life, so vividly pictured in verse six. But first its contrast is referred to in verse five, "Prayer to be seen of men!" Surely not possible in the twentieth century! Ah, yes, if not to be seen, at least to be *heard* of men. How many a child of God hesitates to pray aloud "because I cannot pray as well as so-and-so," or others say, "well, if I cannot speak, at least I can *pray*!" Is there not the same subtle motive of being "seen of men" underlying both?

Does this account in some degree for so much unanswered prayer? The Lord says, "NO reward of your Father."

A life of prayer in the inner chamber of God's Presence would deal with this. The soul that dwells

in the heart of God is in the inner chamber of His Presence directly it approaches Him, in private or public, and it sees and hears no one but God. Men are forgotten, and *how* it prays does not occur to it. The fact is, we think of men so much because we know so little of God.

Let us look at some characteristics of the hidden prayer life.

- (1). It is prayer with no thought of what others think, (verse 5).
- (2). It is prayer shut in with God, whether in private or public worship, (verse 6).
- (3). It is prayer, not so much of language as of *heart*, (verse 7).
- (4). It is prayer which is *sure* of response and reward, (verse 6).
- (5). It is prayer definite, and to the point "after this manner . . . pray ye," (verse 9-13).
- (6). It is prayer to a Father who will respond to every real need, (verse 8).
- (7). It is prayer in the spirit of forgiving love, (verse 14-15).

Secret prayer will bring no response if there is a secret grudge.

Hidden Suffering.

Thirdly, let us look at the Heavenly life in its character of hidden suffering. Again we are warned of the danger of being "seen of men." Here the temptation is more subtle than the first one. To "do our righteousness" to be "seen of men" may clearly have been put away, and we may have learnt something of the life of secret prayer. But we may not learn the lesson here that there is the possibility of our carrying sad faces, to suffer, (to fast, to "do without") to "mourn before God for souls" to be "seen of men"—or in suffering and sorrow to seek too much the sympathy of others, and to be self-absorbed in our sorrow, so as to be blind to the needs of others.

"Go, bury thy sorrow, the world hath it's share,
Go, bury it deeply, go hide it with care."

Go, bury thy sorrow, let others be blest,

Go, give them the sunshine, tell *Jesus the rest*."

The hand of God may be upon us compelling us to fast from the usual means of grace, old companionships, many things, and we may be carrying a "sad countenance" instead of drawing our strength in secret from the Father, that He may reward us openly in His own abundant grace.

Alas! the "mourners in Zion" are many. Self-absorbed mourners; self-absorbed in their troubles, their sorrows, their cares. Mourners who need the "oil of joy" for their own mourning, to make them mourners in secret, in fellowship with Christ—mourners according to God's own heart, who "sigh and cry for the abominations" around them, (Ezek. ix. 4).

Those who "fast" in secret are the hidden few, who like Jacob weep and make supplication, weep alone with God and go forth from the inner chamber to live poured-out lives with hearts at leisure from themselves to soothe and sympathise.

Finally, how blessedly the Heavenly hidden life was manifested in our pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ. How wholly He lived the life of sacrifice, at the disposal of others—how fully the hidden prayer life was seen in Him as "with strong crying and tears" He prayed, and how truly His life was lived in secret with His Father, and He walked this world always at leisure in heart and mind to succour others. How little He even spoke of His own sorrows; He gave them the sunshine and told His Father the rest. As one has said, He Himself was the very embodiment of all that He taught. The ideal life was manifested fully in Him.

May the children of the Father thus live in secret with their Father, so that He can fully give His open reward.

Selected.

The Need of Prayer for Prayer.

WHAT is the most pressing need at this moment? It is to ask God to give more mighty prayer to all who can have at heart the speedy evangelisation of every unreached soul . . . Prayer that is strong, prevailing, believing, God-moving, hell-defeating, devil-routing, sinner-saving, believer-sanctifying, Christ-exalting, worker-producing, and money-finding! Prayer that takes all we are and have to offer it to God, as it took all Jesus had, on Calvary, to give us the right to pray.

But where in all the world are we going to get prayer that will do all that? The kind that Daniel offered and that shook from stem to stern the whole Babylonian empire, and brought God into position and pre-eminence: or the kind Nehemiah offered, and had rulers running after him with men, money and materials, to help rebuild the walls of ruined Jerusalem. The never-give-in to anything or anybody kind, that the man in the Gospel offered on the doorstep or under the bedroom window of his friend, after a hungry man had come along with a need that had to be met without delay . . . Or the kind of prayer the widow woman went in for, until the judge had to rise from his bench, postpone business for the time being, and attend to her urgent pleadings . . .

The people who became infected with the kind of prayer spirit that sent Esther into the king's presence, live or die, for the salvation of her people from the sword, will make a mark upon the lives of others that eternity will never rub out. Please observe that those we have mentioned here prayed as they did because

Somebody gave them the prayer to pray!

God gave to Nehemiah, through Hanani, the prayer that made Jerusalem a new city. This seems to be the way He works. And can God give us this kind of prayer to-day? Yes, God—by the Holy Ghost—can give us the hurricane kind of prayers that will cause things to move and remove that nothing else will. He wants to pack them into any heart anywhere that is prepared to put up with the extraordinary consequences. He

must have given Elijah that prayer for drought, or he never would have offered it: and anybody who has ever achieved anything of value outside the circle of man's wisdom has had to get *God's prayer*. *Our* prayers are perfectly futile and get us nowhere. And even when we do make an effort our capital is soon used up, and our strength exhausted. The supernatural life must offer supernatural prayers . . . The devil fears nothing that man makes or repeats—not even his prayers. He only begins to feel his heart fill with alarm when a soul begins to offer before God something that God has made and passed on . . .

It is only the prayer born in the very heart of God, shot through with the very blood and passion of the Son of God, filled with the power and persistence of the Holy Ghost, and loaded with a deep and heavy sense of the Church's plight and the world's appalling need, that sets the wheels of revival in motion. God save us from trying to turn these wheels by our own efforts. It can't be done . . .

Let us beg God now for prayer—for His prayer. Not prayer inspired by our own observation, our own sense of need, the thought of our own comfort, or the compulsions of our position in Christian service: but prayer straight from God, to straighten out every tangle and to meet every need. When we offer His prayer as put into our spirit, there will be no such thing as unanswered prayer. Every prayer will be as almighty as God is, because His nature will be in them. The difficulties we face, monetary or otherwise, at the present time, will vanish and we shall not speak as if God Almighty was bankrupt . . . God will then be seen in our lives; His power will flow through us as never before in flood-tides of blessing to others; miracles will happen in every sphere we touch; every need will be met in most lavish fashion; and the devil will find it difficult—if not quite impossible—to get anything done!

Lord, give us Thy prayers. Amen.

G. Dempsey (Japan).

Helps for Teachers.

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

"Rightly dividing the Word of Truth."

2 Tim. ii. 15.

MAGNIFICENT DELIVERANCE.

"He delivers magnificently" (Ps. 18, 50, French version).

I. The song of praise from an overflowing heart :

"I love Thee, O Lord my strength . . . my rock . . . my fortress . . . my strong rock . . . my shield . . . my high tower." ver. 1, 2.

II. The hour of extremity :

"The cords of death compassed me . . . the cords of Sheol (the grave) were round about me ; the snares of death came upon me." ver. 4, 5.

A graphic description of spiritual extremity. Cords bind and hold fast in powerlessness, so do the snares that death fastens and weaves round about the soul in its hour of testing.

Paul's story in 2 Cor. i. 8, aptly illustrates this Psalm. "We despaired even of life." We who live, in union with Christ, are "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake," that we may learn how to cast ourselves upon His life, and prove in ever deepening measure that He "delivers magnificently."

III. The one resource in extremity :

"In my distress I called . . . and CRIED unto my God," ver. 6. Nothing left but a tongue, and just strength to cry ! This is being brought to an end of oneself !

IV. How God delivered :

1. "He heard my cry . . . and my cry." "The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry." Ps. xxxiv. 15.

2. "He bowed the heavens also, and came down." ver. 9.

3. "He . . . did fly : Yea He flew swiftly upon the wings of the wind." ver. 10.

4. "He sent from on high, He took me : he drew me out of great waters." ver. 16, m.

These "great waters" are always typical of Jordan, the river of death. "Beginning to sink, he cried out saying, Lord save me." Matt. xiv. 30.

5. "He delivered me from my strong enemy . . . too mighty for me." ver. 17.

"Him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. ii. 14, m.

It was the "strong enemy" that brought the "snares of death" upon the soul. It is well to know the cause.

6. "He brought me forth also into a large place." ver. 19. Out of the narrow bounds of the grave into the boundless infinitude of Himself. This description of His magnificent deliverance is beautiful. Note the Father's response to the cry of His sinking child. He heard ; He came down ; He flew swiftly ; He drew me out ; He delivered me ; He brought me forth into a large place.

"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver : in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver" (2 Cor. i. 10, A. V.).

V. The condition of God's immediate response :

"The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness ; according to the cleanness of my hands . . . for I have kept the ways of the Lord." ver. 20-24.

"If our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God ; and whatsoever we ask, we receive." 1 John iii. 21, 22.

It is only in the path of obedience, and in the assurance of a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men, that we can thus boldly cry unto God with certainty that He will fly swiftly, and deliver us from our strong enemy, "too mighty" for us.

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 Jno. i. 7.

VI. The blessings in the "large place" :

1. Darkness lightened.

"The Lord . . . will lighten my darkness." ver. 28.

2. Power to run through all opposition.

"By Thee I run through a troop." ver. 29, m.

3. Power to overcome all difficulties.

"By my God do I leap over a wall." ver. 29.

4. Girded with strength.

"God that girdeth me with strength." ver. 32.

5. Power to walk with God.

"His way is perfect . . . He maketh my feet like hind's feet ; and setteth me upon my high places." ver. 30, 33.

VII. The rescued one becomes aggressive :

"He teacheth my hands to war . . . I will pursue mine enemies and overtake them : neither will I return again until they are consumed." ver. 34, 37.

VIII. The empowering of God :

"Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle." ver. 39

"Yea, Thou liftest me up above them that rise up against me. Thou deliverest . . ." ver. 48.

"He delivers magnificently, and sheweth lovingkindness"

verse 50, French version.

FAITH IN THE FAITHFUL GOD.

"The just shall live in His faithfulness."

Hab. ii. 4, m.

I. The Name of God :

"The Lord thy God, He is God ; the faithful God !"

Deut. vii. 9.

David sang of His faithfulness (See Ps. lxxxix. 1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33).

"They shall worship because of the Lord that is faithful."

Isa. xlix. 7.

II. The Name of Christ : "Faithful and True." Rev. xix. 11.

1. "Faithful" to God in the work of redemption :

"Jesus Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him." Heb. iii. 2.

2. "Faithful" to the people on their behalf God-ward :

"A merciful and faithful High Priest." Heb. ii. 17

3. "Faithful" in His work of revealing God to souls :

"Jesus Christ . . . the faithful witness." Rev. i. 5.

4. "Faithful" to His redeemed in dealing with their sins :

"The faithful and true witness." Rev. iii. 14.

III. What the faithful God is faithful to do :

1. "Faithful" to forgive and cleanse our sins :

"He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 Jno. i. 9. Our part, "If we confess our sins," see Prov. xxviii. 13.

2. "Faithful" to complete the work He begins in us :

"Who shall also confirm you unto the end . . . God is faithful through Whom ye were called." 1 Cor. i. 8, 9.

3. "Faithful" to take full possession of us :

"The God of Peace Himself sanctify you wholly . . . faithful is He . . . Who also will do it." 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

4. "Faithful" to keep us from the Adversary :

"The Lord is faithful, Who shall stablish you and guard you from the evil one." 2 Thess. iii. 3.

5. "Faithful" in the hour of temptation :

"God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will . . . make also the way of escape." 1 Cor. x. 13.

IV. What the redeemed have to do :

1. Live by the faithfulness of God :

"The just shall live in His faithfulness." Hab. ii. 4, m. (i.e., reliance upon God, not upon our faith.)

2. Simply count Him faithful :

"Sarah . . . received power . . . since she counted Him faithful who had promised." Heb. xi. 11.

3. Hold fast the confession of their hope in Him :

"Hold fast . . . waver not ; for He is faithful." Heb. x. 23.

4. Commit themselves continually to His keeping :

"Commit . . . in well doing unto a faithful Creator." 1 Pet. iv. 19.

"Fully assured that . . . He (is) able to perform." Rom. iv. 21.

"If we are faithless, He abideth faithful."

(2 Tim. ii. 13)

Notes from the Book Room.

At the beginning of a new year we would send a message of loving greeting in Christ to the hundreds of our readers who uphold us, and the ministry of this literature, before the Throne regularly and constantly. We are not able to reply personally to so many whom we know "in the Spirit" as true friends and co-workers, but we ask them to accept this New Year greeting and believe that our prayers also go up for them, that they may enter into the deepest and fullest knowledge of Him, Whose we are and Whom we serve. The thought upon our hearts is the great need for God's children, in these days, to "dwell deep" in Him, anchored at the centre of their being to that Rock, Christ—the only anchorage that "holds" in a civilization, a world, that is being "shaken" according to the purpose of God long foretold (Hag. ii. 6-7).

We would also warmly thank all those who so faithfully contribute to the various funds for the carrying on of this literature work. We realise that in these days of depression, many of the gifts represent real sacrifice; but "there is no depression with God," as a Christian worker wrote us lately, and we are certain that not only all our needs, but the needs of our beloved helpers, will be met out of His riches in Christ Jesus. We have proved this promise true in a thousand ways during the years that have passed. Praise His Name.

May we ask readers to remember to send us their new addresses, when they move away from the one on our list? Since we printed our address on the wrappers, a large number of copies have been returned through the Post Office, for which we have to pay return postage. Many of these, we afterwards learn, belong to readers who have changed their address without notifying us. When they miss the advent of the magazine, they write for it—and thus the postage is sometimes paid three times on one copy! We are sure this little word will be kept in mind. We would also ask that, if any who receive the paper do not really feel it to be of vital service to them, they will kindly send a postcard to the Book Room to that effect, so that our lists may be revised.

To some of God's servants who have written us that they "can no longer afford to pay for the *Overcomer*" we would say, if you are helped by it, we are glad to continue to send it freely. The great joy of sending forth the magazine without a specific subscription has been, that we are able to send it free to many Christian workers who otherwise could not obtain its help, and the cost has always been met, quarter by quarter, by the Lord's stewards whom He enables to contribute more than the cost of their own copies. We ask for the prayers of our readers that, in these days of financial difficulty for many, He will send in all that is needed, and that new friends may be enabled to contribute in place of some who are now unable to do so.

Since the above notes were written we have received a "Thanksgiving" letter from the United States, which we would like to share with our readers! It is dated November 30th.

This is Thanksgiving Day on this side of the Atlantic; and after reading the October number of *The Overcomer* for a dozen times or more, and realizing how much I am thankful

for it, I want to let you know it. Ever since it came to me I have wanted to thank you by letter, but delayed writing because I wanted to send a material token of my appreciation, and still am unable to do so. Maybe my Lord is waiting for me to send just my thanks before He trusts me with His material wealth.

"All my copies of *The Overcomer* are out visiting; should you have some extra ones, I am sure I can find a place for them. May we all—overcomers through the Blood of Jesus—be mightily used in His service till He comes. . . ."

A reader asking for back numbers of *The Overcomer*, writes: "Single copies do not circulate very fast, and there are so many people I want to lend them to! I should be very grateful for a few . . ." We would like to say, in connection with this, that we are always glad to send a small quantity of back numbers (for cost of postage) to those who can make effective use of them. We still have a supply of the issues of 1930 (July and October only), 1931, 1932 and 1933; but the requests for "back numbers" during the past year have been so many as to make havoc with our supply of other years. Only a few copies remain of the years up to 1930, and if friends wish to make up their sets they should do so soon—though Bound Volumes are still available from 1926 onward. We have also a few only of the 1925 volume.

Our Motto for 1934.

In this issue we have reverted to the "pattern" of the early years of *The Overcomer*, i.e., we have used our Motto text as the opening message for the year. The brief excerpt from "*The Conquest of Canaan*" on this text seems to us a very vital word for the days we are living in, and going forward into. May the Lord so cause us to feed upon the Word that we may indeed be "strong and very courageous" in the coming year—whatever tests it may bring to the people of God. "Yea, [we] shall be holden up, for God is able to make [us] stand." M. N. Garrard.

"Pass through the host . . . armed."

Joshua i. 11, 14.

Pass through, pass through, nor sit among

The hosts encamped around.

Thy glorious Victor paved the way,

Put all His armour on you may.

With shield of faith held well to view,

Thy song ere long—"He brought me through!"

E. N. P.

Miss E. M. Leathes.

Will readers who correspond with Miss Leathes please note that she has removed to a new address, viz:

2 Kingsway, Wembley, Middlesex. 'Phone Wembley 3311.

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BOUND VOLUMES OF "THE OVERCOMER."

For the years 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932 and 1933, 2/- each, p.f. 2/2. All volumes previous to 1926 now out of print, but single copies of some issues may still be obtained.

The Message of the Cross in other Lands.

FRANCE.

Madame Brunel sends us the following translated extracts from the letter of a reader of "*Le Vainqueur*," which will be of deep interest to the friends who contribute to the publication of the little French "Overcomer."

"It would be difficult for me to say in words what I think of *Le Vainqueur*. Some years ago I wrote to the friend [who sent it to her] that I could not well understand *Le Vainqueur*. She answered me, 'Read on, and you will understand.' And indeed it has come to pass. It is about three years now that the Lord opened my understanding, and to tell you what *Le Vainqueur* has been to me since, it is difficult to believe! Now I do understand, and I do not know of any other paper to do good to the same degree, or to open the mind and increase faith . . .

What astonished me most is the possibility of a spiritual growth, and a walk with God, and to be 'crucified with Christ.' There I found what I so needed, there I was led to know the enemy, how subtle his devices, his wickedness . . . If anyone has suffered from him it is I. He pressed me down—I cannot write about it but you will understand. But thanks be to God and His mercies, through *Le Vainqueur*, instrumentally, I am now a vainqueur (overcomer). The devil knows it, and I have not to fight so much now, having assurance of full victory. I do realise 1 John v. 18. How marvellous for me! I am not afraid of him as I used to be. It is light to know that he is conquered . . . Victory is ours, through the Blood of the Lamb . . . May the Lord strengthen and bless you for what you are doing for Him . . ."

God is making the French edition of the "Memoir" a definite means of blessing also, and letters find their way to the Book Room asking for many of her writings which are not obtainable in French. One dear French sister has bought and read practically everything on our list! She says:

"I know 'theory' is not enough, and I must begin at the beginning, and am so happy to know the way of victory through the Cross. I devote myself, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to 'spoil the Strong Man's goods,' first in myself, by 'refusing to let sin reign' in me. *Having such a remedy, I am in the obligation to use it, am I not?*"

Madame Brunel asks for our prayers, that those who read may *understand*, and that they may obey the light, and *live* what they understand. "Knowledge without obedience is useless," she very truly says. During 1933 we have been able to send, from our readers, £23.2.6 toward the publication of French translations of "Overcomer Literature."

THE WORD OF THE CROSS IN YIDDISH.

We have received in gifts, and forwarded to the Barbican Mission to the Jews, the sum of £13 toward the printing of the Yiddish Booklet. When ready, these will be scattered in Poland by the agents of the Mission, and prayer is needed for the completion of the work, and for God's seal upon the "seed sowing."

MEXICO.

Great interest has also been aroused in the issue of "The Cross of Calvary" in Spanish, and of "*El Vencedor*," the little Spanish "Overcomer." During the past year our readers have contributed a little over £46 toward the printing and sending forth of these much needed messages, for which we praise God.

The Memorial Free Distribution Fund.

This Fund is performing a most valuable piece of work, in getting the Message of the Cross out to Missionaries, and Christian Workers in all lands, who would be unable to obtain this spiritual help but for the Fund. The literature sent out is not scattered broadcast, but carefully and prayerfully placed, often at strategic centres, under the guidance of God.

We have a number of small leaflets containing vital messages for to-day, suitable for enclosing in letters, or passing on to members of Bible Classes, etc., and we invite the co-operation of our readers in getting them into circulation quickly, in these days of "famine" of definite teaching on the Atonement, the basic message of our faith. All the following are by Mrs. Penn-Lewis, unless otherwise stated:

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6.—Two-Fold Message of the Cross.

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Volume
xv.

April
A.D. 1934

NEW SERIES.

FIDEI COTICULA CRUX

(The Cross is the Touchstone of Faith)

The Overcomer

*A Quarterly Magazine for Christian Workers
on the deep things of God.*

"Power to Witness" —

Acts i. 8.

"And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and

BOLDLY DISPLAYED THEM AS HIS CONQUESTS

when by the Cross He triumphed over them." Col. ii, 15 (Weymouth).

THE "OVERCOMER" BOOK ROOM,
"CARTREF," WESTBOURNE PARK ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH

Published (D.V.) Quarterly on the first Thursday in January, April, July October.

For terms of issue, see inside cover.

THE OVERCOMER.

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The Conference for Christian Workers is held on the first
Thursday in every month, October to July (inclusive). Meetings
11.30, 3 p.m. and 6-45 p.m.

A Prayer Meeting is also held on the Friday following the
Monthly Conference, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on the Third
Wednesday of the month, from 2.30 to 5 p.m. These are held in
The Prayer Room, 4 Eccleston Place, S.W.1.

DATES OF MEETINGS.

April 5—Monthly Conference (11.30 Mr. & Mrs. F. S. Johnson), after-
noon and evening, Rev. H. J. Galley).

" 6—Prayer Meeting, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

" 18—Prayer Meeting, 2.30 to 5 p.m.

May 3—Monthly Conference (Miss Leathes and Rev. Thus. Goodchild).

" 4—Prayer Meeting, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

" 14-19—THE SWANWICK CONFERENCE.

(No mid-monthly prayer meeting).

June 7—Monthly Conference.

" 8—Prayer Meeting, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

" 20—Prayer Meeting, 2.30 to 5 p.m.

July 5—Monthly Conference (Rev. A. R. Boughen).

"Le Vainqueur." (The "Overcomer.")

A 16-page paper issued occasionally, as funds permit consisting of articles
from "The Overcomer," translated into French. Edited and issued free by
Madame Brunel, Lavergne, Viane, Pierre-Segade, Tarn, France.

Miss Cope, 19 Dalmeny Crescent, Heath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, acts as
Treasurer for Mme Brunel. She will gladly send a copy of "Le Vainqueur" upon
application.

The SWANWICK CONFERENCE

In connection with "The Overcomer,"
will (D.V.) be convened at

THE HAYES, SWANWICK,

MAY 14th to 19th, 1934.

Theme :

*The Message of Calvary
in relation to the Holy Spirit.*

The Morning Bible Readings will be given by
Rev. JOHN THOMAS, M.A.

GUEST FUND.

As the Conference is of vital importance to Ministers of the G
and Missionaries, who may not be able to afford the cost of coming
hoped those who are able will contribute to the Guest Fund for ena
these servants of the Lord to attend. Gifts should be sent to Rev. C
Harper, or to Miss Garrard, c/o The Overcomer Bookroom, m-
"Guest Fund." The amounts sent will be allocated as may be de
by the Donors.

INFORMATION.

The cost for the whole period will be £2.10.6, not inclusi
Railway Fares. Circulars giving full particulars may be had (sta
envelope) from the Conference Secretary, to whom all applicatio
accommodation and all payments should be made, before April 1

N.B.—No Meals can be served to day visitors without ord
before hand from the Conference Secretary.

(All applications will be dealt with in rotation and special rooms al
when requested, if at all possible). Address : Conference Secre
Mr. H. E. Hoyton, "Hafod," Merstham, Surrey. Tel. : Merstham

Conferences

Arranged by the Council of the Overcomer Testimonies

LIVERPOOL.

April 10-11. Gordon Hall (large hall), at 3.30 and 7.30 p.m. each
Tea and Question Hour. Speakers : Revs. A. R. Boughen and V
Dalling.

(Also June 19-20 : Revs. B. G. Lovelace and A. R. Boughen.)

Enquiries : Mrs. Crewe, 34 Greenbank Road, Liverpool.

SOUTHAMPTON.

May 2 (Wednesday). In the School Hall, Polygon Baptist Ch
Afternoon, 4 p.m. Tea 5.30, followed by Question Hour. Evening,
Speaker : Pastor W. G. Stalley.

Enquiries : Mr. Podesta, 108 Malmesbury Road, Shirley, Southam

Birmingham : Bible Witness Fellowship, "Kelvedon," Fred
Road, Wyld Green. Every Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle : Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Me
Second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff : Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m., No. 2 F
Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station). In charge of Miss Millett, Supt. C.A.
Newlands Street, Barry.

Isleworth : St. Mary's Hall, Thornbury Road. Informal Mo
Conferences, 2nd Monday at 8 p.m. Also Tuesdays, April 17, M
June 19, at 3.30 p.m.

Quarterly Missionary Prayer Conference, April 30, at 7.45 p.
St. Luke's Mission, Kingsley Road, Hounslow. Speaker : Re
Blumit (Latgalian Gospel Mission).

Enquiries : Miss Gravatt, London House, St. John's Road, Isle
Liverpool : Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday at 3
at 55 Granby Street, Princes Park.

Isle of Wight : Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m.,
Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Leicester : Weekly Prayer Meeting, Tuesday, at 3.30, 12 Gro
Road, Clarendon Park.

Manchester : Room 13, Albert Hall, Peter Street. Monthly me
on the 2nd Monday at 7 p.m. Enquiries : Mr. Norton Repton, Overst
Sagar's Road, Handforth, Manchester.

Stamford Hill : Prayer meeting every Tuesday, 72 Darent h
3 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Suckling.

THE OVERCOMER.

"Prevailed Until"

Overcoming

Daniel vii. 21.

IN this seventh chapter of the book of Daniel we find foreshadowed, with vivid clearness, the world-powers which will govern until the time when the King of Kings will take unto Himself His great power and reign. At the very end, just before the Throne of the Ancient of Days is set for judgment, we have the veil lifted concerning the "great warfare" which will close the rule of the kings of the earth. Daniel was shown that "war with the saints" would be the characteristic of the end; and, strangely, it is plainly stated that the world-power represented by the "little horn" would *prevail against them*.

At the back of all these world-powers is the "god of this world"—the spirit of anti-Christ which is in the world. It is he who instigates the war against the saints, for he knows that the time will come when, they shall reign over the earth. For the Divine purpose is plainly declared, that God Himself is setting up an eternal kingdom, which shall never be destroyed—a kingdom which will eventually break in pieces and consume all the earth kingdoms, and stand for ever (Dan. ii. 44).

This counsel of God standeth sure, and is confirmed in the New Testament, when the veil is drawn aside and we hear the hosts of the redeemed in heaven worshipping the Lamb, and singing the song of the redeemed, saying, "Worthy art Thou . . . for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy Blood men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation," and "hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign over the earth" (Rev. v. 8-10. m.).

The purpose of God to set up an eternal kingdom governed by the "saints of the Most High" is revealed to Daniel, and the heavenly character, and reason for the choice, of the new rulers in the new kingdom is shown to John in Patmos. The "saints of the Most High" are those who have been purchased with the price of Blood—the Blood of the Lamb; purchased ones out of all tribes and nations, and made by His redeeming power "kings," sharing in His royal nature, therefore "kings" by birth, as sons of God, of the "seed royal"; and priests in union with Him Who intercedes within the veil.

These "saints of the Most High," "Saints of the heavenlies" (Heb.) must prove that they are of the "seed royal" by overcoming—or reigning—now on earth. Reigning as their great Forerunner reigned, by

Victory in Outward Defeat:

the victory of love to their enemies, of silence under false accusation, of poured-out life for those who hate them—in short, all that was revealed in the wondrous death of Calvary.

A glimpse into the same pattern for the way of victory for the saints is shown in Rev. xiii. 6-10, R.V. m. Here again is seen a great world-power, energised by the Dragon, opening his mouth to blaspheme God and His Name, and "His tabernacle, *even them that tabernacle in the heaven*"; and it was "given unto him

to make war with the saints, and to overcome them!" Here are the "saints" seen as the habitation of God, even they who "dwell in the heaven" because purchased out of the earth. In their Substitute they have died to the world, and are now with Him in God, tabernacled "in the heaven" (see Ephes. ii.), and He, the Reigning One, tabernacled in them to live again His Lamb-life of victory.

The "war with the saints" is now seen to be a special permission of God, and their being "overcome" also, for only thus are they fitted for the sharing of the Throne of the Lamb. The Victim's Cross is ever the Victor's Throne. It is always the "Lamb slain" in the midst of the Throne. The saints who shall reign over the earth are those who ascend the throne of the Cross, with the Lamb slain. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

We have no indication in the Word of God that the age will close with the outward and visible triumph of Christ. More and more it appears that, as the Jewish dispensation closed with the crucifixion and death of the God-Man, the Head of the Church—Who thus by way of the Cross went to the Father, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high—so, in like manner, shall the Christian dispensation close, by the crucifixion of the living members of Christ's Mystical Body, who shall thus by way of the Cross, join their Head, and sit down with Him in the Majesty of His glory. And the "crucifixion" will be in twentieth century fashion, indicated by the description of the world-power making war with the saints. He had a "mouth speaking great things" (Dan. vii. 8), he "opened his mouth . . . against God and His tabernacle" (Rev. xiii. 6). The tongue! The press! These are the "nails" which the power of darkness will use to crucify the saints in the last hour of the dispensation. Let the saints be prepared, and take heed that they "tabernacle in the heaven," whilst all who "dwell on the earth" bow down before the dragon "speaking great things and blaspheming," through those who appear to reign and to have great authority (Rev. xiii. 2).

The limit is set. Permission to "make war with the saints" is "given" by Him Who is King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. xiii. 7). The forces of hell only prevail "until . . ." God's purposes are fulfilled; "until" the overcomers are all made ready for receiving the kingdom; "until" each child of God breaks through by way of the Cross to the reigning life of conformity to the Lamb Who is in the midst of the throne. And then shall be fulfilled the purpose of God. Together with Christ, through death they have overcome death, and live with Him in everlasting life—life out of death. "Little children, it is the last hour . . . overcome . . . because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world . . ." HE Who dwells in you is Victor over death and hell. He is the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and He sends you forth as lambs; but the time will come when we shall possess the kingdom.

J. Penn-Lewis.

A Word to our Readers.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I want to share with you an extract made from a devotional article picked up and read last year, in an Indian Mission bungalow :

"There is much talk in some circles of absolute surrender as the only beginning of the Christian life ; of absolute sincerity, absolute purity, absolute love, as its essential characteristics and expressions. I confess that I am well out of my depths in language like that. These 'absolutes' are too high for me ; so high that I cannot think of them as having reality, except in God.

"There is an absolute I know more about : forgiveness ; the incredible, complete, ungrudging forgiveness of God for the continuing failure of my attempts to achieve an even relative surrender, or even relative purity and sincerity and love . . ."

These words seem to me to express very clearly the facts as we look into our own hearts. There is a real danger that our very thought of sin and its defilement should fall short of the Scriptural standard : "Whatsoever is *not of faith* is sin." The disobedience involved in our sins of omission is not regarded in its true character until recognized in the light of our Lord's definition of absolute righteousness :

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength : . . . thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mk. xii. 30).

There are those to whom the very word "substitution" seems an offence, but in the presence of the righteous demands of a Holy God, whose love and whose purity can we plead save that of our adorable Lord ? "And this is the Name whereby He shall be called : 'The Lord our Righteousness'."

Having such a wonderful Saviour by no means implies consent to failure or a quiescent acceptance of defeat in the weakest of His ransomed ones. We look for deliverance from the deeds of the flesh, and for overcoming grace to walk in the spirit. We know that victory may be ours every day and every hour as we continue abiding in Him. Yet in whom is this work of Grace complete ?

I suppose that millions can witness to Calvary as the place where God in Christ met them in mercy and dealt with their sins. How many can add "Calvary is the place where my personality is being dealt with" ? There is a sense in which many of us know our surrender to the Lord Who bought us, as a definite and final transaction, failures in obedience and stumbles on our way notwithstanding. How wonderful is His patience Who always meets us in quickening and renewing grace.

It is this same grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, mediated by the Holy Spirit, which enables us to look with confidence to our Lord to finish that which He has begun in us.

How often have we sought to overcome, to walk after the Spirit, dead to sin and alive unto God, our very reckoning being in the strength of our old nature. Link the words of our Lord with the words of His Apostle, and we need not wonder at our most shameful defeat—"Without ME ye can do nothing" ; "if ye

by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, shall live" (Rom. viii. 13).

What untold depths of mystery, glory and power in the finished work of Christ ! Thank God, the degree of our apprehension of its significance does not determine the degree of our security as having "fled refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." by the teaching of the Indwelling Holy Spirit our apprehension is quickened and our wills renewed to fight on in His power—"Keep up your courage have won the victory" (John xvi. 33, Weymouth).

The Swanwick Conference.

The subject set before the coming Conference Swanwick is thus of the most vital importance. We are so utterly dependent upon the Spirit of Christ that we reveal these truths to our understanding and then apply them to our lives in enduing power. These days of quiet waiting upon God may mean much to disappointed ones, weary with the struggle against foe without and within, longing for further light upon God's way of victory.

May I add a word of warm thanks to those who have so kindly helped us by gifts to the Swanwick Guest Fund. Our need is not yet fully met, and should welcome further help in this fellowship of those who long to be with us and share the inspiration and prayer-work of those days.

I would ask your prayers that the Conference may be specially blest to those who wonder why defeat so often their portion when they looked for victory, why their work for God fails in power, and fruit is to seek. Ask for an outpouring of the Spirit of God upon speakers and hearers alike, so that none shall be unblest, and all that hinders the work of God may be shut out. May no place be found for a spirit of union or criticism, but may the Conference be encompassed with a clear atmosphere and each member know that he has seen the Lord.

Yours in the glorious Hope,

PARKSTONE,
March, 1934.

BERNARD W. MATTHEW

The Holy Spirit and the Written Word.

THINK not for one moment that the Word can unfold Life in thee, except as the Holy Spirit within thee accepts and appropriates it in the inner life. How much Scripture study and Scripture preaching there is in which the first and main object is to reach the *meaning* of the Word. Men think that if they know correctly and exactly what the Word means, there will come as a natural consequence the blessing of the Word is meant to bring. This is by no means the case. The Word is a seed. In every seed there is a fleshy part in which the life is hidden. One may have the most precious perfect seed in its bodily substance, and yet unless it is exposed in suitable soil to the influence of sun and moisture the life may never grow up . . . We may hold the words of Scripture most intelligently and earnestly, yet know little of their life and power. We need to renew ourselves and the Church unceasingly that the Scripture which were spoken by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, can only be understood as they are taught by the same Spirit. "The words I have spoken are Spirit Life" ; for the apprehending and partaking of them "the profiteth nothing ; it is the Spirit that quickeneth" the Spirit of Life within us.

Andrew Murray ("The Spirit of Christ")

"Power to Witness." The Enduement of the Spirit and its Purpose.

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

"YE shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be My witnesses" (Acts i. 8, R.V.). The A.V. margin reads: "The power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you," which places the emphasis more clearly upon the Holy Spirit Himself rather than upon the "power." The A.V. reads: "And ye shall be witnesses unto ME." "My witnesses," "Witnesses unto ME"—emphasises the Personal, Living Lord, and His work as the purpose of the Pentecostal enduement of power. The Lord had foreshadowed this in His farewell discourse. "The Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father" ("eternally and continuously proceeding," the late Dr. John Smith once pointed out at Keswick), He shall bear witness of ME; and ye also bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning" (John xv. 26, 27). They had been eye-witnesses of His life, His works, His death, His resurrection, but to make this personal knowledge of His walk on earth effectual they would need the co-witness of the Divine Spirit to His power and glory as the ascended Lord in heaven.

The purpose and the power of Pentecost may therefore be compressed into the few words "*Power to witness*." We have often referred to the distinction in the Greek between the words rendered "power" in English, one meaning authority and another meaning *ability*—"dunamis." "*Power*" to witness has the latter meaning. Not authority to witness, but "*ability*." It is the same word used of the resurrection of Christ. "He liveth by the *power*—ability, energy—of God"; "The *power* of His resurrection"; "Declared to be the Son of God with *power*."

"Power to witness," therefore, means a Divine equipment to witness; a Divine energy—nothing less than God Himself in the Person of the Holy Spirit coming upon a believer to make him "witness" effectively to an unseen yet living Christ, so that the hearer is made to know the *fact* of His death and resurrection and ascension as effectually as if he had also been an eyewitness to these stupendous events as the disciples were! A Divine witness is given to the believer which is infinitely more convincing than a mental conviction based upon mental reasoning or than conclusions based upon evidences, however sound and true. For the Divine witness makes the unseen Lord a living, present reality to the believer—a Person known and obeyed and loved, as truly as the disciples knew and loved Him when He walked the earth as Man. "Christian evidences" based upon historical facts are of great value, but they may be said to be mainly preliminary in the sense of "rolling away the stone" intellectually, so as to open the door for the Spirit-given revelation to the heart.

As we look out on the condition of things religiously to-day, we cannot fail to see that this Divine "*power to witness*" is the great need of the Christian Church; for even in churches where the Gospel is truly preached in the letter of the Word, how few there are to whom

the unseen Lord is a "living, bright reality." The result is that there is little personal devotion to Him, and still less knowledge of His voice, and His personal individual control of the believer's life. So much knowledge about the Lord Jesus, with so little direct and personal communication with Him over every detail of life! So little close walking and talking with Him, but so much running about and questioning of each other over the simplest matters, made plain in the Word of God—and to be made plain again to each obedient heart seeking the face of the Living Lord!

"Power to witness" so that the exalted Christ is revealed as a Living Person, acting and working in the world as really as when He walked on earth, is needed to-day, to meet the daring assertions of "deceiving spirits" and "teachings of demons" (1 Tim. iv. 1, Weymouth), given through the lips of men, themselves deceived, to their eternal loss.

"Christ to-day doesn't mean a Person, but the great advance of goodness and good"; "When we magnify Jesus we disregard God"; "The idea that the world is a wreck or in ruin, and can only be saved by a death on a cross is a lie. Salvation is the change of life within, or character, and cannot come from any cross, or other thing outside of us. There is no doom, no ruin, no curse, no hell, no punishment, no Trinity of Persons. It is all an antiquated, exploded delusion . . ."

These are brief notes of a sermon delivered to a great gathering of united Christian churches in Great Britain. It is all part of an organised scheme of the fallen archangel, Satan, completely and utterly to overthrow, or nullify, or hide, the glorious proclamation of deliverance and victory over sin, the world, the flesh, and the devil through the finished work of the God-Man at Calvary. But it is written that "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will raise a standard against him," and our God will come, and will not keep silence, as He sees the sacred Blood of the Son of God counted a "common thing." "Power to witness" will be restored to the living members of Christ's mystical Church at this time, so that the glorified Christ in the midst of His redeemed ones—the golden candlesticks, or lampstands—will be manifested to the world as an undeniable reality.

"Ability to witness."

But reverting to the "*power to witness*" which so gloriously came upon the primitive Church, we need to ponder a few points which will help us to see clearly what were the characteristics of the equipping of the Spirit upon them. As *preparation* for the "*power to witness*," to be conferred later on, the reception of the Spirit breathed upon the company in the upper room upon the Resurrection Day bears an important place. Here the Risen Lord showed them His scarred hands and side as the marks of His Cross and Passion. They knew Him as the Crucified and Risen One, and here received from Himself the Holy Spirit, communicating to them "the new life of the resurrection." Here they had the path of the

new life unfolded to them. They were to be representatives of the Risen Lord, as He had represented the Father. Walking in newness of life, sharing the life of the Risen Lord, they were to be a "holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices," and, like the priests in the Tabernacle of old, would be able to declare, whether the sin, typified by leprosy, was put away or retained, according to the faith and obedience of the repentant sinner. The Spirit of Christ in them could discern, and would assure of forgiveness, when saving grace was manifest. All this would be the result of the Spirit bestowed upon the Resurrection Day.

But Peter still went a-fishing, and still found himself "hurt," or grieved, over apparent lack of confidence in him by the Lord, and still manifested natural curiosity in the doings of others. (John xxi. 3, 17, 22). In brief, although he had received the Holy Spirit in the on-breathing of the Risen Lord, the equipment to witness was still needed. It was, therefore, to these very disciples that the Lord said: "Tarry . . . until ye be clothed with power from on high." On the Resurrection Day He had said: "Take ye the Holy Ghost"; and now He says, "Tarry until . . ." The one stage is preparation for the other. In the one the believer must take, in the other the Divine Spirit will come in energising power at the moment which is either (1) a time of need in service, or (2) a time of readiness, which He alone can bring about. In the one it is "Take the Holy Ghost"; in the other it is, "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost *coming upon you*." In the one case it is for character, in the other for service or witnessing (F. B. Meyer).

The Holy Spirit uses the Written Word.

Then another, and most important, condition of preparation for the endowment of power is oftentimes overlooked. An experience is sought for, rather than the principles upon which the Divine Spirit will work being carefully studied, for the obedience of faith. *The Spirit of God works invariably along the lines of the written Word of God.* If "power to witness" is to be given, He must have men who know the Scriptures, so as to equip them to bear witness along the lines of the written Word. The disciples were prepared for Pentecost, not only by the experiences of the Resurrection Day, in the inbreathing of the Resurrection Life, but by being carefully taught by the Risen Lord Himself in the Scriptures. To the two on the road to Emmaus, "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things *concerning Himself*," and to the assembled company later on also He said: "I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms, *concerning ME*. Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the Scriptures . . ." (Luke xxiv. 27, 44, 45). This shows how carefully He had taught them, as far as they could comprehend His teaching, in the written Word.

The result was that the "fuel," so to speak, for the Holy Spirit's use in co-witnessing at Pentecost was already laid, and there were three lines of witnessing converging for the convicting of souls: (1) The witness of the Scriptures; (2) the testimony of the eye-witnesses of the death and resurrection of the God-Man; and (3) the supreme living co-witness of

God the Holy Ghost, the author of the Scriptures, the Possessor of the men bearing witness under energising power.

This preparation of knowledge of the Scriptures been often overlooked. Workers think if they are given "power to witness," no "preparation" to speak needed, and that miraculously they will somehow give Divine "messages." It is true that I preached his sermon on the Day of Pentecost on "spur of the moment," as we would say, but his mind and heart had already been filled with the written Word, for the Lord Himself had opened his mind to understand the Scriptures; so that the Spirit of God was using what was already prepared in Peter by teaching of Christ Himself.

This matter is of primary importance for all who are seeking the endowment of power for service. The Spirit of Pentecost has not changed! The pattern of His co-witness with a believer, giving "power to witness," is clearly seen in the Acts of the Apostles. Every "witness" they gave, however brief, was along the line of the Scriptures, in simplicity of language and calm coherent sequence of thought. Not "jerky," or dim in meaning, or in broken sentences needing to be put together and interpreted like some mysterious utterance from the oracle of Delphi, but just plain language which could be verified from the written Word, by the most ignorant and sinning believer. And every "witness" embodied the Gospel as foreshadowed in the Old Testament Scriptures, fulfilled before their eyes. Ye "killed the Prince of Life; whom God raised . . . we are witnesses. Repent . . ." (Acts iii. 15-19). "Ye crucified whom God, raised from the dead" (Acts iv. 10). "Jesus Whom ye slew, hanging Him on a tree. . . did God exalt" (Acts v. 30, 31). And "*we are witnesses*"! So it ran!

It was so manifestly the Word of the Lord that it was said: "And the Word of God increased." It bore fruit. The "power to witness" given in power to wield the Scriptures, and to speak the Word of God with boldness. When they prayed it was that the exalted Lord would grant unto "bondservants" to "speak Thy Word with boldness." When the angel of the Lord opened prison doors to undaunted witnesses, the command was, "Go ye, stand and speak . . . all the words of this Life." No trouble to the chief priests was that they "fought at Jerusalem with their teaching"—the teaching that the Man of Calvary, slain upon the accursed tree, was Prince and a Saviour exalted at God's right hand. Again, when the "work" grew, the apostles who saw they must not be diverted from the "ministry of the Word."

What the Apostles testified to!

In brief, the Book of the Acts of the Apostles tells of passages from the Old Testament Scriptures showing how the Spirit of God gave His co-witness to those He empowered to witness on the simple line of Scripture alone. Taught even though they had been by Christ Himself, they were not left to "witness, to speak, as they thought best, but they were kept to the safe lines of the written Word. Peter did not use any of the striking incidents he had seen in the Lord's life to emphasise this witness! He did not testify to his own experience, except in the brief

way; and he did not give a minute account of his spiritual emotions on that wonderful Day of Pentecost. He only said to the Apostolic Council, in the most matter-of-fact way, concerning the company in the house of Cornelius: "The Holy Ghost fell on them, even as on us at the beginning." They preached simply the death, resurrection, and exaltation of the Lord Jesus, and used the Word of God in so doing. They passed through, so to speak, all extraneous matter, however beautiful, and gave the pith of the Gospel—*Calvary*! The Resurrection! The Ascension! The call to repent. The coming of the Lord.

This is just what is needed to-day. Believers indwelt by the Holy Spirit, revealing their resurrection union with the Risen Ascended Lord, so filled with the written Word that the Eternal Spirit of the Father can come upon them and energeise them to "witness" with boldness, so that they wield the "sword of the Spirit" with such effect that men will be pricked to the heart by the two-edged Word, which is "active," and able to divide asunder soul and spirit, piercing joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart. A "Pentecost" which will produce such witnesses the Church and the world sorely needs. Believers who will not preach their own ideas, or even their experiences, as a testimony, but the Word of God in the message of Calvary and the Resurrection and Ascension of the coming Lord, with such power of God upon them that these stupendous facts become facts to all who hear, and a mighty energy in their lives.

But, it may be said, all this is concerning the

disciples and the Pentecost of the primitive Church. The same principles stand good now. Many are living in the Dispensation of the Holy Spirit, without knowing the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. And this, indeed, is manifest in the condition of the Church. The Spirit has been given, for Jesus has been glorified; but it is the work of that same Spirit to make real and true to each individual believer all that Calvary means, and all that union with the Risen Lord means—yea, and all that *Pentecost* means in "power to witness" to a living personal Christ, in such manner that He becomes a living Person to others. If we seek the fulness of the Spirit, and there is no "power to witness" effectively to the risen Lord, so that results follow—then we must assume that somewhere we have failed in the conditions necessary for the Holy Spirit's working. It seems to be in the preparation needed—which we have overlooked—and possibly in the conception of our minds as to what the fulness of the Holy Spirit means!

"Power to witness" is stamped upon every page of the apostolic record! Power to speak the Word of God with boldness! All else was subservient to this. The Risen Lord had prepared them for "Pentecost" by opening the Word to them; and the Risen Lord can do this again now in those whom He indwells. A great and primary "preparation" for the enduement of power for service is a being filled with the Word of God, so that the Divine Spirit may afterwards use the inwrought Word in "power to witness" to all who need the Saviour.

How God Brought the Gospel to Rome.

By B. G. Lovelace.*

WE have been occupied to-day with the fulness of the Cross and the power and glory which has been liberated for us, as members of the body of Christ through the wonderful triumph of Christ on Calvary. But what for? We have been occupied with a glorious vision. What is the issue? It is a very great privilege to gather together month by month, to get new light from the Lord upon the life of victory in Christ, but it is a tremendous responsibility. With the world in the shadows as it is to-day, and with the awful heritage of flotsam and jetsam that is floating about on the tide of life, to me the challenge of the appalling spiritual need in our day becomes almost too burdensome at times. *God has an issue* from these gatherings—and it is more than the gathering together, it is the going out. It is that going out into dark places, bitter places, difficult places, with the emancipating message which we have gathered at His feet in the quiet of His presence that I want to be occupied with this evening.

Two words grip me very much concerning the life and ministry of the prophets under the old covenant. The first word is the word "seer"—a man who sees. They tell us to-day that we have outgrown the Old Testament Scriptures, and while in England we are a little more refined than they are in Germany, where they want to scrap the whole of the Old Testament without any reservation, yet there is a disposition in our day to regard the Old Testament Scriptures as something

we have done with, and we are now to be occupied with the New Testament. But some of these Old Testament prophets had a vision that prevented them from doing what many of our church members and church attenders do, simply rush into the church of God either to hear a man, or solely because it is customary! They had such a vision of the holiness of God that they always felt there must be a pause on the threshold ere they entered into the Holy Place. We need to get back to that. They were not only men who saw, they were men who felt, and the words often occur, especially in the minor prophets, "the burden of the word of the Lord by the prophet." The prophet was a man who had a burden, and I cannot escape the conclusion that if God gives us a vision in these Conferences,—a vision perhaps denied to others—it must be balanced by a sense of burden. A coming in and a going out; a ministry to us by the Divine Spirit in making the Christ real in life and experience, and then a going out to manifest Him to others. I wonder, dear friends, whether we are as eager to go out into the bitter places of the earth to make Christ known, as to hear messages from the Word of God that are going to capture and captivate our own hearts? There must be a decisive issue from all Conferences, where fellowship in His sufferings means a travail of soul that gets through to new life and blessing for others.

* An Address given at our London Conference.

How did the Gospel come to Rome? It came through a man who was of the old order of prophets, who *saw* things and felt very deeply when he saw them. It is always most refreshing to listen to a man who knows, who *knows that he knows*, and is not ashamed to say so—conviction born of experience means that the word comes to us with "much assurance." The burden of the word by the apostle Paul was, "I believe and therefore I speak." What was it he believed? He tells us that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because it was the "power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth," a salvation into which had been put all the fulness, all the grace and the power and the glory of God. It was a salvation from the penalty and the power and the presence of sin. It was a salvation which became to him a daily salvation.

The Un-Conquerable Gospel.

He was proving the reality of the power of God through the dynamic of the gospel in his own life, and he was therefore possessed of the victorious belief which gave to him speech that was assured. He had not only seen and proved the gospel in his own life, but he had seen the most fanatical of his fellow countrymen bow down before the Christ of Calvary. He had seen the philosophy of stoics and cultured Greeks giving way before the Lord. He had seen such cosmopolitan cities as Corinth, Ephesus, Pergamos, Smyrna, cities given over to a vicious way of life, yet he had seen the gospel penetrate to the heart of the paganism and vice of those cities and had seen saints born there. He had seen the rude barbarian transformed by the same gospel.

I think in the heart of the Apostle Paul there was the conviction that he held the message of a redemption which *could not possibly fail*! He was a man of audacity, the holy audacity of faith. If the gospel could triumph in Jerusalem, he felt there was no place that was too difficult for that message to overcome and he was prepared and ready to preach the gospel anywhere. He was even thinking of the wonderful possibilities of driving a wedge into the heart of the paganism of Imperial Rome with the gospel message! He was thinking of the tides of life that flowed upon that capital and that retreated from it—"if only Rome is captured with the gospel message, what a tremendous stroke it will be for the kingdom of God."

And he got to Rome—but how? They did not hire a suite in a luxury liner for this evangelist to come to Rome, neither did they hire a suite at the best Hotel for him to occupy when he got there. There was no prepared ground, in the largest auditorium in the city, for the crowds who were gathered to hear the greatest evangelist of the age. He came as a prisoner, chained to the leg of a Roman soldier. He was shipwrecked on the way and barely escaped with his life. When he got to Rome he did not know whether the next day, or week, or month, might find him led out on the Appian Way for execution. He was on trial for his life. He had no advantages wherewith to commence his ministry of the gospel in Rome. When he got there as a prisoner he was delivered to the captain of the guard in the praetorium, and as a special privilege he was granted a tiny, hired room, where he could gather together those who wanted to hear the gospel, and all the while he was to be severely censored by a military

dictatorship, for every word he uttered would be noted by the soldier and reiterated to military headquarters. That is how Paul brought the gospel to Rome.

Samuel Rutherford, writing from a prison, hears his notepaper "Christ's Palace"—the Apostle Paul turns his prison into a pulpit. What would you say of an evangelist who came to win London like that? God never commences a great work with great publicity, according to human standards. The Lord has done far, far more through the message of "overcomers" in little quiet rooms, than in all activities of St. Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey. No man would ever have believed that in a little back room in Rome the triumph of the gospel would be witnessed in such a glorious way. But it is so. It simply means this—that the best place for manifestation of the power and the glory and the greatness of the message of Calvary through your life is *just the spot where you are*. The spot where you probably think that if you could only get out of it, into more congenial circumstances, things might happen very much more rapidly. It is just there, in that impossible place, with the holy audacity of faith, that God can make effective the witness which is born of your vision in the presence of His presence.

How did the Apostle Paul get to work? First he gathers together the little Jewish colony in Rome, they say to him, "We desire to hear of thee *what thou thinkest*." Now I want you to try and enter into the meaning of that. It was not an invitation to the Apostle Paul to preach the gospel message. It was an invitation to tell them what he was thinking. Paul was not there to give them his own thoughts, he was there to give them God's thoughts, to preach the precious gospel which was made real to him in his life. So he resisted their temptation.

"And they said unto him, We neither receive letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither are there any brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee" (ver. 21). Now if ever there was an invitation for a man to speak about himself it was there. What are you? what are you? you come out of Judea, you have had no word at all about you. You come with a strange message. Vindicate yourself. If ever a man had a right to speak about himself it was the Apostle Paul. He could have told them he was a Roman free-born, a member of the Sanhedrin, probably marked out to be high priest of his people. He could have established his prestige, and they would have listened to him. But he did not do it. "We preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord." There is no room for ourselves in our message.

Then notice a further subtle temptation. Notice concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against," (ver. 22). There was an invitation to justify his cause! The word sect relates to all disciples of Christ that had been gathered into the church of Christ, of which He is the Head, and if there was a man called upon to justify and vindicate his cause it was this man. He could have told the Jews at Rome how that the Christ had taken ordinary men, sent them out in the power of His living Spirit into the streets of Jerusalem, and how that "ignorant and unlearned men" had out-thought

out-manoeuvred all the learning of the Sanhedrin ; how the holy city had been turned upside down and thousands of his countrymen brought to salvation ; about Stephen of the angel face and angel heart. But he was *not there to justify his cause*.

What was Paul's method ? "And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging ; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus . . ." (ver 23). For everybody that came he had just one message—"Jesus." What are you and I going to the office for day by day ? To earn our living ? Yes, and no ! That is not our primary purpose. Our life is more than meat and raiment—and to persuade others concerning Jesus—does that sound too simple for "Overcomer" teaching ?

Notice how he did this. He expounded and testified and persuaded. There is growing up in the churches a conception of the "Jesus of history" who is merely the result of the highest thinking of eminent scholars, the product of human wisdom, the conception that Christ is not big enough to face the world in the shadows to-day. *That Christ is not the Christ "in Whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," that Christ is not the Christ Who is "the express image" of the Father's glory. He is a great Christ in human thinking from the earthlies, but He is not the pre-eminent Christ in the heavenlies in Whom God has vested all the authority and the power and the glory "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence."* The greatest trouble to-day is through a *sub-normal* impression of the Christ, that He is less than He really is. We need to gather at the feet of our Lord day by day just to get the vision of Christ, the Christ of God, the Christ as the Father knows Him.

Then he not only expounded but he testified. He told his friends that the greatest glory of the new life in Christ was, not his own life in its highest expression, but that Christ was living out His risen life in him and through him, and he would let them into the secret. He testified not only to the Christ of history, but to the Christ of experience ; not in word only but in power and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance.

"He persuaded them—"

Then he persuaded them concerning Jesus. I wonder, as you and I mingle amongst others, whether they feel that in our life there is a sense of urgency, that we are there to bear to them by the constraining love of Christ, an urgent message ?

I was in a city office thirty years ago, and the staff numbered thousands. One day I was "lent" from the division in which I was placed, right to the opposite end of the office, during the busy hour. Sitting by my side I found the blatant infidel of the Central Telegraph Office. I knew what I was there for. Between 6 and 8 o'clock you could read and speak. I went through the biggest fight of my life. The Adversary gained the victory ; 8 o'clock came and I had not given what there was a deep urge in my spirit to give—a word of witness for Christ to this man. I filed out with thousands of others, went downstairs and took my hat and coat, and there he was, standing right in the middle of the doorway as if he was going to stop there all night. I had to push past him to get outside the door. I did not speak to him. Then I have to confess

that I went and tried to give a gospel message to my colleagues, gathered together for a meeting. I do not know what I said. I only know that the speaker was miserable. Could one disobey the Lord and then expect to give a message ? Next morning I went back to my division, and I was allocated to a different part of the office altogether and—I sat down by the side of my infidel friend once more ! I had one in about 300 chances of ever coming into that position again. I knew why I was there. The battle began again. He went outside and I followed him. In one of the corridors I caught him up, and said, "Excuse me, but I owe you an apology." "What on earth do you mean ?" "Look here—you call yourself an infidel. If there is any truth whatever in the Word of God concerning the Christ of God, then your relationship to Christ is a matter of eternal significance to you and to withhold a word from you is to do you a wrong for which I feel I ought to apologise." He had a rose in the lapel of his coat, and he started to pluck the petals. The persuasion came into my spirit, because of the sense of what it meant to be without Christ. As far as I know that was the very last occasion on which that infidel had the opportunity of hearing of, and accepting Christ, for he left the office at once, and died !

There in that little hired room expounding, testifying, persuading, Paul the prisoner saw the gospel triumph. There were believers even in Caesar's household, amongst the guard. Everyone of us is under "the mighty ordination of the pierced Hands" to minister Christ to a world in the shadows. if so be that we are His, and have undergone the discipline of the Cross, bringing to an end any disposition to exalt ourselves or to speak of ourselves. Think what it means if there disperses from this Conference those who have the vision, not only of Christ *for us* but Christ *in us*, and who out of the heart of that experience, go to persuade others concerning Jesus.

Praise in the Dark.

Dan. vi. 10.

Thou servant of the Living God,
Whilst lions round thee roar,
Look up, and trust, and praise His Name,
And all His ways adore !
For even now, in peril dire,
He works to set thee free ;
And in a way known but to Him
Shall thy deliverance be.

Dost wait while lions round thee stand ?
Dost wait in gloom alone ?
And looking up, above thy head
See but a sealed stone ?
Praise in the dark ! Yea, praise His Name,
Who trusted thee to see
His mighty power displayed again
For thee, His saint, for thee.

Thou servant of the Living God,
Thine but to wait and praise ;
The Living God Himself will work ;
To Him thine anthem raise.
Tho' undelivered thou dost wait,
The God Who works for thee,
When His hour strikes, will, with a word,
Set thee for ever free.

M.E.B.

Branch-Life.

"I am the Vine: ye are the branches."

John xv., 5.

ALL the disappointment and break-down in our Christian life arises from failing to deeply recognise this dual relationship. That Christ undertakes to be to me the Vine, the true source of life, growth, the fruitfulness, and that I, as a branch, am vitally united by faith, made one in nature and essence and spirit, by such union through the power of the Holy Ghost.

A branch has no independent life, apart from the vine it can do nothing. Independence means death; the channel of life is severed by separation, and severed instantaneously. It has no roots by which to gather from the earth beneath, and so become an independent stock. Its only life is a life of abiding, drawing unceasingly strength and vigour from its source.

The earthly life of Jesus was a branch-life, lived in entire dependence upon the Father. "I will bring forth My servant the *Branch*." (Zech. iii. 8, Isa. xi. 1). "In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beauty and glory." (Isa. iv. 2). All, therefore, that Jesus means by such teaching as this, is illustrated in detail in His earthly life.

The life of God is inseparable in essence; it cannot be independently communicated, or received apart from Christ, Who is that life. To be a Christian is to be Christ-possessed, and this can only be by branch-life union in the Vine.

Again, the branch is lost in the Vine; it remains unnoticed, does not obtrude itself, and receives no praise; neither does it call for attention save from the Husbandman. The Vine is One, it is not dismembered: roots, trunk, branches, and fruit form one complete and perfect whole. Therefore, to be joined to the Vine is to lose one's own life, to hate that life (Jno. xii. 25), and so to lay it down by an act of definite surrender that henceforth I count myself utterly and eternally severed from it.

This is the cost which we do well to count. In receiving Christ we receive the Divine life, *a life that is death to the life of fallen nature*, which finds its fruit in sin and self. The fatal mistake of thousands is in trying to live in two worlds at the same time—in nature and in God, in self and in Christ, in the flesh and in the Spirit, by faith and in independence, by abiding and by effort. To have life is not enough: the life of Christ demands the death of the flesh, if that life is to be fully developed and become fruitful in us. Here is the crux of the whole matter.

The branch life is a life of oneness.

I or Christ—which? Here is no dual control—no united life. To be grafted into the True Vine, I must be cut off from my own source of life, and become no longer an independent stock but a dependent branch. This is no new doctrine; we find it deeply engrained throughout the Word. As Adam could only find a life of independence and sin by severance from the life of God, so we cannot re-enter that life save by as complete a *severance in will* from the life of self and sin. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches."

Having parted with its own life, and being grafted

in by the Husbandman, there takes place a *de* union, outer or structural, and inner or vital. bleeding of the graft, the callus, here goes to form outer coating, by which it is structurally united to the parent stock: spiritually teaching us that our need fastens upon God's fulness and unites us to it. Then as the sap rises and presses upward to its far shoots, it gradually supersedes the sap that was first. Beautiful figure of the Spirit's working, manifesting the life of Christ through every part, and thus extending the old.

This spiritual sap is *the one life of God* flowing through the Son, and made our very own by the Spirit.

Wondrous fulfilment of our Saviour's prayer, "they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be *one in us*. I in Thee and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect *one*." (John xvii. 21, 23).

"This is life eternal that they may *know Thee*. How know, and where? Within! as the life-giving force of the soul. Within! a fountain springing into everlasting life. Within! the sap of the True Life in the midst of the Paradise of God. With God Himself, the purging, quickening, fruit-bearing life—

*"One life alone between us now,
One life, the life Thou livest."*

Dependent life, branch life, is the limitless, "an abundant life" of God. Oh, let us cease from posing, that we may be possessed by vitality such as

(1) *One life—one nature* (2 Pet. i. 4). To be takers of Christ (Heb. iii. 14) is to have the nature Christ made over to us by the Holy Spirit—a nature that is "perfect and right and pure and good," thus becoming "partakers of His holiness," fruit; God becomes natural and easy. But we cannot separate the nature of God apart from the Person of Christ; it is for this that the power of the Highest travail souls until Christ be "formed in them," the holy glory, (Luke i. 35; Col. i. 27). "I in them and They in Me, that they may be perfected in one."

(2) If one in nature, then all the *disposition* Christ must displace those of my fallen nature, posing me continually in desire and will to the nature and heart of God.

It is always the Will of God, in freeing us from law, to rule and direct us by regenerate desire that may enter upon the liberty of the glory of the son of God. Thus, beloved, "He shall give thee the desire of thine heart," for "loving God with all our heart, we may do as we please" (St. Augustine).

(3) If one in life and nature, *one also in fruit*. source being the same, the fruit must also be the same. "Fruit unto God" proceeds solely from God. Spirit fruit is the product of the Holy Spirit.

It is because their waters issued out of the sanctity that the trees for meat bring forth new fruit according to his months (Ezek. xlvii. 12), for "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit; neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit," (Matt. vii. 18).

The branch life is a life of dependence.

To depend is to hang on another ; to live at the expense of another ; the life of a pauper as regards one's own ability and powers, the life of abundant fruitfulness as regards God.

For how much must one depend ? For all or nothing. The least break here will interrupt the blessed inflow of God's fulness, give an intermittent life and service, fluctuate the power, and grieve the Holy One.

But does this not put a premium on laziness and spiritual sloth ? Such a question is proof that we have not come to an end of our own working, and have still some reliance in the flesh. Never is the branch so active as when wholly dependent on the Vine, drawing all its expectation from thence.

But we never depend upon another until we are crippled in our own powers. How painful the process, is known alone to the soul with God. We fight against the inevitable until we are broken "breach upon breach," and are brought at length to say, "I'm ready not to do, at last, at last !" For dependence is not the mere acknowledgement of weakness ; it is *the resting upon* the strength and qualifications of another. It is to be flung right off on to God, and though "lame on both our feet," yet to "eat continually at the King's table." (2 Sam. ix. 13).

The branch life is one of abiding.

The union of every branch is in the heart of its tree : it is a union of absolute surrender on both sides—the branch to the Vine, the Vine to the branch. When the heart can say, "Lo, we have left *all* to follow Thee," how quick is the response of God, "Son, thou art ever with Me, and *all* that I have is thine."

Further, it is a surrender to receive all, to draw upon and use the all of God. No longer to limit His working for, in and through us. To accept the uttermost He gives ; never to stay the mighty inflow of His Spirit, but wholly and for ever to live in and for the Vine.

It is then God unfolds to us the mystery of this double abiding, "I in you," and ye in Me (John xv. 4. 7). As the life-sap rises and flows through the smallest branch, so His Word (v. 7), His joy (v. 11), His life, *Himself* abides in Me ; and as a branch abiding in His love (v. 9, 10) through keeping His commandments, I may abide in Him.

But what is it to abide and how, as branches, may we abide in Him ? To abide is to stay in the same place, to remain in the same attitude, in stillness, of repose and patience of hope. It is to relax strain, cease self-effort, and enter into His rest (Heb. iv. 10). To both hope and quietly wait for the Lord (Lam. iii. 26), yielding to all the discipline of the pruning knife ; opening to all the action of moisture, warmth, and light ; fully absorbed in the Vine and ignoring oneself. In one word, it is to rest ; to take no thought of one's life or fruitfulness, but so to seek the reign of God through every fibre of our being that these things may be added *as fruit* unto us (Matt. vi. 28-33).

I do not abide because by effort and strain I have borne some small fruit, but rather *by abiding* I may become fruitful.

The branch life is one of fruitfulness.

It must of necessity be so. Here is no uncertainty ; the natural result of abiding is fruit. The Husbandman engages to make fruitful every branch that abides

in the True Vine—that is, every soul that has been cut off from its own life, grafted into Christ, and that shares in the one life of God, henceforth living a life of dependent abiding, responsive to all God's dealings within and without. Such branch shall not fail in bearing fruit, *more fruit*, MUCH FRUIT.

Fruit, not works ; *a growth*, not manufacture, the blossoming and development of more abundant life. Herein is contrasted the fruits of the Spirit with the works of the flesh (Gal. v. 19, 23).

Fruit in all its stages is perfect, every grace is there in embryo ; but there is a bringing forth "fruit unto perfection," and also a bringing forth fruit unto oneself (Hosea. x. 1). There are unripe grapes, shanks green, discoloured, without the pure nectar of the grape. "Israel is a Vine emptying the fruit which it giveth," (margin), a promising vine whose fruit faileth.

Again, the grape of the summer is not that of the vintage. "Let us go on unto perfection : " but perfection is only gained by abiding under the hand of the Husbandman. There is need of continual pruning, the cutting back of all excess of growth. What running to wood there is in our lives, what quantities of leaves, what need of thinning ! The life-sap of the vine, how often diverted from fruit-bearing !

"There are two remarkable things about the vine. There is not a plant of which the fruit has so much spirit in it, of which spirit can be so abundantly distilled, as the vine. And there is not a plant which so soon runs into wild wood, that hinders its fruit, and therefore needs the most merciless pruning " (Andrew Murray).

May the blessing of Joseph be ours. (Gen. xlix. 22). "His branches shall spread" (Hosea xiv. 6), "they shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from bearing fruit (Jer. xvii. 8), for "from Me is thy fruit found." (Hosea. xiv. 8).

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be My disciples." (Jno. xv. 8).

A.B.

"The Wonderful Lamb."

Wonderful Lamb of God,
Thy death hath set us free.
Accepted now with joy we serve :
Made holy unto Thee.

Wonderful Lamb of God ;
Triumphant o'er Thy foes.
Thy train of victory is ours
Where'er Thy chariot goes.

Wonderful Lamb of God ;
Express Thy life through me :
That all may know Thy gracious Will,
And all Thy purpose see.

Wonderful Lamb of God,
With shining glory crowned.
Joint-heirs with Thee through grace we stand ;
"Far above all" enthroned.

Wonderful Lamb of God.
Let all declare Thy fame.
And with Thy blood-bought people bow
Before Thy mighty Name. George Harper

Dying to Live.

By Rev. Herbert Lockyer.

WHEN a lad I well remember passing a dyeing and bleaching establishment, outside of which there was a sign somewhat strange to my youthful mind. It had printed thereon :

"We dye to live, we live to dye ;
The more we live the more we dye ;
The more we dye, the more we live."

Adapting and adopting such a trade sign we come to the New Testament paradox regarding the Christian life, which is a life of dying, and a life of living. "If ye live after the flesh" says the Apostle Paul "ye shall die : but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," (Rom. viii. 13).

Sanctification, which is one of the dominating themes of the Bible, is explained in various ways by teachers of holiness. The truest definition, however, is the one Paul was so fond of using, namely, that sanctification is a double process of dying and living, or of mortification and vivification. The true victorious life is the one in which Christ increases, and self decreases. In teaching this sacred theme we need to be saved from lopsidedness. It is essential to carry a balance, and not to emphasise one phase at the expense of the other. The two sides are to be held in blessed unity, and held fast both in knowledge and experience.

The Two-fold Process—dying and living !

"If ye *mortify* . . . ye shall *live*." All injunctions and incitements to holy living are found to run along one or other of these two lines. Let us select several passages where the two sides—death and life—mortification and vivification—Cross and Resurrection are clearly indicated.

There is Romans viii. 13, which Bishop Moule translates, "If you are living flesh-wise you are on the way to die. But if by the Spirit you are doing to death the practices, the stratagems, the machinations of the body, you will live." The body, even of the believer, is still the seat and vehicle of temptation and sin. Never for one day are we exempt from the elements and conditions of evil residing, not merely around, but within us. But by the habitual recollection and appropriation of the Holy Spirit we are able to do to death the practices of the flesh : we tread down the power of the enemy, living thereby the life that is life indeed. The word "*mortify*," meaning to do to death, is in the present tense, denoting that the process is a continuing one. It is a process continuing until we die physically, for only then, or at the coming of the Lord, shall we be released from the machinations of the flesh. This is what Paul meant when he said "I die daily." The ideal life, then, is one in which there is a daily death, and a daily resurrection.

Again, in Romans xii. 2, we are exhorted "not to grow conformed to this world but to grow transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Moule). "Be not conformed to the course and state of this scene of sin and death"—here is *the Cross aspect*. Christ died for us and saved us, not to reconcile us to the world, but to make us estranged, dissimilar, opposite at every point. "Be ye transformed by the renewal of your mind—here is *the Resurrection aspect*. We are to

have a life as distinct from our old life in the world physical life is distinct from physical death. And I again, we have the idea of a continuous process, see that the word "*conformed*" is in the present tense. Our life in Christ is one of constant, progressive de to the world, and a daily approximation to the liker of our Lord.

Turning to Colossians iii. 1-5, we find this dual touch emphasised. We are to mortify our members which are upon the earth, and at the same time to realise that we are risen with Christ, and because of this, to seek those things which are above. The two practical conclusions are emphasised. Our death in Christ must be made real in ourselves, and resurrection in Christ must also be experienced. What we are judiciously must be translated in practice.

Nature herself recognises this double aspect. I A. J. Gordon reminds us that the human body furnishes us with a remarkable illustration of the dual touch of dying and living. Death is constant going on within the human system. Every day certain amount of living tissue dies, and has to be borne out to burial, and every day new tissue is formed. And did not our Lord, in His mystic message about the corn of wheat dying, emphasise the fact that dying and living is a universal law of nature ? A seed dies that fragrant flowers may appear. Animals die that men may live.

Coming to the great Death and Resurrection Chapter of the New Testament, 1 Cor. 15, Paul makes it clear that these two fundamental facts of the Gospel, form the foundation and superstructure of the Christian Life and Faith. He sets forth the Gospel as he was commissioned to preach as revolving around two focal facts : Christ died for our sins—He rose again the third day. And that such historic facts, believed by all saints, are to become spiritual facts *experienced*, is the meaning of Paul's wonderful message in Romans vi. 1-5.

We sometimes say that Christ died that we may not die ; is it not true to say that Christ died that we might die—die to the practices of the flesh ? Christ died for sin that we might die to sin. Christ died for the world that we might become dead to the world. And, let us never forget, that it is *we who die to the old nature* and not the old nature itself that dies.

In one sense then, Crucifixion was not finished at Calvary, but has continued all down the ages, and will continue until the Church is saved to sin no more. The Cross has to be realised in each life born again by the Holy Spirit. Every soul regenerated by the Spirit is a pulse-beat of the Crucified, Risen Lord on the Throne. The philosophy of this dual touch is wrapped up in Major D. Wittle's appealing hymn :

"Dying with Jesus by death reckoned mine.
"Living with Jesus a new life divine."

Constant identification with Christ in His Death and Resurrection is the place where all who would die to sin must live.

The five-fold Secret.

It is blessed to know that we are not left to the mere discipline of self, or to the exercise of our own will power in the doing to death of the machinations of the flesh. There is no transition from death to life along the avenue of self effort! In the life of the believer there is certainly a battlefield, but it is not a struggle for victory. It is rather a continuous march from victory to victory. How does such a victory become operative in our lives?

(1) *By Meditating upon Christ.*

"Beholding" says Paul, "we are changed" (2 Cor. iii. 18). While it is true that a glance is enough to save a soul, even as it saved the thief on the Cross, it takes a prolonged gaze at Christ to sanctify the saved soul. Alas! in this age of world-blinded eyes, men have lost the most difficult of all arts, namely that of contemplation. Augustine, commenting on Ex. xxxiii. 20, "No man can see his face and live," said, "Then let me die if only I may see his face." In a deeper sense, must we not die in order to see His face? Yes, and do we not die to sin and self as we gaze upon His holiness? "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead!" In proportion as we die to, or mortify, the deeds of the flesh are we able to discern the glory of His holy countenance. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God!"

(2) *By the Appropriation of Christ.*

"He that eateth Me shall live by Me" (John vi. 57), is a mystic truth, faith alone can understand and rejoice in. The story is told of a sick soldier who was given up to die, and whose father hastened from a long distance to his bedside in hospital. The lad lay half conscious, and nothing the father or attendant could do seemed to arouse him. At last the father said: "Here is a loaf of your mother's bread which I have brought you." "Bread from home!" said the dying soldier, "Give me some": and from that hour he began to mend. And we have Bread from Heaven, even Christ in His Death and Resurrection. Let us not fail to "eat" this Bread every day, for as we eat we both live and die. Feeding on the Promises of God, the Christ of God, the Hope of God, our souls are truly satisfied. As we eat, that is, appropriate by faith all that we have in Christ, old appetites die, and new ones are formed.

(3) *By Abiding in Christ.*

In His sermon on "The Vine and the Branches" our Lord distinguished between *Union* and *Communion* in the word, "Abide in Me, I in you," (John xv. 4). It is necessary, not only to be in Christ, but to have His fulness imparted to us. *Position* must become *Practice*. Mere "imitation of Christ" is utterly impossible to make real our death to sin. There must be an incorporation into Christ. We may sit down before the most perfect portrait of Jesus and say, "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me," but such a beauty will never be upon us until it is wrought within us by the Holy Spirit, and by union and unbroken communion with our beautiful Lord.

There are many good moral religious people who appear to be like Christ in their actions, but such actions may be simply the product of the natural man. Morality is the religion of the natural man—Holiness

is the religion of the renewed man—and, let it be noted the greatest enemy of Holiness is Morality. There is a great gulf between the two. One, of course, can be moral without being holy; but we can never be holy without being moral. Holiness comes from God, and it is not therefore a natural disposition or acquirement. Unless we are grafted into Christ we can never reproduce it. We can only die to our old habits, old preferences, old natural instincts, and to our good and bad self, as life flows from the Vine into the branch.

(4) *By the Coming of Christ.*

Our daily death and resurrection is measured by the daily expectancy of Christ. With such a hope before us we are made pure, even as He is pure (1 John iii. 2). The hope of the Second Advent exercises a most powerful influence in and over our daily life. It is effective in making dead all worldly and sinful pursuits and practices. Christ is the Bright and Morning Star, and as we hitch the wagon of our life to Him, we are lifted out of all low, selfish, and unsanctified motives into a serene, blessed, and victorious life. With the Return of the Lord at hand, what else can we do but die to sin, and loosening the cords binding us to all that is earthy, experience a blessed foretaste of our actual resurrection (2. Cor. v. 15).

(5) *By the Spirit of Christ.*

Death or Life—Mortification or Vivification are not possible within our experience apart from the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-Giver. The double process is brought about "by the Spirit" (Romans viii. 13, 2 Cor. iii. 18). It is utterly impossible for a regenerated soul to rescue itself from the practices, machinations, stratagems of the old nature, and of Satan behind it. But the Indwelling Spirit fully possessing the believer acts as a Divine and All-effectual Counter-agent to all evil without and within.

It was "by the Spirit" that Christ accomplished His Death (Hebrews ix. 14); and His death can only be realised in us by the self-same Spirit. It was by the Spirit that Christ accomplished His Resurrection (Romans i. 4, viii. 11). In like manner, the Spirit of Life makes real to us our risen life in Christ.

Are we crying—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" As the Holy Spirit fills the life, the habits of the flesh disappear, for death cannot stand before resurrection-life. Therefore, let us rise in triumph, singing—"The law of the Spirit, of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans vii. 14-15).

Now to come to a practical conclusion—Are we dying to live? Are these two lines parallel, not only in knowledge but in experience? Is the old life growing less and less because we are mortifying, or doing to death, the works of the flesh? Is the new life increasing through the daily appropriation of our Risen Life in Christ? Can we say—"I live, yet not I? Do we know the conformity to Christ's death and the power of His Resurrection, which the Holy Spirit waits to make actual in our lives? (Phil. iii. 10). Beloved, let us die to live, and live to die! May ours be the constant realisation of this dual truth, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

"Balaam Guidance!"

The Permissive versus the Directive Will of God.

By Rev. J. W. Brown.

MUCH thought is being given, in these days, to the subject of "guidance," and there is a great deal of confusion of mind as to what is, and what is not, the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Let us examine three passages in the New Testament in which reference is made to Balaam. In Jude 11 we read "Woe unto them! for they . . . ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." Again, in 2 Peter ii. 15: "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." Then in Rev. ii. 14: "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel."

"The way of Balaam"; "the error of Balaam," and "the doctrine of Balaam"! Surely there must be some very important word of warning that God has for us respecting the name and history of Balaam.

The story of his life is given in Numbers xxii. God is bringing His people Israel out of the land of their captivity, and carrying them through into the land of their liberty. They have met with all kinds of foes as they have passed over from the land of Egypt to the land of Canaan, but one of the most formidable of these foes is Balak, the king of Moab, who hires Balaam to turn back the people of God now on their way to the promised land. Balak has sent a deputation to Balaam, asking him to come down, and to curse this people who have come out over the land, and who are calculated to be a menace to his own people. In sending the deputation to Balaam he uses words of flattery, saying, "I know whom thou cursest is cursed, and whom thou blest is blessed. Come now and curse me this people who have come up out of the land of Egypt."

Balaam receives the deputation, he listens to their words of flattery, but he looks particularly at the reward that they have brought in their hands. When you and I go before God to ask for guidance, let us be very careful what is in the back of our mind. We may go to God with reserves in our minds, in our hearts, in our lives; and while we profess to seek His guidance, all the while, that "guidance" is being coloured by our own desires. That is to say, we may do as Balaam did—formulate our own plans, and then hope that God will bless them. Balaam has his eye on the reward, he "loved the wages of unrighteousness," that is the colouring at the back of his mind. He was out to sell his gifts to the highest bidder. Let nobody imagine that that is a singular experience; there are many in the pulpits of our land to-day who might take their place alongside of Balaam, who have sold their gifts to the highest bidder. We need to be very careful about our own heart, and life, when we come before God, lest we have our eye upon something that will colour our waiting upon God.

Then note, for your own heart's security: before ever Balaam could set out any petition before God, God arrests him with a question. "And God came unto

Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee?" (Num. xxii. 9). Remember, Balaam is professedly representing God. He has a knowledge of God and His ways. He says to the deputation, "You remain here to-night and I will learn of God what I may do." That looked sincere did it not? it looked as though he was after knowing the mind of God.

Here you come to guidance. God said to Balaam definitely, decidedly, finally, "*Thou shalt not go with them*"! There you have what we may understand as the DIRECTIVE WILL OF GOD. Balaam goes back to that deputation and says, "I may not go with you; God has given me the answer. Go back to your master, and tell him I am not able to come." Balaam knows God has spoken, and yet there is a reserve in his mind about the matter. All the time he is *hoping* that something else may transpire that will fit in with the thing that is in his heart. In a little while another deputation comes, and this deputation is more honourable than the first, with greater rewards, and once more he is asked to go and curse this people. There is only one answer that Balaam could give, for God had said, "*Thou shalt not go with them*"; but this is where he goes wrong, and this is where many of us go wrong. Instead of saying definitely, NO, he says, "Remain here this night, and I will go before the Lord and hear what He shall say." And God came to Balaam that night, and said unto him, "If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do."

Has God changed His mind? No, this is what has happened. Balaam had a reserve in his mind, and was hoping that God would come down on *his* side. How often, instead of doing the thing we know we ought to do, we pray about it again, and play with the idea, until at last God says, "Very well, IF YOU WILL, YOU SHALL?" It was thus in the case of Abraham, going down into Egypt, and Jonah to Tarshish. So many people get into all manner of difficulties because they do not differentiate between what is the *directive will* of God, and what is the *permissive will* of God. You come before God for guidance over a certain thing, and you have God's definite answer, *Thou shalt not go*. Or it may be, *Thou shalt go*. Then you play about with that thing; you are not satisfied, because it has not answered that which is in your heart. You want some other decision, and so you wrestle with this thing, and wait, and then come before God again. Then God seems to say to you, "If the men call for thee, rise and go with them." But the difference between God's directive will, and His permissive will, is all the difference between the purposes of God, and your purposes. The first is *His* programme, and the second is *yours*. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness, more than doing the will of God.

Balaam is so eager to get on with his commission that he does not even wait until the men call him. He says, Now I have got my answer! and rises up,

and saddles his ass, and gets on the way, (ver. 21). Do you know anything about that? We are so glad that now, at last, the Lord has come down on our side, that we don't wait, but get out upon the thing which it is in our heart to do.

Here is an illustration. Some gipsies are like Balaam, they carry a divining rod. They stand in the middle of the road and use their divining rod to see which way to take. They throw it in the air, and believe the Great Spirit will guide them, and whichever way the stick comes down they are supposed to take. A gentleman stood at the cross-roads and watched an old woman with her divining rod. She threw up the stick and it came down in one direction, and she shook her head and picked it up. She threw it up again, and it came down in another direction, and she shook her head once more. She repeated the process, until the stick came down to her satisfaction, when she nodded her head approvingly and went on. The gentleman joined her and said, "What were you doing? I was very interested." "Well," she said, "you know, we gipsies *believe in guidance*, and so when we come to a place like those four roads, we use our divining rod so that we may know where we ought to go; we take our guidance by the rod." He said, "Yes, but you threw it once, and shook your head, and then again, and only went on when it had come down the third time." "Oh, well, you see," she said, "the first twice it didn't come down the way I wanted to go!"

The man who knows—and does not!

I think we have all been there. We have said, Lord, guide me in this, and guide me in that. But the guidance given did not quite suit us. So God has said, *Very well, if you will, you shall!* Then we find ourselves out on the way suited to our own taste. We knew what we wanted, we did not want Him to tell us *where* to go, all we wanted was His blessing upon it.

"The way of transgressors is hard." A transgressor is a man who knows where he ought to go, and does not go; who knows what he ought to do, and does not do it. Watch the transgressor on the way! The ass won't go; he beats her; he finds his foot crushing against the wall, and that is not right. By and by the ass falls down—something else gone wrong! Something wrong with the beast? No Balaam, it is you who are wrong. When people talk about Balaam and the ass, you will often find they are most concerned about the ass, but it is Balaam who is wrong, he is the one about whom we should be concerned—the *man who knows*. He is on a path where he is out after the wages of unrighteousness, and God is meeting him there, and making it difficult for him to go on.

Thank God for some of His hindering providences! At last Balaam's eyes are opened, and he sees the angel of the Lord in the way, and hears the dreadful sentence, But for that beast under you, you would have been a dead man by now. Then Balaam says, "Lord, if it displease Thee I will get me back again." Now he is found out in his way! Listen: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of *death*." And when Isaiah is speaking about the coming Son of God he says: "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, but the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," when we get out of the way like that, there is only one back, and the Lord Jesus said

"I am the Way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

Balaam says, I will go back. God says: No Balaam you will not. You have come so far for your pleasure, now you go the rest for Mine. You shall go, but you shall do what I want you to do, and say what I want you to say. And Balaam had to go on. You find him speaking wonderful words. Some of those prophetic words that he uttered are being carried out to this very day, for instance: "From the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him; lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations," (Ch. xxiii. 9). That is exactly where the Jews are to-day.

Balaam a disobedient prophet, but is having to say what God wants said. He is out of the way himself, but must carry out God's commands. We listen to this man as the truth of God comes through him, we hear his pious ejaculation, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," (Num. 23. 10). We say, This is a good man! How easily we can be mistaken! We must never take it for granted that just because a man gives expression to such things, he is God's man. We must know if the life at the back corresponds with the words. He may be a man like Balaam who knows, and can, and does actually give out, the truth, but yet is not prepared to do it.

Peter speaks of those who had forsaken the right way, and had gone astray, following "the way of Balaam." Dr. Scofield's comment on this is, "the hireling prophet seeking only to make a market of his gift." O how many have been caught just there. We have certain gifts, and we know if we could come into some specified position, they could be turned into profit. The tragedy of some lives to-day is that they succumb to the same temptation to leave the "Prophet" office, for the "profit." In other words, to take the path which will be the most remunerative.

Take another look at Balaam who loved the wages of unrighteousness, the man who would sell his gift to the highest bidder. What did he gain by running contrary to God's directive will? Nothing! The very curse that he would have uttered against Israel for a price, fell back upon his own head. Num. xxxi. 8. reveals the fact that he perished among the enemies of God, and His people. What a warning this life is, in the matter of guidance. When God says "Thou shalt not go," He means just that, and it is fatal to go. But if He shall say, as He said to Jonah, "*Thou shalt go*," then it is just as fatal not to go. No doubt Jonah (like Balaam) was turned aside by the prejudice in his heart, and when at Joppa he found a ship going to Tarshish he accepted that as the way out. Jonah paid his fare to go from the presence of the Lord, and Balaam was quite prepared to be paid to do the same thing. Both men received clear guidance from God, as to *His directive will*, but both tried to force the will of God into permitting something else. Both men were deceived and both suffered disaster. "He that knoweth His Lord's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes," (Luke xii. 47), "But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever, (1 John ii. 17).

The *doctrine of Balaam* is this: If you cannot destroy a people, then corrupt them—let loose among them the woman of Moab. We must watch there. If

the enemy cannot blast, he will blight us; if he cannot destroy us he will corrupt us, and he may use a Balaam to do it. There are Balaams at work to-day; they seem to speak with the very voice of God, but the final end of their ministry is to corrupt whom they cannot destroy. We must be very watchful in this present age in which we live.

Some time ago I was led of God, one Sunday night, to speak along this line. At the close of the meeting a dear woman came to me and said: That message has been absolutely for me. I will tell you of my experiences of the last fortnight. One of my boys has become engaged, and the betrothal feast is to be to-night. My husband, myself and my other son had an invitation to the feast, across the other side of London. I said, "Now Lord, give me guidance. This is my boy being betrothed, but it is Sunday, when I ought to be in Thy house!" The Lord said "You may not go with them." She told her husband. He said, "Don't be silly. Why this is only once in a life time; go, at least for this once." She took it back to the Lord, and He said, "You may not go with them." The boy came, and he put his arms around her and said, "Mother, you will go, won't you, you couldn't refuse me this." She said, "I will ask the Lord again and see what He says" and she went back. Again the Lord said "You may not go with them." The fiancée came down and said "Oh, but Mother, you will come, won't you, it is only once." Back she went to the Lord and got the same answer. This went on for a fortnight. On this very Sunday night, with only half an hour to decide whether she would go with them to the other side of London, or come to the service, the Lord graciously said again, "You may not go with them." She came out of her room and said to her husband and her boys, "I have got the Lord's final word, I may not go with you." They went, and she came to the house of the Lord. That night for the first time in 25 years ministry I preached from Balaam, and my text was "Thou shalt not go with them." Your message to-night, she said, is the seal of the Lord—the Lord always seals true guidance. On the following Tuesday the young lady herself came down, and in spite of all her former entreaties, she said to her prospective mother-in-law, "You didn't come on Sunday! I didn't expect you, and if you had come, I should have been very disappointed in you."

Is that guidance? God, that night, gave her His answer, "Thou shalt not go with them." God does speak, beloved. But that woman might have got the permissive will of God, and gone to the party, and wrecked her witness for ever. God in His mercy saved her from that, and the whole family now say, "Well, Mother has got hold of the right thing"—or rather, the right thing has got hold of Mother!

May God keep us very near to Himself, so that we may receive His orders, know His mind, and His will, and then go straight ahead with that. It may cost us something, but it will cost infinitely more if you do not pay the first cost.

It is the Spirit Himself Who teaches and enlightens. *The truth itself*, the preaching of the Gospel, the reading of the Scriptures, has no inherent power to bring knowledge into the soul. These are only the instruments, the Holy Spirit is the Agent: they are only the sword, the Spirit is the energy, the hand that wields it. They shall be taught of God.

Adolph Saphir.

*Image
Sanctified*

Helps for Teachers.

(From Mrs. Penn-Lewis' Bible.)

"THE IMAGE OF THE HEAVENLY."

I. God's purpose for His called ones:

"Conformed to the image of His son . . . the First Born," Rom. viii. 29.

Not only conformed to His character, but to His image, *i.e.*, not His likeness in human form. As we have borne the image of the earthly race, so there is an image of the heavenly race.

II. When Christ was called the "First Born":

"He raised up Jesus . . . this day have I begotten Thee," Acts xiii. 33.

"Jesus Christ, the Firstborn from the dead," Rev. i. 5.

At His resurrection He became the *First* from among the dead.

III. Glimpses of the "Image" of the Firstborn:

"God hath glorified His Child Jesus," Acts. iii. 13, m.

"God, having raised up His Child Jesus," Acts iii. 26.

"Thy Holy Child Jesus, Whom Thou didst anoint," Acts iv. 27.

"Signs and wonders through . . . Thy Holy Child," ver. 30.

The Apostles never saw Him in His human childhood.

They had always called Him "Teacher," or "Lord." Their outward eyes had seen Him as a Man. Now He is revealed to their inward eyes as the "Child," in His heavenly image, the First Born of many brethren.

IV. The pattern foreshadowed by the Lord:

"He called to Him a little child . . . and said, Except ye . . . become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xviii. 2, 3.

The Kingdom is only peopled by this heavenly race.

V. How to become one of the heavenly children:

(1) "Except ye *turn*, and become as little children."

A.V. "be converted"—entirely renewed, "born of water and of the Spirit" (*i.e.*, death to old creation, life in the New).

An Old Testament picture lesson: Naaman, bathed seven times in Jordan, and became "as a little child." 2 Ki. v. 14.

(2) "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child"—entire self-renunciation, self-abasement. Matt. xviii. 4.

(3) "Whoso shall receive one such little child . . . receiveth Me" (verse 5). The Christ-life—identity of the Holy Child and His children.

VI. Conformity to His image, in practice:

"Made conformable to His death," Phil. iii. 10.

"He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter," and His children must have "the lamb-spirit."

Conformity to "His death" is fully described in 1 Peter ii. 21-24.

VII. Characteristics of the heavenly children:

(1) The Father's peculiar care and defence of them:

"Whoso shall cause one of these little ones to stumble . . . it is profitable for him . . ." etc. Matt. xviii. 6.

(2) The Father's Face always clear to them:

"They do always behold the face of My Father" (ver. 10).

(3) The Father's special guarding:

"Even so it is not the will of your Father . . . that one of these little ones should perish" (ver. 14).

(4) The Father's secrets revealed to them:

"Hid . . . from the wise and prudent; and revealed . . . unto babes," Matt. xi. 25.

(5) The Father dealing with their enemies:

"Babes . . . hast Thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that Thou mightest *still* the enemy . . ." Ps. viii. 2. See also Matt. xxi. 16.

VIII. The heavenly children used of God to be:

(1) His prophets (messengers), Jeremiah i. 4-10.

(2) His priests (unto the Lord), 1 Samuel iii. 1.

(3) His kings (over the people), Solomon, 1 Ki. iii. 7. David, Ps. i. 31.

"Jesus Christ . . . the First Born . . . made us kings and priests unto God and His Father," Rev. i. 5, 6.

IX. God's final perfecting of the image:

"We wait for His Son . . . Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able . . ." Phil. iii. 28, R.V.

"Now He that wrought us for this very thing is God."

2 Cor. v. 5.

Luk 21:25-31 Prayer

31

Signs of the Times and the Outlook for Prayer.

"And there shall be . . . distress of nations, with perplexity. . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth . . . Behold the fig tree, and all the trees : when they now shoot forth ye see and know . . . that summer is now nigh at hand." — Luke xxi. 25-31.

"**B**EHOLD the fig tree, and all the trees, when they now shoot forth"! Not only do the marvellous developments in Palestine (of which the fig tree is typical) demand attention at this time, but "all the trees"—all the nations are showing an extraordinary advance and development, on one hand, together with "anguish among the nations in their bewilderment" (Weymouth). And in their bewilderment and perplexity they are appealing not to God, but to the dictatorship of human leaders, and so preparing the world for the appearing and reception of the "man of sin." In the opinion of many people, the world crisis is over and we are reaching the turning point of recovery. We are told that just inside the Peace Palace lately erected at Geneva, the words "*Peace and Safety*" are inscribed : a solemn reminder to the child of God of the Apostle's warning in 1 Thess. v. 3. Truly we may say that we are seeing God's Word fulfilled before our eyes.

In an article in *The Overcomer* a year ago, we called attention to the way in which the thought life of the nations was being "drugged" through the educational developments of broadcasting, in preparation for the time when the rulers shall be "of one mind" under the Beast (Rev. xvii. 13). Even now a demon-intoxication seems to sway whole communities, under evil-spirit-drugged leaders. A writer in the "*Literary Digest*" of Oct. 21st, 1933 (quoted in "*Dawn*") says : "Only Hitler is able to hypnotise people *en masse*. His manner of speaking is not ranting, his gestures are not violent. He seldom shouts. And yet he casts a spell. Audiences follow more than his words. They follow his gestures. When he is at a climax and sways to one side or the other, his listeners sway with him, and when he concludes, they are either awed and silent, or on their feet in a frenzy."

Under such conditions, how intensely we realise the danger of those German pastors who have stood firm for freedom of worship. Let us pray unceasingly for them, and for all true children of God in Germany, that their faith fail not in the test, and that they may stand unshaken, "strong in the Lord," "strengthened with all might by His Spirit."

* * *

A remarkable piece of information, sent by a well-known Christian business man in Jerusalem to the Editor of the "*Advent Witness*," is published in the February issue of that paper. It consists of the translation of a letter sent to Mussolini by a leading Jew in Tel Aviv, in which he writes :

"Will the Roman Mussolini come to save our nation from perishing ? There are fourteen years that Arabs and Jews are quarrelling one with the other without logic and aim . . . A man must be found in whom all parties will see a just and intermediate, impartial judge in the quarrels which clash . . . And you are, according to my opinion, this man in the world to-day—*Eccce Homo* ! (This is the man.) And I, the smallest of the Jewish millions, dare to declare that if you will solve the problems of Jew and Arab, no greater than you will ever be, even in the coming generations . . ."

The February issue of "*Dawn*" gives an extract from Mussolini's personal organ "*Il Popolo d'Italia*." The article, said to be inspired by himself, suggests the settling of eight million Jews in Palestine as an independent nation, and the buying out of the Arabs for an Arab exodus. All these things are but an overshadowing of coming events, but they give us a glimpse into the rapid way in which things are shaping for the fulfilment of the Prophetic Word, and the closing of the dispensation of grace. As Mrs. Penn-Lewis wrote in 1925 :—

"The dispensation of grace is rapidly hastening to its

close. The signs foretold in the Scriptures of Truth marking the 'latter days' are multiplying around us, not only in the national and social upheavals which are causing men's hearts to fail them for fear of what is coming on the earth, but in the SPIRITUAL REALM in rapidly increasing tokens that the forces of darkness are working with feverish activity in the world, and in innumerable ways among the people of God.

"In a remarkable book on the closing days of the dispensation of grace, now out of print, the writer traces from the Scriptures, the workings of Satan in the world from the time of the Flood, right on through the Ages to these days, showing that the end of the Age will find the whole inhabited earth *submerged in a tide of spirit-power from the forces of Satan, producing, practically, an atmospheric condition* similar to that which up to this time only could be found in spiritist seances, *i.e.*, a condition in which spirit-beings can manifest themselves and their workings.

"That atmospheric condition can be seen to be steadily increasing, and there are indications on every hand of the preparation of the world by the powers of darkness for open recognition of the rule of Satan. Millions of deceiving spirits are actively at work among men, preparing for the climax hour when the whole deceived world will be acclaiming the fallen arch-angel Satan as its god, whilst the the professing Church, according to Paul's express message from the Holy Spirit of Truth, will, on the whole, 'fall away,' and turn from the faith of the gospel.

"Out of this condition in the world, and in the professing church, the true Church of Christ—His mystical Body, His living Members—will be taken to join their Risen Head. A 'little flock,' compared to the greater number of professed Christians, and the unregenerate world. Ones and twos here and there, as 'wheat' among the tares, so that only 'two or three gathered in the Name' may be found. Great churches filled with professed worshippers of the Christ, but with ones and twos who are true members of His Body. 'One shall be taken' and 'the other left,' revealing division in family life at the hour of translation.

"Will this true company of believers, living members of a Living Head, escape out of the condition of the last days unscathed ? Alas ! No. Did the closing days of the Age, with its spiritistic atmospheric condition, come upon a *matured* people, trained and taught, and able to discern and defeat the foe, a prepared Church might pass unscathed through the perilous days in safety. But the babyhood condition of the true members of the Body ; their ignorance of the deeper things of God ; and their still greater ignorance of the forces of darkness and their wiles at the time of the end, makes it a certainty that only through deep suffering and trial, will the members of the true Body of Christ be prepared to meet their descending Lord (1 Thess. iv. 15-17)

* * *

A worker in Canada, referring to the message in the *Overcomer* for January, entitled "*The Cry of the Church in the Last Days*," says : "If at the time this was written, Mrs. Penn-Lewis could write of such things, how about the present time ? Oh, how the powers of darkness are now coming in tenfold power compared with a few years ago ! May God open our eyes and bring us to our knees in utter self surrender, till we become afraid of ourselves and of the awful *flesh*, that is such a subtle foe to the work of the Holy Spirit . . ." This

brother also speaks of the helpfulness of the message by Mr. McCall Barbour, "When did you Die?" (October issue, 1933), and says that "it brings home with increasing strength and clearness the awfulness of the *flesh*, even in the dearest and deepest of God's saints. I believe," he continues, "that all spiritual children of God clearly recognise that this time is *judgment time* (1 Peter i. 17), and all that is of the flesh God is permitting to be judged. There is no other explanation to be offered concerning that which is happening in the lives of many of those who have been known as deep and earnest children of God, to-day . . ."

These words are true concerning the saints of God in all parts of the world at this time, and if we believe, from the signs we see around us, that at any moment we may be called away to meet our Lord face to face, we need not be surprised or alarmed at the fiery ordeals through which many are passing, but rather lift up our heads, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh. We in the home lands feel the awful pressure of the powers of darkness, and the subtlety of Satan as an angel of light, but what about those who are toiling in the darkness of heathendom, in lands "where Satan's seat is"?

The critical situation of the Church in these days is well illustrated by the history of the entry into the Promised Land of the younger generation of Israel. Surrounded on every hand by enemies bent on their defeat and destruction, two primary rules were laid down for them, to secure their safety and ultimate victory: first, meditation on and obedience to the Law of God (Josh. i); and second, unquestioning obedience to the commands of the Unseen Captain (Josh. v. 13). It is the present deplorable ignorance of God's Word that, in many instances, gives the enemy such advantage in every sphere to-day. There is need of deeper knowledge of the Word of God among His people, and also of instant obedience to both the promptings and the checkings of the Holy Spirit.

The importance of heeding the latter is instanced in the happenings on a small mission station I have been privileged to visit, where Moslem superstition reigns among the poor and ignorant population. A band of faithful Missionaries had toiled for years under many difficulties, with few results to reward their labour, while the hardness and indifference of the people were almost crushing. To this place there arrived, from another station, a visitor bringing a message of brightness and encouragement, which seemed to bring a real "uplift" to those weary workers when they were almost ready to sink under the conditions around them. What wonder, if they eagerly drank in all that was said, without questioning. But gradually, to those who knew experimentally their death and resurrection with Christ, and were living in vital union with Him, there came a distinct check from the Holy Spirit. In spite of outward manifestations of love, and joy and unity, and devotion to prayer, they discerned "another spirit" at work, which was not of God. They became conscious of glaring omissions concerning the basic facts of the Gospel (Cf. 2 Cor. xi. 3-4; Gal. i. 8-9). The aftermath, also, of the ecstatic spiritual experiences proved far from beneficial, especially in the case of native believers with very limited knowledge of the Word, tending to produce spiritual pride and a spirit of condemnation of others, even their teachers, whom they thought had not received their "wonderful experience."

From many such centres we hear how the pure work of God is being undermined by the counterfeits of "evil spirits," and the Word of God is full of warnings regarding Satan's workings as an "angel of light." The words of our Lord Himself are very emphatic in Matt. xxiv. 4, 23, 24. See also 2 Thess. ii. 8-9.

In view of all these things, we need to pay earnest heed to the warning of our Lord to "WATCH AND PRAY, lest ye enter

into temptation." For three years His disciples had lived in intimate company with their Lord, listening eagerly to His teaching and hanging upon His words; yet they were totally unprepared for the final testing of their faith, and the blow to their expectations, when Calvary came into view. "Can you drink of My cup?" was His answer to the request of two of that little company that they might occupy seats of honour on His right hand and on His left, on the throne of His earthly kingdom. Their eyes were on the reward, but they were not prepared for the suffering and conflict that must first be passed through. How different the attitude of the Apostle Paul, the tried and battered warrior in his Roman prison. Not only had he counted the cost, not only was he fully prepared for the price he must pay, but he had been given a glimpse of the glorious Prize to be won. "Yea doubtless," he cries, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things . . . *that I may win Christ*" (Phil. iii. 7, 8). Have we measured the depth of the meaning of Paul's prayer when he uttered those words: "That I may know HIM, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death." Twice does the Apostle emphasise that only if we share in the suffering shall we "reign with Him" (Rom. viii. 17, 2 Tim. ii. 12). Nevertheless, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. *Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea . . .*" (Ps. 46, 2).

The Swanwick Conference.

Some of us, when we receive this paper, will be considering the question of the Swanwick Conference. We often hear it said that the day of Conferences and Conventions is passing—perhaps because so many beloved spiritual teachers have been called away in recent years. But are we not conscious that God is seeking to take our eyes off human leaders, that we may depend more entirely upon Himself? And God's Word is emphatic, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together . . . *and so much the more as ye see the Day approaching*" (Heb. x. 25).

There is danger lest the people of God sink under the awful pressure of these days—pressure from the Adversary, from the deadness and hardness of the atmosphere of the world, and from the many circumstantial difficulties with which they are surrounded. For this cause we sorely need to gather together in the presence of the Lord—not so much, perhaps, to listen to messages, as for intensive prayer for the loosing of every individual member of the Body of Christ and their preparation for translation.

With this in mind, and the deep need of prayer, such as Daniel offered, for the speedy outworking of God's purposes for the world, and for His people the Jews, the Council have been led so to arrange the programme for this year's Conference as to give more time for united prayer and waiting upon God. We ask the prayers of all our readers, whether they will be with us or not, that God will draw together a group of His children upon whom HE can lay the burden of the great needs of these closing days of the age, and that all His purposes in and through the Conference may be accomplished.

E. M. Leathes.

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J.P.L.

(Extract from the Introduction.)

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July 5—Monthly Conference (Rev. A. R. Boughen).
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Note.—We are glad also to call attention to the following meetings: prayer and fellowship arranged by some of our readers, who are asked to meet the need in their own districts.

Birmingham: Bible Witness Fellowship, "Kelvedon," Frede Road, Wyde Green. Every Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle: Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Meeting Second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff: Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m., No. 2 R C Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station). In charge of Miss Millett, Supt. C.A.W. Newlands Street, Barry.

Isleworth: Meetings in abeyance until further notice, except Quarterly Missionary Prayer Conference, July 30th at 7.45 p.m. in St. Lu Mission, Kingsley Road, Hounslow. Speaker: Mr. George Pa (N.E. India General Mission).

Enquiries: Miss Gravatt, London House, St. John's Road, Isleworth.

Liverpool: Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday at 3 p.m. at 55 Granby Street, Princess Park.

Isle of Wight: Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m., a Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Leicester: Weekly Prayer Meeting, Tuesday at 3.30, 14 Gree Road, Clarendon Park.

Manchester: Prayer Meeting second Monday each month, 7 in Room 13, Albert Hall, Peter Street.
Enquiries: Mr. Norton Repton, Overstrand, Sagar's Road, Handforth Manchester.

Muswell Hill: Prayer Meeting every Tuesday, at 35 Muswell Ave 3.30 p.m.

Stamford Hill: Prayer meeting every Tuesday, 72 Darent Road 3 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Suckling.

Our Hymnbook.

A JOYOUS feature of the Swanwick Conference this year, was introduction of a new edition of our little hymnbook, "Song the Heavenly Life," containing four pages of new hymns, some other revisions, including the hymn "Victory," with tune "No. 1."

The alterations may make the New Edition a little difficult to with previous editions, and we have therefore reserved a small quantity of the last edition, so that friends who are using it for meetings make up their number, if necessary. These may be obtained from Book Room at the reduced price of 1/6 per dozen, postage paid, 1/

"Le Vainqueur." (The "Overcomer.")

A 16-page paper issued occasionally, as funds permit consisting of a from "The Overcomer," translated into French. Edited and issued by Madame Brunel, "La Source," Boisset-Anduze (Gard), France.

Miss Cope, 19 Dalmeny Crescent, Heath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, a Treasurer for Mme Brunel. She will gladly send a copy of "Le Vainqueur" application.

THE OVERCOMER.

Feb. 11/6

"God is"

God
confidence

"He that cometh to God must believe that He IS, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."—Heb. xi. 6.

A WORKER recently sat, as David once sat (1 Chron. xvii. 16), before the Lord, facing out in the innermost sanctuary of His presence some stupendous attacks of the powers of darkness upon "work" assuredly initiated and directed by the Spirit of God, in response to dependent and continuous prayer. It looked as if the forces of evil were triumphing, even as they apparently triumphed at Calvary, when in "the hour and power of darkness" they wrought out their will through the "hand of lawless men" (Acts ii. 23), crucifying and slaying the Man approved of God by "mighty works, and wonders and signs which God did by Him."

It seemed to the servant of God waiting before the Lord, as if for a brief space of time all things were shaken as by an earthquake, and the "mountains" were moved, and cast into the heart of the sea, and mighty rocks were tossing and shaking as leaves before the wind. All the promises of God were now in the balance. *Had He guided in the past*, and was it really at His command that every step had been taken? Then why this apparent triumph of the adversary? Suddenly in the midst of the earthquake and shaking mountains and rocks, stood out two words in soft clear letters of light—"God is."

"God is!" God! Yes, the God who brought Israel out of Egypt; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Pentecost; the changeless God, with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning. GOD is on the Throne. And God is! He remains. He rules. He is, whatever else passes away. GOD is, oh child of God! Hast thou reached Him? Hast thou passed through all created things to thy Creator, to find that when all things are shaken around thee, and, like the dove that left the ark, thou findest not one place to rest thy foot upon, thou art "with Christ in God," steadfast, immovable in the day of testing? And thou art "with Christ in God" if thou hast learnt thy place of union with the God-Man in His death on Calvary, and in His resurrection and ascension to the Father. There thou wilt know that "God is," and find that they who dwell in Him are like Mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever."

Art thou tossed and shaken by testings and trials? Art thou discouraged when the forces of evil apparently sweep over the Church of God? Then thou knowest not yet the immovableness of the soul who has passed through the things temporal into union with Him who sitteth on the Throne. "God is" on the Throne. His counsels shall stand, and He will do all His good pleasure. He has purposed that in the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. He has said that He will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and show wonders in the heavens

and in the earth. Let us believe God, for "God is" on the Throne. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him. Let all the apparent triumphs of the enemy break us away from reliance on anything outside God, and drive us into Him who is our refuge and strength, our hiding-place and fortress from the enemy.

"God is" a consuming fire, and as we are hidden in Christ, and with Him are drawn into the bosom of the Father, we are drawn into Him who is Fire. "God is" Light, and in Him is no darkness at all; with Christ in God we therefore dwell in light which must make manifest the works of darkness. "God is" Love! He that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him" (1 John iv. 16). *Fire, Light, Love!* Fire to melt, Light to reveal, and Love to pour out. Oh, soul, press on to know this upward calling of God in Christ Jesus! The path thereto may lie through the valley of deep darkness, and through the shaking of things on earth, so that thou mayest have thy life anchored in things eternal. Press on until thou passest through all created things to thy Creator, and "with Christ in God" look forth, steadfast, immovable, upon the world, knowing that "God is" on the Throne, and will yet bring to pass His counsels for His Church and the people.

J. Penn-Lewis.

NOTE.—This message was written many years ago, for "The Life of Faith," and the experience given in the opening words in the third person was, of course, a personal one.

"We which Live."

2 Cor. iv. 11.

LIVE in the love of God,
Deal with the Lord alone!
Live in the blaze of that white light,
That beats about God's Throne.

LIVE, cleaving to His Word,
Its faithfulness to prove;
Live, looking for thy Lord's return,
Live, feeding on His love.

LIVE, so that life on earth
A foretaste shall become
Of perfect life where God is King;
Thou heir of Jesu's Throne!

LIVE, counting all but loss,
Save that which draws thee in,
To that great heart which broke for thee,
Because it bore thy sin.

LIVE, counting nothing gain,
Save that which makes Christ dear;
Live, set apart to prove to men
That earth and heaven are near.

LIVE till thy life on earth
Shall so unearthly be,
That Christ shall catch thee to His Throne,
Child of eternity!

M.E.B.

A Word to our Readers.

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

We are glad to have a word of greeting from our Chairman, who is away on another tour in India. We look forward to having him at home again before the Autumn Conference work begins, for we miss him greatly, not only on the platform, presiding over our gatherings, but in the background, for his keen, sober judgment and advice in matters pertaining to the carrying on of the work.

Our hearts overflow with praise to God for the way in which He carried us through another Swanwick Conference. Never, perhaps, has the spiritual burden been so intense during the months of preparation, or the prayer battle so unceasing, since the Council have been responsible for this tremendous undertaking. The fruit of this was seen in an atmosphere clear from the first moment, and surcharged with the presence of God. It was a very searching Conference, God dealing strongly with the flesh and the soulish life of nature all through the week. The "self life" has often been dealt with in the pages of "The Overcomer," in the more subtle aspects of its manifestation—self-love, self-interest even in spiritual things, spiritual pride etc.,—but in the early messages of the Conference this year God led us, almost against our will, to a drastic dealing with sin in the household of God, and with the terrible manifestations of the flesh with which Paul and other apostles had to deal in the early Church. Because this "pattern" was so definitely the Holy Spirit's leading, and not our own choice, we have felt impelled to give space to this side of the work at Swanwick in this issue, being "fully persuaded" that God has His own purpose in it.

Here we would say to our prayer helpers, that the conflict over the preparation of "The Overcomer" is intense and unceasing, as it has always been, but we do not remember any issue of late years which has gone through with such difficulty, such apparent obstruction from the enemy at every point, as the present one. We therefore ask for a very special "barrage" of prayer around it as it goes forth to every corner of the world, that the uttermost purpose of God may be accomplished through its message.

One of the most striking things of the week, given to us by "the God of all encouragement," was the frequent and remarkable testimony, spontaneously given in various meetings both by speakers and hearers, to what God is doing through "The Overcomer," and the writings of Mrs. Penn-Lewis. There were those in the Conference who had been delivered from psychic power, and Satanic deceptions, through the reading of a single copy of the magazine—the first they had seen. A Pastor present had received much light through *The Overcomer*, of January, 1933, especially the article "Two Thrones at War," by our beloved brother, now with the Lord, Rev. R. B. Jones. His freedom was established through the reading of "War on the Saints," and "Soul and Spirit," and through his testimony to what God has shown him regarding Satan's counterfeits of the work of the Holy Spirit, many other children of God have been delivered. This brother gave his testimony in one of the afternoon meetings—an amazing story of deception by Satan in guise as "an angel of light," and as it closed, a Missionary rose to his feet and corroborated all that had been said from his own observation of many similar cases among true servants of God in the mission field, adding grievous instances of the havoc wrought, and the dishonour done to the Name of the Lord.

This testimony, which the Council hesitated long before permitting, lest it should bring a check to the deep work of God already being done, proved the beginning of a new and deeper note. Questions followed, and were answered, and all

was turned to prayer "against" all that works against God and hinders the "perfecting of the saints" for translation.

The great safeguarding answer to all counterfeits of the work of the Holy Spirit is to be found in discernment between that which is "spiritual" from the Spirit of God, that which is "spiritual" but from evil spirits, and that which is simply the working of the "soul-life" of the man himself, in the exercise of psychic force, hypnotism, etc., and for this "discernment of spirits" all God's people need earnestly to pray to-day when these things are taught, in many quarters, in substitution for the true Gospel of the grace of God.

Yours in the Master's service,

Mary N. Garran

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I am writing this from the Vale of Kashmir, that veritable garden of loveliness, surrounded by mighty snow-clad mountain giants. We have joined a party of tired missionary friends, recruiting health and strength in this life-giving area after the exhausting heat of the plains. Our brethren have added their prayers to ours for these days of Conference and fellowship which are now being spent at Swanwick.

My own heart turns homeward to that spot, hallowed by so many memories. I would join those gathered there in remembering with gratitude the workers who in former days were used of God to bless their brethren. Surely He will continue to us that succession of His servants so long as He is pleased to make use of the Overcomer Testimony.

In these perilous times we all need a deeper insight into the meaning of our warfare, and a courage constantly renewed as we learn more and more of the resources that are ours: Christ Jesus. One of the greatest of these, to our brethren preaching the Gospel in the gross darkness of heathenism, the sure and certain hope of the near coming of their Lord: yet so many faithful witnesses are without the inspiration that hope would give them. The Gospel is preached indeed—as witness. The Lord is calling out a people to Himself, through the preaching of the Word, from the four corners of the World. What a joy it is to see these, from distant fields, joining the blessed company of all faithful people: yet what less than the fact of the near coming of The King can be adequate to the problems that face us to-day?

A brother beloved, and one who, I find, rejoices in our Testimony, tells me that in the Province of Bengal where his labours, the increase of population in the last decade exceeds the total Protestant Christian population of the whole of India. In the face of such a fact, should we not do our utmost to share our joy with so many of the Lord's children who labour on without this blessed hope as a comfort to their soul?

Since arrival here, I have received a letter from Dr. Harold Morton telling of his continued serious illhealth, and of his leaving England with Mrs. Morton for a long voyage. May I ask your prayers that, in the will of God, our brother may be restored to health, and that in his absence, the ministry which he represents may be abundantly sustained.

Permit me to close with a word of personal greeting to all many friends linked to us in the bonds of this Testimony, at home and abroad. It has been with the greatest joy that I have met with many such in distant lands. For these, and for many more still unknown in person—I would crave the blessing of the Lord in all their life and work, until the dawns, and the shadows flee away.

Yours in the bonds of His service,

B. W. Matthew

SERINAGAR, INDIA,
15th May, 1934.

The Message of Calvary in Relation to the Holy Spirit. The Swanwick Conference, 1934.

ANOTHER Swanwick Conference has come, and gone, with all its vital opportunities of blessing and service. From the first meeting, on Monday night, a deep and solemn sense of the presence of God brooded over the gatherings, and it was said by some that this year we had "begun on the highest note." The key note of the Conference was struck with our opening hymn :

Lift that Name high ! that glorious Name,
Let heaven and earth its power proclaim ;
Our mighty, conquering, coming King,
Earth yet shall with His praises ring !

A cable of affectionate greeting was received from our beloved Chairman, Mr. Bernard Matthews, whose presence was greatly missed, but we were fortunate in the appointment of Rev. B. G. Lovelace to act in his place as chairman in general, while the Rev. George Harper presided over the morning Bible Readings, given this year by Rev. John Thomas, M.A. Notes of these meditations on Rom. vii. and viii. are given consecutively in another place.

Opening Message by Rev. George Harper.

"For He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you"
John xvi. 7-14.

THIS passage is a vast theme, personal in its application and far flung in its possible issues ; but it was never more necessary for us to understand and grasp its significance than at the present time. We are living in an age of religious ethics. "Do good, be good, etc.," seems largely to sum up the present hour gospel as preached by many. There are those who try, only to fail and give up defeated. Why ? Because there is no rock bottom to rest upon in such a gospel. When the storm breaks, the building upon the sand soon gives way. Not so, however, if we rest upon the Rock of Ages. George Herbert, referring to the keeping power of Christ says "Storms are the triumphs of His art." The Prophet Isaiah declares "And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest ; as rivers of water in a dry place : as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." I wish to make two statements :

The Holy Spirit was, and is, in absolute and unqualified agreement with the finished work of Christ.

To separate in any measure, the one from the other, would be fatal. Let us consider this from a twofold point of view.

(1) *The work of Christ in the fulness of its accomplishment of the Will of God.* The "Amen" of the Holy Spirit is upon this, as Hebrews ix. 14 clearly proves. Through (Greek *Dia*) the energising power of the Holy Spirit, Our Lord offered Himself to God, as the whole burnt Offering. Then turning to Eph. i. 19-20, we read of the exceeding greatness of His power when He raised Christ from the dead. What power was this, but that of the Holy Spirit ? The Apostle Peter refers to this in 1 Peter iii. 18, where he says, Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." The use he makes of the dative here signifies, He was made to live again in the Spirit, that is, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, in His death and resurrection.

(2) *The work of Christ in the fulness of its application to us.* Again we have the "Amen" of the Holy Spirit upon this. This application of the work of Christ unto us is summed up in one great word of Scripture, the word "SALVATION," which must ever be recognised as being threefold in its unfolding as applied unto us. From, Through, Unto. Three questions immediately present themselves here. What are we saved *from* ? How are we saved *through* ? What are we saved *unto* ?

We are saved from sin's condemnation, (Rom. viii. 1, John v. 24.) Not only so, but as truly from Satan's attempt to condemn. In Rom. viii. 33, the challenge of the Apostle is "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect ? Let Satan try. What is our answer ? "It is God that justifieth." And upon what ground ? "Christ died and is risen again."

Yes, but more, we are saved through the conflict. We are not only sustained and preserved in the conflict, we are saved when passing through the hours of dark and determined assault from the invisible enemy. Oh let us take hold of this. God's purpose for His people is that they should be victorious in the conflict. What a demonstration of this we have in Daniel iii. 27. Those three Hebrew youths triumphantly walking amidst the fire in company with the Son of God ; and when they came forth, even the smell of fire was not upon them, nor a hair singed upon their heads. But how may this be ours ? Revelation xii. 11 will tell us. Only by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of our testimony can we thus triumph.

But what are we saved unto ? God's uttermost (Heb. vii. 25.) Don't tremble to believe and to accept this. Saved to the uttermost of time and eternity. To the uttermost releasement from sin, Satan, and self.

But this is not by any means all. We are saved to the uttermost enjoyment of God. The Apostle in Romans v. 11 writes "And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the Atonement." We rejoice in God, as a child in the strong loving arms of its father. Our chief end in this Salvation is "to enjoy God for ever." But even this does not end the "unto" in our salvation. We are saved to God's uttermost enjoyment of us. In Revelation v. 9, we hear the multitude sing of their redemption. "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood"—that God's enjoyment of His own blood-purchased people might be a glorious realisation and satisfaction unto Him. Let me say again The "Amen" of the Holy Spirit is upon all this. Well might we add our *Hallelujah* to it. I now proceed to my second statement :

The Finished work of Christ makes possible the functioning power of the Holy Spirit.

This, first, in relation to the great world that is outside the Kingdom of God. We read concerning the Holy Spirit, He shall reprove, or convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, (John xvi. 8) ; but especially is this functioning power of the Holy Spirit seen in relation to the individual believer and the whole body of Christ. Four tremendous facts must now be considered.

(1) *There is a soulish life.* That is, a life that is governed by self interest, instead of the interest of of Christ and His body the Church. Such a life finds its glory in the lime-light. It is of remarkable significance that Jesus never posed, in any sense, for His picture. He left no picture of Himself upon anything, in order that we might know Him, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. In Romans vi. 11-14, we are instructed to reckon ourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God. Our members are to be yielded unto Him as instruments of righteousness unto God. When we turn to Philippians iii. 3-7, we are shewn how this may be fully realised in us. "What things were gain to me," says Paul, "those I counted loss for Christ." And again, in Galatians vi. 14, we hear the witness of this great Apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." When we can say this truthfully, then the soulish life has been displaced by the Christ life in us.

(2) *There is a sensual life.* That is, a life governed by the senses instead of by the Holy Spirit. This need not necessarily be considered from the lowest plane. Rather let us view it as the soulish life in its descent. In Romans viii. 6, we read "The fleshly mind is death." How solemnly true this is. The very expression of this mind in the assembly of God's people brings deadness into their midst. In Romans viii. 13, we read "If we make to die the deeds of the body we shall live." Again in Galatians v. 24, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." When this has become a realised fact in our spiritual life and experience, what a change is ours! No longer are we communicators of death, but we become imparters of life, the very life of Christ our Lord.

(3) *There is a life spiritually separated.* That is, a life governed by the passion of Christ to do the will of God. How may such a life be ours? If we turn to John xii. 24, we will discover its secret. The corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, but if it die, fruit abundant will be the issue. Let us not confuse this with the "dying" of the old flesh life (Rom. vi.). The point here is that of REPRODUCTION. We are nowhere taught to look for reproduction in relation to our old sinful life. Philippians iii. 10 will help us here: "That I may . . . be made conformable unto His

death" cries Paul. This suggests that the principles of love and devotion, and sacrifice that governed the death of Christ our Lord, should govern our new life in Him. Paul, writing in Romans ix. 3, gives expression to this in words inexpressibly solemn. "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Ah, he was baptised into the Spirit of Christ when he uttered that cry. He was willing to be as the corn of wheat, buried in the earth, if only his brethren might be saved. Willing to be accursed from Christ, who was Himself made a curse for us (Gal. iii. 13.) Such is service for Christ in its true meaning, that of a willing sacrifice. The inner power for such service is given to us in Acts. i. 8—The Holy Ghost coming upon us, in the plenitude of the Divine provision.

(4) *There is a life Supremely Triumphant.* That is, a life that shares the triumph of Calvary with Christ. In Revelation xvii. 14, this is vividly set before us. It is the final assault upon God's chosen Lamb by the greatest of World Confederacies. In the 13th verse we read of them: "They have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Thereupon they shall make this final effort to overwhelm and overthrow the Lamb. But we read "The Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings." Then follows the striking statement, it indeed is thrilling! "And they that are with Him are called, and chosen and faithful." What a day of victory that will be for our glorious Lord, and for His Cross. It will be the final attestation to the great truth and testimony of God in His Word, that Calvary is not, never was, and never shall be interpreted as defeat in the Divine economy, but as VICTORY. Ah, but what a day too that will be for those that are "with Him." No longer will theirs be an identification in death, but in ruling, reigning, victorious life. The "Amen" of the Holy Spirit is over all this, from first to last. This, too, not only of assent, but of the fellowship of mighty imparting power.

Now it remains for us to ask ourselves—Am I with my Lord now? How far shall I go with Him? We are called to witness and warfare now with Christ. Shall our response to our Lord's call in the present hour determine our place with Him, as sharers in His final triumph?

The Noon Hour and Other Gatherings.

The Noon gatherings consisted of a brief message on the theme outlined for the day, followed by prayer "intensive and extensive," in the words of the syllabus. Intensive in relation to the spiritual needs unveiled by the teaching and fellowships of the Conference; extensive in relation to the needs of the world outside. We wish we had room for all these helpful talks, but our space only allows the following. Opening the first of this series, the Chairman (Rev. B. G. Lovelace) said, "Before we take our place as intercessors for others, it is important that we ourselves are perfectly adjusted in spirit, in that fellowship with our Lord which is the basis of our approach to God in prayer. The foundation work needs to be done *in us*. There have been those who have sought to teach the message of the Cross to others, but who have failed to apply that Cross to themselves, and the result has been disastrous. But by the grace of God we are not going to shirk the issue in these strategic morning meetings; and if the Lord should break us down with the

consciousness of an inner life that is not acceptable to Himself, we will not shirk it. The desperate need of the world to-day is not going to be met otherwise than by an intense and deep life in God, among those who are His. If He gives us a break, it will be for the sake of the world in the shadows.

Miss E. M. Leathes was the Lord's messenger on Tuesday morning, and when she rose to speak she said that her heart was overflowing as she thought of the burning need of the world to-day, and that we, as God's people, had the only message that would meet that need. The Lord has brought us together at Swanwick in a real day of battle, that we may return to our place of service for Him better equipped to help the poor distracted souls He sends us to. Confirming the words of Mr. Lovelace regarding the need of a breaking in our own hearts, "for the sake of the world in the shadows," the speaker read 2 Cor. iv. 11, from Conybeare's translation:

"For I, in the midst of life, as daily given over to death for the sake of Jesus, that in my dying flesh the life whereby Jesus conquered death might show forth its power."

The Lord Jesus was delivered up to Pilate, to the Sanhedrin—entirely put into their hands—when God "spared not His own Son, but *delivered him up* for us all." Though Son of God, yet "learned He obedience by the things which He suffered," and thereby became "the Author of eternal salvation." If He, the Captain of our salvation, had to suffer, must not we who are the sons of God in Him be prepared for some share in the suffering, not vicariously, as He suffered, but in handing ourselves over as His instruments for the working out of His will for the world? Through His broken body the Lord Jesus conquered death and the power of darkness that surrounded Him at Calvary, and this is the path of victory for those who will follow Him all the way—"daily given over to death for Jesus sake, that the life whereby Jesus conquered death may show forth its power."

The "life out of death."

We shall never forget a message given by Mrs. Penn-Lewis from this platform years ago, when she asked again and again, "*How deep shall the Cross go?*" searching our hearts and leading us into the deep self-effacement of it. We may talk about the Cross, and about Romans 6, and even teach it, but all will fail unless we are willing that the Holy Spirit shall carry it deep into our own lives, and make it true in us. This will mean a deep breaking, bringing us into circumstances and conditions where our own natural and spiritual strength, breaks down, and we are cast utterly upon God to carry us through. Paul says, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in necessities, in persecution, for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. xii. 10). Think of taking pleasure in being without strength, in insults, in the very things which the natural man rises up against, and yet this doing service to others, and being insulted for it, with no vindication of ourselves, is the likeness we bear to the Lamb Who "opened not His mouth." This is how the Lord brings us face to face with the depths and depths of evil in our own nature, when the things we thought were "crucified" long ago keep cropping up, to our dismay.

This is the work of the Cross and the Word of God, dividing between soul and spirit, searching down into the depths of our being. Are we willing, not only that the Holy Spirit shall convict us of sin, but that He shall do this deep dividing work, so that we may know how to "walk after the Spirit," with the "flesh" and the soulish life of nature kept under the domination of the Holy Spirit? If not, we shall be open to all the deceptions and delusions of these days, for the wiles and deceptions of the devil are more subtle to-day than they have ever been. True Christians are utterly puzzled to know what is of God and what is not, and many are being led away by them.

God is seeking to prepare His children for translation, but believe me, the flesh is not going to be translated! Therefore we need to know ourselves. Are we willing to be "delivered unto death," and to ask the Lord to do this deep dividing work in us? Or shall He have to say to us, "Where I go, ye cannot come?" Yes, there is an easier path. You may take it, and perhaps have a better time here, but if you are going all the way with Him, looking for "the recompense of the reward," it will mean a being delivered unto death, that all that is of the flesh may be left behind. Like that grain of wheat which must be sown in the ground to die, yet has the germ of life in it which springs up in

hundred-fold fruitfulness, so all in us that makes up the natural, the popular, the self-pleasing life must go, that the germinal life of God in the spirit may be manifested. You may reach a place where you feel you cannot bear any more, but the Lord will give you grace to go further with Him, and His strength will be made perfect in your weakness all the time.

I do not want to destroy the joy of those who are young in the Faith. At this Spring season we see the lovely blossom covering the trees, and hear the song of the birds, and find great joy in them, and they are God's gifts to us. So also in Christ, there is always joy, and sweetness, and deep inward happiness. But as in nature, there may come wind and rain, and the lovely blossoms are torn off, and all the former beauty is spoiled—yet that is the process for the fruit to be produced! The joy and thrill of the early experience in grace may have to go down, so that the divine fruit may appear—and when the fruit comes, it is *that others may have it*! There again, death works: it is "life in you" and death in the Apostle; and then death in you for life in other souls. (2 Cor. iv. 12).

You sing "I'll go with Him all the way"—*will you?* With Him to the Cross, to become "weak in Him" that His life may be made manifest in life to others? Will you say "Yes" to Him for that? How deep shall the Cross go in you, for fruit in other souls, to His glory?

* * *

Rev. H. W. Thomasson, on Wednesday morning, said that the only way in which we can gain an adequate knowledge of *ourselves* is by a vision of God's holiness. We shall never get a clear view of our self-life by searching our own hearts, or only by the reading of the Scriptures—it must be through God revealing Himself to us in all His awful holiness, and in that light we shall see and know ourselves as God sees and knows us. Isaiah "saw the Lord," and great prophet of God as he was, his cry was immediately "I am undone." When God comes into our midst the result is always the same, we *know* that in us, that is, in our flesh "dwelleth no good thing."

The Enduement of Power for Service.

Rev. Joseph Ellison gave a message on the Holy Spirit's application of the Cross in relation to "power for service." He began by asking the question, Can we become powerful Christians, powerful enough to overcome the flesh, sin, the world and the devil? Yes, provided we get the promised enduement of power from on high, as did the disciples at Pentecost. It is not sufficient for Christians to have the Holy Spirit in a general way. They cannot be "born of the Spirit" without having the Spirit of God with them and in them, but that is not the enduement of power, nor the power for service under consideration. It is clear enough to the Bible student that the disciples had the Holy Spirit long before they were anointed in Him in this special way, when they wrought miracles by His power in their journeys two-by-two, prior to Calvary, and when the Lord Jesus breathed on them and said "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" on the evening of His resurrection day. It is also evident that the Lord Himself was filled with the Spirit from His birth, and led of the Spirit throughout His earthly life, but not until he was thirty did the enduement of power from on high fall upon Him at His baptism. Luke says that Jesus was praying when he rose out of the waters of Jordan, and while he does not tell us the words, we can safely interpret them by the answer given—"The Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice from

heaven which said Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased." Such was the endowment as explained by Peter in Acts x. 38. By it, the Spirit-born, Spirit-filled *Son of God* was made into the anointed Servant of Jehovah, according to Isa. 42. 1-2.

With such examples and illustrations before us, what conclusion may we safely reach? It is perfectly true that God has "predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son," that we are to be *like Jesus*, not only in moral excellence but in the paths of experience in this world. There are three ruling factors of our Lord's earthly life that ought to be as definite in our experience as they are in the N.T. First, He was born of the Spirit, and became thereby, in an historical sense, the Son of God—the Sonship acknowledged by the Father is biologically proved and historically established by the Virgin Birth. Second, as the Son of God He became subservient and obedient to every requirement of the Divine law of righteousness—not one jot or tittle thereof failed in Him, until He had become, in a human way, legally righteous. He did not become morally sinless in that way (He was always that), but as a Son He became legally perfect through suffering and obeying all that the law required of the sinner. Third, the descending Spirit upon Him in Jordan, the anointing that brought His 30 years silence to an end, the endowment of power for the work His Father had given Him to do. The Son became the Bondslave of His Father in respect to the sin-laden, lost human race, that He might toil for it, suffer for it, bleed for it, die for it, live again for it, intercede for it, judge it, reign over it for ever.

Such is the pattern life of Him Who says, "Follow Me." Only the briefest reference need be made to the fact that a similar outline of experience was ordained for the disciples, who, like their Lord, were first born of the Spirit, then filled and used by the Spirit, and finally endued by the Spirit with power from on high. They too were sons, enjoying the privileges of sonship. Then they became servants, bondslaves of Jesus Christ, sent forth with authority to serve Him, in every sort of humble service among men.

There is a heavenly endowment for the children of God, an appointed and necessary supplement to every new-birth experience. The Agent of this transfer of power from the Throne of Christ to our hearts is the Holy Spirit. Those who become sharers of our Lord's life and of His divine nature, are also to become sharers of His anointing. The sonship is our necessary relationship to Him, the anointing is our necessary qualification from Him for service. In this anointing, or baptism in Holy Spirit, there is a transfer of Divine power from our Risen Lord to us, enabling us to perceive, to possess, to interpret, the values of His Person and work, as Redeemer and Mediator, and to declare the same to our fellow men, in a fearless, faithful, and victorious service.

* * *

Our many friends in America were represented this year by a Minister from Boston, Rev. R. D. Kilgour of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, who had crossed the Atlantic to attend the Conference. We were delighted to have this link with the group in Boston who pray for us and our ministry so faithfully, and which includes Mrs. McDonough, well known to our readers through her valuable book, "*God's Plan of Redemption*." Mr. Kilgour gave a message in one of the evening meetings, and was a real help in the "Clinic" work.

The afternoons were given to sectional meetings for Ministers, Missionaries, etc., and at 5.15 each day there was the usual "Clinic Hour," where much light was given upon personal experiences, hindrances, difficulties; guidance true and false; and psychic or supernatural im-

pressions. These meetings were held under the leadership of Miss Leathes, Revs. A. R. Boughen, B. G. Lovelace, George Harper, J. W. Brown, and others. We are sorry that lack of space forbids our giving more than a glimpse of one of these useful gatherings.

On one occasion Miss Leathes dealt with the "life of the soul," described in James v. as "earthly, sensual, demoniacal." Rev. A. R. Boughen followed, and said it was intended to have a time of prayer in this connection, and there were many in the Conference who desired to know how to pray effectually against movements that come from alien sources. There are two forces at work in the world to-day:

The super-development of the soul of man.

(1) There are evidences of tremendous workings of the power of the human soul over other souls. We are witnessing this in many movements, and while we are not here to talk about movements, as such, we are here to discern a common power at work through many of them. We see this power at work even in the Churches—the power of a man's *personality* exercising a dominating influence over the congregation. In some cases it may be unintentional, in others designed, although the power is the same in both cases. The Lord Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to liberate the spirit of man and put it into use, [and the order of God is that the spirit should be in dominance over the soul and body. That is the right order, if we are going to be effectual prayer warriors. Satan has reversed that order, causing the soul to predominate. Many of these movements are soul-movements. The man himself exerts the power, and that power is psychic, the power of the soul, the personality, exerting hypnotic influence, moving others to an alarming degree, in order to get results. These things are being tabulated as spiritual, but they are nothing of the kind. It is Satan's effort to reverse God's order and counterfeit His work. These soul-powers are being trained and developed to a high degree. That sort of thing is well pleasing to Satan. In our prayer warfare work we have to watch that psychic power of the soul, which robs God of His power in the spirit of the believer. His order is this, that His Spirit shall fill every faculty of every member of the body, and when you get that you will reach a real balance of life, with everything moving in right proportion. Recognise the difference between these two extremes, in modern movements. Our business is to preach the Gospel faithfully, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and leave the results to Him; not to work on the emotions of an audience with psychic power.

The other power is Satanic.

(2) "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." In commenting upon this statement, Dr. Jowett says, "I could not understand modern life, if I did not understand that passage to mean what it says." Everything in our prayers for the deliverance of souls in bondage depends upon diagnosis, as is the case with the physician, whose prescription depends upon it. If we are wrong there, our prayers fail. There is one clue that is certain—whenever you find a dual personality, you may be sure the demons are at work. It is not merely the development of psychic power, but an interference from without, settling upon the person. Discovering this, you will know how to pray. I urge that diagnosis is important and essential in prayer warfare. Whenever a dual personality is in evidence, it is not the slightest use to deal with flesh and blood.

Keep two things in mind, (a) that your own life must be fully yielded to Christ, for the dominance of the Holy Spirit within. Walk in the Spirit, live in the Spirit. The soul must never be on the throne. It is the Holy Spirit that must reign, working through the faculties of the soul (mind, personality, affections, etc.), controlling even the use of the body. Christ died to bring back the ascendancy of the spirit within us. (b) The moment you seek to deliver other souls, you become a target for the enemy. Don't let this frighten you. If you become such a target, you may depend upon it you are going to bring damage to the kingdom of Satan. Remind yourself all the time of your union with *Christ the Victor*, that you are joined to Him, in the victory won by His precious blood, and in that place you need not fear, you are an overcomer, in and through Him.

The Bondage of the Law and the Liberty of the Spirit.

Notes of Bible Readings on Romans 7 and 8.*

By Rev. John Thomas, M.A.

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I COME with a message from Romans viii. at the request of our Council, and I have added the seventh chapter, for reasons which will appear. I deal with Ch. vii. this morning and shall have to conclude it in one reading. This Epistle is colossal, it stands out as a mighty peak in the midst of the great uplands of Divine revelation. How did it come into being?

Paul had not visited Rome yet, but he was intensely a Roman. Rome was the great centre of a mighty tide of life, and Paul had a citizen's eyes, looking from this great centre of the Roman world, not for the Roman Empire, but for the Empire of Jesus Christ. His journeys were along Roman highways. He had Rome in mind all the while. He wanted to get the Gospel of Jesus Christ into that Imperial centre and make a great reservoir there, which would send its streams throughout the Empire and round the world. So he longed to go to Rome, but at present he could not go. By and bye he got to Corinth, and there he prepared the way by writing this marvellous Epistle, the greatest piece

of literature in the Bible—not in its inspiration, but in its outlook and scope, its plan and detail, its breadth, depth, height and length. He put into it all the gospel he could, through the leading of the Holy Spirit. Then he got a woman to take it to Rome, Phoebe, which means "light-bearer," and by bearing this epistle she bore to Rome a light which has been shining ever since over the world.

First of all Paul lays the ground-work of the Cross—Why has redemption come at all? This is answered (a) in Ch. i. by a picture of the heathen world with its lust and sin. Then (b) there is the Jewish world, knowing the Law and unable to keep it (Chs. ii. and iii.). Did God make a mistake, then, in giving man a law which he could not keep? No! God never intended to save man except by grace. The Law was only an interlude, to help man on his way and show him his sinfulness. In Ch. v. we have the wonderful story of the atoning death, in which sin is cancelled; and this is continued in Ch. vi. where life is seen to spring out of death—life tearing in time and eternity.

I.—The Moral Ideal and the Sinful Nature.

Rom. vii. 7–25.

Rome was a great centre for the Jews. The Jewish legalist and the Roman moralist gathered there. And the Roman moralists were decent people. Marcus Aurelius taught some very great moral ideals, so did Seneca. The Jews possessed the great moral law as given in the Divine covenant. How are you going to present the Cross to them all? Paul has to lay the foundations for the building of redemption. That is why I wanted to deal with the 7th before the 8th Chapter. You mighty Roman with your ideals of moral perfection—you Jew with your moral law—do you need anything more? Rom. vii. is the answer. There Paul views the matter from his own personal experience, and shows how, in himself, the whole thing has been fought out and made clear. He, at any rate, had found that nothing less than the atoning, redeeming Cross of the Son of God would suffice for his need of salvation.

Commentators and expositors differ very widely over the details of this chapter, and I am not going to deal with it controversially. I am going to forget all about them, and go my own way as God shall lead me. Rom. vii. starts with our freedom from the law through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ and our death with Him, but that is a continuation of the previous chapter. The argument of Ch. vii. begins at ver. 7: "Is the law sin, then, since we have to die to it?" No! The law has come to give light. It is God's moral sun, shining upon the way of life, revealing all its shadows. "Sin took occasion, working through the law, to work in me every manner of evil desire." He did not know these things except under the light of the law—you must have a moral ideal before you can be conscious of sin: "without law sin is dead." If you go back far enough in your experience, you get a little child, with no consciousness of sin, no moral ideal (this is not a question of original depravity but of actual moral experience), an innocent little child with no sense of compunction, of sin or guilt. Then one day there came a "thou shalt not," and the moral sense leaped out of

its hiding place, and you were no longer a child without a moral law, you were morally responsible from that time (ver. 9). That is how Paul begins to explain the function of the law. That is where the moral law old John Bunyan writes of comes in, and slays you. If you know yourself, you know that you are "a dead man."

The Bible often uses the word "death" for being "in the grip of death," doomed to die. "So the law, which was intended to give life (if you can keep it) was found leading unto death. For sin, taking opportunity, deceived me" (10-11). "Made a fool of me" gives Paul's idea better; it lured me to heights impossible for me, to the edge of the precipice, and let me down. The moral ideal without Christ will never do any thing else than that—make a fool of you. That is the main lesson of Rom. vii., and the higher your moral ideal, the greater fool it will make of you. It made a greater fool of the Jew than of the Gentile.

"The law made a fool of me," not because the law was evil, but because I was evil. That is the foundation Paul laid. The Jews accused him of tossing aside the law as an evil thing, in order to give his own message, but Paul said No! "The law is holy" (that is why it kills me), "the commandment is holy, and just, and good." No one can extol the law more than Paul. He does not lay it aside because it is inadequate, poor, or sinful. The law is holy, like God—what more can you say about God but that He is "holy, just, and good"? Then can a good thing bring forth death? "God forbid," certainly not. "But sin, in order that it might be manifested as sin, through that which is good, wrought death in me. SIN wrought death, not the law. The law manifested the sin and brought it into the open, where it is seen at work, and its work is murder. "So that sin might be made to appear exceeding sinful"—not to be explained away by fantastic phrases. When the law puts its hand upon sin, you do not call it "indiscretion." Sin is SIN. The whole blaze of Sinai is on top of you if you call sin indiscretion. "That sin might appear in its own colours," not watered down as it is in press and pulpit to-day.

* Not revised by the Speaker.

Now we come to the upward look ! "I know that the law is spiritual," it is an attribute of God, "but I am carnal, sold as a bondsman under sin." Sin has bought me up, it is my master and owner—just as the believer has been bought by Jesus Christ and belongs to Him. I wonder men do not try to escape from one master to the other ! They would if they only knew !

"For what I do I allow not" (ver. 15)—"For I do not know what I am doing" is the literal English, but Paul did not mean that at all. The sinner always knows what he is doing. This is one of the points where a trifle of scholarship is useful. There is imported into the word "know" an old Hebrew meaning. "The Lord *knoweth* the way of the righteous"—that does not mean "know" in the English sense, for He knows the way of the wicked too ; but the Lord acknowledges, owns, knows sympathetically. "I *know* My sheep" said Jesus. In the English sense, He knows the others too, but not in this deep sense which has come into the Greek from the Hebrew.

Let us read it this way : "The things which I am doing I do not recognise as valid, I do not acknowledge in my mind, I do not mentally sympathise with, but I do them." As a man who has known the law and acknowledged it, I know that these things are not what ought to be, even while I am doing them, for "the thing that I am *not wanting to do* (for I am aiming at something else) I am doing," so, "If I do that I do not want to do, then I agree with the law that it is good." "With my moral ideals and reason I am not going that way of my own desire, but there is something dwelling in me that takes me that way. I know that there does not dwell in my flesh any good thing, for I am *able to will* that which is good, but to do it—NO ! (An emphasized negative).

Get out of your minds entirely a regenerated personality. Paul is dealing with the law of the mind and the moral ideal, and there is no mention of the power of the Cross and the Holy Spirit in the whole passage. I have seen a believer depressed, caught in a weak moment, fearful of having offended his Saviour, and of being restored to favour again, but I have never seen him give up the ghost and say "I am done for." He knows Christ has delivered him, and can deliver for he *has* the Deliverer. This man in Ch. 7 has not got the Deliverer, he is looking for Him. Rom. vii. puts its foot on the idea of this age, that man can make angels out of men by the religious ideals that are latent in them. Paul, the greatest moralist that ever lived, with the most indomitable will, tried all he could, and failed.

That is where we are. The Bible faces facts, and is never at variance with the moral consciousness of man, and Rome knew perfectly well that it is possible for man to have noble ideals, to aim at moral ends, rectitude, honesty of purpose, and yet to know nothing of Christ. There is an element in life which pollutes all the rest, hence Paul refers to himself as an object lesson, saying, "there does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh, any good thing."

But the *moral reason* is not evil. Ideals of righteousness, purity and peace, are not in themselves evil. They are good, and in accord with the Divine law, *as far as they go*. I have been a student of Greek philosophy and, next to the Bible, the most wonderful and beautiful moral visions are in the writings of Plato. To say all that is black is monstrous, but face the facts, as Paul did. He gathered up all that the Jews had of moral law, and all the Romans had of moral ideals, and said "I know all about it. Before I knew Christ I did not want to be

despicable, and wicked, No. I heard the law, and in my mind, my moral reason, I admired and loved it. I wanted to do it, I tried to do it, *but I failed*." That is when failure came in. The Bible is the sanest Book in the world.

Paul says, "It is not *me*, but sin that is in me all the while overwhelming everything else ; for I find a law" (and *by* law, in this chapter, Paul means exactly what the scientist means when he speaks of "the laws of nature," something at work all the time) "I find a working law, doing business within me, that when I want to do good, evil is right upon me"—that is a hopeless business ! "I have pleasure in the law of God, according to the inward man (his reason) but see another law in my members, leading out its army (that is a big word, not moral warring, but leading and compelling),"leading its legions against the law of my mind"

The Greek has several words for "mind," and the word here means the moral reason that tells a man it is wrong to pick another man's pocket. "Another law in my members leading its legions against my moral ideals, and taking me at the point of the sword, as a slave to the law of sin that is in my members." A living, active power in the lower life of me, leading its army against the active law of my moral ideals and taking me prisoner, a slave to the acting law of sin which is in my members, so that I cannot escape : have my moral ideals, but what is the use of them ? There is a tramp of hell's hosts within me, and I am dragged helpless at the wheels of sin.

The defeat of the moral Idealist.

That is the experience of one of the mightiest moral men that ever tried to fulfil the law of God on earth. "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me ? " Roman, with your moral ideals, look at Saul of Tarsus ! Jew, with your moral law, look at Saul of Tarsus ! Down, helpless, doomed to death, in spite of all his moral fighting, and see there a picture of yourselves—YOU ARE LIKE THAT !

Where is deliverance ? Do you realise that this wretched failure of Paul is being preached from pulpit and platform to-day as the way of success, the way of glory ? I have heard sermon after sermon over the radio, and the message has been : "Be a moralist, live up to your ideals, live for others, and you are all right. We shall have a beautiful world by and bye." Do you know the kind of world we shall have ? "I find another law in my members, leading its forces against the law of my mind, taking me as a helpless slave to the law of sin which is in my members"—Oh wretched man ! Oh wretched world ! Who shall deliver ?

If a man is a Christian at all, he is free, though he may be but a poor Christian, for Christ has set him free. When Christ has delivered you, you do not cry "Who shall deliver me ? " And Paul gives the anticipatory answer : "O," he says, "I am thanking God"—it is the present tense of continuity—"I am thanking God through Jesus Christ ! I am only talking about *what has been*—I am something different now."

Before explaining the great difference, he just sums up the Christian position and condition, the last word on the foundations before he erects the building of glory : "This is how the matter stands under the law, that although I am trying to serve the law of God, yet in fact, I am serving the law of sin, owing to the flesh." That is where the natural man stands to the end, even the greatest moral idealist who sneers at the Christian faith to-day, this is where he stands. After all is said and done, he is under condemnation, a sinner before God.

II.—“The Spirit of the Life in Christ Jesus.”

Rom. viii. 1—12.

THERE are certain things, said Dr. Joseph Parker, that “even a young man may have to learn,” and I would like to emphasise again the need of reverent simplicity in the reading and interpretation of God’s Word. Immense mischief is caused in these days, by a multiplicity of interpretations, by ingenuities which I do not profess to share. Teachers, with very superficial knowledge of the original, are cutting up verses as with a penknife, dividing those who really love the Word into a multiplicity of groups, which is very weakening to the cause of the Truth. At least nine-tenths of these divisions could be avoided by a simple, common-sense acceptance of the Word of God as it stands. The Bible is a common-sense Book. It is not a riddle (you would think it was by the way people go at it). The writers of the Bible did not write for scholars—that is why few scholars understand them! “I speak unto you,” said Paul, “as unto *little children*,” and when you know their language (you have to be scholar enough for that) then you must become as a little child to understand them. God waited for the Greek language until it was very simple, and the language of the New Testament is the language in which the children read, in the days of our Lord. The wisdom of this world has failed, so do not bring it into this matter—bring the simplicity of God’s children, who believe that He has given them a simple message, not difficult to understand. Here are a few good rules for the study of the Word of God :

(1) Do not put into it anything that is not obviously there. There is nothing about grace in Rom. vii., and if you imagine it is there, *you* have put it there! Many people have been convicted of sin who have never been converted afterwards.

(2) Never find in a phrase that which contradicts the general teaching of the Bible. If you do, the general teaching of the Word is sure to be right, and you had better revise your interpretation.

(3) Before you begin to particularise and split up, get a good general view and understanding of the meaning of God’s Word as a whole. Get the salient points first, then you will be safer as you go on to the details.

(4) Do not mistake a new emphasis for a new Gospel! This is very important in connection with this “Overcomer” testimony. Do not imagine that we have a new body of divinity because we have a great and glorious *emphasis*. The truths remain as they were—we have *underlined something*, that is all. We have not separated ourselves from the main body of believers by our emphasis upon the victory of the Cross. We have underlined, (because we think it important for Christian living, one of the great and glorious and triumphant elements of the Christian life. The rest remains as it was.

Now we will leave the great battle of the moralist, in which he is absolutely defeated. We are entering a new world! Romans viii. begins like a Hallelujah chorus. It has two connections with the previous chapter, two streams like the sources of the Thames that make up the great London river. There is a positive succession and a succession by contrast.

(1) “*There is therefore*” : That takes us back to Rom. vii. 6 :

“Now we have been set free from the law, having died to that by which we were held in bondage, so that we might serve in newness of spirit and not in the ancientness of the letter.”

“Now therefore we are free,” that is the positive succession.

As we said yesterday, we really begin our law matters at ver. 7, and Paul has not forgotten, in going through the process of legal failure, what he has been telling before that, about the liberty that has come. We are dead to the law which held us in bondage. We are out of the bondage of the “letter” into the new liberty of the spirit.

(2) Then there is a succession by contrast, because Ch. 7 is more than a digression, more than an episode, it is built into the building. We have ceased to be in bondage to the flesh, and come into the liberty of the spirit.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

That is Ch. 7 over again, and is a succession from ver. 7—a succession by contrast from the terrific failure of the law : “for what the law could not do . . . *God has done!*” The two great streams, positive and negative, flow together into the mighty shout—

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death”!

That means a thing done once and for all, not gradually. It is liberty from the law of sin and death, that is, the *law of the flesh*. The law of God is not called the “law of sin”—it reveals sin. “The law of the Spirit of life” is the new power, the working energy of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, given through Him, which liberates us from the evil working forces of sin and death that are in our flesh. That wants looking at! Turn to 2 Cor. v. 17.

“Therefore, if any man be in Christ is a new creature.” Not a few select ones, but all. “*Whoever* is in Christ Jesus, old things passed away, behold all things became new.” No man is a Christian unless that has happened : and “there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” Every soul on the face of the earth who is “in Christ” has escaped condemnation, and we are “in Christ,” however imperfect a Christian we may be, thank God. Now turn to Gal. v. 17 :

“For the flesh lusteth against the spirit—is continually pitting its desires against the spirit, and the spirit is pitting its desires against the flesh, for these are contrary (opposites) one to the other, in order that (notice the contrast) you may not do the things you are wanting to do.”

The “you” here is the man who still has temptations and carnal impulses to fight down and to destroy, *i.e.*, the man, even the Christian man, who here wants, through the flesh, to do the things the Spirit would not have him do. In Rom. 7 the will was the moral reason, and the flesh opposed that will. Here the will is the “natural man,” and the Holy Spirit is opposing that will. The desires of the flesh are still there. There is conflict, not between the moral reason and the sin in man, where moral reason is beaten ; but between God’s Spirit in the man, and the flesh in the man—and the flesh is beaten this time. You are wanting to be in the world’s limelight, and the Spirit says “No.” You are wanting to get rich quick by doubtful methods, and the Spirit says “No.” The desires are there, but this is the great difference, in the Christian life, sin is the inferior, and is being conquered as a rebel. The Holy Spirit is on the throne, and sin, the rebel, is doomed to be destroyed and exterminated in every true child of God. That is what the Bible says ; and every true child of God, in this way, cannot be defeated ; he is out of the realm of defeat.

“Since by the Spirit you are being led, you are not under law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest . . . of which I tell you now, as I have told you before, that they who

keep on doing these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. v. 18-21). You are bound to beat the flesh, or you are outside! That does not mean that you will never sin. Notice how I translated: "those who habitually do these things." It is the present tense of continuity, which we cannot always get in the English Bible.

"Those who make a practice of these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." The Christian may fall into sin, but he does not belong to it, it is not on his level. It is one thing to fall into sin through weakness, but not lose grip of Christ, and another thing to make a practice of sin. There is the pagan world, and the Jew with his letter of the law, outside. There is the professing Christian who lives in the flesh; he is outside. Let us be quite honest in the Word of God—Christendom is not Christ. Jesus made it quite clear; wheat is wheat and tares are tares, however respectable they may look, but "if any man be *in Christ* he is a new creation," and from that moment he ceases to practice the things of the flesh.

Of course, some are more successful in killing off the Diabolonians than others! We owe a great deal to John Bunyan. You remember Feeblemind, and Mr. Ready-to-halt on his crutches—he did not leave them out of the final anthem. It is a matter of degree. Every Christian must be a victor to a certain extent, and we have no right to be common-place in our victories. I have seen criticism levelled at overcoming on this ground, and I am sure it is through misunderstanding, for it does not mean that anyone, held in the arms of Christ, can suffer defeat. He may not have *magnificent* victories, but he ought to have them; there are resources unused, sins committed, negligences in life that ought not to be, a lack of fellowship with the Saviour that ought not to be. Oh, there are vast degrees of Christian victory, from the one who just manages to crawl out of the battle undefeated, to the man who enters, as Bunyan said, "and all the trumpets sounded on the other side." That is the difference.

No, we are not proclaiming defeat for any of God's people, but the possibility of higher victories, more splendid triumphs, for every one who is "in Christ," and that is worth underlining, when you see the commonplace Christians of to-day. If we could only get every real Christian to don the armour, and appropriate all the power possible to

them, we would make the world ring, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus liberate me from the law of sin and death." What are you going to do with this flesh, that is all the while leaping upon you and over-mastering you? *You* cannot do anything with it but God can. He sent His Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh—not *in* sinful flesh, O no! But in the likeness of sinful flesh, like it in all but sin, and as an offering for sin so that He was able to take sin upon Himself. He was the exact counterpart of sinful humanity, so that the sinful content of one vessel could flow into the other! So he "condemned sin in the flesh." A new, sinless, conquering flesh has come into the world, and has taken the place of the other; and as it does so, the other is executed, condemned to death. "I will come instead," He says, "and will absorb all the venom of that sinful flesh, and destroy it for ever! Then spirit, soul and body shall find an absolutely new life in Me, and a new power, by which you shall trample the flesh to atoms, by faith in Me."

That is the way of victory. Death, crucifixion all the time, but it is death that leaps into life. Unless it is death that leads into life it is valueless. The Resurrection belongs to the Cross. He died for our sins, and was raised for our justification. It is because He turned death into life, and gathers us around Him into one great associated death, that He can fill us with His risen life and make us "more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." "In order that the righteousness of the law might be completely fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The law has been satisfied in Him Who is our life. The flames of Sinai are quenched at Calvary. He has put a curse, all the condemning power of the law, in death for me, by taking upon Him my nature, and when God looks upon the believer He sees the image of His Son.

But remember, when we cease to be bondslaves to the law, we become bondslaves to the Spirit of God. Culpable negligence in the child of God does not mean exclusion from His love, but it does mean exclusion from many things of joy, of glory, in the Christian life. "He shall suffer loss but he himself shall be saved"—with the very least he can get out of the Cross of Christ! (1 Cor. iii. 12-13.)

III.—"The Vision and the Glories of Sonship."

Rom. viii. 12-25.

NOW we come to the glories of sonship. There were some threads left yesterday, that we may well gather together, as an introduction to the study of this section. For this turn back to verse 3.

"Condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteousness of the law might be completely realised (for that is the meaning of "fulfilled") in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "For those that are after the flesh, do mind (or think about) the things of the flesh, but those that are after the Spirit are thinking the things of the Spirit. For the thought of the flesh is death."

In the previous chapter "mind" means the reasoning mind, the word here means the continual thought and bent and disposition of life—what you are thinking all the while. The avaricious man thinking how to make money, the frivolous thinking how to get more frivolity—the sort of thinking that determines the continual action. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"—the "flesh-thought" by which the man is dominated. "For the flesh-thought is death, but the Spirit-thought is life and peace."

Of course it is obvious that the "flesh-thought" is hostile to God, for it is not subject to His law, and it cannot but God's law is not abolished, we have not done with the law. We have done with *the curse* of the law, with the power of the law to condemn us, but the law has to be fulfilled and that is where the life of the Spirit comes in—"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled, realised in us. Our freedom does not mean a lawless life, but the opposite we are out to completely realise the divine law. It is more to us than ever before, but we are not in bondage to it, and it cannot be used by Satan to hurt us.

"They that are in the flesh (the carnal life) cannot please God, but you are *not in the flesh*, but in the Spirit since (not the 'if' of doubt) the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Unless any man have not the Spirit of Christ; he is none of His."

There are no degrees here. There is no Christian outside the possession of the Spirit of God. And that Spirit is the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of Christ in the New Testament.

always means the Holy Spirit, it does not refer to what Christ was thinking. In a flippant way it is often said, "This man has the spirit of Christ," because he gives an extra half-penny to the boy who sells the paper! The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit by Whom you were regenerated, and your life lifted from the plane of the flesh to the plane of the Spirit, and "If any man *have not* the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ"—that is very definite.

"And since Christ is in you (an argument based upon a fact) although the body is dead on account of sin, yet the Spirit is life on account of righteousness."

That is the beginning of a connection between the carnal nature and the body. They are distinct. Of course the body in itself is not vile. The human body is a holy thing, but it has been corrupted by the carnal nature of man, and that carnal nature and its processes cannot attack anything in the believer but the body. Your *spirit* is absolute sovereign, dominant, supreme, in Christ. Our *bodies* are not yet cleansed from the taint of sin, and therefore lie under the grip of mortality—what remains of the "law of the flesh" attaches itself to, and takes revenge upon, the body. But do not trouble too much about that—"for since the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also make alive your mortal body, through His Spirit dwelling in you."

"Therefore"—I like these "therefores" of Paul, one thing follows another. The Gospel is rational, you can argue it out. There is nothing more reasonable than God Himself giving His love to those whom He can save—irrational to think anything else. It is reasonable to believe, that when Christ grips us, He can fill us with a conquering life. The man has not much intellect who doubts that. Do not listen to those who tell you that all the intelligence is on the side of the Devil! It is not. Paul was one of the greatest thinkers ever known, and he said, "Therefore brethren, we are not in debt to the flesh, to live after the flesh." We owe it no allegiance.

We have been bought out.

We were bond slaves to the flesh, and all our duty then was owing to the flesh; but now we have no obligation at all there. "If you live after the flesh you are about to die" (a common phrase in Greek talk), "but if you are all the while putting to death the practises of the body"—such is the present tense here. You cannot do it once for all, and the Bible does not say you can. It does say: "If through the Spirit *you are putting to death all the time* the practises of the body, ye shall live."

A word of warning and exhortation here. In order to do this, it is not the best way to be concentrated upon these practises of the body. The best way is to prevent them from rising, by living in, and by thinking the things of the Spirit. "If you walk in the Spirit, you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh." The Bible distinguishes between the body and the flesh in that sense, although "the flesh" is sometimes used for our natural constitution, but the tense makes it clear when that is so. "Body" is never used for the evil principle in man, but it becomes the instrument of the carnal nature, and that is how it is used in this connection.

"As many as are being led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Here we reach another mountain top). For we have not received the spirit of bondslaves, so as to fear."

We are in danger of being misled by a metaphor, but truth is always bigger than a metaphor. Even "crucified" does not express everything, nor does "putting to death." The latter sometimes means simply living in the life.

Metaphor has its limits. We are bondslaves, says Paul, but do not be troubled about being a slave, for as you open your eyes, you find that you are a "son." We are still bound to Him, and we are glad to be, but it is not a bondage that leads to fear, it is the bondage of a free servant-son. "We have received the spirit of sonship." "Adoption" it is translated, but I believe it includes both adoption of an alien into the family, and also the passing of the child into mature life. Sonship, we will call it, as it is the fullest rendering, the best understanding of the meaning of Paul—we have received the spirit of sonship, in which we are all the time saying Dadda—Abba! That word is Aramaic; a little child learning to lisp his father's name, while learning that he is a son. Such is the beauty of it.

We are sons—in the Son.

One of the greatest children in the world was the apostle Paul. All great men are children, "except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." That stands eternally true. I think it is also true, that if you are not a child, you certainly are not great, whatever else you may be. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit." So intimate have we become that we can hear the whisper from heaven. *We know*, and we call Him "Father." We feel that we are sons, there is something within us that says, Yes, you are—a voice of authority. We hear the echoes of it running through all the corridors of our life, and the music is more than the music of angels that sang over Bethlehem. We are sons because we are children. One of the astonishing fallacies of to-day, is, that Jesus came to teach the universal fatherhood of God. Of course He is the Father of all flesh, the Creator of all flesh; but they do not mean that. They mean something that is quite untrue. There is a Fatherhood of God in Jesus Christ, and that is the only Fatherhood in which he can save. They say, "God is our Father, and He will deal kindly with us." There is not an elementary intelligence in such reasoning as that. *God is holy*, the world is based on *righteousness*. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do RIGHT—even if doing right means penalising and destroying? You cannot become a child of God, in the sense of salvation, until you have the Spirit of His Son. You have to be born again, begotten of God, and because you are thus His child, He is going to make you His son in the full sense.

Paul reserves the title of son for one who has come of age to receive his inheritance. He is arguing that we are children, and since that is so, we are also heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. The earthly father has to die before he can leave his fortune to his son, but God, living in eternal glory, out of His boundless love, without suffering any loss, yea, even adding to His glory, can dower His children with the treasure of His love and grace. "Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." Think of it! Sharing God's treasures with the eternal Son of His love—"Since we are suffering with Him, in order that we may be glorified with Him"!

Are we doing this? Paul takes it for granted that we are. That is the dying daily—we are suffering for Him. "I fill out in my flesh that which is lacking of the sufferings of Christ." He suffered in order to make the kingdom, and we have to suffer in order to consummate the kingdom. You have to suffer with Him, not so much as Paul did, but in some way or other, if you are out-and-out, come life, come death, come scorn, come ostracism, come anything! It is part off the way to glory. You get your salvation free, but you have to pay for the glory! That is

where our suffering with Him comes in, that is where we win the crown.

"Since we are suffering with Him, that we may be also glorified together." O, do not shirk the fire, for it is the way to glory. We are in the region of sonship now, "for I am reckoning that the sufferings of the present season are not worthy, in comparison with the glory that is about to be revealed to us, for us, unto us, into us"—there is no English for it. It just means that we are the sons of God, the objects *now* of all of God's love, the new thing in God's Christ, the most wonderful thing that ever was. There were sons of Elohim in the Old Testament, and there were angels, but they have to take a second place now! "Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels, Thou hast crowned Him with glory and honour." In Christ our Lord we rise to a sonship of which creation never dreamed, "which things the angels desire to look into." Not angels, but sons of God, redeemed by the precious blood, belonging to the great, wonderful, brilliant assembly, the white robed throng, to which all the glories of God's creation are rolling in mighty tides.

"For the earnest expectation of the creation, is waiting expectantly for the apocalypse of the sons of God."

The creation here, of course, can only mean the material world in which we live. It cannot mean the sons of God, because they are mentioned apart. It cannot mean the evil world, because they are not going to share the glory. It cannot mean the angels, because they are not described in the creation. There is only one meaning possible, and it is

Rom. 8:16-29

IV.—"The Eternal Purpose."—Rom. viii. 26-29.

WE ended yesterday's studies with the great vision—saved in the way of hope, not in final, full consummation. Whatever of glory there is in present Christian experience, it will be far exceeded by the glory that is to come. Therefore our life is, in one respect, a Hallelujah chorus, and in the other it is a travail, a groaning. But do not groan too much! The Bible preserves the balance, we often lose it, and while we are groaning, the Holy Spirit is helping our weakness. Not that the groan is a weakness, our groaning is not deep enough.

"What we should pray for we do not know. But the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us (on our behalf) with groanings which cannot be put into words."

What we ought to pray for is *His* intercession. That which we really need, the heart of it, we do not know, says the apostle. That is a clear command not to dictate to God.

Baptize your prayers in the groaning of the Holy Spirit, and they will go up beyond all the power of human words. The thing that cannot be spoken in the language of man, is quite clear to the heart of God. "He that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, for He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God—better, "according to God." The Spirit makes intercession "according to God," not only His will, but His thought, His purpose, His nature, His attributes, His Cross, everything that is God in His relation to us. Not according to our little understanding, but "according to God!"

"And we know"—this is a book of knowledge. The scientist does not know to-day whether the law of gravity is correct, Einstein has upset all that, but here is something bigger. We Christians are the only people who do know, others are only guessing, and what we do not know we leave to God. He is the answerer and the hearer of prayer, and the Holy Spirit is the maker of all true prayer. And

this material world which God has made as the habitation for our race. All this mighty organism is groaning and suffering along with us, under a condition of mortality and corruption. Paul had the ear of a poet and a seer. "We know," he says, "that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth." We can see it is not satisfied. The thunders are complaining, the rolling years are moaning, the wind is wailing, and the flowers are withering. Something is going to happen. Jesus Christ has told us what it is—the creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. When they are glorified, this old creation will put off her mourning robes too. There shall be a new heaven and a new earth and around the glory of the sons of God, there will be a new temple worthy of the glory.

"Not only so"! There is something more—a story with out an end, a glory without an end—"But we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit, are groaning within ourselves, *waiting for the sonship*." The son is heir and he wants his estate, and he cannot begin to have his whole estate, until his corruptible body has been glorified. He is a child of glory. He does not belong to the angels, for he is higher in the scale. He belongs to the eternal Son of God. He knows he is a son, and he is waiting for the son's robe—"that is, the redemption of the body." Our robes now are ragged although we are sons of God. This corruptible body is not good enough for sons of God. The sonship is not completed, and so we are discontented—contented enough to say Hallelujah now and again, but there is another cry "Lord Jesus come quickly."

"we know that all things are working together for good along with them that love God" (ver. 28). All God's work is working, not merely *for* us, but *with* us. The stars in their courses fought for Israel! The Thunder is working for us. We do not know how, but it is. All creation is working together for us, as we are on the way to glory. They are going to be glorified by and by, as we are, and they are moving along the way of the glory of the children of God. They are giving us a hand on the way, for we know that all things are working for the great end of those who love God.

"To them that are called according to plan"! That is better than the word "purpose" here. God has His eternal plan, and we are called into it. Not all the powers of hell can prevent that plan being carried out to the full. That is victory "Whom He did foreknow"—as I have said to "know" very often means a great deal more in the Bible than the English word implies. It means some inward link that is difficult to explain, such as "I *know* my sheep," "the Lord *knoweth* the way of the righteous," and "to *know* Him and the power of His resurrection." Things have not been jumbled together emergency wise. On the great tranquil throne of the Eternal with eager eyes of love and grace, He *saw* His own! "Whom He did foreknow, those he predestinated, predetermine to be conformed to the image of His Son"! Ah! That is the great thing that follows the foreknowing, and into that we are to come, as we are "called according to plan." God has a plan, and in the carrying out of it there is something for me to do—a responsibility to His grace, and an appropriation of the forces of His grace and the power of His love, unto the image of Jesus. Thought cannot picture it. O! to be like Jesus, the chiefest among ten thousand the altogether lovely! That is our goal, *to be like Him* "that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

The word firstborn is not a usual word, but in each place where it occurs, it means the foundation, the beginning and the source of all that follows. He is "The firstborn of every created thing," i.e., He made every created thing, and every created thing has His stamp upon it. The first born from among the dead" (Col. i. 15-18): every possible resurrection from the dead, dates back to Him, has His stamp and seal upon it. So here, as the Son of God and the Son of Man, He starts the great brotherhood of the redeemed—He is the firstborn among many brethren. That is going to be a countless host, not a little remnant, at the end; "a great host which no man can number," out of all nations, and peoples and tribes and languages and tongues.

"Those whom He pre-ordained," or predetermined, or called, "He also justified, and whom He justified, those He also glorified"! That is the aorist tense, which means something done once for all. There is no continuous-ness about this tense at all. It states something done, and there it is, done yesterday, to-day or to-morrow, but it is just regarded as done, fixed by God. That is the great line, foreknown, foreordained, called, justified, glorified, and nothing can break the chain. That applies to every soul that is in the chain, and every soul must determine for himself whether he is in the chain or not. This chain is from all eternity determined, and that is the certainty of the Cross.

Paul's "Glory Song"!

Here Paul starts to sing! He has been singing all along, but his solo has become a chorus on the way. When God speaks the great visions of eternity to men, He makes them sing and speak in poetry. Sometimes even in rhyme, and that was not a characteristic of Greek poetry at all. Certain verses here actually run into rhyme, but according to all the rules of Hebrew poetry, and Paul was a Hebrew, it is a poem, beginning with the words, "What shall we say to these things? If God is on our behalf, who is there against us" (ver. 31).

"He that spared not His own Son, but freely offered Him up—handed him over—on behalf of us all, how shall He not also with Him, freely, graciously, give us all things"?

Here is a contrast. He has given us His Son already, the Son of His love, the Beloved of His heart. I say it reverently, He has bled with Him on the Cross, given the very tendrils of His heart. Do you think He will not give us the lesser things after that? We are on the line of certainty. After that it is a small matter to forgive our sins. They are cancelled on the Cross. There are some who doubt whether God can forgive them. Since He gave us His Son, sin is a detail—He wipes that out as He passes along, saying, "I will blot out thy transgressions as a thick cloud." That is done with His hand, but he had to put *His heart* on the Cross.

"Who shall accuse, or bring an accusation, against God's elect"? Now the Apostle passes to a judgment seat. Here are God's elect in the great judgment. Who is going to bring an accusation? "God is the One who is justifying"—

"God is all the while saying 'not guilty'!"

That is the meaning of it. Ever since Jesus died, over every soul that rests in the Blood, God says, like Pilate who judged the Christ, "not guilty"; I find no fault in this man, in this woman! Let the accusation come, and the Accuser! Are you afraid of Satan? I am not! "I am a poor sinner and nothing at all, but Jesus Christ is my all in all." In Christ I am *not guilty*, the Eternal God says so, and He keeps on

saying so, and no accuser dare turn up. "It is God who is justifying." The Greek word means, pronouncing completely righteous.

Another question—"Where is the judge who is going to condemn"? Is anyone appointed to condemn God's elect? Why Jesus is the Judge—there is nobody else. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Who then can condemn? You look into the face of your judge, and lo, He is your Saviour. Here is His triumphant statement—"Christ Jesus, the One that died, and rose again, and is sitting at the right hand of God, is on my side, my Advocate! My judge is my Saviour, my judge is my Advocate before the throne. Who then is going to condemn me? Satan is not the judge, he is going to be judged, and we are going to have a share in judging him: "The saints shall judge the world." The only One that can judge us is our dear Saviour. I am not afraid, I have offended, if He could be offended, many a time, but I am ready to trust His grace.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Paul is not asking in doubt or difficulty, but in order to make the music swell. He names and includes all the personal forces, such as evil spirits, or forces of evil men, (and Paul knew them all), saying, "Who shall separate us"? Of course, this means all real Christians. Some of us ought to win greater victories than we do, but "Mr. Feeble-mind" and "Mr. Ready-to-Halt" can dance at the feast! "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"—that means Christ's love for me, it is the subjective genitive, as the grammarians say. That is where I am trusting, hanging on His love to me—"Shall tribulation, or distress or persecution? Shall famine or nakedness? Or peril or sword?" Paul knew them all. Shall they separate us?

Let Paul give the answer as one who knew. Why, he says, We only just fulfil what is written—"On Thy account we are suffering death, we are being killed, all the day, accounted as sheep for the slaughter; but" (mark the great contrast, the mighty unexplainable consequence) "in all these things we are overcoming, over-conquering (it is the continuous tense) we are conquering and conquering, and more than conquering, with a good deal to spare, through Him that loved and loves and will love us." "Through" in the genitive is followed by the aorist tense, the tense of a thing done once for all. You see how exact the tenses are. Christ's love is once for all; our victory is to be repeated hour by hour, day by day; for every time we strike, through the power of Him that loved us, we will have a beaten foe—

"We are more than conquerors."

Do not make too much of your enemy. The "more than conquerors" are the continuous overcomers. Satan is a beaten foe—why make a fuss about him? You must not despise your enemy, you must be on your guard against the powers of darkness, but say "Christ" one hundred times, for every time you say Satan. Say, "Hallelujah, we are more than conquerors, get thee behind me, Satan!"

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life; nor angels nor principalities; nor things that are now [going on], nor things that shall be, nor powers; nor height nor depth nor any other created thing"—that is the order in the R.V. which is right—None of these "can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is the grand finale to say "*I am persuaded*," but it is a schoolboy translation of the Greek. It means I am certain, I have made up my mind, I have no doubt about it. Death cannot separate, for He is the Lord of death, and when I get

through death, I shall be in everlasting life with my risen Lord. "Nor Life," for life is more dangerous than death; it may be harder to live and conquer, than to die and rest. "Nor angels nor principalities"—Is it possible that any powers that are in the heavens, may by any means stand in our way? "Nor things present nor things to come, nor powers." Notice how he adds that word lest he should leave anything out—"things that are now working, things that will be working, or any powers that you cannot define, any secret forces of which man knows nothing at present." What a challenge! "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other thing." Who knows but that there may be something we have never heard of nor conceived, some vaster height, some vaster depth, some unexplored creation of which we know

nothing, that will roll upon us someday, like a comet from afar? No, nothing whatever shall be able to separate us from the love of God. It gathers up everything into this great combination—the Eternal Love of God in the Son of His love, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the final challenge and shout of victory at the end of this wonderful chapter. If you would get this music of God and eternity, you can only find it in Jesus Christ. Let us join in the shout—altogether—

"I am certain that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Amen.

Man, Nature

*God's Revelation of the Carnal Nature.**

WE have to ask ourselves to-night, at the beginning of our Conference, a question which was illuminated to me a little while ago by Dr. Northcote Deck. Although for a moment it appeared humorous, I recognised that within it there was a wonderful truth. He told us of a man who was near-sighted, but who was a great art critic, especially in respect to portrait-painting. Making his round of an exhibition of portraits, he presently stood before one frame and began to criticise most severely. First of all he criticised the artist in respect to the choice of his subject, and then he criticised the subject himself, because of his ugliness. Why was ever such a man as that put on to canvas? His wife was standing by his side and gently she pulled his arm and said, "My dear, you are standing before a looking-glass"! It reminds one of what James says about the man who beholds his natural face in a glass and then "goeth away and forgetteth what manner of man he is." My question is this: Are we here to criticise others, or are we here to have a revelation of ourselves? I was going the round of a great institution with a good man who is present at this Conference, and when we came to a certain place he opened a cupboard, and there, staring me in the face, was a skeleton. "This is our skeleton in the cupboard," he said. That made me think very much of what we may appear like in all the ugliness of our nakedness before God.

The subject that has been allotted to me has brought me much exercise of heart, because of things that have come to my own knowledge during the past year or two, and I have been reminded more and more of the Lord's own words in Matthew, where He tells His immediate followers that they are to look well to their own hearts, for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts or evil designs: murder, adultery, vice, thefts, false witness and blasphemies or slander. The Lord had no need for anyone to tell Him what was in man for He knew all men (John ii. 24-25), and now he is looking right into the depths of the human heart and He knows the awful possibilities from that source. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9). But the prophet does not stop there. He goes on to say: "I, the LORD, search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings." We may not know our own hearts but God knows them. "All things," said the apostle, "are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do." We may successfully hide ourselves from others. There is no shadow of darkness where a man may hide himself from

God. We have to be careful therefore lest we deceive ourselves. Had we not better pray as David prayed in Psalm 139? "Search me, Oh God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Now, I believe God is letting down the searchlight of His own wonderful Word during this Conference. I think we recognised that last night and again this morning in the stirring message. Are we prepared therefore to stand this scrutiny and to accept the revelation that God gives, of the iniquity of the heart of man? I am not just now thinking of any minute distinction between what we call the flesh and the soul. Such distinctions undoubtedly exist in the language of the Word; but I am thinking to-night of the Holy Spirit's unveiling of ourselves; just what we are in our humanity and its awful possibilities. I would hardly dare to take the subject I am taking to-night, but am seeing very clearly that it is possible to attend Conferences on the overcoming life, and yet be overwhelmingly overcome by the flesh and the world and the devil.

Knowledge about spiritual victory is not sufficient; there must be the actual application of it to the life by the Holy Spirit. I do not think we shall get there unless we are prepared, first of all, for the unveilings: to have some vision of ourselves as God Himself sees us. One of the most awful unveilings of the flesh is perhaps the passage in the 1st chapter of Romans, a passage we do not often look at for our own edification. We think that is relegated to paganism and to heathenism. You may say "Is it possible that such things as these could be found in the life of professing Christians to-day?" Let us see what Dr. Handley Moule says as to whether we are justified in speaking thus in a Christian conference. Having quoted the passage in Romans I, with those twenty-three dreadful things that characterise the human heart, he says,

"It will fit us to listen as those who are not sitting in judgment on paganism but standing beside the accused and sentenced, to confess that we too share the fall, and stand if we stand at all, *by grace alone*. Aye, and we shall remember that if an apostle adduced all the wrongs from the subjects of the black death of ancient morals, he would have been less merciful, if possible, over the like symptom lurking still in modern Christendom and found sometime upon its surface. We may well pray, Lord, save us! It is only by the grace of God that we shall be delivered. As Paul goes on to speak of this subject he describes with tremendous particularity the variegated symptoms of the disease, the corruption of man's heart. A disease every

*Address by Rev. J. W. Brown on Tuesday evening.

where present, everywhere deadly, limited in its manifestation by many circumstances and conditions outward or within the mind, but in itself quite unlimited in its dreadful possibilities."

Speaking about looking at the pagan, Dr. Moule says: "But just now let us withdraw from all such look outward, and calmly and in a silent hour look in. Do we, do you, do I, stand outside this chapter? Are we definitely prepared to say that the heart which we carry in our breasts, whatever our friend's heart may be, is such that under no change of circumstances could it, being what it is, conceivably develop the forms of evil branded in this passage? Ah, who that knows himself does not know that there lies in him infinitely more than he can know of possible evil? Who can understand his errors? Who has so encountered temptation in all its typical forms, that he can say with even approximate truth that he knows his own strength and his own weakness exactly as they are?"

So there is still reason why we should consider this question, that we may be awake to the dreadful possibilities that are in our own hearts. There is a place of deliverance, thank God. We shall get to that. But for the moment we are looking at the self-life. In Romans i. 29 the apostle outlines what may be found in the human heart. He speaks first of all of *unrighteousness*. Unrighteousness is an inclusive term for all manner of wickedness or that which is not honest and upright, and, seeing that honesty, in the sense of that word, enters into the ramifications of all our relationships, not only with God but with one another, we do well to examine our hearts and see if we can stand the test.

He speaks in the next place of fornication, but at the back of that word you have another sense—it means "a state of corrupted morals." We shall all agree, I am sure that immorality is growing apace and the morals of our young people to-day are very, very low. The moving pictures with their dreadful suggestiveness, and the ugly nakedness of its artistes are corrupting the moral life of our young people everywhere to-day. The growing familiarity of our young people with the nakedness of their fellows to-day is playing havoc with the morals of the people of our nation. You have the word here, for this sense of depravity is a state of corrupted morals, and when a people once begins the descent such as we have begun—well, if God does not arouse us by some mighty revival we are slipping back into paganism as quickly as we can slip back. What can we do? If you are parents, watch your children. Keep them as far as possible out of association with these things, and do not allow them to dress as many young people are dressing to-day to their shame. Don't say, "It is all very well for you as a Minister to talk like this"—I know! I am both a father and a grandfather, so I know them for two generations. I know of hours in the night in prayer for the children, in entreaty, and tears. Parents to-day are not sowing in tears, but if we do not sow in tears we shall reap in tears. If you would reap in joy the tears will have to come now.

"*Wickedness*" is the wicked acting of evil nature. "*Covetousness*"—lust, greed, or enviousness. "*Maliciousness*"—malicious disposition. Have you ever been in a church meeting? Then there is envy, jealousy, Murder! The word here is not exactly that. It is the word you get in Acts I.—"and Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter . . ." I suppose you have experienced that, some of you. It is not merely the ovate act, not merely the thing in operation, but *the motive that is moving the spirit*

to action. We say again, "Is it possible that these things can be in the heart of a professed child of God"? and everyone of us knows that it is so. We have all seen it, we have all come into touch with the thing and we know it is true.

"Debate"—what is that? Look at the back of that word and you will see that it is not exactly being in a debating class. It means the spirit of quarrelsomeness. Then there is "deceit"—*Intrigue*. How often you find that in Christian churches. "Malignity"—the "disposition for mischief." When you come to look at it, you see the whole thing working in the Christian church. Do not relegate these things to the pagan, but let us look at our own hearts. "Am I responsible for any mischief in my church"? Do not be like that poor fellow before the glass. Let us see ourselves at last as God sees us. I pray God we may not think lightly of this, for it is a serious matter, this unveiling of the natural man.

"Whisperers"—slanderers. Solomon says the whisperer separateth even friends. Oh, the "whispering" in our churches! What damage is done among the people of God! They set a certain thing in motion, and it grows, until it almost amounts to defamation. "Backbiters"—Evil speakers. You say, I have never said anything against anyone, that I would not say to their face. The fact is, you ought not to say it at all!

"All about us"!

When missionaries went to the West Indies and put the first book into the tongue of the natives (which happened to be this book of Romans), the natives clamoured around the missionary and said: Who has been telling you all about us? That is it, "*all about us*." Would not we have to say that if we read it for the first time?

Haters of God, Despiteful, Insolent, Outrageous, Proud, Boasters. Then, "Inventors of evil things." The inventive genius may be a grand asset to life but it may be a damning thing, and remember the Adversary is always ready to use you in his purposes. Do not allow him to make you one of his geniuses.

"Disobedient to parents," unfilial. Was there ever a time when we saw that more than to-day? The next word is "devoid of conscience." The apostle Paul says: "I have a conscience void of offence toward God and man." Follow Paul's teaching on the subject of conscience and you will find that there was a time when he could hail men to prison and see them put to death, and could still have a good conscience towards God. Conscience is not a safe guide unless that conscience is cleansed by the precious Blood of Christ and operated on by the Spirit of God and kept in relationship with God.

"Covenant-breakers"—people who are faithless to their word; who will promise you almost anything and yet not fulfil their promises. Much of the disappointment and much of the heartache and break in our Christian churches, especially to those who are leaders, comes along this line, that which promises much and produces so little.

"Without natural affection," callous, implacable, stubborn, constant in their enmity. I would like to give here a simple illustration, not only to show how it can be overcome in one's own heart, but how it can be overcome in others.

I had a Sunday School secretary at one time who was constant in his enmity. He always disagreed. I sat by his side one night taking a Sunday school teachers' monthly business meeting and I had written down on the agenda a

certain thing I was going to bring forward, as I thought, for the good of the school. When we came near to this item on the agenda he looked at me and said "Are you going to bring that forward?"—"I thought of doing so." "Well, if you do I shall oppose it." He always liked to be different. So I said, "All right, my friend, if that is so we can remedy the difficulty," and I drew my pencil through it. We passed through the items, down to the place where he had a proposal to bring forward for the good of the school. I pressed it and it was passed unanimously. Then he said "What about your item?" I said, "That is off." He said "Won't you bring it forward?" and I said, "Certainly not, I should not think of doing so." Then he urged that I would bring it forward, so I did, and he pushed it through and it passed unanimously!

I am going to make a confession to you. At one time, if that man had opposed my suggestion, I should have wiped the floor with him, and put that thing through willy-nilly. But the Lord has taught me the better way, so, by making a concession I got the victory and, what is better still, I have his love to this day. I could have made an enemy of him that night. That is how the message of the Cross works out. There is a place to meet the unveiling of the human heart—and that place is the Cross. You cannot meet it successfully in any other soul until Christ has met it successfully *in you*. Not until you have been to the place of death, and yourself-life has been taken out of God's way, through the Cross, will you be able to stand amidst even Christian people with any triumph.

Failure or success depends upon this!

I would say to my brethren in the ministry here to-night "What success have you met with when you have tried to handle these difficulties by your own wisdom?" I confess to you, I have made a horrible mess of things. It was not until I was brought to this Conference, thirteen or fourteen years ago, and listened to the message of Calvary and was brought by the Holy Spirit of God into some of the secrets of the overcoming life—not until I was willing to come into the position of identification with Christ in His death and burial and resurrection, that I really knew what it meant to reign in life over such situations. And now one does not wait until one comes to the place where these things are going to be manifested, but takes the victory at the throne before going on to the field.

Now I am coming to a point. Bear with me—prayerfully, patiently. I would not dare to touch this subject to-night had I not known Christian men who have fallen here—men who could preach the Message of the Cross—a mighty language, but no real experience! I say again to our young folk here, for God's sake do not go away from this Conference with a "language" only, for if ever you come into the testing you will fail as miserably as they.

In Galatians v. Paul deliberately tells us what are the works, the doings of the flesh. "Adultery," married vice; "fornication," unmarried vice; "uncleanness," morally impure; "lasciviousness," evil desire; "idolatry"—the fetish, the charm.

One of the things that appals me more than anything in connexion with the present day descent into paganism is when I see so-called Christian men and women who will put on a black cat or anything else. What does it mean? Idolatry. That you imagine that that charm can benefit you, that you hide behind that thing. Our nation is going back into idolatry as quickly as it can go. I went into one of our markets a little while ago. There was a Hindu with charms on his stall, things representing the Hindu religion, full of

corruption, and there were our English people flocking round, and buying his wares, and wearing them. There they are, walking about representing Hinduism, with all its attendant evils, in a Christian land.

"Hatred." A little while ago I had a terrible revelation of this in a great church that has stood for years for a vital witness. There came a day in that church when one set of people would walk out of one door and the other set of people would walk out of the other door. They would never meet, they would never speak, and when the Lord's Supper was administered one set would go up into the gallery and one set would sit below—in the church of God Hatred, dislike! That can only come from one place beloved—the pit. And those who were the worst sinners were "super-religious" people, who had cultivated the superiority complex to a very high degree. What they believed was "the acid test of Christianity," and yet they would walk out of one door and see to it that they never looked upon their fellows as they walked out of the other. Is it possible in a Christian church? God knows it is. I am talking about *things as they are*. We have got to face up to this. Where do we stand in relation to these things before God and before our fellows? Can it be that there is anyone in this Conference of whom it could be said, It is true! Let us look to our own hearts and see to it that it shall not be true hereafter.

Variance—dispute, disagreement, dissension. Emulations—jealousy, desires of superiority, to make oneself a rival. Does that ever come into the Christian church? We all know it does. Sedition—division. Heresies. Envy—feeling that makes us begrudge another's good fortune "Love envieth not; love is kind; love is never glad when others go wrong." That is how it should work out.

It is a dreadful unveiling, isn't it? Those are some of the lists. There are others in Eph. iv. 22; Col. iii. 5-9; Heb. xii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 1; James i. 21 (that word always arrests me—"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness . . ."). Then you come to Jude—what a list there. We have not time to look at it. They have "Gone in the way of Cain." What is the way of Cain. Going back to *natural religion*. Many people will tell you to-day when it comes to a beautiful Sunday, "I am going out to worship God in nature." Cain tried to do that. That is how things work out. If these things were not in the Word of God one would be afraid to say them.

The Place of Victory.

But there is a way out, thank God, arising out of the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus Christ. You and I by God's grace may be brought to a place in Christ where we may reckon ourselves to be "dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi.) where we may say afresh with Paul "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii. 20); that is the only place to get rid of the outworkings of the old fallen nature, and bring it to the place of death. This is the only safe place to live in—to live with your "life hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3). What a position! You and I are no match for the Devil, for sin for the world, or the flesh, but the Lord Jesus Christ by His wonderful death on Calvary dealt with them all; and as you and I are identified with Him in all that Calvary means, that is the place where the carnal life is rendered inoperative, and where all the evil purposes of the Devil are defeated. Thank God! If it were not for *that* we should lose heart, for "the wages of sin is death"—"but if ye through the Spirit do make to die the doings of the body *ye shall live*."

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The last issue contained a translation of "The Cry of the Church in the Last Days," by Mrs. Penn-Lewis (from the January number of *The Overcomer*), a chapter from "Face to Face," and other helpful matter.

"*Le Vainqueur*" and many of our books (including The Memoir of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, "The Cross of Calvary," "Soul and Spirit," "Thy Hidden Ones," "The Leading of the Lord," "War on the Saints," etc., etc.), may be obtained in French from the Overcomer Book Room, or from Madame Brunel direct. Please note her new address: "La Source," Boisset-Anduze (Gard), France.

SWEDEN.

"*Korsets Budskap*," a little magazine which had its genesis in one of our Swanwick Conferences, a number of years ago, continues to publish translations from "*The Overcomer*," and the April, 1934 issue contains an article on Romans vi., one on the Holy Spirit, and "Gleanings from Question Hours," all by Mrs. Penn-Lewis. "*Korsets Budskap*" is to be obtained from: Mr. Gustaf Fredberg, 21 Tradsgatan, Alingsas, Sweden.

MEXICO.

The Spanish "*Overcomer*" (*El Vencedor*), No. 27, consists entirely of the article by Rev. R. B. Jones, "*Two Thrones at War*." This vital message, the last given from our platform before the Lord called His servant to Himself, has now gone forth in many thousands of copies, in several languages, and is still being used of God in a remarkable way for the opening of the eyes of His children to the subtle devices and disguises of the adversary in these last days.

For the sake of our readers working in Spanish speaking lands, we give the address from which this Overcomer literature in Spanish may be obtained: Mr. A. B. de Roos, Latin-American Prayer Fellowship, Plaza de San Francisco 167, Patzcuaro, Michoacan, Mexico.

"The Overcomer."

We are often asked by our "helpers together by prayer" to give them more news of the ministry of *The Overcomer* and the way in which God is using it. They will be glad to know that our "Missionary" mailing list is constantly growing, and very encouraging are the letters that come from these servants of God in the "front line trenches." As a reader in California, sending names of Missionaries in S. America for the list, writes:

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While numbers of Missionaries send gifts much beyond the cost of their own copies (gifts which are very sacred to us, and surely very precious to the Lord), the magazine is sent freely to a very long list of those who would be unable to receive it except for the free-will offerings of our readers in the "home lands." So we thank God for those of His faithful stewards, who send both names of their missionary friends, and contributions toward the cost of the paper.

"It sends one to the Word," writes another. "I cannot find words to express what the '*Overcomer*' has been to me, in sickness and temptation, and distresses; at all times it is of help because it is all based on the pure Word of God . . ."

We scarcely need to tell our readers that the circulation of all our literature is contested in many and subtle ways by the adversary, for through the reading of it many have been delivered from his deceptions and wiles. We therefore earnestly ask all who know the warfare described in Ephes. vi. to "*pray it out*" to all who need the message, and to "*pray it in*," i.e., that all who read may have the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the Word of God, as they read.

Donations for this Literature Extension Work may be sent to the offices of "*The Overcomer*," marked "France," "Mexico," or "Free Distribution," as the case may be. All remittances should be made payable to The Overcomer Literature Trust. (Money Orders ONLY payable at Westbourne Post Office, Bournemouth.)

Volume
xv.

October
A.D. 1934

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THE OVERCOMER.

FOUNDED BY MRS. PENN-LEWIS, 1909.

Issued by the Council of the Overcomer Literature Trust.

EDITOR : M. N. GARRARD.

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TERMS OF ISSUE.

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A Prayer Meeting is also held on the Friday following the Monthly Conference, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on the Third Wednesday of the month, from 2.30 to 5 p.m. These are held in The Prayer Room, 4 Eccleston Place, S.W.1.

DATES OF MEETINGS.

- Oct. 4—Monthly Conference (Rev. John Thomas, M.A.).
" 5—Prayer Meeting (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.).
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Nov. 6. Meetings 2.45 (for Women) and 7.30 (General). Speaker Miss E. M. Leathes. Full particulars from :—Rev. G. Forbes Will St. Paul's Rectory, Fleetwood.

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Oct. 30-31. Gordon Hall (large hall). Meetings 3.30 and 7.30 p. each day. Speakers : Miss E. M. Leathes and Rev. W. H. Thomassc and Rev. W. E. Dalling. (Tea and Question Hour.)

Enquiries : Mrs. Crewe, 34 Greenbank Road, Sefton Park. Please *not* new address.

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Oct. 24. In the School Hall, Polygon Baptist Church. Afternoon 4 p.m. followed by Tea 5.30, and Question Hour. Evening meeting, 7.1 Speaker : Rev. W. E. Dalling, M.A.

Note.—We are glad also to call attention to the following meetings of prayer and fellowship arranged by some of our readers, who are asked to meet the need in their own districts.

Birmingham : Bible Witness Fellowship; "Kelvedon," Frederic Road, Wyde Green. Every Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle : Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Meeting, Second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff : Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m., No. 2 Room Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station). In charge of Miss Millett, Supt. C.A.W.G. Newlands Street, Barry.

Isleworth : Meetings in abeyance until further notice, except Quarterly Missionary Prayer Conference, Oct. 29th, at 7.45 p.m. in St. Luke's Mission, Kingsley Road, Hounslow. Speaker : Miss M. Titterton (Ceylon Evangelistic and Medical Band).

Enquiries : Miss Gravatt, London House, St. John's Road, Isleworth

Liverpool : Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday at 3 p.m. at 55 Granby Street, Princess Park.

Isle of Wight : Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m., at 42 Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Leicester : Weekly Prayer Meeting, Tuesday at 3.30, 14 Greenhill Road, Clarendon Park.

Manchester : Prayer Meeting second Monday each month, 7 p.m. in Room 13, Albert Hall, Peter Street.

Enquiries : Mr. Norton Repton, Overstrand, Sagar's Road, Handforth, Manchester.

Muswell Hill : Prayer Meeting every Tuesday, at 35 Muswell Avenue, 3.30 p.m.

Stamford Hill : Prayer meeting every Tuesday, 72 Darent Road, 3 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Suckling.

"Le Vainqueur." (The "Overcomer.")

A 16-page paper issued occasionally, as funds permit, consisting of articles from "The Overcomer," translated into French. Edited and issued free by Madame Brunel, "La Source," Boisset par Anduze, (Gard), France.

Miss Cope, 19 Dalmeny Crescent, Heath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, acts as Treasurer for Mme. Brunel. She will gladly send a copy of "Le Vainqueur" upon application.

DO NOT PASS THIS COPY of "The Overcomer" on to another, until you have thoroughly, and prayerfully, read it.

"Turn all you read into prayer."—Ephes. vi. 18.

THE OVERCOMER.

Mountain Vision.

Vision

"MOUNTAIN Vision"! Oh, how the Church needs it. "Come with Me, and look from the top," said the Bridegroom in Cant. iv. 8. He had brought the soul into the banqueting-house, and very much had taken place in her spiritual history ere He called her His spouse, and invited her to look with Him, in oneness of vision, from His place on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Nay, on the whole, the Church cannot, because her sight is dimmed with things of earth, and she has not learned in experience, her union with the glorified Lord in His place on the throne. She has not learnt to look out with Him from the standpoint of God, at the world which He has redeemed—to look out from the place of power at the "lions' dens," suggestive of the lion of hell and the host of darkness that fulfil his behests.

Oh, Church of God, listen to the Beloved's call. Come, look from the top, and see the battlefield unveiled. See the Man with the pierced hands, the crowned Saviour, waiting, "expecting," till His enemies be made His footstool, and He obtains His inheritance in the saints.

"Look from the top."

Looking "from the top," what do we see to-day? Signs on every hand of the preparation of the Church for the "appearing" of her Lord; a cry after God in the hearts of His *spiritual* children, deep, and true, and strong—an intense deepening cry after reality and God; a deep, strong under-current movement of the Holy Ghost, so deep, that it is not always easy to be discerned.

The Holy Spirit is rapidly preparing the true Church for her Lord. Evangelists tell us they cannot gather in the unsaved as they once did; their meetings are, more or less, filled with professing Christians. It is well to remind ourselves of the "dearth of conversions." It is well that there should be heart-searching and humiliation on the part of the Church; nevertheless, it remains true that the hand of God is upon His people, preparing His own channels for the coming life-tide of the Holy Ghost, which shall close this dispensation, and complete the preparation of the Church to receive her Lord.

* * *

Looking "from the top" into the camp of the enemy, side by side with all this we see tremendous activity in the hosts of darkness. Every inch of the ground is being contested. Every device of the enemy of souls is being exerted to delay the consummation of the redemption wrought out on Calvary.

The Word of God is assailed by professing Christians. The Atonement of Christ is questioned and denied. The life of Christ is preached as a beautiful pattern for poor fallen humanity, with no "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" breathed in by the Holy Ghost to make it possible. Doctrines of demons, manifested in Theosophy, Spiritism and other cults, abound for those who can be attracted thereby, whilst for God's own

children the "wiles" of the devil are multiplied on every hand.

When all these devices are laid bare, they will be found to be directed against two points: The rendering null of—

(1) The Word of God (the sword of the Spirit, the only weapon which Satan dreads).

(2) The Blood of the Lamb (the only power to conquer and destroy the works of the devil).

Perilous days truly, but all who keep to the written Word, and learn to know the power of the Blood of the Cross, will find themselves led safely over all the pitfalls, through all the devices of the hosts of darkness, safe to the Father's home.

* * *

Looking "from the top" at these two sides of the unseen battlefield, what of the world?

"As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be . . . eating and drinking . . . until the day," etc. (Matt. xxiv. 37-38).

The world goes on its way, whilst tremendous issues are being wrought out in secret. Slowly, but surely, events are moving towards the close of this dispensation. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 19).

And what of the individual believer?

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Rom. xiii. 12).

Looking "from the top" we shall fear and shrink from every touch of "creaturely activity" in speaking, writing, doing. If we are to be channels for the pure river of the Water of Life, we shall need to take time, and wait in deep stillness before God. There must be depths to give forth from the depths; only so can we meet the depths in others, and cause the healing of the springs. It is not a mental acceptance of divine things that souls need, but that the depth of God working in us, may touch the spring of their beings, and work mightily in them (2 Cor. xiii. 3) by the going forth of God, through all our service. We need to fear the activity of the flesh in these days, when the whole atmosphere of the Christian world tends to hurry us along with it. Let us in newness of life learn to wait, and wait, and wait before God, until God shall speak through voice, and pen, and life, utterly stilled of all self-originated movement; then souls shall be met by God Himself, according to the promise of the outflow of "rivers of living water." *Selected.*

HERE is love, vast as the ocean,
Loving kindness as the flood;
When the Prince of Life, our Ransom
Shed for us His precious Blood.
Who His love will not remember?
Who can cease to sing His praise?
He can never be forgotten
Through Heaven's everlasting days.

Songs of the Heavenly Life (new edition).

A Word to our Readers.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

The frequent opportunities enjoyed in recent years, of meeting with our brethren in many parts of the world, has been a privilege for which I am deeply grateful. I am grateful to have shared the preciousness of the Lord with those of like faith but different race. Often such sharing can only be expressed by smiling words that are not understood, and the light in the eye that speaks of joy within.

Once again I have returned humbled by the selfless devotion of many missionary friends; a devotion often displayed in the face of bitter disappointment and difficulty. Their fellowship has been a joy and their example an inspiration. The more intimately we share the lives and problems of our comrades abroad, the more clearly it appears that their problems and ours are essentially the same. Front trench fighting is not confined to the foreign field: our front line circles the globe. Conditions may differ, but we have the same deadly foe against us, the same human nature to deal with—in ourselves as well as others—above all we have the same Lord with us.

Christian intercourse with honoured men and women of very different training from our own has made one value the more the things for which we stand. I believe God has given us a great responsibility as members of this Testimony, in entrusting us with "The Overcomer" and its literature. These are truths woefully needed to-day. Souls are bound for lack of them, hindered in service, and bewildered in outlook. Alas, our powers of commending truth to others are not measured by our own conviction of its value. May the Holy Spirit direct us as we speak of these deep things to others, and save us from raising opposition by obtruding ourselves!

When we consider the conscientious effort involved in Christian work at home and abroad, the daily and weekly ministry of the Churches, as well as the individual witness of countless Evangelists and their helpers, in Missions and in the open air, is it not amazing that the visible results should be so disappointing? Add to this the weight of influence for God which His true children exert upon those around them in the daily course of life; does it not seem grievous that the results appear so small? The point may even arrive where the listener seems convicted, yet no definite decision follows. How often might we echo the words of the first disciples, "Master, we have toiled all night, and have caught nothing."

At such times, we look up to the Great Shepherd of the sheep, with the question upon our lips, "Lord, why . . . ?" That question must be honestly faced in His Presence. Have we wilfully failed in obedience: in fidelity: have we, who deal with holy things, not ourselves been cleansed by the fire that comes from off the altar? That fire still avails: the Divine answer to our insufficiency and unworthiness is still, "Lo this hath touched thy lips and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Only with that blessed assurance can we still say, "Here am I, send me."

Facing the future of our service, I desire to comfort your heart and my own with the remembrance that the Lord Himself is the Seeker of lost sheep. The

wandering and them that are out of the way are His first care: He goes on with the seeking long after our contact has passed, using, it may be, other ministers of His that do His pleasure. The Shepherd goes after that which is lost "until He find it."

Our concern, therefore, as workers together with Him, lies in being at His disposal, to speak the word in His Name which He shall give us. "The angel of the Lord said unto Philip, Arise and go . . . and he arose and went." God save us from failure to hear the angel, as well as failure to obey the call: from the tragic omission of silence when our Lord bids us speak, as from that most disastrous of blunders—the word which is from ourselves alone.

Commending you to Him Who still says "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Yours in that grace,

Parkstone,

September, 1934.

God

BERNARD W. MATTHEWS.

The Faithfulness of God.

WANT of trust is at the root of almost all our sins and all our weaknesses; and how shall we escape it but by looking to Him and observing His faithfulness? . . . The man who holds God's faithfulness will not be foolhardy or reckless, but he will be ready for every emergency. The man who holds God's faithfulness will dare to obey Him, however impolitic it may appear. Abraham held God's faithfulness and offered up Isaac, "accounting that God was able to raise him from the dead." Moses held God's faithfulness and led the millions of Israel into the waste, howling wilderness. Joshua knew Israel well, and was ignorant neither of the fortifications of the Canaanites nor of their martial prowess, but he held God's faithfulness and led Israel across the Jordan . . . The apostles held God's faithfulness, and were not daunted by the hatred of the Jews or the hostility of the heathen. . . . "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell" of those who, holding God's faithfulness, had faith, and by it "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises . . . out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

Satan, too, has his creed: Doubt God's faithfulness. "Hath God said? Are you not mistaken as to His commands? He could not really mean just that. You take an extreme view, give too literal a meaning to the words." . . . How constantly, and, alas, how successfully are such arguments used to prevent whole-hearted trust in God, whole-hearted consecration to God! . . . How many estimate difficulties in the light of their own resources, and thus attempt little and often fail in the little they attempt! All God's giants have been weak men, who did great things for God because they reckoned on His being with them. . . .

O beloved friends, if there is a living God, faithful and true, let us hold His faithfulness. . . . Holding His faithfulness, we may face with calm and sober but confident assurance of victory every difficulty and danger; we may count on grace for the work, on pecuniary aid, on needful facilities, and on ultimate success. Let us not give Him a partial trust, but daily, hourly serve Him, counting on *His faithfulness*.

—J. Hudson Taylor.

The Prize of the Throne.

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

"**H**E THAT OVERCOMETH, I WILL GIVE TO HIM TO SIT DOWN WITH ME IN MY THRONE, AS I ALSO OVERCAME, AND SAT DOWN WITH MY FATHER IN HIS THRONE" (Rev. iii. 21).

These words were spoken directly by the Ascended Christ, and they describe the climax reward for all who will fulfil the conditions for obtaining it. Many may ask why we should go forward in ceaseless conflict and warfare with the forces of evil. It is for the PRIZE OF THE THRONE. In His messages to the churches the Lord clearly holds out to all the incentive of reward. Paul's writings are full of reference to "reward," to all who will fulfil the conditions.

Christ is not yet seated on His own throne. At His ascension God said to Him, "Sit Thou on MY RIGHT HAND until . . ." (Heb. i. 13). He is "seated on the RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH" (see Heb. i. 3; viii. 1; Acts ii. 34, 35; Heb. x. 12, and xii. 2) waiting for the time when He will have His Throne, and those who are to share it with Him.

The throne for the *overcomers*! Is it possible? Are they to share the *throne* of the Son of God? We can see now why, as we pass through the closing days of the age, there must be such terrible conflict, and why the prince of darkness will challenge every child of God who wants to "overcome." It is the final testing and training of all who are to share the throne, and to rule and reign with Christ.

Now what is the throne which awaits our Ascended Lord? It is the millennial throne of reigning and ruling the kingdoms of the world. After it is given to Him, the voice from heaven said: "The kingdoms of this world ARE become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15). This throne God promised to Him, when far back in the ages of eternity He was "appointed to be heir of all things" (Heb. i. 2). This is foreshadowed in Daniel vii. 13, 14.

Then the millennial throne of Christ is to be shared with others on certain conditions, by the gift of Christ Himself. "I will *give* to him to sit with Me." Paul refers to this heir-ship in his unfolding of the work of the Holy Spirit in Rom. viii. "Joint-heirs with Christ . . . if so be that we suffer with Him" (Rom. viii. 17). This is foreshadowed in Daniel vii. 22-27, where it says, "the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." The fact that Christ's coming throne is to be shared by overcomers, who are appointed by the Father to be "joint-heirs" with Him, who was "appointed heir of *all things*," is therefore quite clear.

Glimpses are to be found, too, into the future time when the Christ, and those who are to share the throne with Him, will reign. Paul said: "Know ye not that the saints shall *judge the world*?" "Know ye not that we shall *judge angels*?" (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3). What angels? Certainly not the unfallen ones. The explanation will be found in 2 Peter ii. 4. "The angels which kept not their first estate . . . judged." These fallen angels—Satan and his hierarchy of evil powers—are to be judged by those who reign with Christ on His throne. In brief, they who are "overcomers"—those who overcome the world and Satan *now* will be the "judges" of the fallen hosts of evil, when these over-

coming ones are "glorified together" with Christ upon His throne.

The obtaining of the prize of this "high calling" of sharing the Throne with Christ, was the incentive which urged Paul on to count all things loss to obtain it, and to be willing to be made conformable to the death of Christ as the primary means for reaching such an end (see Phil. iii. 10-14); for each believer who reaches the prize of the throne, goes by way of the Cross in the path of the ascended Lord. "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection . . . being made conformable to His death, if by any means I may attain to the *resurrection* from among the dead" wrote Paul. In Greek it means the resurrection "out from among the dead." A little later in this same chapter, Paul says "I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

"If" . . . "If" . . . "If."

Notice the word "if" which Paul uses, "If by any means I may attain . . ." "If." Paul was perfectly sure of his eternal salvation as a free gift from God, through the finished work of Christ. Rom. iv. 4, Rom. vi. 23, and many other passages make this clear, but he again and again refers to a "Prize" which even he could not be sure of, unless he pressed on to fulfil the conditions for obtaining it. In Rom. viii. 17, the same "if" comes in again in connection with the same subject; "joint-heirs with Christ *if* so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also GLORIFIED with Him." Again 2 Tim. ii. 12, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." We shall be "joint-heirs with Christ," and be "glorified" with Him, when He is given the millennial throne of visibly ruling over the kingdoms of the world, *if* we are willing for the path He trod. He obtained eternal life as a free gift for all who will believe on Him; but for His new government over the world when it has been re-taken from the hand of the enemy, He must have those who will have gone through the same "made perfect through sufferings" that gave Him the throne.

What is in the balance, therefore, for every believer in the present warfare with Satan, which must intensify as the age closes, is the millennial crown and throne. The question for each is, how to hold fast all spiritual victory hitherto obtained, that we do not lose the crown; for we must expect that Satan will challenge every one he sees moving on to the throne, where, with Christ, he will "judge angels." In brief, he contests the future judges of the evil hosts of darkness when he contests and hinders those, who like Paul, press on toward the goal.

Now consider the qualification for obtaining the prize of the throne. The Ascended Lord gives it in the words, "*He that overcometh will I give*"—a personal gift—"to sit with Me"—a personal sharing with Him—"ON MY THRONE"—Christ's own throne open to the overcomer—"EVEN AS I OVERCAME." Here is the qualification, and the path made clear.

The question resolves itself into: How did Christ overcome? If we carefully consider it, we shall find that Christ's overcoming had mainly to do with the world and Satan. It was not a question of victory over

SIN. The "overcoming" which is the qualification for sharing Christ's throne is not merely victory over sin, although that is included in it; for victory over sin is set forth in the Scriptures as the normal life of any child of God, and not as the full goal of the overcomer.

Christ's overcoming had to do with Satan and the world. He overcame Satan in the wilderness, and on the eve of His Cross He said to His disciples, "in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD." He had overcome the world, and Satan, but He dealt with SIN on the Cross of Calvary.

Let me make this clear. We must come back again to the fundamental basis of Rom. vi. as the very foundation of the Christian life, where Paul said, "We who DIED TO SIN, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Rom. vi. 2.) The believer is never told to "overcome sin," but to reckon, on the ground of death with Christ, that he is DEAD to it. On this ground of death, he is told not to "LET" sin reign in his life. In brief, it is to be dealt with by the attitude of death, not by "overcoming" (see Col. iii. 5, R.V.m., Gal. v. 24, Ephes. iv. 22). The language about sin, and the works of the flesh, is consistently "Put off," "put away," "put to death," "reckon yourselves dead indeed," "let not sin reign." The attitude to sin is the attitude of separation by death. "We who *died* to sin, HOW shall we any longer live therein?"

"He that overcometh shall sit with Me in My Throne," therefore means more than personal victory over known sin. The epistle written by the Apostle who transmitted Christ's messages to the Churches recorded in the Apocalypse, strikingly makes this clear. There are two passages about the meaning of the call to overcome, which, read as from the pen of the same writer, throw much light on Rev. iii. 21. The one speaks of overcoming the world, and the other of overcoming Satan. The question of *victory over sin* seems to be settled according to 1 John iii. 9, where the Apostle says that those who are "begotten of God"—*i.e.*, having His own life in them—do not *practise sin* as a habit. No man with God's life in him *can* settle down to a life of perpetual sinning, it is morally impossible, but John says he *may* sin, and God makes provision for it as seen in 1 John ii. 1, 2, where the "IF" is clear.

The believer therefore is not to be spending his whole life in getting victory over sin, but understanding his position as having died to sin, he is to overcome the world, and Satan.

"Whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (1 John v. 4). "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" This speaks entirely about overcoming the "world." It does not say "whatsoever is born of God overcometh *sin*, and this is the victory that overcometh *sin*, even our faith!" In all the epistles, of John and Peter and Paul, the true position of a Christian is described as in the attitude of death with Christ, reckoning himself dead to sin, and then in the strength of the imparted life of God—begotten of God—he is to overcome the world, and overcome Satan. Satan may deceive you if this is not clear. He knows that you cannot be "overcomers" of the world and his evil hosts, if he can keep you revolving around

yourself in getting victory over your "temper," and other personal aspects of known sin. What is it, then to overcome the world?

It means conquering your circumstances, and never going "under" them; conquering your environment and not being affected by it; conquering everything that would drag you down. It means that this "victory" that "overcometh the world" is the result of faith that lays hold of the Living Christ who is the Son of God, and in the power of His might and the strength of His Spirit, overcomes environment, and everything that is "in the world"—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain-glory of life (1 John ii. 16)—overcomes the fascinations of the world, the world spirit, and all that the world mean as opposed to the Father. It means the overcoming of the opposition to God in your home; the world's atmosphere in your church; the talk of the world; the trials of the world; yea, everything that belongs to "this present evil world."

Are you an overcomer in all the things round about you? Are you conquering everything with an indomitable faith in the living Christ? I do not say, *Are you changing everything!* You cannot alter things around you, until they cease to affect your victory spirit. Overcoming the world means that you do not need any props whatsoever; that all your faith is so rooted in the living Christ, that you do not require anyone, or anything, to help you *to stand!*

When God tells you to doubt!

The second passage about overcoming, in John's epistle, clearly brings out the overcoming of Satan. This is in 1 John iv., and you need to read the whole passage, vv. 1-6, to see its force. The believer is to overcome the visible world, and things of the world and the things in the *invisible* world also. The apostle writes: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but PROVE THE SPIRITS . . ." This has to do with the spiritual world. "Prove the spirits." But how can I do this you say? You can, at least, do the first thing: "BELIEVE NOT *every* 'spirit' . . ." You can keep an attitude of neutrality to all things from the spiritual world until you are *sure* they are from God, instead of keeping yourself open to everything, in the fear of rejecting what may be of God. When God tells you to doubt, it is necessary to do so. You are bidden to doubt until you have *proved*. Then will God be grieved if you do so?

"Because many *false prophets* are gone out into the world." These "spirits" then are spirits that speak and teach through men, according to 1 Tim. iv. 1-4. How shall I "prove" such "spirits," for I can only see *men*, you say? The apostle makes it clear. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God, and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus, is not of God; and this is the *spirit of the anti-Christ*, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already . . ."

Then we reach the verse about overcoming: "YE ARE OF GOD, little children, and HAVE OVERCOME THEM; because GREATER IS HE THAT IS IN YOU THAN HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD." Notice the personal pronouns: "HE" that is in you, against "HE" that is in the world. In the overcoming of the world, and the things of the world, the FAITH of the overcomer is the

principal factor—faith laying hold of a Living Christ. But in the fight against Satan, the factor is essentially spirit, for the conflict is spiritual. The Spirit of God in the spirit of the believer against the spirit of Satan in the world, penetrating, and permeating the world.

The spirit of anti-Christ which the believers of John's time were told would be coming in the last days—deceiving spirits with *doctrines* to deceive—had even begun in John's time, according to the messages to the churches written by him. It was "in the world already" then, but it would reach its climax at the end, when the overcomers would be in the last great hour of testing for the prize of the Throne.

He who would overcome must try the "spirits" to-day, until they are proved to be of God; he must "believe not every spirit," teaching through the mouths of men, however good they may be, without proving the origin of the teaching, by its attitude to the Lord Jesus Christ. The spirit that is of Satan is ANTI-CHRIST, *i.e.*, *against Christ*, and the test given by the Apostle (without going fully into it now) is manifestly connected with truth about our Saviour; for in the most subtle way evil spirits can instigate "teaching" about "Jesus" which practically annuls (see R.V. margin) Him and His work. They can preach "another Jesus" (2 Cor. xi. 4) than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is our Saviour and Lord. Beautiful teaching, and sacred sentiments called "Christian," may wholly eliminate the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and be used to cover an annulling of Jesus Christ as the Substitute for sinners, and the Calvary Conqueror of Satan. They who would overcome the spirit of Anti-Christ which is at work in the world, must test all teaching by the *written Word*.

This is only one of the many ways in which Satan must be overcome in the last hour of the dispensation. The FACT OF THIS WARFARE is the primary point I wish to impress upon you. The great fight of the overcomers, at the close of the age is against the *works* of the devil in the world, and against Satan himself as the spirit that now worketh behind, and in, and through the world. If you were in accord with the spirit of anti-Christ, and the spirit of the world, there would be no fight; but the very fact that you have your eyes opened to the victory of Calvary, means that Satan challenges you, and will stir up all the resources he has in the world against you. We are told that the condition at the end will "wax worse and worse," men "deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. iii. 13), and many true children of God, for lack of knowledge will become unconscious instruments for Satan to use in the day of his power (see Matt. xxiv. 10).

Notice again that in qualifying for the prize, each believer must stand *alone*. It is "HE that overcometh." Each future ruler with Christ must have individual preparation and training, and his environment and Satan's attacks upon him will be specially permitted and weighed by Christ (1 Cor. x. 13) to bring about the required results. Each "heir" to a vast estate must be carefully trained according to his capabilities and sphere (Gal. iv. 1-2). There may be only one placed by the Head of the Church where "Satan's seat" is, but he must "overcome" or lose his crown (Rev. ii. 13). He must not look for a second to "overcome" with him, for "one receiveth the prize" (1 Cor. ix. 24). He alone, must alone qualify for the throne,

by a faith developed by trial (1 Pet. i. 7), and a triumph over Satan because of the Spirit of God in him as the sufficient power.

Let us look for a moment at Rev. xii. 1-12, and see the last hour of the believers made ready for sharing the millennial throne. Verse 5 depicts the overcomers prepared for the destined throne, even as Christ overcame and sat down with His Father in His throne. Here we see the dragon's attitude toward the souls who have overcome, and who will share the throne with Christ, and take part with Him in His work of judging the world, and the fallen angels. (See also Rev. ii. 26-27.)

We find at the crisis hour, the "great red dragon" erect and ready to devour the overcomers, as they emerge into the sphere between earth and heaven, on the ascension road to the throne; joining their conquering Lord, to share with Him the final carrying out of the Calvary judgment upon him.

Notice, too, that the conflict in heaven between the Archangel Michael and his hosts of light, and Satan and his fallen angels, apparently is over the translation of the throne-sharers. But it results in the casting down of the accuser. "Satan and his angels were cast down to the earth," and then the seer heard "a great voice in heaven saying, Now is come . . . the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ; for the accuser . . . is cast down . . ."

The part of the overcomers in the conflict is given in Rev. xii. 11. They are in *direct personal conflict* with Satan now, not only with his works, for they "overcame HIM because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death."

From this point let us take one glimpse into the future, and in Rev. xvii. 14 see Christ and the overcomers with Him carrying out the judgment; the Heir and the joint-heirs. In Rev. xvii. Christ is carrying out terrible things on His enemies who "war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall OVERCOME them, for He is the Lord of lords and King of kings; and THEY ALSO SHALL OVERCOME WHO ARE WITH HIM, called, and chosen, and faithful." The saints shall judge the world, the saints shall share in judgment. They will appear before the judgment seat, first to be judged themselves (2 Cor. v. 10), and then they who are given to share Christ's throne, "the called and the chosen and the faithful," will be with Him in His dealing with the world.

"Hold fast . . . that no man take thy crown."

You may say: Ever since I began to testify to Satan's defeat at Calvary, and to pray against him, he has been attacking me. That is because he sees the prize before you. He is attacking those who will judge the fallen angels if they obtain the prize of the throne. Will you not then hold fast your crown? How are you to do it? Just with a steady, unswerving aim to BE TRUE TO CHRIST, AND TO THE LIGHT HE HAS GIVEN YOU at all costs. Say to yourself, "The Lord is training me for the throne." Say again and again: "GREATER IS HE THAT IS IN ME than he that is in the world." "Hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown." For every bit of the conflict there will be the gain. So Paul said, "The sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

The Lord's Overcomers.

By Dr. A. T. Pierson.*

THE Battle of the Ages is upon us. The Word of God warns us that the Last Days are to be times of peril and of conflict, when God will have need of warriors to fight the good fight of faith. The one overwhelming impression that the present aspect of modern missions has produced upon my own mind, after forty years of the careful study of missions at large, is that of combined and desperate opposition; that the powers of earth and hell are arrayed against CHRIST and His Gospel, determined to defeat the project and purpose of a world's evangelisation; and that consequently nothing is so necessary, in a true missionary of the Cross, as to know and wield the secrets of the overcoming life.

The book of the Revelation—the last in the Word of God—resounds, from beginning to end, with the tramp of contending hosts and the noise of battle—the signs of a conflict with colossal foes, on a gigantic scale—a fight with all hostile powers, human and demonic, combined. There is more frequent portrayal of such battle scenes in the Apocalypse than in any other book in the Bible, but there is also more about “overcoming” than in any other.

The word “overcome” occurs thirteen times, and always at critical points in that final and wonderful prophetic vision. In the second and third chapters alone it is found eight times—in fact, at the conclusion of every one of the epistles to the seven churches. Then, again, in Ch. xii. 11, where the great conflict is depicted with the Arch-Adversary, the Accuser of the brethren, he is represented as overcome by the Saints, overcome “by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony,” and by their absolute self-oblivion, in that “they loved not their lives even unto the death.” Then again, in Ch. xvii. 14, we have another vision of conflict—in this case a tremendous battle with the ten kings, that give their support to the beast; they are overcome by the Lamb; and we are significantly told that “they that are with Him”—His companions in fight—are called, and chosen, and faithful.”

Looking at these three instances in which conflict and victory are put so prominently before us in this remarkable book, we notice that in every case there is a distinct climax. In the seven epistles, and the promises “to him that overcometh,” there is a regular historical order in the figures used. They follow the progress of events from the Tree of Life, in Eden, through the second death of the Fall, the desert journey with its manna, the lifted rod of Moses, the prevailing against Amalek, the white robes of priesthood, the erection of pillars in the temple, and, finally, Solomon's ascent to his own throne, after having occupied, jointly with his father, his seat of sovereignty for a period—the golden age of the Hebrews.

What this historic order means we cannot discern, unless it is to teach us that the rewards of an overcoming life cover the whole range of blessing at God's disposal. For mark how this history, reaching from the Fall to the final establishment of the Kingdom under Solomon, typically suggests the whole progress

of redeemed man, from the forfeiture of innocence and fellowship with God, in the Fall, to the very close of the Mediatorial Reign of CHRIST. It is as though God had said that, to those who are truly the victors in this war of the ages, He will give every reward within His gift. He will welcome to His own Paradise, share with them His own deathless Life, feed them with celestial banquets, lift them to seats of authority, and put into their hands sceptres of rule; clothe them in the white robes of holiness, and give them a permanent place in His Eternal Temple; nay, exalt them to joint sovereignty with Himself.

The fact is that from such a prospect of promise and blessing, we simply shrink back, overwhelmed with glory too great for mortal eyes. It is rather a dream or a poem, than a possible reality or actuality. But after making all allowance for the glamour of highly wrought oriental symbolism, it still remains true, that behind all this magnificent figurative dress, there stands a superb body of promise addressed to him that overcometh.

Two aspects of the War.

The other two passages, as we have already seen, are connected with two great conflicts: one with the ten kings that give their power and strength to the Apocalyptic Beast, and who make war with the Lamb and are by Him overcome. But there are those who are “with Him” in His war and victory, and they are distinguished by three significant titles—“the called and chosen, and faithful.”

If we turn to the other passage, there is an even more gigantic conflict; it is with the great Adversary Himself, the Accuser of the Saints; he is cast down and the overcomers are the very Saints he accuses. And, again, we have a threefold secret of this overcoming power: it is by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their testimony, and it is especially added as the climax of all, that “they loved not their lives unto the death.” Here, again, is a progressive order. They were, first, identified with the Sacrifice of Calvary, but so fully as to become witnesses to His Grace, and then their witness was carried even to the point of martyrdom.

As we put these two passages side by side, we are further struck by their resemblance and correspondence. Perhaps there is a reason for this threefold arrangement in each case. The “called” corresponds to those who overcome through the Blood; the “chosen” to those who to the Blood add their own witness; and the “faithful” to those who love not their lives even unto the death. In other words we have here the degrees of overcoming life and power. When we hear and obey the simple gospel call, we reach the first stage of the overcoming life; in the dying we overcome Death and Judgment. When we are our place as witnesses, we are among those chosen by God to the peculiar privilege of testifying to others of saving grace; but, when we reach the grand height of self-effacement, and life itself becomes a sacrifice when unselfish devotion to our Master and to souls led to absorption in Him, so that even life itself surrendered for His sake, we prove ourselves to

* A message given by the late Dr. Pierson at an Annual Meeting of the China Inland Mission. (Condensed.)

among those who are found faithful, trustworthy—the imperial bodyguard. We have now advanced from the mere position of recruits enlisted under the Lord's banner, or even captains entrusted with the command of companies, and are brought into sacred nearness to the very Victor Himself, as His main reliance.

As nearly as we can discern the Spirit's meaning, there are three stages of victory: the *judicial*, the *experimental*, and the *sacrificial*—the first, wholly dependent on our identification with the Lord Jesus as the great Overcomer (Rom. viii. 37); the second, adding the testimony of the believer's own experience after testing for himself the power of the Blood and the Word, and the Spirit; and the third, the further power which comes from a still closer identification with the Saviour of the world, in like Him sacrificing self, even to the point of surrender of life, for His sake. As to the first, *we are in Him*, and so *His victory is ours*; as to the second, we are *His witnesses*, and so our word, like His, has power. We speak that we do know. As to the third, *we meet the Adversary* with utter fearlessness and contempt of all his threats and wiles, for we love not life. As in our witness, we meet him as liar by testifying to the truth, here we meet him as murderer by willingness to die, and it is only when we are ready to bleed that we are able to bless.

I count the three things, thus suggested to us in this brief sentence, as among the foremost truths of all Revelation . . .

The judicial overcoming.

Let us dwell for a little on each of these stages of overcoming power. In the first place, the judicial overcoming. That is a victory found *in identity with the bleeding Lamb*; an overcoming entirely independent of any activity, sacrifice, or even testimony upon our part, due purely and simply to the overcoming power of His atoning blood. Faith makes us one with our Lord Jesus Christ, so that whatever He accomplished is *potentially and judicially our achievement*, and its whole benefit is reckoned to our account. The moment that any penitent sinner believes and accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, he is entitled to, and made a sharer in, all the merits of His holy obedience and all the conquest involved in His vicarious death and resurrection. All His overcomings are reckoned absolutely to every believer's account. In His cross we also, in Him, conquered death, and hell, and the devil. In His resurrection we rose, in His ascension we mounted to the heavenlies, and in His session at the right hand of God we sat down in the place of power and authority. These are the privileges alike of all the called, of all believers. There is an immediate and unconditional reckoning of victory to those who penitently and believingly turn to the Lamb and enlist under the banner of God.

The experimental word of witness.

But look further, for there is another secret and stage of overcoming power: "and by the word of their testimony." What is testimony? It is witness, and the word witness is from the Saxon word, *Witan*—to know. A witness is simply one who tells what he knows. But observe, one must know, in order to witness; and, therefore our testimony for our blessed Lord can be powerful only when, and so far as, our experience is genuine and deep. The first lesson of all over-

coming power is learned when the disciple understands the effect of his judicial standing, and identity with the bleeding but overcoming Lamb. But our witness is to be added to the power of the blood of Christ if we are to know all the higher achievements of the overcoming life; and, because *all witness is powerless when it goes beyond knowledge*, there must be a profound and genuine experience of Divine things; a cultivation of the highest possibilities of godliness if the witness is to be really effective and powerful. There must be a *man* behind the *message*—a saint behind the service. There must be the nameless power that comes from a true fellowship with God. Otherwise, our witness is a mere formal, heartless repetition of the Gospel tidings, and the dialect of the overcoming life . . .

It would seem that great emphasis is laid in the Word of God on witnessing, as having an influence on the *witnesser*, on the *God* witnessed for, and the *man* witnessed to. God ordains that he who testifies to a truth shall get the blessing both of knowing more to witness to, and being stronger for witnessing. It is a law of the spiritual realm that the tongue shall both *express* and *impress* truth; that speech shall give vent to thought and conviction, and react on both; and God gives distinct and supernatural blessing to every one who, so far as light comes, reflects it in utterance. Testimony which expresses, also expands, experience. It tells men the truth, as that truth has become incarnate in us. It is the truth plus the man behind it. It is the speech of the heart and life, which always carries conviction. And no sooner do we witness to a fact in experience than in some strange way experience so enlarges, that we find we have something more to say. We cannot tell how it is, but to have spoken for Christ is to have gone a step further and higher, and to have got a clearer and fuller view of Christ, and therefore more to witness. This can be accounted for only on the ground of a Divine Communication to the soul . . .

There lies one secret of the power of missions. Everyone that goes out to tell the story of Christ at home or abroad finds that every time he speaks for Christ, he knows Christ better. He has something more to say every time he opens his mouth to tell—not what somebody else knows, but what *he* knows—what God has shown *him*, in his own spiritual experience, of the riches and the wonders of His grace.

The sacrificial spirit.

The third and climacteric secret and stage of overcoming is the *sacrificial*—they "loved not their lives, even unto the death." That marks the final and most advanced conquest; it is found in the sacrificial spirit. When you carry your readiness to witness to Christ to such an extent, that you care nothing even for your own life, in comparison, you may boldly defy the devil to do his worst. The thing that men value most is life, for it is life that gives value to everything else; and, when the great Adversary threatens not only your reputation, not only your standing among men, not only your physical ease and domestic comfort, and social influence, but your very life itself; and you can boldly look him in the face and say, "I love not my life even unto death," you have come to the high position where the final secret of overcoming power is

learned and possessed. You have come now where you "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in your own flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church." And that is the grandest possible elevation upon which any man or woman can stand, in any work of any kind, or mission for God; whether in the slums or the pulpits of a great city; whether on the very borders of civilisation in the home-land where the opposing tides of virtue and vice, government and anarchy, meet and collide; or at the very ends of the earth, in the habitations of darkness and cruelty.

As to sacrifice, that is the law of service of the highest sort. The seed must die, as a seed, to live as a crop. And nothing do we cling to as to self and life. Much even of our spiritual life has a great deal of the leaven of self corrupting it; we are seeking self-advantage and self-glory only on a higher level, and of a more refined sort. Nothing is so hard to kill as pride and selfishness. Man is like an onion—layer after layer, and each a layer of self in some form. Strip off self-righteousness, and you still come to self-trust; get beneath this, and you meet self-seeking, and self-pleasing; even when you think these are abandoned, self-will betrays its presence. If this seems stripped off, you find self-defence, and, last of all, self-glory. And when even this seems abandoned, the heart of the human onion—most offensive of all—is the selfish *pride* that boasts at last of being truly humble.

Nothing comes so near to the Christ-like idea and ideal as utter self-abnegation and oblivion. And, because our Lord had reached this sublime height, He

could say, "The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me."

And notice this: Just as surely as any man or woman gets to the point wherein there is the resolute determination to bear full witness to the truth, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, up to the very limit of experience and knowledge, the devil's devices are defeated, he is again practically "judged," and we become "more than conquerors."

What is it to be "more than conquerors."

I have heard many attempts to explain that famous phrase in the eighth of Romans, but never anything that satisfied me so well as when I read in a book of Dr. Mabie's that, when the devil brought about the death of Christ he practically destroyed himself—the *decide was suicide*; that is, the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus reacted in judgment upon himself, who had conspired to secure the death of the Lamb of God; that Christ, in dying, and "through death, destroyed him that had the power of death—that is the devil—and delivered those who, through fear of death, were, all their lifetime, subject to bondage."

And so our Lord *more than conquered* his Adversary. He destroyed him. So, when you love not your life even unto death, the very efforts that the devil makes to intimidate you and defeat you, react upon himself in a sort of new judgment. He does not vanquish you, but his own authority, and power, and rule are diminished; and so you become "more than conquerors through Him that loved you."

*Phil. ii. 14.
murmuring*

"Do All Things Without Murmurings."—Phil. ii. 14.

IT ought to be comparatively easy for us in the homeland to do things "without murmurings," but it must be tenfold more difficult for those on the foreign field who are surrounded by what, at times, seem almost impossible, impassable difficulties; when the nerves are overstrung, the brain overstrained, the body overworked, the climate enervating, and perhaps, a fellow worker in no better state.

"All things"! The things we like, the things we do not like; the things we are ordered to do by people we find it easy to obey, the things we are ordered to do by those we *do not* find easy to obey—"not only the good and gentle" but "also the froward" (1 Pet. ii. 18), or as Newberry puts it, in language that none of us can misunderstand, "the difficult to please." Alas, all Christians are not easy to please; it seems almost next to impossible to please some, even when one honestly does one's best. Yet we are to "*do all things without murmurings*." Sometimes we get as far as not grumbling outwardly, and we are inclined to think then that we are saints indeed, but "the Lord looketh on *the heart*." We may murmur outwardly against our fellow worker, but an inward murmur is surely against God. "Do all things without murmurings," inward or outward. Meditate on five things in connection with the murmurings of the children of Israel:

I. It was against God (Ex. xvi. 8). "Your murmurings are not against us but against the Lord." Perhaps you are placed with an uncongenial worker, the one of all others you might not have chosen, and you feel inclined to, or perhaps you do, actually murmur. Well, your only refuge is in seeing in this arrangement the Hand of God, and in remembering that "He heareth your murmurings," for it is not against man (not against those who have ordered it so) "but against God."

II. Murmuring is useless. The people would have got the manna without murmuring. It was not their grumbling that

brought it to them. This may not be the highest ground from which to look at such things, but it is at least practical common-sense to remember that murmuring is useless. It does not alter things for the better, it only increases the trouble. "A right spirit toward a wrong thing" is what we all need.

III. It was the ordinary, everyday things about which they murmured, eating and drinking and people (Ex. xv. 24, xvi. 2-3, Num. xiv. 2). Now a good part of our lives is made up of eating, drinking, and people! If these were put out of our lives there would not be much left about which we could murmur! It is not usually extraordinary events which call forth the murmuring spirit, but commonplace things—the food we do not like, the rooms that do not suit us, the thoughtlessness of our fellow-worker, the selfishness of someone else. Therefore let us be on our guard against grumbling about these things that are bound to meet us day by day.

IV. Murmuring is serious. "Some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer" (1 Cor. x. 10). As a rule we are not inclined to think much of grumbling, but it is serious, for it had terrible results in the days of old, and to-day it certainly gives the devil a hold over us. Someone has said "the devil can do anything with us if we lose our peace," and it is true. But there is one more thing to be said:—

V. There is a cure for murmuring. The cure is to be found in drawing near to God. "Come near before the Lord, for He hath heard your murmurings" (Ex. xvi. 9). There is no other cure. It is only as we get into touch with Him that our spirits are soothed, and in His light "we see light." In His blessed presence we find once again that He reigneth. We cry, as we come near to Him, "It was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I"; and we go forth anew to face the difficult position saying, "It is good for me to draw near unto God" (Ps. lxxiii. 16, 17, 28). M. A. S.

The World Outlook for Prayer.

By E. M. Leathes.

"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me . . ."—Hab. ii. 1.

THE attitude of the prophet, in the passage quoted above, is surely the position we all occupy to-day, if we are truly the Lord's intercessors. We too are standing on our watch tower, watching with a spirit of eager expectancy for His next word of command. Whatever way we look over the distant horizon, it is dark with ominous signs of approaching storms and disaster. We have much to praise God for, especially those of us who are in this favoured country, for the peace that, for the present, surrounds us. The past Summer has been exceptional for its cool breezes and sunshine, and in spite of forebodings of the serious consequences of the long drought, fruits and vegetation of all kinds have been abundant. Nevertheless, our newspapers daily teem with news that appals us, and we need to learn from God Himself what is to be our attitude in such conditions as prevail in the world to-day.

If we compare this present state of things with the times in which Habbakuk lived and prophesied, we shall see how close the resemblance is, though then it was in a much smaller and more confined degree. It is very true that history is constantly repeating itself, but as time goes on, the circles of human life and civilization are ever widening and increasing, so that events which once would have been confined to a very small area now quickly become world-wide.

We understand that Habbakuk prophesied during the latter part of the reign of King Josiah, on the eve of God's severe judgments upon Israel because of their long continued iniquity and terrible idolatry; but it was also a time of God's *silence*—a period of forbearance and holding back of coming judgment on the nation because of Josiah's repentance (See Dr. Scofield's introductory notes). In fact, it was for Josiah's sake that the punishment of the nation was delayed, God was waiting until he should be removed from the earth (2 Kings xxii. 18-20).

The reply of God to the burdened cry of His waiting prophet is significant: "The Lord answered me and said, Write this vision and make it plain upon tables, that one may swiftly read it. For yet is the vision for an appointed time. Still it presseth towards an end and will not deceive. If it tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come and will not be too late" (Hab. ii. 32-38, *Rotherham*). The margin (Scofield) links this with Heb. x. 37, 38, where the "it" of the vision becomes "He," and refers to the Return of the Lord.

There is truly a sense in which this prophecy, uttered so long ago, exactly applies to our own times. We look out upon the ever deepening iniquity and impurity spreading over the world to-day, the open and daring mutilation of God's Word (and that even by some of the Bishops and leaders of the English Church), and see the judgments of God ready to fall upon this Christ-rejecting generation—and yet, at the present juncture, the silence and forbearance of the Lord, and His restraining Hand, are manifest to all who are closely watching the turn of world events. How often, of late, have we been apparently on the very

verge of an outbreak of war, and other disasters. The storm has been ready to burst, the flood has been almost upon us. Then we have seen what we clearly recognized as the Almighty restraining Hand of God, holding it back! There has been a sudden lull, a suspension of the outbreak of hostilities, and for the time being quiet has been restored.

These are certain signs that there is a secret Force at work, stronger than the hypnotizing power of earthly dictators, or even the uncontrolled violence of Communism directed and engineered by the unseen forces of darkness. *God is still on the Throne*. His ear is open to the intercession of His own elect, who cry unto Him day and night. In all parts of the world God has His Josiahs, men and women "who know their God" and are praying for the working out of His purposes on the earth. Prayer inwrought and energised by the Holy Spirit—"the inwrought, energized prayer of a righteous man, is mighty in its operation" (Jas. v. 16, literal). A striking sentence by the late Oswald Chambers says, "A praying saint performs far more havoc among the forces of darkness than we have the slightest notion of. We have not the remotest conception, nor the right to try and examine and understand, what is being done by our praying. All we can know is, that Jesus Christ laid all stress on prayer."

The present danger is lest, in the overwhelming tide of circumstances, and the density of the spiritual atmosphere caused by the "end-time" influx of the powers of darkness, we give in, and faint by the way. In this world-atmosphere effectual prayer becomes more and more difficult. We are told by some that it is difficult to collect together even the "twos and threes" for prayer, and there is need of prayer for time and strength to pray.

How many of us, in the past, have been buoyed up by success in Christian work? We are willing for any amount of toil, and persecution for Christ's sake, if only we see results for all our work and sacrifice. But now reports from many quarters speak of work for God apparently "drying up." Servants of God are finding their witness no longer welcomed in districts where they have almost given their life's blood for souls. Truly we have come to the time foretold by the Apostle Paul, when "they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own inclinations they will heap up for themselves teachers upon teachers, to please their itching ears" (2 Tim. iv. 3, *Conybeare*). We would not say that such a condition is general everywhere, and we thank God for every evidence of His Holy Spirit's working in the salvation of souls and the building up of believers; and for the unparalleled call and eager demand for the written Word of God, news of which comes from many countries which have never had the privilege of an "open Bible."

Yet how many of God's believing ones are eagerly scanning the spiritual horizon, and saying in the words of the Psalmist, "Return O Lord, how long? And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants"; or, as it has been rendered, "Lord, how long shall we wait for Thy

Hab. 2:1
Prayer

Return?" Perhaps with some of us there is a degree of impatience at what we deem such long delay; but let us be certain of one important fact, that, as God assured His waiting prophet, He is never too late in the fulfilment of His purposes. He may permit delay, but they will come to pass at the very tick of the clock that He ordains they shall, as it was with Israel of old. At the very hour He had appointed, God brought them out of Egypt, and that in spite of all the fury of Pharaoh and his refusal to let them go (see Ex. xii. 40-41).

The world is hurrying on to its final doom. All the wonderful discoveries of the present day are being employed in the race for power and world dominion, nation competing against nation for supremacy, and in the desperate competition making such scientific discoveries as would, but for the mighty intervention of God, bring about their own destruction and annihilation. "It is hurry, hurry, hurry, or we lose the race between civilization and disintegration. Modern culture must be dynamic, a culture of growth and change," we read in a great daily paper some months ago, and the editor added, "Speed and change, yes—but whither?" And alas, this demand for adjustment to the present age is creeping into the churches and religious organizations. A plea is even made by a leading Scientist for "a new religion, consistent with our new psychological knowledge and the established facts (?) of science."

The Apostle Paul, inspired of God, warned Timothy of the approaching apostasy, but also that there must be no slackness or want of courage on the part of God's servants. "I adjure thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ . . . preach the Word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. iv. 2). Then he added (ver. 5) "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions . . ."

"Write the vision and make it plain upon the tables," is the Lord's command to the prophet Habbakuk, "for it will not deceive, for it surely cometh." In the next verse we see the distinction between the worldling and the child of God: "Lo as for the conceited one, crooked is his soul within him, but one who is righteous by his faithfulness shall live" (*Rotherham*). Pride of man exulting in his own achievements, and an utter discredit of the Word of God, is the order of things in the present day. We can best describe such a condition by quoting Nebuchadnezzar's proud speech as he viewed the result of his own handywork in Babylon (Dan iv. 3).

One statement, made by a Bishop at the recent annual Conference of Modernist Churchmen, is sufficient evidence whereunto man's unbelief is leading him. He said, "Our modern outlook has created a background of thought against which we cannot maintain the traditional belief in the infallibility of the Scriptures." The errorists of Paul's day were called "gnostics," from the word *gnosis*, knowledge; and Paul's characteristic word for the Divine revelation is "epignosis," i.e., full knowledge (Col. i. 9, iii. 9). "Let no man," he writes, "beguile you of your reward . . . intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up in his fleshly mind" (Col. ii. 18). Note again the Lord's word to Habbakuk, "his soul which is lifted up (or puffed up) is not upright in him—but the just shall

live by his faith." Truly, to be carnally minded: death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Rom. viii. 6). The world to-day is full of "death, but—"the just shall live by his faith," and Paul quoting the words in Heb. x. 38-39, adds that those who draw back from the position of faith "draw back unto perdition." "The life which I now live in the flesh," he writes again, "I live by the faith of the Son of God."

Writing to the Phillipian believers from his prison in Rome, the Apostle tells them of his discovery of wonderful secret. While thanking them for their ministry to his needs, he assures them that he wants for nothing, "for I have learned in whatsoever circumstances I am to be independent. In every way, and in all things, I have been let into the secret—both to be well fed and to be hungering, both to have more than enough and to be coming short." Then follows the secret of his contentment—"I have might for all things through Him that empowereth me" (Phil. iv. 11, 12, *Rotherham*).

Reverting to the prophet Habbakuk, we find that he also had discovered something of this wonderful secret. There were men and women in Old Testament days who lived far in advance of their dispensation. Their faith stretched out, beyond their adverse circumstances, and laid hold of "God Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. iv. 17). Doubtless Habbakuk had a similar experience to that of Daniel, and Isaiah. He had been brought to an utter end of himself and his own "goodness" (Compare Hab. iii. 14 with Dan. x. 8, and Isa. vi. 1-5). In Habbakuk's case it meant a stripping even to destitution, and then when all earthly resources failed him, the divine spark of faith kindled by God begins to glow:

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls . . ."

Could we picture a worse state of things? But the prophet has suddenly come out into a new experience that renders him independent of his earthly surroundings. "Yet," he declares (in spite of all these things)—

"I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord is my Strength, and He will make my feet like hinds feet, and He will make me to walk upon my high places"—or "upon my high places will He cause me to march along" (Hab. iii. 17-19).

"Let my soul march along with victorious strength" sang Deborah (Jud. v. 21). "The just shall live by faith." "Because I live, ye shall live also"—live in the power of His victorious life. All the true members of Christ's Mystical Body are under severe testing of their faith in these days, and God needs men and women so free from all care and anxiety concerning their own lives that they can give themselves to prayer for the completion of the Holy Spirit's work in the Church, and for increase of faith in God's children, that they may be ready for the Glory. Paul's greatest anxiety for his converts was concerning their faith. He sent Timothy to the Thessalonians to comfort (or encourage) them concerning their faith (1 Thes. iii. 2, 5, 6, 7, 10; 2 Thes. i. 3, 11). "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth . . . might be found unto praise and honour

and glory at the Appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 7). Yet how appropriate are the words of our Lord for the present time: "Howbeit, when the Son of Man cometh, *shall He find the faith on the earth?*"

As the great apostasy increases there seems to be less and less room on earth for those who are determined to be absolutely loyal to their Lord. May it not be that, as in the days of Habbakuk, God is holding back the terrible judgments, that sooner or later must fall upon this Christ-rejecting age, until the Body of Christ is complete and ready to be caught away?

We are living in unprecedented days. Past experience does not always help us in to-day's problems, the present is fraught with endless difficulties, and the future (from earth's standpoint) is utter uncertainty—and so we are *being pressed up into our place in God*, a position that renders us absolutely independent of all earthly resources: "your life is hid with Christ in God." There, in living union with Him, "God is able to cause every gracious gift to superabound unto you," that "having in everything at every time every kind of

sufficiency of your own, you may be superabounding unto every good work" (2 Cor. ix. 8, *Rotherham*).

Let us "Keep up the song of faith," and in spite of all the apparent triumph of the enemy may we be able to shout, with Habbakuk, "For the earth *shall* be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Keep up the song of faith,
However dark the night;
And as you praise, the Lord will work
To change your faith to sight.
Keep up the song of faith
And let your heart be strong,
For God delights when faith can praise
Though dark the night and long.
Keep up the song of faith,
The foe will hear and flee;
Oh let not Satan hush your song,
For praise is victory.
Keep up the song of faith,
The dawn will break ere long,
And we shall go to meet the Lord
And join the endless song.*

—M. E. B.

Liberty

"Stand fast . . . be not Entangled."

Gal 5:1

"Stand fast . . . in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free . . ."—Gal. v. 1.

THE keynote of the Epistle to the Galatians is Liberty. What is liberty? There are probably many answers to that question, but the one which will commend itself to us all as Christians is this: *Liberty is the full and free working of the life of God in the believer's life and service.* The great objective of the coming into the believer of this life of his Lord is expressed by Paul in three places in this epistle: twice in relation to his own life) and once in relation to that of his readers. (1) "To reveal His Son in me," Ch. i. 16; (2) "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," Ch. ii. 20; and (3) "My little children, of whom I travail in birth until Christ be formed in you," Ch. iv. 19. It is well that we keep always before us this great objective of Christ's work in us. How different it sounds from much that is urged to-day, in various cults, as to the working of the Spirit of God and its effect in the lives of believers!

The Galatian Christians had sadly failed of this objective, and Paul reveals four of their downward steps in this epistle. (1) "I marvel that ye are so soon REMOVED from Him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel" (Ch. i. 6). This word "removed" implies *distance* between Christ and the soul, and this is where backsliding always begins. Peter followed "afar off," and it resulted in open denial of his Lord. In these days of many temptations and siren voices which call us, we must beware lest we follow afar off, and afterwards find ourselves "removed" from His fellowship.

(2) "O foolish Galatians, who hath BEWITCHED you, that ye should not obey the truth" (Ch. iii. 1). To "bewitch" means to fascinate or allure, by that which is more spectacular than spiritual, and this is a very real peril of our times. There are movements which dangle before our eyes the working of psychic forces, and so becloud the truth of God and ensnare such Christians as are following "afar off." Alas, there are many to-day who, like the Galatians, are being bewitched by works of the flesh, and things of the

world, and—there being a distance between them and Christ—these things are inserted between.

(3) "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whatsoever of you are justified by the law, ye are FALLEN from grace," (Ch. v. 4). Because these Christians have allowed something to come between them and their Lord, they have fallen away. They are not feasting upon the abundance of His grace, they are not appropriating by faith the flow of His life, and so they have become weak in life and ineffective in service.

(4) Arrested growth. "Ye did run well, who did HINDER you that ye did not obey the truth" (Ch. v. 7). They were not going on unto perfection. Having ceased to draw from the well of salvation, they were hindered from discerning and obeying the Truth. This is one of the grave perils of the many psychic and spectacular movements which are among us to-day: they take men's eyes off the Lord of Life and glory. They fasten their attention upon certain experiences, rather than upon the crucified, enthroned Lord and His grace.

In this connection it is very significant that when Paul speaks of the Cross as the remedy for this weak and ineffective life, he points to the *flesh* and the *world* (see Ch. v. 24 and vi. 12). Now it is to these very things that such modern movements pander: they seek to "make a fair show in the flesh" before the world. It was reported to me that the opening meeting of a campaign in a certain city was staged so as to "appeal to the popular mind," and to be "well reported in the press." How different to the great truth of Calvary, and the objective which God has, that Christ shall be "formed" in us. Let us see how Paul deals with these things which separate men from Christ. He reveals in this Epistle a two-fold remedy:

First—THE CROSS. "Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world . . ." (Ch. i. 4). This goes to the root of all that

* From "Songs of the Heavenly Life" (new edition).

manifests the spirit of this world—often so beautiful and so moral that men do not recognise the lack of all real power of the Holy Spirit. We shall never be kept from these things unless we are willing for the Cross to exercise all its power over the old nature. We must be willing, like Paul, to say "I am crucified with Christ," and to reckon ourselves dead unto all things which please and minister to that old nature. This inwardness of the Cross is all too little realised to-day. There are good men, who know a great deal of the Bible, but they "love to be seen of men," they love the popular show, and there are movements to-day which pander to these very elements of the soul-life, and the flesh. Victory over the world and the flesh is only possible as our co-crucifixion with Christ is made real to us.

"Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified."

In Ch. iii. 1, Paul says of the Galatians, "Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth (or placarded), crucified . . ." If we are to be saved from the bewitchments of our times, the Lord Jesus Christ, "and Him crucified," must be continually placarded before our minds. Only as the death of Christ is set forth in all its wonder and inwardness, shall we be saved from the fascination of things which appeal to the senses, and to our innate love of the spectacular.

Then Paul goes on to show that this Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ is all-sufficient for our Christian life. There is no need whatever for us to turn to these "beggarly elements" of the flesh and the world. "Christ hath redeemed us . . . being made a curse for us . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Ch. iii. 13). Really, we let Christ down badly when we turn from the fulness and liberty of the Life that comes to us through His Cross, to experiences in the realm of the psychic, which belong to the flesh and the world. The work of Christ at Calvary is all sufficient. It was there that the Life of God was liberated, and only as we continually turn to Calvary does this Life operate in all its fulness.

As if the foregoing were not enough, Paul turns to the other side of the picture, and (Ch. iv. 5—7) sets forth the sonship of believers, in the Son, as if to say: How shall we turn from Christ to other things? We are sons and heirs, and thereby we are able to appropriate all that Christ won for us at Calvary. Put in your claim brethren, realise your high position in Christ, and the privileges of sonship, and all the thrills and experiences which these psychic movements beg us to seek after will seem as dross compared with the glories of His Life in us.

The truth is, that in ourselves (the natural man) we love the excitement of gatherings where psychic power is manifested, and the leaders of such gatherings know it, and play upon it. Herein lies the peril—that innate love of the spectacular, and the rhythmic movement of soulish forces. But, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts" (Ch. v. 24), and all such desires must be brought to the Cross, and in our Lord's Name we must refuse everything that is not of Him, in thought and speech and action, asking that the delivering power of the death of Christ may be fully wrought in us. Then these affections and desires will be put to death.

Then comes the final reference to the Cross: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (vi. 14). No one who has followed the great movements of our time, which are spreading through Christendom, will fail to see that certain worldly elements are very prominent: the love of popularity, big notices in the press, the working up of excitement that makes the atmosphere electric with possibilities, the claiming for the movements themselves of incredible achievements. Worldly elements which this verse clearly shows that the believer should be "crucified unto." It was when our Lord declared these great truths concerning the crucifying power of His Cross in the lives of His disciples, that "many followed Him no more," but it is only as we realise this working-power of the Cross, in inward crucifixion of the desires and affections of the flesh, making us dead to all worldly ambitions and methods, that we shall enjoy the full tide of His life ourselves, and be channels of that life and blessing to others.

"Christ in you."

The second part of Paul's two-fold remedy for those who are in danger of being "removed from Him" unto "another gospel" is this—the realization of the life of the Risen and ascended Lord in us. "I live, yet not I, but Christ *liveth in me*" (ii. 20). If we are continually receiving of this life-giving Presence, we shall not turn aside to the things of the world or the psychic realm. How did we begin our Christian life? By *faith*—by looking away from ourselves and our own experiences to the Cross of Christ, and in that moment we receive the Spirit of the Living God. It is only as we thus continue to *look away from ourselves*, from the flesh and from the world, with all its bewitchments and entanglements, that we shall live that Christ-life, and "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath set us free."

Paul goes on to tell us that where the living Christ has full sway, the desires of the flesh will have no power, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit will be manifested. One of these fruits is Love. Not for a moment must we compromise, and we must speak the truth with all boldness, but it must ever be "speaking the truth in love." How much our fundamentalism has suffered because of a lack of love in its exponents! We have gone out against "flesh and blood" instead of setting forth the truth of Calvary in love. This love will bring us joy, and peace, and the other fruits of the Spirit, and one of these which calls for notice is SELF-CONTROL (R.V.m.). There will be an absence of excitement, our lives will be characterised by steady balance, we shall hold truth in right proportion. Being sure of our ground in Christ and His redemptive work, we shall declare with holy boldness all the truth of God, ever keeping before our eyes the full victory of the Cross, with the flood tide of the transcendent life of our Lord working in us and through us all the good pleasure of His will. Thus we shall not only be saved from error ourselves but we shall be able to help others to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has set them free.

A. R. Boughen.

Brief notes of a message given at our London Conference, July, 1934.

The Place of Victory.

"God . . . hath quickened us together with Christ . . . and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 5-6.

ARE we so advancing in the life and liberty which is ours in Christ as to know this place of victory? We are in the last days, which must necessarily mean conflict for the children of God who would fain know more of life in Christ, and all that it should mean in circumstance and environment. Is it not therefore high time to awake, that we may prove to the very hilt the power and resources of our God? And the place of victory? It is at God's right hand "where Christ sitteth," high above all. For to such an altitude are we raised with Him, our glorious Head. Let us drink in the words, live in them, live them out, revelling always in our place among the celestials.

Too long have we lived on the lower planes. Our crying need is to know the quickening of God's Spirit, and all its forceful power. How can we know this, how live, move, and have our being so in the place of victory that we win through to the praise and glory of God? These then, are some of the great words which stand out to point the way.

"Just as Christ was raised from among the dead by the Father's glorious power, we also should live *an entirely new life*. For since we have become *one with Him by sharing in His death*, we shall also be *one with Him* by sharing in His resurrection." (Rom. vi. 4, 5, Weymouth).

The Price of Victory.

The great secret of this wonderful life and victory, is identification with Christ in death, and, as arising therefrom, union with Him in life. Think of the manner of His death, and the power of His life. See how it was brought home to the apostle Paul who set it down in black and white, that we might follow in his wake. "I long to know Christ . . . to share in His sufferings, and die even as He died" (Phil. iii. 10, 11, Weymouth).

Our place of victory is in the heavenlies, but the PRICE OF VICTORY lay at Calvary, and in all that Calvary meant. For was it not "by the cross He triumphed," triumphed over the enemy as "He shook off from Himself the hostile princes and rulers and boldly displayed them as His conquests. Then, ascending, He sat down at God's right hand far above all principalities and powers. Should we not therefore live there in spirit, with Him? And now, in the living present. It is the place of victory, but to realise it, and to hold it means warfare. The prince of the power of the air would impede our ascent, and by the subtle devices he so skilfully engineers through his emissaries, he would keep us down. Many are the agencies he uses, worldly things, art and science, literature and music, things and people near and dear to us, and a host of appeals and siren voices to which we should be dead.

O to be aware of our need, to love the secret place of the Most High, to stand in the invulnerable battlements of the heavenlies! For this is victory, this is peace! To this end let us look earnestly at Paul's unfolding of vital truth in Eph. iii. 19.

"That now, to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials may be made known, through the

ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God." What an incentive this should be to the people of God, that in and through us, His manifold wisdom is displayed to watching celestials.

Let us then stand in Christ for God's will to be done in and through us. And though it mean conflict, we stand in victory in Him Who was so gloriously the Victor at Calvary. And thanks be to God, the issues of the conflict are sure, since He so supremely conquered. Thus Satan is a defeated foe, for the Son of God appeared expressly for the purpose of destroying the work of the devil. See how the valiant apostle dictates the Divine way of victory:

"Strengthen yourselves in the Lord and in the power which His supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armour of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil. For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with the despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world—the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare." (Eph. vi. 10-12, Weymouth.)

Do we recognise these despotisms, empires and forces, back of human passions and pursuits? O to be dead to the baneful and disquieting influence of these, for cultured as they may be, they can ensnare and enslave the soul. Dwell deep in Calvary, and from the death to self itself, and all its cherished hoard, you will live in the victory and the glory of its blessed place.

W.M.

The above message was written during a period of unemployment, by a reader of *The Overcomer*, and we believe its victorious spirit will be helpful to many in similar straits at this time. It is easy to talk of victory when all goes well, but only the triumphant grace of God can enable His children to ring out the message when the days are dark with storm clouds. Testifying to blessing received through the Overcomer literature, he writes:

"For months I knew much anguish through giving ground to the enemy, but came through to victory on the great truth of Romans vi. What a marvellous difference between mental knowledge of Scripture—life on the soul plane—and the strong, God honouring life in the Spirit . . . Romans vi. as related to Ephes. i. is indeed basic to our glorious position. Would that more believers saw the import, too, of Ephes. iii. 10—"that NOW"—the emphasis being strong, as I think we should take it, for in such measure are we being fitted as administrators in a future age . . ."

The days may yet grow darker
The nights more weary grow
And Jesus may still tarry
But this one thing I know
The Lord will still grow dearer
And fellowship will be
The closer and the sweeter
Between my Lord and me.

'Tis our dear Lord we wait for
Our Hope! Our Joy! Our Friend!
Himself we long to welcome
And just beyond the bend
Hidden, perchance to meet us
Before the day is done,
The waiting will be over
And heaven will have begun.

M.E.B.

Helps for Teachers.

(From Mrs. Penn-Lewis' Bible.)

"Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth."

2 Tim. ii. 15.

THE WORLD AND ITS REDEEMER.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him . . ."

1 John ii. 15.

(Several Greek words are rendered "world" in the English Bible: one means simply inhabited earth, another "age" or dispensation, used for things of time, earthly surroundings, as opposed to things spiritual and eternal).

I. The condition of the world:

"The whole world lieth in the evil one" 1 Jno. v. 19.

II. The ruler of the world:

"The prince of this world." Jno. xii. 31, xiv. 30, xvi. 11.

"The god of this world." 2 Cor. iv. 4.

"The world-rulers of this darkness." Eph. vi. 10.

III. The Redeemer:

"God so loved the world that He gave . . ." Jno. iii. 16.

"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself . . ."

2 Cor. v. 19.

IV. How the world received Him:

"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not . . ."

Jno. i. 10.

"Light came into the world . . . men loved darkness . . ."

Jno. iii. 19.

The world hated Him because He testified that its works were evil.

Jno. vii. 7.

V. How He redeemed the world:

1. He bore the sins of it's victims—

"He is the Propitiation for the sins of the whole world."

1 Jno. ii. 2.

2. He conquered it's ruler—

"Now is the judgment of this world . . . the prince of this world cast out."

John xii. 31

3. The purpose of His death—

"He gave Himself for us, that He might deliver us from this present evil world."

Gal. i. 4.

VI. How we are set free:

1. By sharing His death—

"Ye died with Christ from the elements of the world . . ."

Col. ii. 20.

"The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world . . ."

Gal. vi. 14.

2. By sharing His life—

"Whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world."

1 Jno. v. 4.

3. By His indwelling—

"Greater is HE that is in you than he that is in the world."

1 Jno. iv. 4.

VII. Our practical attitude:

1. "Put away the childish lessons of outward things."

Col. ii. 20 (C. & H.).

2. Hate (i.e., not cling to) own life in this world—no self-love.

John. xii. 24.

3. "Be not conformed to this world."

Rom. xii. 2.

4. "Live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world."

Titus ii. 12.

5. Keep "unspotted from the world."

Jas. i. 27.

VIII. What is meant by "the world":

1. All that is not of the Father—

"the desires of the flesh."

"the desire of the eyes."

"the vainglory of life."

1 Jno. ii. 16.

2. The elements of the world in religion—

"Outward things . . . founded on the precepts and doctrines of men . . ."

Col. ii. 20-22 (C. & H.).

3. The world's wisdom—

"Wisdom of this world . . . foolishness with God."

(See 1 Cor. i. 20, iii. 19).

4. The world's fashion—

"The fashion of this world passeth away."

1 Cor. vii. 31.

5. The world's riches—nothing!

Jas. ii. 5.

John 17:20-23

IX. Our real position in the world:

"Not of the world . . . even as I . . ."

Jno. xvii. 14.

"Sent into the world"—as Christ was

Jno. xvii. 18.

"As He is, so are we in this world."

1 Jno. iv. 17.

"I am the Light . . . ye are the light."

Jno. viii. 12; Matt. v. 14.

In rejection:

"The world hateth you."

Jno. xv. 18, 19.

"The world knoweth us not."

1 Jno. iii. 1.

"In the world . . . tribulation."

John xvi. 33.

In overcoming:

"Ye . . . have overcome them, because greater is HE that is in you than he that is in the world."

1 Jno. iv. 4-5.

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God."

1 Jno. v. 4-5.

THE PRICE OF THE THRONE.

I. The ambitious request:

"Grant that these . . . may sit, the one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom . . ."

Jno. xvii. 20-23.

The Lord's reply:

"Are ye able to drink of the cup . . ."

(ver. 22).

The Lord's lesson:

"They that are great exercise authority . . . but it shall not be so among you. But—"

"Whosoever will be great . . . your minister;"

"Whosoever will be chief . . . your bondservant."

(Verses 25-27).

II. The Corinthians' idea of throne-life:

"Ye have seated yourselves upon your throne . . ."

1 Cor. iv. 8 (C. & H.).

III. Paul's path to the throne:

"A spectacle to the world . . . fools for Christ's sake"

way. . . weak . . . despised . . .—the earthly path-

way. (see 1 Cor. iv. 9-14).

The condition:

"If we suffer with Him . . . glorified together."

Rom. viii. 17.

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him . . ."

2 Tim. ii. 12.

IV. The future goal:

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in my throne . . ."

Rev. iii. 21.

V. The heavenly vision:

"We shall reign . . ."

Rev. v. 10.

THE JOY OF THE LORD.

I. The joy of redeeming the sinner:

"Jesus . . . Who for the joy that was set before Him"

endured the Cross . . ."

Heb. xii. 2.

II. The joy of delivering captives:

"He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen"

with singing."

Ps. cv. 43.

III. The joy of forgiving love:

"I will cleanse them . . . I will pardon . . . and [they]"

shall be to Me for a name of joy."

Jer. xxxiii. 8, 9.

IV. The joy of indwelling His own:

"The Lord . . . in the midst of thee . . . He will rejoice"

over thee with joy, He will . . . joy over thee with"

singing."

Zeph. iii. 17.

V. The joy communicated to His possessed ones:

"That My joy may be in you . . ."

John xv. 11.

VI. The joy imparted by His word of life:

"These things I speak . . . that they may have My joy"

fulfilled in themselves."

John xvii. 13.

VII. The joy of the Lord the strength of His redeemed:

"The joy of the Lord is your stronghold." Neh. viii. 10. m

VIII. The joy of fellowship over others:

"Rejoice with Me . . . I have found My sheep." Luke xv. 6

IX. The joy of final presentation to the Father:

"Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

Jude 24.

X. The joy of rewarding a life spent for Him:

"Enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

Matt. xxv. 21.

From our Readers.

A CHRISTIAN Worker of many years experience, abroad and at home, writes :

"I have been a reader of *The Overcomer* for the past twelve years. The truth of 'death' to sin and the self-life I accepted long ago, and the need for the Holy Spirit to have complete control of my whole life, and an endowment of the Holy Spirit for service . . .

"For months past I have 'reckoned' as formerly (*Rom. vi. 6*) but it has seemed to have little effect ; I have also 'resisted' the enemy as the Word tells us to do, but with little visible result, though in the past God has wonderfully witnessed to this aspect of His truth as I have obeyed it. My reading of the Word has seemed to be without illumination or 'grip,' and I have been asking myself, Why does that which I have proved in the past now seem to have lost its 'working power' ? Where are the 'rivers of living waters' promised by the Lord ? My doctrine was sound, my faith sure—what was the cause of this dullness and deadness ?

"I am sending you this testimony as perhaps you may be able to use it for the help of others, and it may be God will give you something to add to what He has shown me . . .

"The Holy Spirit has been lighting up to me *Romans viii. 13* : 'If ye BY THE SPIRIT make to die the doings of the body, ye shall live.' I see that from force of habit I have been 'reckoning' or resisting ; and not only so, but my reckoning and resisting has often been in the power of my own will. I have 'willed' this and that, and thought I was obeying *Rom. vi. 11*, or *1 Peter v. 9* and *Jas. iv. 7*. But when 'by the Spirit' we either deny the self-life or resist the enemy of souls, we find it works every time.

"Another point has been made clear to me : if, even for a moment, we get out of living vital fellowship with our Lord, our 'reckoning' is of no avail, because not in the power of the Holy Spirit. Any conscious sin will break this fellowship, and until it is confessed and cleansed in the precious Blood, the Holy Spirit ceases to work with us as His instruments. A little pride, a little doubt, and the rivers of living water cease to flow. We remember that in *Leviticus* the anointing oil never came on the flesh, but was poured upon the blood. We need from moment to moment to seek from God a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit, that we may be able to 'reckon' with effect, and 'resist' with effect, because the flesh is continuously and perfectly covered by the power of the precious Blood . . ."

We have given our correspondent's letter almost in full, as we believe this experience to be not uncommon among Christian workers. How great is the danger of service for God becoming "hum-drum" and "ordinary" ! The sense of wonder at being used of God gradually lessens, the glory of it becomes dim, the process stale—then the power goes out of the work, and what was done for sheer joy of co-operation with God is done mechanically, from a sense of duty only, or from mere habit. Then there is the possibility, especially with those who are continually preaching, or teaching others, of truths which have been accepted and proved and taught for many years passing, from an inward and vital spiritual experience, into a "knowledge of the letter" of the Word, held in the memory or mental powers. "Reckoning" may become a matter of using the "will of the flesh," and not the will energized and empowered by the Holy Spirit to a faith which reckons back upon the finished work of Christ, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (*Phil. ii. 13*). That which "worked" in the past may then be tried again in similar circumstances : i.e., Years ago we reckoned ourselves "dead" to some besetment or test, and it ceased to trouble us, so we take the same words on our lips—and nothing happens.

But "no theoretical 'death,' no mental reckoning" has any working power in our lives. "Naught but a very real fellowship with the death of Christ, and a faith wrought in us by God, as He reveals to us the glorious liberty that is ours through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ" can make actual in our lives the fact that the law of sin and death is made null and void, conquered, by His resurrection life implanted in us.

"If ye through the Spirit do mortify (Greek, *thanatoo*, to put to death, to take away the vital principle) the doings of the body, ye shall live"—really live, in newness of life.

It is quite possible for a person with a strong natural will to control, or keep under, the doings and inclinations of the carnal nature, but it is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that they can be "made to die," so that even the desire and the thought of them is "dead"—that is, not the body but its "doings." The flesh, necessarily, is still with us, but it is no longer able to bring the crucified believer into bondage because its "vital principle" has been taken away and replaced by a new motive power—"the law of the Spirit, of Life in Christ Jesus."

* * *

We were unable to make more than a brief reference, in our October issue, to the testimony given by a Minister regarding his experiences in movements working in the Church of God to-day which draw their power from the psychic rather than the spiritual realm, and are a fruitful source of dangerous counterfeits of the working of the Holy Spirit. Speaking in love, and recognising that many of the leaders of these cults are deceived themselves rather than wilfully misleading, a terrible story was told of "manifestations" supposed to be of God but not bearing any marks of the indwelling Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The speaker told of his gradually awakened suspicion that these experiences were from the powers of darkness rather than from God : "After preaching for twelve months, every night in the week," he said, "I observed that those who were saved did not go on to sanctification. I sent up a heart cry that these people might get a true sense of God's holiness—for there is no holiness in these things, it is foreign to them. Just then I came into contact with *The Overcomer*, the January issue of 1933. It was read and re-read, and I sent for more copies, then for "War on the Saints," then for "Soul and Spirit." Thus some of us received light from God on the situation, and in that light we began to refuse all 'manifestations' that were not of Him. We went through terrible mental agony, as the method of prayer we adopted led us to take sides with the Lord against ourselves, saying : We have imagined that this was Thy work but have found it is not so, and we refuse it. On the ground of *Rom. 6* and *1 John i. 17* we claimed the victory of the Cross, and prayer was answered when forty of us came right out, and established another witness, which God has blessed. It is not sufficient to come out, there is need for a clean, clear, Holy Ghost witness to the truth, for many of God's people do not realise the depths of Satan's wiles and schemes to ensnare them."

"Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits . . ." is the command of the Word of God, for "the Spirit expressly declares that, in the later times, some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons" (*1 Tim. iv. 1*, *Weymouth*). Speaking of visions and manifestations, a writer clearly shows the difference between the pure manifestation of the power of God by His Holy Spirit, and the "signs and wonders" of deceiving spirits. We give on the following page an extract from this book (now out of print). Those who heard our brother's testimony will recognise the close similarity between his experience and the description of the counterfeit work of the enemy given by this writer.—M. N. G.

Three sources of "signs and wonders."

Every "sign and wonder" may be classed under three sources: (1) The Holy Spirit in peerless purity. (2) The Anti-Holy Spirit in *counterfeit*. (3) The man himself in natural laws through self-concentration producing a magnetic state.

In true visions of God (a) the recipient *makes use of no artificial means*; (b) the visions are given simply and naturally for a specific purpose; (c) always for practical outcome. In the Scriptures the servants of God let themselves healthily alone, and the visions came to them *irrespective of their physical condition*. They came of God's sovereign will, to accomplish His will, and establishing no precedent of what He would give to another. Then the recipient (a) does not lose his own identity; (b) he retains his own individuality and his full consciousness; (c) He is in no way *elated or intoxicated* by his own visions; (d) *nor does he set to work to cause others to seek the same experiences*.

If ignorant Christians fulfil the necessary conditions (even in utter unconsciousness of what they are doing), in intense meetings, where a "magnetic control" has replaced the control of the Holy Ghost, if they determine to go on under this secondary control, and look and wait for super-natural manifestations, to take place, they must not be surprised, if first of all they experience strange sensations, and the feeling of some mysterious invisible influence in their meetings. Proceeding further, and continuously, they will find shakings, rockings, swayings, knockings, noises; some of their number being naturally mediumistic will fall under the "power" and will speak, foretell, write, talk in foreign, classical, obsolete or even in unknown tongues; will preach sermons, will sing hymns in voices not their own; spirits pious, spirits prophetic, spirits coarse and refined will control for the time being, the person under the "power"; joy and agony, weeping and groaning, sounds of all kinds from laughter to shrieking, will take place; the spirits for the time in the ascendancy will lead souls to confess to having committed sins . . . ; will shriek for the prayers of those present, will roll their victims convulsed upon the floor, and all the while the mistaken awe-struck congregations will commence praising God for Revival having broken out, or will be dismayed or perplexed, and weep from sheer nervous exhaustion, and protracted or pent-up feeling.

Then as to the third source of the *man himself*, in an artificially induced magnetic state (which can be produced by himself in prolonged concentration, or by others by the "laying on of hands"). Slight currents of electricity can also be produced by a strong concentration of will in consequence of which muscular concentration ensues. One feature of the visions from this source is that mental conceptions govern the character of the visions, *i.e.*, Catherine of Sienna, as a child, saw the Lord dressed in Pontifical robes—the Pope was her highest conception of what Christ would be like!

Notes from the Book Room.

"Songs of the Heavenly Life."

A NEW edition of our little hymnbook was issued in time for the Swanwick Conference, containing four pages of new hymns, and some other revisions. The stirring battle song "Victory" now appears on the first page, with its original tune. The author writes that it was "the first note of victory in song the Lord gave, after one of the first 'Overcomer' Conferences"—so it is fitting that it should now appear as "No. 1." This hymn and tune may still be obtained in leaflet form (*4d. per doz.*) from the Book Room.

We were anxious not to increase the price of the new and enlarged hymnbook, but it will be understood that no reduction for quantities is now possible.

The revisions may make the new hymnbook a little difficult to use with the previous editions, and we have therefore reserved a small quantity of the last edition, so that Workers who are using it in their meetings may make up their number, if necessary. These may be obtained from the Book Room at HALF PRICE, *i.e.*, 1/6 per dozen, postage paid 1/10.

THE MOTTO CARD, 1935.

The new Motto Card is now ready, Friends in other countries are advised to order their supplies in good time, to avoid disappointment or delay. We believe the 1935 card will have an unprecedented circulation at Christmas and the New Year, for even the printer remarked upon the aptness of the message for the days we are living in, days of the "proving" of God, when all who seek by the grace of God to be "overcomers" are being "*proved trustworthy by trial*" (2 Tim. ii. 15. Conybeare). Headed by these words, the central text of the 1935 card is—

"Fear not . . .
God is come to PROVE you" (Ex. xx. 20).

"The Overcomer" Bound Volume, 1934.

The issues of 1934 may now be obtained bound together in stiff paper covers, with INDEX, price 2/- each, postage paid 2/2.

THE GATE TO LIFE CHARTS.

Containing three diagrams with full explanations, for use in Bible Classes:

The Cross and the Sinner.	{ Price 4d. post free 4½d.
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"The Significance of Modernism" (Marshall Bros., Ltd.). By Col. L. Merson Davies, R.A., F.G.S. (Written at the request of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, who keenly desired that what he had to say as a Scientist and Bible Student regarding the significance of Modernism in the light of prophecy should be made as widely known as possible.) From the Overcomer Book Room, Price 1/-, post free 1/1.

The Drawings of God.

"Not for long has one written with such power of the Majesty of God. He cannot leave off talking about God."
(The Significance of Karl Barth, by John McConnachie).

THOU Glorious One! our thoughts go back from wandering here and there
To Thyself, the Centre of our Souls! in a rhapsody of prayer.
We praise, we worship, and adore, our hearts bowed to the dust;
Thou holdest with magnetic charm; we seek because we must.
As babe is drawn to the mother's breast, and knows not why it's drawn:
As the dawning day opens the widening eye of the daisy on the lawn:
As the sun with powerful attraction keeps the planets in their round:
As the drawing power of a manly heart in a maiden's breast is found:
So with greater grip and more subtle force Thought turns from all else to Thee:
O God of Heaven and Earth! so great is Thy blest transcendancy:
We feel the urge, we obey the call, O God in Christ we come,
And in the embrace of Thy Love Divine Faith finds an Eternal Home.

William Olney.

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"Soul and Spirit."

A Glimpse into Bible Psychology.

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

"PSYCHOLOGY" is in the air in these days. The word is used by many who scarcely understand what it means, while some medical men (and many amateurs) are seeking to use what they term "psycho-analysis" for the relief of sufferers from various forms of nervous trouble—a dangerous practice which men and women who know their God will fear to touch. In addition to this, many religious "cults," both old and new, derive their power from the psychic (or soul) realm rather than from the Holy Spirit of God—forces which are "at the disposal of the powers of evil" as they go forth to deceive "the whole world" (Rev. xii. 7-12).

In such a day as this there is need of a definite searching of the Word of God for knowledge of the true "psychology," *i.e.*, an understanding of the faculties and functions of the tripartite nature of man, created by God in His image, and for His glory, that believers may be able to discern between what is of God and what is from some other source, and not be led away by "soulish" counterfeits of spiritual realities.

There is very little literature obtainable on this subject, from the Christian and Biblical standpoint, and we are therefore calling special attention to the above treatise, which has been used of God to the deliverance of many souls from counterfeit spiritual experiences. After the testimonies given to its value at the Swanwick Conference in May, there was such an increased demand for this book that the *paper covered edition* was soon exhausted, and none but the more expensive copies left. It has now been re-printed and is available in both styles. M.N.G.

THE CROSS IS THE "TOUCHSTONE."

THE "psychic" power . . . which is so much to the fore to-day, is not "*spirit*," for it belongs entirely to man's *fallen nature*. The development of the "psychic faculty" is the drawing out into action some of the capabilities lying dormant in the "natural man . . ." They do not constitute the "grace of God" as taught in the Scriptures . . .

The cry on every side, reiterated even in the pages of Christian magazines, is "develop the personality." "Strengthen your will." But what is the teaching of the Lord Himself concerning the psychic or soulish life? On the way to the Cross He bids those who would follow Him, take their Cross, and "lose" or "hate" their "*psychic*" (*psuche*) life, so as to save or keep it (the soul) to "life eternal." . . . Does this not show that the "psychic" part of the life of nature is to be laid down, and not "cultivated"? That the lower life of the *psuche* is, by the taking of the Cross, perpetually to be kept out of action for the outworking of a higher kind of "life" from the Lord Himself, Who is to His redeemed ones, a "Life-giving Spirit."

How wonderful to see that the Cross of Christ becomes to everything the "touchstone"! If "supernatural power" can draw into activity *psychic forces latent in the believer*, then it is not safe to accept any manifestation of "power" as of God, except it comes by *way of the Cross*, and leads the believer into the *path of the Cross*. "Power" that results in the building up of "self" with *compulsory forces at work upon others*, simply means that the *psychic powers have been developed*, instead of being kept latent and unused by the [power] of the Cross. This alone makes way for the outflow of the Holy Spirit, who works upon the consciences of men, not by forcing and compelling power, but in conviction of the conscience by the light and truth of the Word of God.

(Extract from "Soul and Spirit.")

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